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Member Spotlight

Hospice of Larimer County here to serve families

To us, hospice care is not about how you die - It is about how you live - how you live each moment to the fullest extent possible.

If you have not lost a loved one, you may not know about the many services and gentle care Hospice of Larimer County provides. For those who have lost a loved one, hospice was probably there to provide care to the dying person or grief counseling to the family.

The word hospice was originally used to describe a place of refuge for people on a difficult journey. Its current meaning is not that different today. When a



patient takes on the journey in the later stages of life, it affects the entire family unit.

The hospice mission is unique, offering pain and symptom management as well as emotional and spiritual care of dying people and their families. Hospice care is a philosophy of care that accepts dying as a natural part of life. When death is inevitable, hospice seeks neither to hasten, nor postpone it, but to provide comfort care, and enhance the quality of life.

Hospice care is a patient and family-centered approach that includes, at a minimum, a team of doctors, nurses, certified nurses' aides, social workers, counselors, Chaplains, and trained volunteers. They work collaboratively focusing on the patient's needs, whether they are physical, emotional, or spiritual. The goal is to help keep the patient as comfortable as possible, with loved ones nearby.

Since 1979, Hospice of Larimer County has served the community as a local, non profit organization. They have provided physical, emotional and spiritual care to more than 6,000 terminally ill people, their families and their caregivers.

"It is truly a pleasure to be a part of such a caring organization in a community where the people support the hospice philosophy. We are currently in our 30th year of serving the Loveland/Fort Collins area and the public support has been wonderful," said Gail Neben, community relations representative.

Hospice care is for any person with an advanced medical condition and a life expectancy of six months or less if the illness runs its normal course. Although hospice care began caring primarily for cancer patients, today all life-threatening illnesses and conditions are included in hospice care.

Hospice patients and their families are cared for by an experienced team of compassionate professionals specializing in care that includes medical, emotional, spiritual and financial services. It is available in almost all settings. A care team comes to each patient's residence - wherever that might be. Most care is provided in homes, but care is also provided in skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, hospitals, any place that would be called "home."

Hospice patients reside at home, at a caregiver's home, a long-term care facility, or an inpatient care center. They bring services to the home to assist the family members and friends providing care for the patient.

Hospice of Larimer County also operates a care center located on the third floor of McKee Medical Center. The seven rooms reflect a homelike atmosphere and are staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for patients who require more acute care.

Another role of hospice is grief counseling to help people get through this very difficult time of bereavement.

While grief is a normal response to loss, it can literally turn a person's world upside down. Grief can be a life-changing experience. Emotions, thought processes, behaviors, and physical well-being are all impacted by grief. Most people who suffer a loss experience one or more of the following: anger, guilt,

anxiety, depression, fatigue, confusion, inability to concentrate, change in appetite, sleep disturbances, physical complaints, sudden mood swings, or lack of energy.

Grief touches every person at some point in their lives. Grief support is important because it is about everyone. Hospice offers caring grief support and education for the entire community, including neighbors, co-workers, families and friends. The Pathways program provides community grief support, education and counseling as a part of the hospice mission. As the need for these services has grown, along with the region, the Pathways programs and new building, 305 Carpenter Road, were developed to allow for an expansion of services. In 2007, the Pathways programs served more than 5,000 participants in their various events, classes and counseling sessions.

Hospice of Larimer County designed an educational program on grief and loss especially for schools to help children and teens cope with loss. 'Forgotten Mourners' helps teachers, counselors and other school staff gain a better understanding of the processes of grief and loss as experienced by children and teens when a significant death loss has occurred.

Bereavement Services staff is available to provide in-service education, consultation and/or training to schools on issues of grief and loss. Grief support groups, co-facilitated by hospice staff and a school counselor, in the school setting are part of the services available.

It is not unusual for a bereaved child or teen to 'act out' their loss at home and at school. Changes in academic performance, difficulties getting along with others, sudden mood changes, regressive behaviors, or school phobia, are common grief responses. It is important for the adults in their lives to recognize these changes and to be willing to be that caring, supportive adult. For more information about the 'Forgotten Mourners' program, contact Janet Severance at 663-3500 or janet.severance@hlchospice.org.

All of Hospice of Larimer County's grief support groups provide a safe place, in the company of other grieving persons, to share, heal, and to grow. All hospice support groups are facilitated by professional

counselors. Individual counseling is arranged by appointment. To participate in a grief support group interested persons must pre-register. For additional information, fee schedules and to register, call Hospice of Larimer County at 663-3500.

Volunteers truly are at the heart of hospice care, providing support to patients, their families and HLC staff. There are few things more rewarding than offering your time and energy to help others. Hospice volunteers are trained to provide companionship and support for the patient and brief breaks for the caregivers. Perhaps the most important skill, however, is their ability to be 'good listeners.'

Today, more than 200 volunteers work in almost every department of Hospice of Larimer County. Some will stay with a patient and give the caregiver a much needed break, others will offer companionship and a listening ear, while others will help out behind the scenes working in the office or planning events.

Hospice volunteers donate their time because they find pleasure in helping others. They have been touched by hospice with their own families and wish to give back. Other volunteers report that they are motivated by a desire to give something back, but soon find that the spiritual and emotional rewards far outweigh the time and caring they contribute.

Persons interested in working with patients and families need to attend a volunteer training. Hospice of Larimer County offers the training twice a year, in the spring and fall. The training is required for Patient Care, Grief Support and Hospice Care Center volunteers. Many call the training, a 'life-changing experience.' Workshops and continuing educational opportunities are available throughout the year for HLC volunteers.

Hospice of Larimer County is currently in need of more volunteers for the Loveland area. Anyone who wishes to enhance the compassionate care for

patients in Loveland by giving their time and energy can call the Volunteer Director, Sarah Van Etten at 663-3500 for more information.

In 2007, 293 local volunteers provided 12,696 total hours helping patients and families, and also providing needed help with fundraising events, clerical assistance, courier service, serving on the Board of Directors, and many more areas of dedicated service.

"All of the staff and volunteers of Hospice of Larimer County are dedicated and highly trained professionals who are very compassionate and caring individuals. They are here because they truly believe in the philosophy of hospice care," says Neben.

The organization also offers many classes and programs including *Grief in the Workplace*, *Surviving the Holidays When You're Grieving*, *Summer Grief Education Series*, *Explorations adult retreat*, *Kids, Horses and Healing*, *Memorial Services* (semi-annual, open to entire community), *Following Image: A Visual Exploration of Loss* an art-based support group, *Journey by Journaling* provides expressing grief by recording thoughts and feelings in a written form, *Newly Bereaved Group* provides support for grieving persons in the early months of surviving the loss of a loved one, *The Mourning After* provides adult grief support group to anyone who has experienced the death of a loved one, *On Our Own* is an ongoing, drop-in group open to widowed persons and is designed to offer mutual support, education, and coping strategies for grief, *Music Therapy* is the controlled use of elements and influences of music to meet the physical, psychosocial and spiritual needs of the client, and *Five Wishes* is the first living will that talks about your personal, emotional and spiritual needs as well as you medical wishes. There are many more classes and programs offered by Hospice of Larimer County.

The long-term survival of hospice in America depends on a public that is fully aware of the benefits of hospice care services. According to a survey conducted by the National Hospice Foundation, 75 percent of Americans do not know that hospice care can be provided in the home, and 90 percent did not realize that hospice care is a benefit of Medicare & Medicaid paid at 100 percent. However this survey also showed that Americans want the kind of end-of-life services offered through hospice care.

Staff is on call 24 hours around the clock, every day of the year. They will help answer questions over the telephone or make a visit if it is needed. To access care 24 hours a day, call our main number, 663-3500. When the office is not open, the phones will be answered by our answering service.

Abby's Signature Concert Series

In 1989, Abby French was born with severe developmental disabilities. Though her doctors gave her a life expectancy of only two years, Abby lived a 'long life' and died when she was 10 years old. Her circle of care givers included her family and friends, with invaluable support from Hospice of Larimer County and Respite Care.

Abby spent much of her day listening to music. In fact, music was one thing that seemed to bring her comfort. Over the years Abby's mother, Christy, a pianist, brought together many talented musicians to play for Abby. The music touched Abby in a special way and, in turn, Abby touched the lives of the musicians who gathered to play for her.

Abby's Signature Concert Series has been established in Abby's memory and is inspired by the belief that every life has a special purpose.

The concerts have become a wonderful opportunity for others to donate their time, talent and resources to helping children and families in our community.

All proceeds benefit Hospice of Larimer County and Respite Care.

Good Friday Concert

Friday, March 21, 10 a.m.
First Presbyterian Church, Fort Collins
Donations will be accepted at the concert

Our Mission

Honoring every moment of life, Hospice of Larimer County provides compassionate, excellent, comprehensive care for those who have an advanced medical condition and those who are grieving.

Members in the news

Premier LifeStyle Realty adds to their team

Sue Wedryk believes that attitude is the key to success, and Sue says her attitude is the key to her success. Warm, outgoing and sincere, Wedryk is passionate about helping people. A teacher and counselor for 35 years overlaps with her real estate career of 22 years. She has managed and trained dozens of other Realtors. Her resume includes writing training manuals, articles and newspaper columns, leading professional enhancement groups, as well as participating in numerous community projects. She has served as president of both the Loveland Berthoud Association of Realtors and was voted Realtor of the Year in 2001 by her peers. She lives by the motto, "Your Satisfaction Defines My Success." She can be reached at 227-3058.

Marjie Tessean has been a part of the real estate community since 1995 when she entered into her Realtor career in northern Colorado. Because the real estate industry is becoming more sophisticated and challenging every day, people need a professional

that understands the industry and is positioned to stay ahead of the game. With her sales experience, knowledge, continuing education and involvement in our local residential and business arena, Tessean is dedicated to helping her customers achieve their goals. Tessean's motto is "Helping Nice People (like yourselves) Find Great Homes." She can be reached at 217-1986.

Rose Netto has been working in the construction industry for the last six years but has been around it all her life. She is co-owner of Netto's Construction, a full service general contractor specializing in manufactured homes. Her role in the company led her to be very familiar with the county building and planning department, Colorado Division of Water Resources, Land Use Issues and many different building codes. Netto has been very fortunate to see many of her clients' projects from the time they purchased their land to the time of receiving their C.O. "After being involved with many real estate trans-



Marjie Tessean Rose Netto Sue Wedryk

actions over the years, I decided to pursue a lifelong goal in real estate," she said.

Netto is familiar with the market in northern Colorado. She has been a buyer and seller in these changing times and understands the challenges with the market today. You can reach her at 227-8105.

Premier LifeStyle Realty is a local company with 26 Broker Associates and Administrative staff. Premier started in April 2004 with associates that have been in the real estate industry for over 30 years. Premier LifeStyle associates are very active in their community and want to make northern Colorado the best place to live. Premier LifeStyle Realty is one of the top real estate companies in northern Colorado.

Addison Avenue Federal Credit Union opens new Loveland branch

Addison Avenue Federal Credit Union opened a convenient new branch in Loveland. Located in Van De Water Plaza just off Highway 34 (E. Eisenhower Blvd.), the new branch opened for business on February 13.

There will be an official grand opening celebration on March 8. The grand opening will be open to the public and will feature major prize offerings.

"We are excited to complete the move to our new home," said Kathy Erickson, Addison Avenue's branch manager. "The increased convenience and added space will help us keep up with the growing Addison Avenue member base in the Loveland area." Addison Avenue serves more than 8,000 members in the Loveland area. Because of its growing member



base, the credit union decided there was a need for an easier-to-reach location than the current two job-site Loveland locations.

Approximately a dozen employees will be moving from the current 815 14th St. S.W. site to the new branch. The other Addison Avenue Loveland location, on-site at Agilent Technologies' 900 S. Taft Ave. address, will be unaffected by the move.



ADDISON AVENUE
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

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