



THE SPIRIT

Hospice and Palliative Care of the Wood River Valley Newsletter

February 2021

SCRIBBLES



I have a habit of using things until they are broken or absolutely gone; little things, like hair ties, lotion, and writing utensils. If I lose a pen, I will search the house until I find it instead of just grabbing a different pen. Now, if you would kindly ignore any mental alarm bells that may be sounding at my neurotic behavior, I bring this up because there is a pencil on my desk that has been here since I started. I have used it for over 5 years now. I use this pencil to write on my large desk calendar that charts meetings and

nursing schedules and patients being visited. It records anything that has a high chance of needing to be rescheduled or changed; things that do not warrant an entry in ink, which in my line of work is most things. I have a separate eraser that has long been the pencil's trusty companion, as the pencil's own eraser was quickly depleted. These two instruments are used daily, continuously, to organize and structure the daily flows of this business. There have been a few times when I thought that I had lost the pencil, but each time careful searches beneath papers that are strewn across my desk have revealed its small presence, tucked just out of sight.

This pencil gives me a sense of connection to the core processes of my job as an Executive Director. I have held on to it knowing that prior to my arrival it was used for the same purposes. In general, the need to change and erase what I write on a continual basis is somewhat hard for me. The ebbs and flows in my daily schedule are reverberations of the weightier changes happening within our patients' lives and their deaths, each of which is marked by the erasing of a name and an addition of one.

Hospice and palliative care provides the vivid portrait of the dynamic nature of our lives: changes that can be painful and hard, and those that can bring beauty, reconciliation, and meaning. And these things are all in tandem and in flux, scribbles that can be erased, added, or permanently recorded and yet slightly blurred with an accidental rub of a thumb.

This past year has brought many changes to our lives. In some ways, 2020 might have felt like a blur. It is captured in pencil on my work calendar, with lots of eraser marks and smudges, and even whiteout, over the very few things recorded in ink. 2021 will look similar. My pencil will need to be replaced soon as it is getting so small my fingers can barely hold it. Its replacement will continue its predecessor's legacy, a new friend to the faithful eraser. As Executive Director, I will be its master, and yet somehow also its scribe.

As you begin 2021, carrying many of the same challenges from 2020, may you remember the power of a pencil and an eraser to life's calendar. May you be regularly adjusting your life's story in response to what comes upon you that day, knowing that life is right on time.



In This Issue

- Direct Patient Care
- Needs and Opportunities
- Welcome, Peter
- In-Services
- Important Dates
- Year in Review



Direct Patient Care Volunteers

You all continue to amaze us. The creative ways that our volunteers have been able to help our organization and our patients has just been spectacular. Here are a few examples:



- Cut and stack firewood for a patient
- A nurse who retired last year has come back in a volunteer capacity to help make phone calls to check on patients and help with patient medical data entry
- Scanning medical documents for us to be able to enter into our new electronic medical record
- Designing birthday cards for patients
- Chart audits
- Stuffing mailers back at your homes and attaching stamps, labeling, and delivering to the post office
- Delivering supplies to a patient.
- Calling and/or texting patients during this time
- Co-leading virtual bereavement support groups
- Meeting with a patient through the window
- Assisting with the application process for the Payment Protection Program Loan
- Picking up supplies for the office at Twin Falls Costco: hand soap and sanitizer seem to be top needs!
- Interpreting by phone for the nurses' meeting with Spanish speaking families
- A volunteer counselor meeting with a bereaved family member on their porch
- A volunteer programmer designing the entire platform for our new electronic medical health record that is now being used by the nurses for charting purposes
- Keeping our gardens looking good!
- Sewing gowns and masks for the nurses at a time when obtaining protective equipment was extremely challenging
- More frequent board meetings to help lead and support our organization's functioning during unprecedented times.

We could not do it without you. We hope that we can have you back in homes soon, but rest assured this will happen only when we feel that it is safe and prudent to do so. As we try to balance our families' needs both practically and socially, we continue to offer financial assistance through our Caregiver Respite Program for those who have been unable to find the caregiving support a volunteer had been previously providing them. We are continuing to look to the experts to make the best decisions possible about our volunteer program as we go forward.

Needs and Opportunities



We could use some twin sheet sets for our hospice patients who are in a hospital bed. If anybody has some used sheets that are in nice enough shape and would like to donate them, it would be appreciated.

Great Moments can be small moments- a Hospice Volunteer's story: We will feature a volunteer story every month on our website and on our Facebook page with the goal that this will help inspire new volunteers to want to join our program. We are looking for volunteer stories that maintain confidentiality while painting a picture of what you do as a volunteer. If you are interested, please send a 300-400 word story and include a photo of yourself.

About a year ago we suggested some creative ways for volunteers to get involved. We are still looking for assistance with one of these endeavors that we think would be even more meaningful during the pandemic:

Bountiful Bouquets: Have you ever found yourself noticing how flowers seem to bring out genuine smiles and brighten rooms? This is your opportunity. Previously, a group donated flowers to our patients for special occasions but their funding ran out the end of 2018. Some of our patients have kept those small plants alive for months. We would like to reinstate this floral delivery and are hopeful we find some volunteers who would ask local florists if they would occasionally donate some flowers and then have volunteer(s) collect and deliver. We're thinking something like the Friday Flower Group.



Peter LaFleur

Welcome, Peter

Peter LaFleur is our newest board member, having joined us the start of 2021. Peter runs a medical consulting group that has interfaced with hospital systems such as St. Luke's. He and his family have lived in the Wood River Valley since 2007. We are glad to have his healthcare business knowledge on the board.

Want to HELP?



Help with the Annual Report Mailer on Monday, February 22@12:00 We need 10 people. You will pick your package up at the office and do the stuffing of envelopes at your home to put in the mail on Sunday, February 28th.

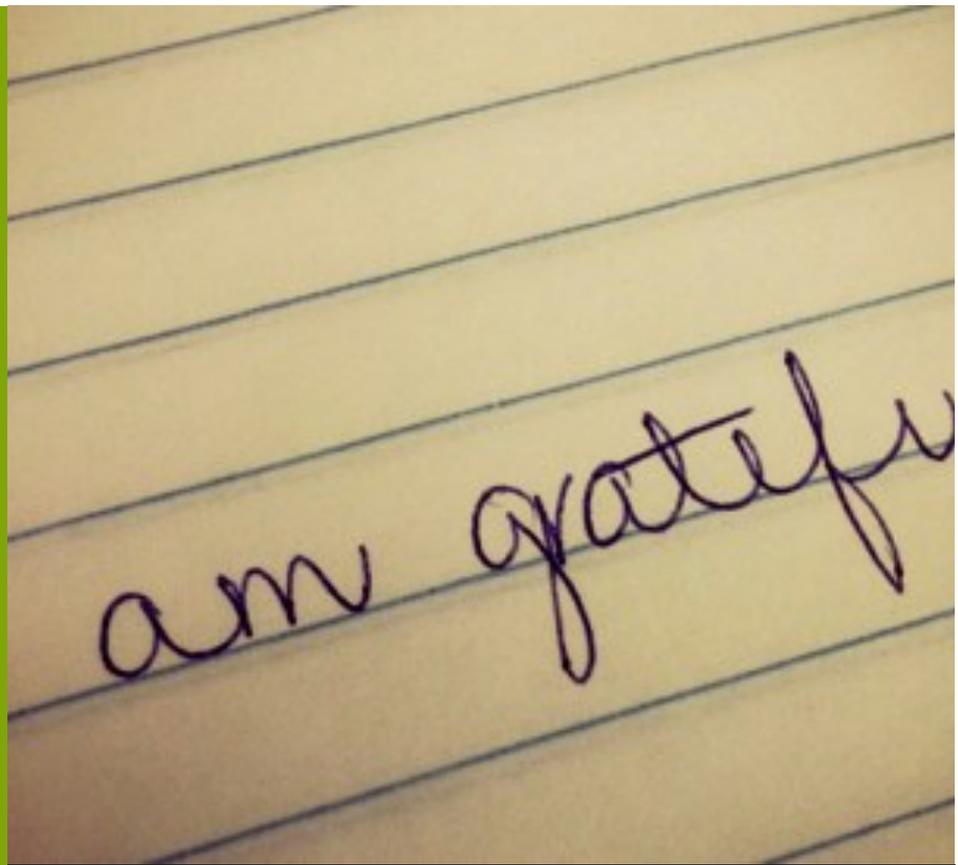
Help with the Annual Letter Mailer on Friday, May 14th@ 10:00. We need 12 people. You will pick your package up at the office and do the stuffing of envelopes at your home to put in the mail on Friday, May 21st.

Important Dates-

Fall Bereavement Virtual Support Group begins March 3 If you know of anyone that may be interested in joining the group, have them call the office before the Group begins to get the details, time, etc.

Caregivers' Support Group meets twice a month....the first Tuesday of each month at 11am at the Senior Connection in Hailey with an RSVP and the third Monday of each month at 4pm virtually with an RSVP. Anyone is welcome, remind possible participants to call the office to join either group

Surviving Spouses with young Children Support group for individuals who are parenting children after losing their spouse is currently on hold.



In-Services-RSVP 208.726.8464

The staff are still reading! We would love for you to join us as we continue our **virtual** hospice book club. Sign up to attend one or all of the following book discussions led by various staff. Grab the book from a local library or order it from a bookstore and come prepared to share your own thoughts about the book with other participants.

March 30th : 11-12:30: *Knocking on Heaven's Door* by Katy Butler. Criss Fallowfield will facilitate the discussion

April 12th : 2-3:30pm: *A Beginner's Guide to the End: Practical Advice for Living Life and Facing Death* by BJ Miller. Hayley Rosen, RN will facilitate the discussion

February 26: 4pm-5:30pm (virtual). *Personalized Music and Video Support for Memory Loss.* Debby Dodds, a gerontologist and partner of the company Generation Connect will be joining us virtually to share how we can better connect with our dementia patients through music. If you are currently paired with a patient that has dementia, you won't want to miss this one! Be prepared to have your smart phone handy as she talks about music and gently paced videos to make personalized connections. At the end of the session, you'll have a few to-do's so you will be better equipped when our direct patient volunteer program suspension has been lifted and you can bring in some tunes!

March 9: 1pm-2:30pm (virtual). *The Latest Hospice Information:* Amber Sela, RN and Mary McGonigal, RN attended the National Hospice and Palliative Care Conference virtually this past fall. They are excited to share what they learned. This is a great opportunity to hear about the most recent research, care and treatment of hospice patients.

YEAR IN REVIEW

We thought you may want to know what happened at Hospice and Palliative Care of the Wood River Valley in 2020

- The second Navigating Longevity Summit was cancelled due to COVID, but a series of the planned speakers, including Lisa, presented virtually in September through the Community Library. Check it out at: <https://livestream.com/comlib/advance-directives>
- Using Blue Jeans platform to host virtual in-services and board meetings
- Our Hospice has been connecting with patients and families in the pandemic through the telemedicine platform Doxyme
- Our support groups have moved virtual including both the caregiver support group and the bereavement group
- Office building's exterior was landscaped this summer on the west side of the building
- Two board members have joined our team
- Our spring volunteer class was suspended
- Our Direct Volunteer Program has been on-hold
- Volunteer hours totaled 735 in 2020 in spite of hours being predominately not direct patient care due to COVID
- Our RNs are using a new platform for an Electronic Medical Health Record
- F.R.O.G.S children's grief group is on-hold. F.R.O.G.S. (Finding Real Options for Grief Support) is for six to twelve-year-olds who had a parent die
- 1209 individuals our organization supported in 2020



Contact Us

HPCWRV
PO Box 4320
Ketchum ID 83340

208.726.8464

hospice@hpcwrv.org

Visit us on the web at

www.hpcwrv.org

Providing excellence in end-of-life care and bereavement services

Hospice & Palliative Care of the Wood River Valley
PO Box 4320
Ketchum ID 83340

PLACE
STAMP
HERE