

Meadowlark Notes

Meadowlark Hospice Newsletter

Issue 109 | Summer 2025



**MEADOWLARK
HOSPICE**

5 Reasons for Hospice Now

1. Quality of Life
2. Symptom Management
3. Spiritual Care
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5. Grief Support

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Eagles Learning to Fly

by Dawn Phelps, RN/LMSW

Eagles—graceful, proud, magnificent! Eagles—symbolic of pride and strength. Eagles—flying at thirty miles an hour, soaring high in the air, or diving at thirty miles per hour to snatch a fish from a stream, quickly rising again!

Have you ever wondered where eagles nest or how they learn how to fly? If you are interested, let's begin on a very high cliff with a stream meandering through the valley floor. The air is crisp and cool. The sky is blue, and the day is clear with an occasional whimsical cloud floating high overhead.

On the edge of the cliff there is a large nest which was built by a male and female eagle. It is about four feet wide and three feet deep, made from limbs and lined with pine needles, soft mosses, feathers, grass, or leaves. The nest is a just-right place to rear a couple of baby eaglets. The parent eagles usually mate for life and return to the nest year after year. They repair the nest by adding limbs and additional lining until the nest is extremely heavy—sometimes heavy enough to topple a tree if that is where the nest is built!

Then the female lays one to three speckled, off-white colored eggs. In about thirty-five days, soft fuzzy eaglets will peck their way out of the eggshells. The babies emerge vulnerable, totally dependent on their parents for food. They grow rapidly, and soon their once-comfortable nest becomes crowded. In need of space, the young eaglets are forced to move to the edge of the nest where they discover a new world below. "What a view!" There is green grass, trees, water, and flowers—entirely different sights and colors from their drab, brown nest.

The mother knows her eaglets must soon leave the security of the nest. There are new lessons to learn if they are to grow into strong, independent eagles, and she knows they must learn to fly. A little eaglet might think "How scary" or "No way am I going to do that!" As he clings to the edge of the nest and watches his mother fly!

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MEADOWLARK HOSPICE

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Tracy Wallace, HHA

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Bereavement

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Bereavement Coordinator

Chaplains

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Sr. Janet LeDuc
Kathy Ouellette
Al Paredes
Julie Shields

Administrative Staff

Lilly Hitsman
Administrative Assistant/Billing

Jenny March, RN, CHPN
Volunteer Coordinator

Kim Sixbury, BSN, RN
Medical Records Coordinator

The mother gradually removes mosses and leaves that line the nest, exposing the rough limbs that poke into the young birds. The mother quits bringing food regularly, and the eaglets become hungry and begin to lose weight. Then the mother eagle flies by the hungry eaglets with a tasty morsel of meat. She dangles it just out of reach of the babies that are perched on the edge of the nest.

Motivated by hunger, the eaglets try to grab the meat from their mother's beak. As they reach, they may temporarily become airborne for a few seconds. Next, the mother may fly near the nest and gently push an eaglet out of the nest. Startled, the baby will instinctively spread his wings and flap. And to his surprise, his wings may hold him up and he flies!

If a young eaglet begins to fall, the mother swoops beneath and catches him on her back. She may give him a ride, dump him, and catch him again. Flying lessons, which are exciting and exhilarating to the onlooker, may be scary for the eaglets.

In life, we humans face many scary situations too—illnesses, relationship struggles, financial problems, or deaths of those we love. During these times, we are forced to make changes in our lives, and we may even have to learn new skills. Like the eaglets, our nests may become uncomfortable as our soft lining, our old familiar life, is removed.

When someone we love dies, we grieve. Grieving is hard work, and we are vulnerable. We, like the eaglets, are challenged to cope, to personally grow, to develop new flying wings in our unfamiliar world.

From time to time, we may need to rely on our friends, family, and God to catch us when we fall—we may have to let them swoop under us and pick us up. Eventually, we, like the eaglets, will find that life can be good again. We, like the eaglets, will learn to spread our wings, catch an air current, and learn to fly.

Personalized Bereavement Care

Our team is introducing an additional layer of bereavement support for loved ones navigating grief. We recognize that time constraints and personal preferences can make attending in-person groups challenging, so we've created a flexible, online alternative.

This new option is a private Facebook group designed to offer comfort and connection whenever it's needed. Within the group, we'll share thoughtful articles and resources, and provide a safe, welcoming space for individuals to ask questions, seek guidance, or simply feel supported.

Scan the QR code to join this support group and connect with others who understand the journey of grief.



Meadowlark Hospice Spiritual Team

On August 1st, our Meadowlark Hospice chaplains came together for our annual in-service—a time that's always rich with laughter, love, and meaningful connection. Their insights into end-of-life care continue to be deeply valuable, and I'm constantly moved by their compassion and dedication to those seeking spiritual support.

This year, we placed special emphasis on the distinction between spiritual and religious care. Spiritual care is centered on helping individuals find inner peace—identifying sources of comfort and navigating personal struggles. Sometimes this involves prayer or religious rituals, but often it's simply the healing power of presence and a listening ear.

We also explored how to support individuals who already have a personal pastor. Our conversation highlighted the unique role of the hospice chaplain—not to replace existing spiritual relationships, but to complement them by offering specialized guidance and comfort during the end-of-life journey.

Thank you to the chaplains of Meadowlark Hospice!



(Pictured L to R) Larry Brock; Sister Janet LeDuc; Kathy Ouellette; and Julie Shields

Music Charms the Soul

The Profound Power of Music in Our Lives and Final Moments

Music holds an extraordinary place in our lives—it speaks to the soul in ways we often don't fully understand. Just this past Sunday, while sitting in church, a hymn transported me to a joyful memory from my childhood. As the congregation began singing "Love Lifted Me," I was suddenly back in the pew beside my grandpa, listening to his strong, beautiful voice fill the sanctuary.

One of the most cherished gifts I received after his passing was a CD of him singing hymns. It's something I can play whenever I need comfort or simply want to feel close to him again. That CD has become a balm for my anxious heart—a way to have "grandpa time" when I'm missing him most.

And then there's "What a Wonderful World." Every time it plays, I melt into a puddle of emotion, instantly transported to my wedding day, remembering how breathtakingly beautiful that moment was.

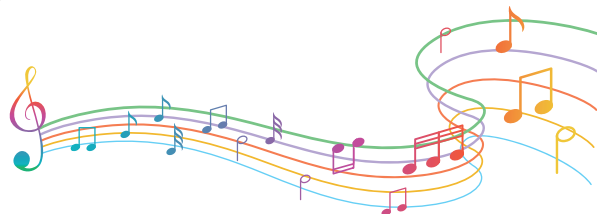
Music at the End of Life: A Gentle Companion

Incorporating music into end-of-life care can offer profound peace and comfort. Whether it's playing a loved one's favorite songs on a radio, phone, or TV, or softly singing hymns at the bedside of someone who can no longer respond, music becomes a tender bridge between hearts.

Talking about music with someone nearing the end of their journey can be a meaningful and loving conversation. It's a chance to discover the melodies that shaped their life—and to carry those songs forward as treasured memories.

In those final moments, the presence of music can leave behind a lasting imprint—a beautiful echo of love, connection, and peace.

*Love lifted me, Love lifted me, When nothing else could help,
Love lifted me; Love lifted me, Love lifted me,
When nothing else could help, Love lifted me.*



Hospice Gifts, Grateful Family and Memorial Gifts

Meadowlark Hospice gratefully acknowledges the hospice gifts and memorials.

Hospice Gifts

Harold & Delila Metz

Memorial & Grateful Family Gifts

Norman Danielsen

Karen Heavner

Wendy Genereux

Friends and Family of Wendy Genereux

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Dr. Bill & Mildred Smith

Steve & Kathy Anderson

Willis "Ray" Vizner

John & Christa Vizner



Grateful Family Program

Our Grateful Family Program provides a meaningful way for you to say 'thank you' by sharing your personal experience with Meadowlark Hospice. In addition to sharing your story, you can help other families create lasting memories by making a gift in honor of your experience. Your contribution ensures that we can continue offering end of life care to patients and their families.

The Gift of Presence: Why Hospice Needs Volunteers Like You

In the quiet moments of life's final chapter, something extraordinary happens—love deepens, memories resurface, and the smallest gestures become profoundly meaningful. Hospice care is not just about medical support; it's about compassion, dignity, and connection. And volunteers are at the heart of that mission.

Why Volunteer with Hospice?

Hospice volunteers offer something no medication can: human presence. Whether it's sitting beside someone in silence, holding a hand, sharing stories, or playing a favorite song, volunteers bring comfort in deeply personal ways. You don't need medical training—just a caring heart and a willingness to be there.

Join Us in Making a Meaningful Impact

Our hospice team is currently seeking compassionate volunteers in the **Belleville, Clyde, Leonardville, and Frankfort** areas. While we welcome volunteers across all our service regions, these communities are especially in need of helping hands and caring hearts.

If you're searching for those powerful moments where your presence can truly make a difference, we invite you to become part of our volunteer team. Whether it's offering companionship, sharing music, or simply being there, your time can bring comfort and peace to those nearing life's final chapter.

Flexible Commitment, Personalized Service

We understand that everyone's schedule is different. That's why your time commitment is entirely based on your availability. You'll also have the flexibility to serve one or more patients at a time, depending on what works best for you.



Call 785.632.2225 or
Email: JMarch@ccmcks.org

**MAKE A
DIFFERENCE**

Volunteer Education In-Service

SECOND Monday of each month	11:00 a.m. Republic County - Courtland United Methodist Church - 308 Main St
SECOND Monday of each month	1:00 p.m. Cloud County - Concordia Sister Susan Stoeber's Home - 443 W 18th St
THIRD Monday of each month	11:00 a.m. Clay County - Clay Center Meadowlark Hospice - 709 Liberty St
THIRD Tuesday of each month	9:30 a.m. Washington County - Washington Washington County Courthouse - 214 C St
THIRD Tuesday of each month	Noon Marshall County - Marysville Marysville Methodist Church - 1500 N St

Bereavement Groups

Serving Northeast Kansas

Join us for one of our
bereavement groups.

Learn to Live
Life After Loss

Washington
2nd Tuesday
12:00 pm

This group meets at the KSDS office. We share a pizza together or you may bring your own lunch to eat while we meet. This group is led by KayLynn Mead, social worker.

Clay Center
2nd Tuesday
4:30 pm

This group meets at Meadowlark Hospice. This group is led by KayLynn Mead, social worker.

Belleville
3rd Thursday
Call For Time

This group meets at the Belleville United Methodist Church. This group is led by Stephanie Garrison, social worker.

Marysville
4th Thursday
4:00 pm

This group meets at Community Memorial Healthcare in the South Plaza. This group is led by Jennifer Meier, social worker.

*Call about community bereavement groups in
Concordia 785-243-4454



Please call our office at
785-632-2225 to confirm dates
or for more information!



Phone: 785-632-2225
Fax: 785-632-3557
Email: mhospice@ccmcks.org
Web: meadowlarkhospice.org

We are available to present programs to area organizations!



Donation Form

☐ Please contact me. I would like to share my testimonial or story.

DONOR INFORMATION

Name: _____

Street Address: _____ Phone: _____

City, State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

THIS GIFT IS: ☐ Outright Donation to Meadowlark Hospice

☐ In honor of: ☐ In memory of:

Name: _____ Occasion: _____

☐ Please send notification of my gift to:

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State: _____ Zip: _____

☐ Include the donation amount. ☐ Do not include the donation amount.

☐ Include my name in the notification. ☐ Please acknowledge my gift in the newsletter.

☐ Enclosed is my check payable to Meadowlark Hospice. ☐ Anonymous gift.

☐ I donated online at: 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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