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SEASONS HOSPICE

Provides individualized and compassionate care, education and support for the dying and others who have experienced loss.

– SEASONS HOSPICE –

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OUR UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO PATIENT CARE DURING THE PANDEMIC

By Beverly Haynes, RN, Executive Director



There has been nothing usual about 2020 as individuals, families, businesses and governments have faced one of the most challenging times on record due to the COVID-19 virus.

The pandemic has made its mark on Seasons Hospice, too, as we strive to provide the highest quality care and support possible for our patients and their families while keeping our staff's health and well-being front of mind. During this difficult period, we have been reminded repeatedly of the goodness and generosity of people who have shown us how much Seasons Hospice is valued within our community and region.

When we sent out the clarion call for homemade masks in March, over 100 volunteer seamstresses responded, donating hundreds of masks for our staff. The Rochester Area Foundation approved an emergency grant to underwrite the rising costs we incurred for personal protective equipment (PPE) for frontline workers. And, when our Center for Grief Education and Support (CGES) was facing increased demand for grief support services related to the upheaval in people's lives and the added sense of grief and loss COVID causes, many of you answered our request for a donation to help fund our Center's operations. The outpouring of support we have received has been tremendously gratifying.

Building on a legacy of nearly 25 years, Seasons Hospice has done our utmost to provide compassionate and skilled care to those at the end of life. We serve all individuals who seek hospice care from us, regardless of their COVID-19 status, and our staff are devoted to each patient. Individuals who reside in their own homes or at our hospice house can

still access the full range of services we provide. Congregate living facilities have needed to restrict outside access to their residents in order to contain the spread of the coronavirus. But, wherever we are allowed to, our clinical staff is there to care for our patients in facilities. In some cases, we have been the conduit for family members who cannot visit their loved one in a facility so they rely on our staff to deliver notes or provide them with detailed information about their loved one's condition. It has been a heartbreaking time for so many and we feel privileged to be able to help families navigate their end-of-life journey made all the more distressing by the pandemic.

We have protocols in place for mitigating the contraction of the COVID-19 virus among our staff and patients. Additionally, we are in frequent contact with officials from such organizations as Mayo Clinic, Minnesota Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. Thus, our leadership team receives up-to-date information on best practices related to virus containment and care of our patients.

While these are trying times, Seasons Hospice has not wavered from our mission of providing compassionate care, education and support for the dying and those who have experienced loss. No one knows when the pandemic will end but we will continue to care for individuals at the end of life while supporting their families with the same level of dedication and commitment that has been our hallmark since our founding in 1996. It is our hope that as a community, we will emerge from this crisis with a renewed sense of compassion and charity for all.

SEASONS HOSPICE WELCOMES NEW NURSE PRACTITIONER TO THE STAFF



Seasons Hospice is pleased to announce the hiring of Heidi Seaberg, Nurse Practitioner (NP), on April 1, to complement our clinical team. Heidi's skills as a NP provide an additional level of expertise within our medical team. She graduated from Luther College with a nursing degree in 1998 and completed the Adult-Gerontology NP graduate program from Winona State in 2014 and the Mayo Clinic NP Residency in 2014. Prior to coming to Seasons, she worked in Community Internal Medicine at Mayo Family Clinic Southeast for six years as a NP. Heidi's dedication to hospice started years ago. "I have had a life-long passion for our geriatric patients and hospice. My love of hospice started at age 18 when I started volunteering with Hospice of North Iowa. My grandparents all died with hospice," she said. Heidi started her career at Mayo Clinic, working first

in Internal Medicine and later on the hospice floor at St. Mary's Hospital. For a short time, she worked part-time at the Seasons Hospice House.

A native of Garner, Iowa, Heidi and her husband have two teenage children who occupy a good portion of her non-working hours. Heidi stated, "I am thrilled to return to Seasons Hospice as your first nurse practitioner and work with a very talented, caring multidisciplinary team who provide exceptional care to our patients at the end of life. I appreciate the ability to provide holistic care and journey with individuals and their families in such an intimate, sacred time of their life."

Welcome, Heidi, to our team!

One Last Fishing Tale – A Sentimental Journey

Roger Jenson wanted to go fishing one last time. He and his wife always loved Lake City and Lake Pepin, so their daughter, Rhonda, decided this would be the perfect place for his last fishing trip. For several years Seasons Hospice has collaborated with Mayo Clinic Ambulance to offer special "last outings" for our patients with family members in attendance, accompanied by a Mayo Clinic EMT and ambulance driver who donate their services.

Chris Humble, Seasons Hospice Director of Volunteer Services, spoke to Roger's daughter about our "Sentimental Journey" program and Rhonda thought this would be a wonderful way to fulfill his dream. Chris then called Lake City Boat Club & Rentals to make the arrangements, expecting there would be a charge for the four-hour pontoon boat rental. Once Chris explained the purpose of the call to owner Dave Breitenfeld, he graciously donated the use of a brand-new Bennington pontoon boat and offered to be the captain for the outing.

And so, July 13 was Roger's big day. His Seasons Hospice nurse Breanne, arrived at Roger's place extra early to make sure he was ready to depart for the Lake City Marina via Mayo Clinic Ambulance for an 8:30 a.m. excursion. Roger's three children, Rhonda, Matt and Ryan, were with him on the boat. Additionally, Seasons Hospice Marine veteran volunteer Jim Crawley, made the trip to Lake City to present Roger, a fellow Marine, with Marine patches and stripes Jim had framed for Roger. As the boat left the harbor, Jim offered Roger a final salute.

After the fishing excursion was over, the family said it was a day they will never forget. We wish to thank Paramedics Kevin Steever and Curtis Alexander for transporting Roger via Mayo Clinic Ambulance and Dave Breitenfeld for his generosity in donating the boat, the fuel and his time. Special thanks as well, to Jim Crawley for his volunteer service.



Roger viewing Marine patches



Roger and group on pontoon boat

SEASONS HOSPICE GALA IS GOING VIRTUAL!

While we will miss seeing you in person, we are looking forward to your virtual attendance at the **15th Annual A Live & Love Affair Virtual Gala – "Home is Where the Heart Is"** on **Saturday, November 21**. As always, it will be a fun evening with unique touches, all enjoyed from the comfort of your own home this year. Stay tuned for more details!



– GRIEF DURING THE PANDEMIC –

On March 13th of this year, Governor Tim Walz declared a Peacetime Emergency for the state of Minnesota in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Since that time, not only our state, but our world, has been reshaped through change and loss causing a universal grief. Within the Center for Grief Education and Support (CGES), we have heard stories of families unable to be with a loved one since March because they are in a long-term care facility and the facility was locked down. Others could not be with their person in the days prior to or at the time of death because of visiting restrictions imposed due to the coronavirus. The very precautions that have been put in place to protect the most vulnerable have also caused great sadness. We have heard that some loved ones did not die specifically of COVID-19, but from causes related to the loneliness they experienced in isolation.

For those whose loved one died, a traditional funeral service may not have been possible or needed to be delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions. Many griever feel as if society has forgotten not only their loved one, but them as well. One such person said “I couldn’t honor my parent in a meaningful way (at time of death) and when I am able to, will it just reopen a wound beginning to heal?” Others have commented that friends and neighbors have been unable to bring traditional comfort foods over due to fear of spreading the virus. “Hugs are a thing of the past, or given hesitantly.” Another person said “Have you ever tried to cry and wipe your nose wearing a mask?”

So how do we move forward in our grief? How do we acknowledge it and the grief of those around us? How do we re-establish a sense of community rather than isolation? Unlike a natural disaster or an attack, we have been pushed apart rather than drawn together by our communal shock and grief.

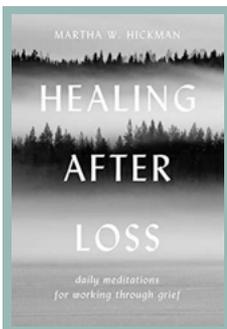
The CGES will be offering a virtual grief group to our community twice per month to facilitate our community coming together to mourn the losses we have experienced due to the pandemic. All of our losses, including death, jobs, community and really, the world as we knew it.

This forum will provide a chance to come together in a safe way and share our stories. To learn from one another. To support and encourage one another. To consider what hope looks like to us as unique individuals. If you are interested in joining one of these groups, please contact us at cgcs@seasonshospice.org to register.

Please remember, you are not alone.

BOOK REVIEWS

The most popular books on our bookshelves right now are two meditation books: *Healing After Loss* by Martha Whitmore Hickman, and *Grief One Day at a Time* by Alan Wolfelt. Both are written as very short, applicable, daily meditations on grief. If you are wondering what you can do for a friend who is grieving, a gift of one of these books could be a great idea.



Seasons Hospice is excited to announce the public display of the “GRIEF UNMASKED” exhibit at the Rochester Art Center, now until November 1, 2020, featuring masks made by Rochester Public School students during in-school grief group sessions.

This is a collaboration between the Center for Grief Education and Support, Rochester Art Center and John Kaul, photographer and documentarian. Special thanks to all for helping to bring this to fruition as well as to Cathy Wurzer of MPR and TPT’s Almanac for her interest in and support of this project.

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Grief Unmasked

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