

Helping Hands



Friends of Hospice

Dedicated to the quality of life

Volume 20, Edition III October 2015 Supporting Hospice, End-of-Life Care, and Grief Support in Whitman County

Celebrating Caregivers: The Journey of a Lifetime

The Journey of Caregiving: Rooted In Our Beginnings

As young people we watch our parents, our aunts, our uncles, our neighbors caring for the newborn, the sick, the injured, the dying. We experience first hand, their caring for us.

We witness the giving and the receiving that comes in these moments. Sometimes in the healing of

The lifelong process of caregiving, is the ultimate link between caregivers of all ages.

You and I are not just in a phase we will outgrow. This life—birth, death, and everything in between...the care continuum is the cycle of life turning full circle in each of our lives.

And what we learn when we spoon-feed our babies will echo in

the body, other times in the healing of the heart.

When young we see this as the natural course of life, someone taking care of us. As we mature, we find this gift of caring for us is something we are asked to extend to others—perhaps a younger brother or sister, or a grandparent.

The ebb and flow is simple: as we are nurtured, so we nurture others.

The Journey of Caregiving: Coming Full Circle

As our lives evolve, we often find ourselves occupied with the busyness of everyday life. We're off to work and college, buying a

home, establishing relationships, friendships, and families. We learn to care for our children when they are sick.

Then one day there's an unexpected shift, and we find ourselves caring for our mother-in-law with whom we've shared the deep love and affection of our spouse. Or maybe it's our very ill spouse, a sibling, a parent, or our child. Then, the feeling is familiar and we can embrace it.

We don't always know the course of this new journey. We may find people shy away from us, not sure what to say or do for us; perhaps not knowing what to say or do when with our loved one. This can be a time of uncertainty and confusion.

"Let your wise & gentle inner voice guide you in your caregiving. There's no 'perfect' way to care.

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Caring for the Caregiver:

What Can I Do?

So often we ask ourselves, "What can I do?" This is not a rhetorical question, but more of an acknowledgement we aren't sure what to do, or how to do it.

What we can do is bring the world of daily living to the caregiver and the individual. A connection that is often missing. Caregivers tell us:

- ◇ Visit—the caregiver, the family member. Talk about daily life, talk about dreams, but mostly listen...from your heart with no judgment.
- ◇ Take a meal over.
- ◇ Take them out for a meal.
- ◇ Offer to provide respite for a couple of hours.
- ◇ Mow the lawn.
- ◇ Pick up groceries.
- ◇ Rent a good movie, bring a pizza, and watch the movie together.
- ◇ Shovel the snow.

- ◇ Pick up the mail in the winter.
- ◇ Listen.
- ◇ Encourage.
- ◇ Become a Senior Chore volunteer, a volunteer driver for COAST, or deliver meals on wheels.

Caregiver Support Resources

Rural Resources (CLC) Community Living Connections

Rural Resources provides aging and disabled adults and their caregivers with information, assistance, and referrals to services and supports to help people remain independent in their homes and communities for as long as possible.

CLC and In-home Care Case Management provides personal attention to individuals and their families focused on maintaining the highest level of health and independence possible. Comprehensive assessments and options counseling are available to develop individual plans of care.

Family Caregiver Support Program is designed to help unpaid caregivers and those they care for maintain a positive caregiving situation for as long as possible. Support is tailored for the individual caregiver. Respite may be available.

The Kinship Caregiver Support

Program provides information, assistance grandparents and other relatives caring for minor relatives. They also provide short-term financial help for clothes, food, car seats, beds and other needs.

Whitman County Rural Resources
509-332-0365 or 1-800-873-5889

Pullman Community Council on Aging

Advocating for seniors since 1973, this non-profit organization provides Meals on Wheels, Senior Chore Services, and foot clinics in Pullman, and the Local Guide to Senior Services in Pullman and Whitman County. www.pullmancoa.org.

Council on Aging and Human Services (COA&HS)

Established in 1976 to serve throughout Whitman County, COA&HS offers weekly community meal sites, food pantries, and monthly commodity distributions throughout the county. In addition COAST offers transportation to medical appointments, shopping, and other basic service needs for elders, disabled, low income and children. www.coa-hs.org or 1-800-809-3351



Celebrating Caregivers: The Journey of a Lifetime Continued from Page One

Perfection isn't the goal.
Love is."

"Who do you know providing care for someone else? What one thing could you do to support them

Little by little those who've been there ahead of us start to arrive at

our door. They bring experience, knowledge, a kind word, and resources to consider. They are our neighbors, our faith community, our family, a social worker, a healthcare provider. Their sage advice, wisdom, and hope are welcomed. They celebrate our everyday successes, they celebrate our wisdom, they celebrate us reaching out for help.

We discover we are not alone.

We are not the first. We will not be the last. But we know we can do this now, in this day, in this time. We realize the gentle nature of letting go of this earth. Along the way, there comes a time when we sense the final journey is beginning. We remember back to those ahead of us who have taught us this



In the spotlight...Board Member Rosalie Harms

Learning, teaching, giving... summarizes Friends of Hospice board member Rosalie Harms.

Like so many of us, often the first time we learn about something is when we truly need it. This was Rosalie's experience with hospice. She and husband Jerry had been lovingly caring for her mother in their home when hospice services were offered. During this tender time of serving as her mother transitioned from life, Rosalie and Jerry found the support of hospice invaluable.

From that experience Rosalie became a true champion for educating people on the benefits of hospice—the comfort and care provided for

the individual, the support and encouragement for the family caregivers, and the chance to be fully open and present to the gift of saying goodbye. She readily shares that hospice does not equal dying, rather it equals living well.

Rosalie spent her entire career teaching children lessons of a lifetime. Starting with 1st grade at Edison School, 2nd Grade at Sunnyside, Rosalie ended a 34-year career with the Pullman School District at Franklin. She not only finds the students from her first classes coming back to share their lives with her, the children of her former students come back too. From 1976-1978 Rosalie and Jerry taught at



Board Member Rosalie Harms
the International School, in Manila, Philippines.

Since retirement in 2005, Rosalie enjoys a full life of giving to her community. She is a distinguished event planner, providing her expertise for small and large, private and public events. She is a member of the Grand Avenue Committee, the Pullman Historical Society, the Friends of Gladish Advisory Committee, the City of Pullman



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The Many Faces of Hospice

Friends of Hospice

Gladish Community Building, Suite 117
115 NW State Street - PO Box 484
Pullman, WA 99163
509-332-4414 Office/Fax 509-338-5792 Cell
contact@friendsofhospice.net
www.friendsofhospice.net
www.facebook.com/friendsofhospice
Executive Director: Annie Pillers

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Reflections

Favorites of Rosalie Harms'

"Friendship is always a sweet responsibility; never an opportunity."

Kahil Gibran

"The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the greatest