



# Meadowlark Notes

Meadowlark Hospice Newsletter

Issue 91 | Winter 2021



**MEADOWLARK  
HOSPICE**

## 5 Reasons for Hospice Now

1. Quality of Life
2. Symptom Management
3. Spiritual Care
4. Caregiver Relief
5. Grief Counseling

## Inside this Issue

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We Honor Veterans  
Hospice Myths

## Some Leave Sooner than Others

*by Dawn Phelps, RN/LMSW*

In the spring of 2018, my husband Tom and I bought a small mobile home in Texas—a place to stay a few weeks each winter. One of the things I was excited to see was a hibiscus bush in the front flower bed.

We could not take possession of our little property until the fall, but two of our Nebraska friends arrived in Texas before Tom and me. They went by our place to check things out and snapped photos of a bud on our hibiscus bush. When they sent pictures to us, I was ecstatic that our flower was about to bloom in December!

We left Kansas the day after Christmas and arrived at our little place on December 27th. By the 29th, a big, beautiful, orangey-red blossom opened up. It was about 5-6 inches across! When I told my friend Patty the bud had opened, she said, “You know, they only last a day,” and I was disappointed.

But, to my delight, our first blossom was still beautiful on the second day and again on the third day. I did some reading and found that some hybrid hibiscus blossoms can last between 2-3 days, and ours did! We were so glad we had a hybrid bush!

Other flowers only open for a day. For instance, poppies with their beautiful

orangey-red blossoms leave us wishing they would stay open longer. Spiderwort, a blue-purple wild flower which grows from Maine south to Alabama and as far west as Missouri, only opens for one day.

So you see, some of the most beautiful flowers only bloom briefly, then fade, similar to life that goes by far too quickly!

I recently had a visual reminder of how fast time flies when my son-in-law Bryan posted two photos of their family. One photo was taken when they arrived in Wales to live, and the other a recent photo, both taken at the same location.

My four grandchildren were very small then, and now they are all taller than their mother. My oldest grandson and granddaughter are now married, and the two younger ones are in their teens. My son-in-law wrote, “Same place. Gracious, life goes by so quickly!”

Like flowers, some of us stay for a very short time, and others “bloom” for many seasons. Similar to a brilliant sunset that glows for a few seconds and fades into the night sky, life goes quickly for some. For those who are blessed with longevity, life still goes by too fast. Like my now-grey-haired son-in-law wrote, “Life goes by so quickly!”

*Continued on page 2>>*



# MEADOWLARK HOSPICE

## Leadership Team

John Ryan, MD HMDC  
Medical Director

Michele Voelker, APRN  
Nurse Practitioner

Amy Burr, RN, BSN  
Program Director

Audie Hartman, RN  
Patient Care Coordinator

KayLynn Mead, LMSW  
Director of Social Services &  
Bereavement

## Hospice Staff Nurses

Sherry Wiese, RN  
Erin Shultz, RN  
JoAnn Lips, RN  
Debra Champlin, RN  
Deb Hedke, RN, BSN  
Sharon Ramsey, RN

## Home Health Aide

Tracy Wallace, HHA

## Social Workers

Kathryn Benson, LBSW  
Stephanie Garrison, LBSW  
Jen Meier, LMSW

## Bereavement

Dawn Phelps, RN, LMSW  
Bereavement Writer

## Chaplains

Sr. Janet LeDuc  
Rex Fuller  
Kathy Ouellette  
Al Paredes  
Marilyn Sweet

## Administrative Staff

Lilly Hitsman  
Administrative Assistant/Billing

Darlene Melton  
Volunteer Coordinator

Life has many twists and turns. Sometimes children die before their parents which is not the natural order of things. Unexpected events, illnesses, and deaths may almost overwhelm us, leaving us to grieve how life used to be and what might have been.

Someone with terminal cancer said, "Don't be sad for me. We all come into the world to be tourists, enjoy life, go sightseeing, and do good deeds. I just happen to be leaving earlier than others."

In 1890, Crowfoot, the chief of the Blackfoot First Nation in Canada, said as he died, "What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a

buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset."

The Bible compares life to the grass that withers, and the flower that falls, similar to the brief life of a flower. Life is gone before we know it, so it is important to not waste a minute. So do good deeds for others, sight-see a bit, love, and live each day deliberately, joyfully, and with purpose!

It is up to us to make the best use of the time we have left and "bloom" as long as we can. After all, some of us leave sooner than others.

## Excelling in Hard Times

Hospice volunteers are an important piece of our hospice team. The care and support provided to patients and families by hospice volunteers is priceless. Our hospice volunteers are used to being able to make visits in person and provided support in a way that eases the burden for that family.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought everything to a screeching halt. Volunteer visits became restricted at nursing facilities. Our volunteer support percentage dropped from 11% to 2.4%. In order to continue to serve our patients, a new approach became the focus. Our volunteer coordinator and volunteers rose to the challenge. Our volunteers turned to sending cards, having flowers delivered, and delivering homemade goodies to continue to support families facing end of life. The volunteer in-service meetings became an opportunity to create holiday crafts for distribution to our nursing homes.

We are thankful for the volunteers of Meadowlark Hospice. They took a hard situation and found ways to continue to brighten the days of those facing hard times. Although we are looking forward

to face to face visits again, we are thankful for the added activities we have added to our volunteer program.

Our current dilemma is when we have a patient and there is not a volunteer available in their area to serve them. It is heartbreaking to know a patient is in need of a service that we are struggling to find someone to fill that need.

There is a lot of flexibility in being a hospice volunteer and the time commitment is really dependent on what you have to offer. The relationships formed with the families are ones that will stay with you for a lifetime. It is a tremendous honor to be able to support a fam-

**There is nothing stronger than the heart of a volunteer.**

**Become a Hospice volunteer today!**

ily and ease some of the burden they are facing.

If you or someone you know is interested in serving as a volunteer for Meadow-

lark Hospice, I encourage you to make contact with Darlene Melton, our volunteer coordinator. She can be reached at 785-632-2225 or dmelton@ccmcks.org. We are looking for volunteers in all of our counties, but especially need support in Republic county and cities of Riley and Glasco.

# Meadowlark Hospice Annual Events

## Tree Of Light Ceremony

The 30th Tree of Light ceremony held by Meadowlark Hospice was celebrated in a different way this year. The annual event was held as two separate virtual events. Both events provided an opportunity for people to remember loved ones during the holiday season. The Angel Tree Ceremony was held live and we decorated the tree outside our office with angels. The tree is now glowing with angels bearing the names of loved ones being remembered.



The second ceremony was a Tree of Light Candlelight Ceremony. This ceremony was prerecorded by hospice staff and has been posted on our Facebook page. The ceremony focused on the lighting of candles and how this activity can provide a touching moment to remember our loved ones. I invite you to visit our Facebook page and watch both of the ceremonies if you or a loved one are facing grief this season.



## Socks for Seniors

During the month of November, Meadowlark Hospice collected socks for our 2nd Annual Socks for Seniors. We collected 415 pairs of socks that will be delivered to individuals receiving meals on wheels and home health services in the communities we serve. Thank you to all that donated to this wonderful event! The entities receiving socks have expressed how excited the clients were to receive the socks last year.



The We Honor Veterans program was launched at the NHP-CO Interdisciplinary Conference in Atlanta, GA on September 12, 2010. Currently there are 5, 115 hospice partners associated with We Honor Veterans. Meadowlark Hospice is proud to be one of those partners. Our team has been committed to becoming more educated on the specific needs of veterans at end of life.

We have been able to provide certificates of recognition for service to the veteran patients. On Veterans Day, the local DAR organization provided handmade blankets to be distributed to the veterans under our care. The blankets were well received by our patients. The veterans and their families are thankful to be recognized and acknowledged for the service they provided.

## Blankets made by Clay Center DAR for Veteran's Day!





# Hospice Myths

## **Myth #1:**

**Hospice care is only for cancer patients.**

Fact: Hospice care is for anyone with a terminal prognosis of 6 months or less. This can include dementia, heart and lung disease, kidney failure, and many other life-limiting diseases.

## **Myth #2:**

**Hospice care is only provided in a home.**

Fact: Hospice care is provided in the setting that the patient calls home. This can include nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

## **Myth #3:**

**Hospice care is expensive.**

Fact: Hospice services-including medication and equipment related to the terminal diagnosis-are completely covered under the Medicare/Medicaid Hospice Benefit. Most private insurance carriers also offer a hospice benefit. Medications not related to the terminal diagnosis are the patient's responsibility. Room and board is also the patient's responsibility.

## **Myth #4:**

**Hospice is for the last days of life.**

Fact: Patients and families benefit most when hospice services are begun as soon as an individual learns of his or her terminal diagnosis. Hospice care, at any stage, but particularly when started early, can significantly lighten the burden of an end of life illness.

## **Myth #5:**

**Your doctor will no longer be involved in your care when you begin hospice.**

Fact: The hospice team works closely with your primary physician to ensure you receive the best care at end of life. Hospice care is provided by highly specialized professional staff, including a medical director, registered nurses, social workers, home health aides, chaplains, and volunteers.

## **Myth #6:**

**You can't contact Meadowlark Hospice until your physician suggests hospice.**

Fact: Anyone may call at any time to learn about hospice services at no obligation. A physician's order will be required for admission, but anyone is free to learn about their treatment options. We encourage individuals to contact our office when planning your advanced directives to learn about the hospice benefit before you are facing a crisis. Many families have reported that they just had no idea what hospice could do.

## **Myth #7:**

**Hospice means giving up hope.**

Fact: Choosing hospice does not mean death is imminent. With Hospice, the miracle isn't the cure, it is in the caring. The Hospice team provides support and symptom management so families can share quality time together doing the things they love.

**\*IN-SERVICES & BEREAVEMENT GROUPS ARE SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION IF COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS ARE IMPOSED. PLEASE CALL 785-632-2225 IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CHECK OUR FACEBOOK PAGE.**

## Volunteer In-Service for February, March, and April

### Clay Center

Clay County volunteers meet in Clay Center on the 3rd Monday of the month at 11:00 AM @ Meadowlark Hospice office.

### Concordia

Cloud County volunteers meet in Concordia on the 2nd Monday of the month at 1:00 PM @ Sr. Susan's home.

### Washington

Washington County volunteers meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 9:30 AM @ Washington County Courthouse basement.

### Belleville

Republic County volunteers meet in Belleville on the 2nd Monday of the month at 3:00 PM @ the Belleville United Methodist Church.

### Marysville

Marysville volunteers meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 12:00 pm @ First United Methodist Church Marysville.

### Frankfort

Frankfort volunteers meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 2:00 PM @ Frankfort Presbyterian Church.

## Bereavement Groups for February, March, and April

Meadowlark Hospice offers four monthly community bereavement groups for anyone who has recently experienced a loss. During the groups we focus on living with loss, the grief process, and topics that many may be facing after losing someone they love. Previous participants have commented that the group helped them feel normal—giving them hope that better days were ahead. One person stated that it was easier to share her experience since everyone in the group had a similar loss. There is no charge to attend these groups which are open to anyone in the community.

### Clay Center

The Living Life after Loss group meets the 2nd Tuesday evening of each month at the Meadowlark Hospice meeting room, 709 Liberty, just east of the hospital, from 4:30-5:30 p.m.

This group is led by KayLynn Mead, social worker

### Washington

This is a newly formed group that meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 12:00-1:00 p.m.

KayLynn Mead, social worker, leads this group. (Call our office for specific location)

### Belleville

This group generally meets the 3rd Thursday of each month in the Belleville Public Library, 1327 19th Street on the Square. Once a quarter the group eats out together. The group is led by Stephanie Garrison, social worker. (Call our office for specific times)

### Marysville

This group usually meets the 4th Thursday evening of each month from 4:00-5:00 p.m. at Community Memorial Healthcare, in the South Plaza, Marysville.

The group is led by Jennifer Meier, social worker.

We hope you will join us for the group sessions, as group members together learn to live life after loss. If you know of someone else who would benefit from this group, please feel free to bring them along. Group dates and time are subject to change to meet the group needs for the month. Please call our office at 785-632-2225 if you have any questions.

### Community-Sponsored Bereavement Groups

#### Concordia

The bereavement support group meets the 2nd Monday of the month at the Episcopal Parish Hall, 117 W 8th at 6:30 p.m. Contact: Judy Lambert 785-243-4454.

#### Leonardville

The bereavement support group is currently on hold. Contact: Sandy Ferguson 785-706-1595 if you wish to be notified when group resumes.

*\*Please call the contact numbers for questions or cancellations.*



Meadowlark Hospice gratefully acknowledges the hospice gifts and memorials. If we have inadvertently omitted a donation from this listing, please accept our apologies.

## Hospice Gifts

William & Jaclyn Chestnut  
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Lyle & Glenda Stohs  
John, Jr. & Deanna Turner  
Dave & Dana Welch & family  
Clyde & Rita Wollenberg  
Dean & Karen Wright

**Brian Wingerd**  
Dail & Kathy Smith

Crosses made for each of the colors of ribbon for cancer awareness by our volunteer June Laha.



Crafts made by volunteers for Christmas.





Phone: 785-632-2225  
Fax: 785-632-3557  
Email: [mhospice@ccmcks.org](mailto:mhospice@ccmcks.org)  
Web: [meadowlarkhospice.org](http://meadowlarkhospice.org)

We are available to present programs to area organizations!



# Thank You for Your Gift

## DONOR INFORMATION

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Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Include the donation amount.  Do not include the donation amount.

Include my name in the notification.

Enclosed is my check payable to Meadowlark Hospice.

I donated online at: [www.ccmcks.org/meadowlarkhospice/giving.php](http://www.ccmcks.org/meadowlarkhospice/giving.php)

## Mission

Our mission is to provide loving, compassionate care for those living with a life limiting illness.

## Serving

Clay, Cloud, Marshall, Republic, Western Riley, and Washington Counties.

## Meadowlark Notes



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