

Hospice of the Plains celebrates love and care

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

November is National Hospice and Palliative Care Month, and hospices across the country are reaching out to raise awareness about important care issues for people coping with life-limiting illness.

“Every year, more than 1.4 million people living with a life-limiting illness receive care from hospice and palliative care providers in this country,” said J. Donald Schumacher, president and CEO of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. “These highly-trained professionals don’t only provide quality medical care. They work to make sure patients and families find dignity, respect and love during life’s most difficult journey.”

Hospice is more than traditional health care. Hospice and palliative care programs provide pain management, symptom control, psychosocial support and spiritual care to patients and their families when a cure is not possible.

Hospice and palliative care combines the highest level of quality medical care with the emotional and spiritual support that families need most when facing the end of life.

As Hospice of the Plains volunteer Jim Coulter noted, “It started 11 years ago when I was losing my wife Ellen after a lengthy and difficult battle with breast cancer. I had been able to see her through, but was struggling to let her go. It took friends, who were Hospice volunteers, to help me understand what was good and natural in the last days of the dying process. It took seven assigned team members, and countless others behind the scene, to do it right so Ellen could die with dignity, having spiritual support, and without undue pain.

“I said then, and say now, that I can never repay that act of kindness and grace. It took a while, and some other difficult experiences, to know I could start to repay by becoming a Hospice volunteer, which I completed this past winter.

“Do you know what it’s like to associate with highly trained, highly motivated, of kindness and heart, yet of strongest of being people of all ages? I do, because these are my friends I have come to know and work with at Hospice of the Plains. It doesn’t take a specific skill or talent because there is something for everyone with the comfort level he or she can give; all it really

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takes is a loving heart and some time spent because being there is the most important gift a friend can share with a patient and family.

“Please join me as a Hospice volunteer. It will change your life, as it has changed mine and allow you to grow as a person in spirit and commitment.

“No one should go through the dying process alone, or in fear, or in pain. You will have the glorious opportunity to walk a friend to the edge, knowing you made their life richer and yours more filled.”

Hospice of the Plains is committed to bringing Hospice services to anyone living with a terminal illness throughout northeastern Colorado.

For more information about Hospice, call 970-332-4116 or 970-526-7901 or visit their website at www.hospiceoftheplains.org.