

◆ Meadowlark Notes ◆

Issue 18

Hospice serving Clay, Cloud, Marshall, Republic, Riley, Washington Counties

Summer 2000

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Funeral directors say hospice helps families handle death

Families who have worked with hospice during terminal illness are more comfortable when death comes, area funeral directors have observed.

"I see a completely different atmosphere," said Roger Terry, director of Terry Chapel and Funeral Homes in Waterville.

Terry said that a home where a family member has died and a hospice staff member is present is "much easier. Someone is taking care of things. The family has had time together."

Buford and Preston Rook, father and son directors at Neill-Schwensen-Rook Funeral Home in Clay Center, concur.

Hospice staff tell families what to expect, Buford said.

He noted that people are afraid of the unknown. By telling people what to expect, they aren't so scared.

In addition, he said people wonder if they are doing the right thing for their loved one.

Preston Rook said many families mention hospice's blue book, which describes typical stages of dying.

"They say, 'That blue book was the best thing hospice could have given us.'"

Roger Terry observed that when families come to make funeral arrangements, often hospice is one of the first things they talk about.

"I've never heard them mention

hospice without accolades," he said.

All three men frequently refer people to hospice, noting how caring the staff and volunteers are.

Buford said the staff furnishes a hospital bed and provides pain-relieving drugs.

"Within minutes after a death, the bed is gone, the drugs are gone and everything has been dismantled. They take care of things."

He chuckled at the memory of his own father, who died of cancer five years ago. When hospice staff first showed up to help, the 91-year-old asked, "How much are you paying those ladies?" The patient contended: "Nobody can be that nice unless they're after something."

Both funeral homes make an effort to help educate young people, providing tours for selected high school classes and explaining what is involved.

"Teachers tell me that riding the bus back to school, students say they appreciate knowing that wasn't so bad," Terry said.

He has been a funeral director about 20 years, returning to Waterville where he was born.

The death of his 17-year-old uncle when Terry was very young affected him deeply, leading him to his present occupation.

Buford has been in the profession full time for 40 years.

Moyers TV special to examine end-of-life issues in September

Award-winning journalists Bill and Judith Moyers will bring to television a groundbreaking examination of end-of-life issues facing America.

The four-part series, "On our Own Terms, Moyers on Dying in America," airs Sept. 10-13 at 8 pm on Public Broadcasting System (PBS) stations.

It highlights the nation's growing efforts to improve end-of-life care; explores the search for new ways of thinking about death; examines the evolution of palliative (comfort) care; and looks at the issues surrounding efforts to control when and how patients die and the implications for law and public policy.

Based on two years of research and production, Moyers reports on the best examples of change, documenting stories of the dying as they struggle to live their final days and to share their deepest wisdom.

Through television, the American public sees people becoming aware of the quality of end-of-care life in their communities and attempting to improve it.

"On Our Own Terms" introduces leaders in palliative care who use various techniques to deal with physical symptoms as well as psychological and spiritual issues critical to a dying person and his or her family.

How to help the man who grieves

- Give him the freedom to have feelings and express them with whom he chooses. Reassure him emotions are normal and talking about them is necessary and healthy.
- Give him the freedom to be silent, as well. Your presence and acceptance will help him express his grief in the ways best for him.
- Encourage activity as a part of confronting grief. Physical labor is one way to channel powerful emotions. Find an activity you can do together.
- Remember it may be easier for him to talk about his experience in the context of his family and their reactions. Spot-lighting his feelings may seem threatening.
- Become aware of his practical needs and provide support.

—KSU Extension Service

Do men grieve differently?

Sometimes men's grief differs from women's. It's not less effective or less appropriate. It is simply different.

While women tend to react to the loss of a loved one as abandonment, men perceive it as losing part of themselves, as if severing an arm or leg.

In our society, many men find it difficult to express their personal feelings and needs.

The natural need to talk about one's grief may conflict with the traditional belief that a man must always be in control of his emotions.

Many men find it difficult to show their grief around others. Friends and family may think "he's over it," when, in fact, he is still hurting.

Many men try to distract themselves with their jobs. They strongly desire to maintain productivity and are often discouraged when, quite normally, they have less energy and less attention to give their work because of their grief.

Often men prefer to take action instead of confronting their feelings. They may increase their physical activity or over-commit themselves to employment or community service.

Many men feel a sense of failure because they cannot control the situation. They could not prevent the death. They could not protect the loved one who died.

Nurse's Notes

Food and Water at the End of Life

Should we insist that the doctor insert a feeding (and water) tube into Grandma?

It is one of the most excruciating decisions that families and caregivers face as they weigh the needs and wants of a person with late-stage Alzheimer's disease or other types of dementia.

Recent medical studies are showing that "yes" may not always be the right answer, both ethically and medically. A study reported in the Jan. 20, 2000, *New England Journal of Medicine* offers evidence that tube feeding a dementia patient may not really achieve any of the results for which it is usually prescribed.

Writing a "Sounding Board" piece in the journal, Muriel R. Gillick, M.D., of the Hebrew Rehabilitation Center for the Aged in Boston, provides a strong opinion based on research that feeding tubes should not be the automatic choice.

According to Gillick, feeding tubes are inserted for several reasons: To extend life; to prevent aspiration pneumonia; to promote comfort; or because moral beliefs require that sustenance must never be withheld.

Gillick maintains that feeding tubes used in patients with dementia usually don't meet any of these goals. Eating is typically among the last activities of daily

Calendar of Events

July

- July 11 NOTE DATE CHANGE: Washington County Volunteer Inservice, 9:30 a.m., Washington County Courthouse Extension meeting room
- July 12 Clay County Volunteer Inservice, 12 noon, Clay County Medical Center, Clay Center
- July 18 Marshall County Volunteer Inservice, 12 noon, Community Memorial Healthcare Inc, Marysville
- July 19 Advisory Board, 12 noon, First National Bank of Washington
- July 25 Republic County Volunteer Inservice, 12 noon, Potluck. Senior Citizens Center.

August

- Aug 9 Clay County Volunteer Inservice, 12 noon, Clay County Medical Center, Clay Center
- Aug 15 Washington County Volunteer Inservice, 9:30 a.m., Extension Meeting Room, Courthouse, Washington
- Aug 15 Marshall County Volunteer Inservice, 12 noon, Community Memorial, Marysville

September

- Sept 13 Clay Center Volunteer Inservice, 12 noon, Clay County Medical Center
- Sept 19 Washington County Volunteer Inservice, 9:30 a.m., Extension Meeting Room, Courthouse, Washington
- Sept 19 Marshall County Volunteer Inservice, 12 noon, Community Memorial Healthcare

living to become impaired in people with dementia.

Gillick observes:

—It's been difficult to demonstrate prolonged life through the use of feeding tubes.

—It is difficult to gauge the comfort level of a person with severe dementia.

—Tubes may cause discomfort.

Dr. Gillick recommends a new standard of care. She suggests family members should be able to request a feeding tube if they believe it is truly what the patient would have wanted. However balancing risks and benefits leads her to conclude that feeding tubes are generally ineffective.

Donna Bales,

Director LIFE Project

Kansas Senior Press Service

*Our thoughts
are with
these families*

- Alma Luhning
- William Pinkham
- Dennis Stallbaumer
- Clara Reiter
- Robert Hagen
- Della Rogge
- Edna Davidson
- Jerry Hogan
- Lester Shirck
- Ambrose Rueger
- Helen Day
- Esther Carlson
- Dorothy Mayo
- Connie Sides

Hospice staff receives letters

Please accept my annual gift in memory of my mom, Joan Mall, who passed away on April 11, 1998. The caring efforts of your nurses and volunteers will never be forgotten and I hope it helps many other families the way it helped ours.

Sincerely,

— —

May the power of His resurrection bring shouts of joy to your soul and bursts of triumph to your heart.

God Bless Your Easter Day

To all my wonderful friends at Hospice, You have been such a blessing to me.

Love,

— —

I would like to thank the nurses and volunteers for being so kind, helpful and caring. It was comforting to Alma and myself to have such wonderful people helping us through this difficult time.

God Bless you all.

What a blessing you are

Hospice nurses

We want to thank you for being with Loren Mueller, our brother's uncle, through his serious illness.

You are truly a blessing in your care and profession.

Sincerely,

— —

We thank all of you for all you did to ease the pain for our loved one. — She was always telling us about how nice every one was to her.

That is certainly great news to hear when you have to leave them in another place.

She has had very special care from everyone. Our thanks and God's Blessings to all of you.

— —

Dear Rita, Deb and Kay,

Thank you for your kindness.

We appreciate all your tender loving care in helping me to be in better health.

What is the LIFE Project?

The LIFE Project (Living Initiatives for End-of-life care) is a partnership of the Association of Kansas Hospices with more than 45 statewide organizations to improve the quality of end-of-life care.

One of the LIFE Project's main initiatives is to educate the general public about end-of-life care.

For example, the project wants to enable Kansas citizens to understand the choices they have for the care that they and their loved ones receive at the end of life.

The Project also wants to help Kansans learn how to talk with their families and care providers about their wishes for end-of-life care.

The other main initiatives of the LIFE Project include working with medical professionals and public policy makers to improve the quality of care at the end of life.

The LIFE Project believes that excellence in end-of-life care will be achieved with three things:

1. A well-informed and engaged citizenry that understands its choices;
2. a good public policy environment;
3. a health care system with expertise in end-of-life care.

You can reach the LIFE Project at—

**1888-202-life (toll free) or
livewell@southwind.net**

Thank you, volunteers, for your time

- Ann Ackerman
- Gary Griffiths
- Mary Bertsch
- George Blomberg
- Karen Blomberg
- Carol Brown
- Christine Buchanan
- Daisy Carlson
- Jerry Coleman
- Don Dejmal
- Irene Duitsman
- Fay May
- Dona Welborn
- Mark Droll
- Elizabeth Dunn
- Ernie Foster
- Delores Germann
- Edna Hatfield
- Lorna Heitman
- Janet Helmerichs
- Gevine Hoesli
- Dennis Holst
- Nancy Holst
- Cathy Hull
- Carol Kirtley
- Eva Lewis
- Pam White
- Helen Meyerhoff
- Mary Alice Pacey
- Mattie Patterson
- Bernita Reinert
- Ina Roeth
- Billie Rohde
- Barney Rohde
- Pat Simmons
- Reba Smith
- Nelda Ungerer
- Marcene Wachsnicht
- Mildred Lull
- Leona Woellhof
- Marlene Quillin
- June Laha

Introducing . . .

Pastoral work neat fit for Odell couple

For Dennis and Nancy Holst, becoming hospice volunteers fits with Dennis' work as a minister.

Now serving the Marysville Church of Christ, Dennis learned about hospice when he was delivering medical equipment to homes for Apria HealthCare.

In many of those homes, patients were under hospice care.

"He would come home and say, 'One of these days I want to be involved,'" Nancy said. "He saw how neat the hospice organization was and how caring the nurses and volunteers were."

Then Dennis left Apria to return to full-time ministry. In February, the couple went through hospice training at Marysville.

Soon Dennis was assigned three patients. Nancy hopes to become more involved when the summer is over.

The Nebraska family includes five children: Kristi, 28, and family, O'Fallon, Mo.; Adam, 25, and family, Lincoln, Neb.; Dustin, 21, and family, Air Force, Montgomery, Ala.; Kathi, 18, new graduate, enrolled this fall in Oklahoma Christian University; and Andrew 12, seventh grade.

Dennis loves to play with his four grandchildren (soon to be six). His wife says the grandchildren are his hobby but he also enjoys working in the yard.

Nancy likes to read, embroider, and work with her flowers.

Father's death sparks desire to work with hospice

A year after George Blomberg's father, who died of cancer in 1995, was the recipient of hospice care, George and his wife Karen become hospice volunteers.

"We wanted to be able to give something back," Karen said.

Both she and George immediately became active in patient care, sometimes with the same patient.

Today, Karen is in charge of the Memorial Gardens at Clay County Medical Center, a project that was started when Jodi Kohlman was volunteer coordinator.

Karen, who has a yard full of flowers at 833 Huntress in Clay Center, also cares for flower beds at Evangelical Covenant Church, where the couple serve as greeters, help in the nursery and other volunteer activities.

In April, Karen completed her first year in a one-on-one mentoring program started by Bob Stratton of Covenant church. The non-denominational One-on-One program for youngsters who need a friend has about 26 "matched" kids, with others on the waiting list. It is part of the Lighthouse for Christ outreach.

George does smaller wood-working projects in his shop, giving away some, using others, like a fireplace mantel, at home.

The Blombergs take time to enjoy their eight grandchildren: three in Miltonvale, two in Concordia, three in Wichita, and "one on the way in Hiawatha."

They have five children.

Meyerhoff cared for terminally ill brother, finds hospice volunteer work rewarding

During the last seven months of her brother's life in 1989, Helen Meyerhoff cared for Herb in her home in Linn.

The last few months Herb was bedfast, and his daughter, Jolene Balch, would drop by after leaving her job at the nursing home and help Helen with anything she needed.

That might explain why Helen said a quick "yes" when Lorna Heitman asked her to attend a hospice meeting at Greenleaf three or four years ago.

"I knew that's what I wanted to do."

Three or four years later, the newly turned 80-year-old likes every part of volunteering: sitting with patients, reading, visiting and taking care of them.

But her volunteer work doesn't stop there.

Helen makes many World Relief quilts.

At St. John Lutheran Church, Palmer, she helps in many ways, including having the dial-a-devotion at her house.

Since she started putting visits to the Linn nursing home on her calendar for Thursdays or Fridays, she's been faithful about getting there, too.

For 37 years, Helen was book-keeper for Kuhlman Implement and Harware, Inc., becoming co-owner and selling her share when she retired.

Raised on a farm southwest of Palmer, she moved into Linn 26 years ago.

Neither of her sisters lives close, one in St. Louis and the other in St. Paul, Minn.; however she sees Herb's daughter Nina Meyer and son Nathan who are nearby.

Introducing . . .

Virginia Petersen
of Republic on Page 7

Thank you, each one, for your memorial gifts

Hospice gift

Larry & Donna Miles
Nevada Marty
Waleta Buck
Warren Anderson
Darlene Bloom

Brian Leseberg Memorial

Eleanor Wieden

Chester Teas Memorial

Larry & Marilyn Smith
Ann & Tom Lee

Clyde Tippin Memorial

Herb & Margaret Gier

Edna Colt Memorial

Harold & Fay May
Gary & Linda Colt and
Family

Joan Mall Memorial

Larry Mall

**Ladies' Auxiliary
of Clay Center**

Fraternal Order of Eagles

Marcella Vopat Memorial

Skilled Nursing Sunshine
Club

Zelphia Brantley Memorial

Jim & Karen Patterson

Alma Luhring

Kenneth, Irene Duitsman
Wanda & Duane
Kendhammer
Vernon & Carol Foster
Rodney & Connie
Eisenbarth
Waverly Jacees

Charles "Chuck"**Hollenbeck**

Jim & Evelyn Hodge
Jr. & Peg Weidman

Dorothy Mayo

Wayne & Jean Hammel
Douglas & Patricia Adams
Elsie Mugler
Joyce Hollenbeck
Family of Dorothy Mayo
Pamel Kemp
Lloyd & Vonna Nemnich

Ailene Beall Mintum

Jack & Elizabeth Dunn

Patty Fowles

Friends and Neighbors

Daniel & Lavona Harding

Prairie View Elementary
School

Prairie View Fifth Grade

Everett & Donna Girton

Galloway Insurance, Inc.

Randall & Cathy Hafner

Gail & Karen Hauserman

Rita Siebold

Hanson Ford-Mercury,
Inc.

Lowell & Robyn Marsh

Avondale Church

Edward Steward

Deb & Larry Blayees

Mildred Rundle

Nila Matzen

Edna Davidson

Friends and Neighbors
Glen & Betty Sears
Donna Bierbaum
Walter Sears
Agnes Epley
Edward & Doris Fosha

Elvie Hageman

L. Eugene & Ruth

Henderson

Sophia Rabe

Jerry Hogan

Harry & Lamoyne

Converse

Richard & Mary Jane

Bromfield

Lu Klataske

Barb Rollman & Family

Geraldine Herzig

Joseph Bill

Raymond & Rose Anna

Horn

Julia Siebold

Linda Coleman

Jan Wouten

Marilyn Maulden

Kenneth Fritz

Kathryn Fritz

Margaret Koppes

Matthew & Patty Warren

Esther Carlson

Ernie Foster

During Meadowlark Hospice training in June, Christy Contreras, Miltonvale, demonstrated the effectiveness of music in hospice care.

A violinist and pianist, she used soft background music to show the effectiveness of quiet melody or nature sounds.

The daughter of nurses and granddaughter of a pastor, Christy will spend six weeks in Honduras this fall and six weeks in South Africa next spring as part of her four-year missionary nursing degree she completes in Pennsylvania. She also trained in Concordia.

Melodies waft lightly on the soft and gentle breeze,
Undulating chords rise high like waves upon the seas.
Serenading all who'll listen to their sweet refrain
Inspiring them to plunge within immersing ev'ry pain.
Cheerful are those gentle notes that weave a melody
Touching those who will embrace the' harmonious remedy.
Hearts are touched, lives are changed, on eagle's wings they soar,
Ever higher to the heights where suff'ring is no more.
Resting quietly awhile their spirits then subdued
At last rest from searing pain that once brought inward feud.
Peace, at last! A quietness where mortals fear to tread
Yes, peace and rest and strength within, 'tis hope that lies ahead.

O Christy Contreras 2000

Introducing . . .

Petersen invites staff to tell hospice story in northern Kansas town of Republic

Virginia Petersen thinks hospice is so important, she asked staff members Kay Lohmiller and Linda Gibbs to have lunch at the Senior Citizens Center in Republic for the July 25 meeting.

The Republic volunteer group, organized in April, 1999, will hold its quarterly potluck lunch with other people in what was once the school.

"Not everybody knows what hospice is," Petersen said. Like others in the original group, she's convinced it is worthwhile.

When the original 12 started training, Virginia said, "I thought it was something I could do. And I could do it locally."

A very active citizen, Petersen writes weekly news from Republic for both the Belleville Telescope and the Superior (Neb.) Express.

She also serves on the library board, works with United Methodist women, plays bridge and other card games—to name a few

of her interests.

"I can't stand it if I don't have something to do," she said.

Her small community helps each other. Although there's just one church in town and not everyone belongs to it, "If there's a funeral, everyone participates."

One day a week she spends with her daughter who lives on a farm 12 miles away. She also has a son who lives in Shawnee.

The Nebraska-Kansas state line has always been an unusually important part of her life.

Born on a farm in Kansas, just three miles from Nebraska, she and her four siblings had to cross the line to Hardy, Neb., in order to go to school.

"My Dad was on the school-board, and he saw to it the state paid our tuition so we could get our education."

Despite her mixed background, Virginia Petersen claims she has never, never been a Big Red fan!

Quilt to be fund-raiser at Clay Center

A quilt made and donated by Waleta Buck will benefit hospice at a silent auction in Clay Center Saturday, Sept. 30. The auction will be part of the annual Piotique.

Waleta's husband Robert was served by Meadowlark Hospice.

Waleta said she wanted "others with a terminal illness to have the same good care my husband received."

A long-time quilt maker, Waleta used the log cabin design for the queen-size quilt.

Neil Bartley dies June 4

Hospice volunteer and Presbyterian minister Neil Bartley of Barnes died June 4, 2000, at his home.

Members of the Meadowlark staff and volunteers extend their sympathy to his wife Sue and their five children.

Neil trained to be a volunteer in July 1996.

Lunch, program honor volunteers

To express their appreciation to their volunteers in Marshall, Republic, Clay and Washington counties, Meadowlark Hospice staff members provided a lunch and program April 20, during national volunteer month.

Reba Smith, a volunteer from Clay Center played familiar tunes on the accordion, including some requested by the audience in the community room at Washington First National Bank.

LewAnn Schneider, doctor of veterinary medicine, made a presentation on networking. She said networking helped her get her present position as meat inspector of the State of Kansas.

Dr. Schneider said "We are all just three people away from someone we know. It's amazing how someone we know, knows someone we know, who also knows someone that person knows."

*One is not born into the world to do everything
but to do something.*

—Henry David Thoreau

About your newsletter—

What a lot of cooperation it takes to make your newsletter work.

Look at the number of people who took time to provide information for the summer issue: Roger Terry, Waterville; Buford and Preston Rook, Clay Center; Virginia Petersen, Republic; Helen Meyerhoff, Linn; George and Karen Blomberg, Clay Center; Nancy Holst, Odell, Neb.; Linda Gibbs, Dianne Michaud, Charron Cales and Kay Lohmiller, all in the Hospice office at Clay Center, who compiled countless details. In addition, they helped proofread and faxed information back and forth. Linda even proofed pages Friday night and returned to the office to fax them to Washington Saturday.

It doesn't end there. Once The Printery at Clay Center has finished printing from camera-ready copy, volunteers gather to fold and mail your newsletter.

As you can see, it's truly a team effort.

We do welcome your own suggestions for your newsletter. Please contact:

- Linda Gibbs, Seventh St. Clay Center, KS 67432 ; 785-632-2225;
e-mail: mhospice@Kansas.net; fax: 1-785-632-3557
- Christine Buchanan, P.O. Box 6, Washington, KS 66968; 785-325-2343
e-mail: buchanans@washingtonks.net; fax: 1-785-325-3351

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