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Death can be dignified without suicide

Five states now allow terminally ill, mentally competent patients to end their lives through physician-assisted suicide.

Advocates say that giving patients freedom to choose their end-of-life-care allows them "death with dignity."

I've been thinking a lot about assisted suicide since 29-year-old Brittany Maynard publicly announced her decision to end her life. The California newlywed had been diagnosed with an aggressive form of brain cancer; doctors told her she likely had six months to live.

"After months of research, my family and I reached a heart-breaking conclusion: There is no treatment that would save my life, and the recommended treatments would have destroyed the time I had left," she wrote.

"Because the rest of my body is young and healthy, I am likely to physically hang on for a long time even though cancer is eating my mind. I probably would have suffered in hospice care for weeks or even months. And my family would have had to watch that."

Maynard and her family moved to Oregon, where physician-assisted suicide is legal.

When she killed herself with a cocktail of prescribed medications, Maynard wrote on Face-

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HOLIDAY WISH LIST

PennLive/The Patriot-News is assembling its annual list of goods and services needed by midstate charitable organizations — whether the need is yearlong or only during the holidays.

Nonprofit agencies are invited to submit up to three items — such as canned foods, desk chairs or personal care products. If your agency needs volunteers, describe the task, such as driving people to doctor appointments or helping lift food into clients' cars. Requests for money must be designated for a purpose, such as buying a vehicle.

Agencies should send the organization's full name, a short description of the agency's mission, its address; a contact person if applicable (with phone number and/or email address), the three items needed (may include money and volunteering services) and the agency's website, if any.

The wish list will be published Nov. 30 in The Patriot-News. It can also be found at PennLive.com. Deadline for submitting wishes is Wednesday. Email the information to jkrajcsik@pennlive.com with "Wish List" in the subject line, or mail it to The Patriot-News, Wish List, Attn: Janet Krajcsik, 2020 Technology Parkway, Suite 300, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050.



UP, UP and AWAY

9 things to know before taking a hot-air balloon ride

BY JULIA HATMAKER • JHATMAKER@PENNLIVE.COM

A lot can go wrong 3,200 feet in the air. • It's a thought that crosses your mind as you soar across the skies of Lancaster County in a glorified picnic basket. But it's a thought that only flickers in your mind. • The beauty that surrounds you is so captivating that it commands your attention. The balloon's soft glide makes it easy to forget that it even exists. In fact, you feel like you're flying. • That's what I found when I joined the United States Hot Air Balloon Team for a ride in the sky in October. If you're considering a hot-air balloon ride, read the nine things you need to know on [Page D2](#).

TAKING A RIDE

If you want to go hot-air ballooning in Lancaster, York and Dauphin counties, here are five companies who rise to the occasion:

- » **1. United States Hot Air Balloon Team:** \$170 per person. Private flights are available for \$650; ushotairballoon.com.
- » **2. Hershey Balloon Flights:** \$225 per person; hersheyballoonflights.com.
- » **3. The New Horizon Balloon Team:** \$170 per person; newhorizonballoonteam.com.
- » **4. AE Balloon Flights:** \$225 per person; aeballoonflights.com.
- » **5. Susquehanna Valley Balloon Co.** Call 717-569-6642 for price; svballoonco.com.



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