



— ALICE RAU —

Her outstretched arms extend far and wide to assure that the missions of Sarasota's nonprofit organizations are achieved. A 30-year resident of Sarasota, Alice is past chair and current member of the board of the Ringling Museum of Art; current board member of the Salvation Army and Suncoast Communities Blood Bank; former board member of G.WIZ, Women's Resource Center, the former Hospice of Southwest Florida Foundation, and New College Library Association. This February, Tidewell Hospice will award Alice their first Compassion in Caring Award.

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The outstretched arms of Alice Rau extend far and wide to assure that the missions of Sarasota's nonprofit organizations are achieved. As a donor and current or former board member of many organizations, Alice says giving back to the community was ingrained in her by her grandparents and parents. To say that Alice took this guidance to heart is an understatement.

"I moved to Sarasota 30 years ago because the west coast was more laid back. It was attractive to me because it is a diversified community—not just a community built for wealthy retirees. We have the Amish and we have the circus. We have diverse institutions of higher learning and arts organizations that rival New York City. Many people come to Sarasota later in life and have the time and/or the financial resources to give to the community."

"Sarasota is special to me. I was surrounded by a family atmosphere of civic responsibility. It's not my nature to sit still. I'm crazy busy, but organized enough to consider what to do and what not to do. I am one of many who serve on boards. I haven't sought out organizations except for Tidewell Hospice. They just happened."

Many local organizations are fortunate that Alice is a current or former volunteer who held and continues to hold leadership positions. She is past chair and current member of the board of the Ringling Museum of Art; current board member of the Salvation Army and Suncoast Communities Blood Bank; former board member of G.WIZ, Women's Resource Center, the former Hospice of Southwest Florida Foundation, and New College Library Association. This past November she co-chaired the Key Chorale Bach to Bach luncheon.

Alice fully or partially funded the production of the introductory video at the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art and the 45-minute audio tour of the Cà d'Zan Mansion. In addition to her volunteerism in Sarasota, she served as president of the board of trustees of Bowling Green State University Firelands College in Ohio.

With her and her family foundation's long history of supporting organizations with a focus on life-threatening diseases such as providing doctoral fellowships to Salk Institute and Stanford University Medical Center, she was interested in how to best care for the terminally ill.

"In 1988 the concept of a hospice house was a brand new idea in the county. The first hospice house was proposed to be built in Venice. I called Zoltan Karpathy, president/CEO of the Hospice Foundation of Southwest Florida, to look at a way that my family's foundation could become involved in the hospice house. In the end we financially supported the patient rooms and still continue to support the organization," Alice explains.

Tidewell Hospice will award the first Compassion in Caring Award to Alice in February. Tidewell's president/CEO Marge Maisto says, "Tidewell developed the Compassion in Caring Award to recognize an individual in our community who exemplifies the characteristics of the founder of the

modern hospice movement, Dame Cicely Saunders. The individual would be someone who gives unselfishly from their heart to help ease the pain of others. It would be someone who understands the importance of meeting the physical, spiritual, emotional, and social needs of the individual in providing comfort and support. Alice has demonstrated through her volunteerism, philanthropy and personal example that the quality of life is in how you 'live and give' to help ease the pain and suffering of others along the way. Alice exemplifies the true hospice spirit of Compassion in Caring. She is being honored for her commitment to Tidewell's core values and gifts of time, talent and treasures."

Alice's family and work experience are firmly rooted in the newspaper business. For six generations her family has owned daily newspapers and radio stations. "I delivered papers with my father as a little girl. During World War II, I was a copyboy—really we were gophers—for the *Washington Daily News*. There were a lot of women who were department heads at that time. During the war my grandmother ran the family-owned paper in Norwalk, Ohio. In 1983 my son hired me to be the publisher of the Grand Haven (Michigan) Tribune where I stayed until 1988."

She is also the former vice-president and treasurer of Sandusky (Ohio) Newspapers, Inc., the family-owned business where her two sons currently manage seven daily newspapers and ten radio stations in Phoenix and Seattle.

In regard to print newspapers, she states, "It is a time of serious change for newspapers. However, I believe the manner of distribution and the products are in evolution and will continue to be. The print paper will survive in one way or another. It's very important to the country to have newspapers in some form. Without them we put at hazard the integrity of the coverage and the freedom on which the country was founded. My family's papers operate in smaller communities and have good quality reporters that provide local news."

For women who are entrepreneurs or employed, Alice advises, "Women have owned businesses and worked for a long time and they're doing just fine. Women can go as far as they want and shouldn't feel held back because of their sex. Be curious and reach out to every opportunity".

In her leisure time, Alice reads books on national and international issues, plays bridge, attends a weekly weight-lifting session with a physical therapist, and spends some time in the summer at her cabin in the Canadian bush country. She is currently facing two challenges: one of a volunteer nature and one of a personal nature. She is on the search committee for the director of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art. She is also going through a process to make decisions about her future life that she says many people delay.

Sarasota is fortunate to have Alice Rau's dedication and commitment to meeting the needs of diverse organizations. Asked how she would like to be remembered, she simply says "as loving and caring." ❧

Story: Carol Darling
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