

Helping Hands



Friends of Hospice

Dedicated to the quality of life

Volume 21, Edition 1 | May 2016 Supporting Hospice, End-of-Life Care, and Grief Support in Whitman County

The Journey Home: Reflections of a Family

The Journey Begins: A New Home

Donald White, born and raised in Michigan, moved to Whitman County in 2011 to be near his family, Mike and Sharon White, after his wife Lorraine died. It's an honor to share his story as told by his family.

Don's first years after the move

were spent with his family in

Palouse. Mike cherished the long talks he and his dad shared in the shop while Mike worked on projects. In that ordinary of ordinary settings, Don

would open up in ways Mike had not known before. He would come to the shop and relax into conversation. Two men, with a shared past, now sharing the rhythm of everyday.

Sharon treasured making their home Don's home. With

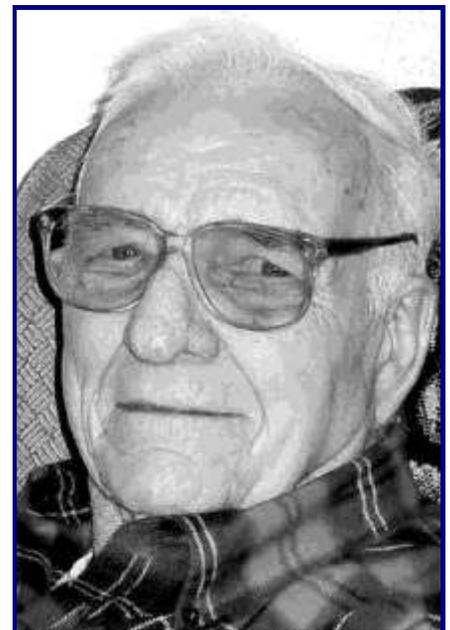
thoughtful intention she welcomed him into their daily lives, not treating him as a guest, but rather as a family member. "We worked at our best keeping Dad's dignity for him. He had chores, he wasn't a guest. We wanted him to feel he wasn't just visiting. We wanted to respect him." And what developed was a respectful intimacy. He had his chores to do, kitchen table discussions to be had, and calendars to be coordinated.

Witnessed Tears
"It took time to realize we just needed to be there and be calm for him. Trying to fix it just

The Journey Continues: New Friends

After a time in Palouse, Don moved to a senior living community in

Pullman. Mike and Sharon had always known their dad to be social. Mike described his dad as readily developing friends when he was working; often enjoying a bantering style friendship. Don quickly made friends, especially with a dear man, John. When he did have occasion to need care



Donald L. White

away from the senior community, he would always say, "I'm going home" upon his return.

Mike and Sharon took great joy in this new found home for their dad. They loved witnessing the deep friendships and connections he developed. Those connections were so close that Mike and Sharon made friends with his friends, and those friendships continue today.

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Hospice Service: Comfort and Connection

*Reflections of three who serve:
A personal conversation.*

What drew you to hospice?

- ◆ My grandmother, who could not speak English, was on hospice. They spoke Spanish to her. They did an amazing job for her and for us. I was inspired from that moment.
- ◆ My grandmother was on hospice. I was her caregiver. I was a nurse's aide and in nursing school at the time. I promised my grandmother if I ever had the opportunity I would go into hospice.
- ◆ My best friend's dad had cancer and was dying. As a nurse, she called me and I was able to help her and her dad. I was there when he died. In that experience I realized I was comfortable serving in that intense time for patients and families.

What is the most rewarding part of your work in hospice?

- The connection with patients and families.
- Giving comfort, palliation and pain relief.

"Caring has the gift
of making the
ordinary special."

George R. Bach

- Making a difference in a visit.
- Gaining their trust.
- Hearing their life stories.
- Helping people through what can be a scary time in life for them.
- Helping them realize how important comfort is at that point.

What do you want people to know about hospice service?

It can be hard times having someone you love passing away. **You don't have to go through this alone.** Hospice can be there for the patient and the family. **You don't have to suffer.** You can be comforted.

All the services and disciplines hospice offers - Volunteers, Chaplains, Living Legacy, Social Work, Bereavement, and follow-up. Everyone from the team brings something unique. People often think hospice is only for the last two weeks. There are so many benefits we can provide if we can come in earlier.

When we come in early we get to know the families better and can provide more to them. Hospice can help with so many different things along the journey. The whole team is available to help. **It's a very healing and positive experience.**

Hearing from the doctor that a person is dying and has 6 months or less to live can be frightening. Hospice can help explore those



feelings as they arise.

Walking Beside Mr. Don White

- ◆ Mr. White always talked about his children, and living with them. It brought him great comfort to talk about them when he **couldn't be with them.** He loved his kids.

They were there when he passed away. It was special for all of them being there together. I was able to be there for him and for them. It was a privilege for me. We witnessed that he was now at peace, and the relief for his family.

- ◆ I remember Mr. White's smile and how his eyes would light up. We had a fun and funny connection immediately. He had a really nice pair of high hiking boots from Veteran Affairs (VA) and we talked about his shoes. As a former senior nurse for the VA we had a wonderful connection from that moment forward.

The Journey Home: Reflections of a Family

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The staff would say "your dad told me..." often things he hadn't expressed

to them. This brought such comfort to his family, knowing he was reaching out, sharing his life, voicing his thoughts with others.

"Angels... that hospice are made of. They saw his most vulnerable side. He trusted them."
Mike White

The Journey Within: Gifts Along The Way

So many gifts along the way. Sharon remembered how deeply touched she was by Don's gratitude and appreciation for the things she and Mike did for him. The typical family things...washing his clothes, hanging them in a certain way; Sharon, a vegetarian, working hard to

cook a delicious meat dish; Mike managing his dad's bills. Sharon: "He would say, 'Thank you so much for doing that for me.' He was always grateful."

Sharon: "Taylor was the gift we gave him." Don and Lorraine spent 6 weeks each year with them. They enjoyed getting to know their granddaughter, Taylor, Mike and Sharon's daughter. Sharon: "Last Christmas was tremendous when Taylor visited and they shared a remarkable holiday." He was so proud of her and delighted in sharing his family with his friends

In the spotlight..Thrifty Grandmothers of Colfax Serving Since



L to R Back row: Gayle Buri, Bonnie Smith, Viv Nafziger, Front row: Alice Allenbach, Jean Anderson, Ann Emerson, Sandy McAdams, Shirley Simmons, Goldie Foss, Dianne Appel, Jill Miller,

The Thrifty Grandmothers of Colfax have been serving those in need continuously since 1956. From inception, members have always been grandmothers, with the exception of one time.

Current officers are President Goldie Foss, Vice-President Ann Emerson, Secretary Dianne Appel, and Treasurer Shirley Simmons.

The club has a proud history of meeting the special needs of individuals, families, organizations, and the community. From scholarships for high school graduates, special classroom and student needs, individual and family heating and electricity bills, swimming pool passes, to Stuff the Bus, Thrifty Grandmothers have been there. Individuals

and the staff at the senior living community. and organizations are asked to submit a letter of request. being part of a well-respected organization is a privilege. And with the amazing privilege of work they need all 35. Our club pastings are held these a month, but that's only the beginning. Members serve to others. You inspire us. We are deeply grateful and honored to be a recipient of your generosity.

The store is open, sort items, get new merchandise ready for display, and special projects. The store, located on Main Street in downtown Colfax, is open Tuesday thru Friday 10-4, and Saturday 10-3.

Donations, including small appliances and furniture easily handled by one person, are always welcome.

One of the most rewarding



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The Many Faces of Hospice

Friends of Hospice

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Reflections

In Honor of Those We Serve

“One of the most important things you can do on this earth is to let people know they are not alone.”

Alder Shannon