



THE SPIRIT

Hospice and Palliative Care of the Wood River Valley Newsletter

February 2022

UNEXPECTED GIFT



'Tis the season of post-holiday bliss with our waistlines slightly expanded and our wallets slightly thinner. We generally spend the following few weeks with New Year's resolutions to reverse these two realities. The holiday season always feels like a whirl of activity with the twinkling lights, the completely full grocery store parking lots, the fear, as a pedestrian, of stepping into a cross walk

since every license plate coming at you is from somewhere other than 5B and may not stop, and the busyness of the post office in the transfer of packages as they seem to be a remote hub of the North Pole.

I, as many of you, rely heavily on ordering gifts for the holidays. This Christmas I was expecting to receive a food processor to give as a gift. Consequently, when I received the yellow slip in my PO box that notified me that I had a "Back Door pick-up", I figured this was the item. I gladly loaded the large box into my car, headed home, and let the box sit in my living room. Now, if I had been left to my own natural last-minute tendencies, I would have just let that box sit on my floor until a few days before Christmas, at which point I would have needed to open it and then proceed to wrap the smaller box inside, apply some decoration including a gift tag, and then place it under the tree just before the actual gift exchange. But since I was the middleman with this specific gift, I knew I needed to report to the individual who had ordered it that the package had arrived and all was in good shape. You can imagine my surprise when, upon opening the brown cardboard box I found a smaller box with a Dutch Oven inside. Upon double checking the tracking number I realized that this was, in fact, supposed to be the Cuisinart Food Processor. After a series of phone calls and messages, a new food processor was on its way and a return slip was sent for the Dutch Oven. Luckily, the real gift made it before the actual gift exchange.

How many times in life do we think we know what something is, or we feel we know what is to come and then upon opening the package, upon receiving the cardboard box, upon hearing a certain phrase, we are totally surprised, and are sent into a flurry of different-than-expected activity. Much of survival in life is anticipating things correctly; therefore, we often become quite good at it: planning our advance education, accepting a job that will cover our expenses, planning our family, ordering gifts for special holidays, eating healthily, exercising, getting vaccinated, or communicating about hard topics. And then, unexpectedly, something else enters our world and we are caught off-guard. At times, it seems we want to believe that life is about the actual planned events, a series of controlled sequences, but I have found there is much of life that exists in the more unexpected and unknown domains.

Our patients and their families exist in this unknown reality on a day-to-day basis. It is humbling to watch people's courage and resilience and this work provides a perspective check that a misdirected Dutch Oven is really a minor inconvenience in comparison to what some individuals are going through. It is a constant reminder that life is about opening these unexpected boxes, these mis-"gifts", and figuring out what to do next.



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YEAR IN REVIEW

We thought you may be interested in what happened at Hospice and Palliative Care of the Wood River Valley in 2021

- Our Caregiver Group and Bereavement Group went back to meeting (masked) in person in July
- Our Direct Patient Care Volunteer Program was restarted in June after over a yearlong pause
- Using Blue Jeans platform to host virtual in-services and board meetings
- 2,272 RN visits in 2021
- Our Hospice has been connecting with patients and families in the pandemic through the telemedicine platform Doxyme
- Three new RNs joined our team, while three RNs left our team
- Chaplaincy and Social Work were added to our interdisciplinary team
- Every patient has received a hand-made (by a volunteer) birthday card
- Over 100 flower bouquets arranged by a volunteer have been passed out to patients
- Two new board members
- Two new volunteer classes, adding 10 new volunteers
- 1,327 Volunteer hours in spite of the direct patient care volunteering being suspended for half the year due to COVID
- Our RNs are now using the Electronic Medical Health Record for bereavement and patient care charting
- F.R.O.G.S children's grief group was restarted for a few months before scheduling and pandemic concerns arose. F.R.O.G.S. (Finding Real Options for Grief Support) is for six to twelve-year-olds who had a parent die
- 1,367 individuals our organization assisted in 2021



NEW VOLUNTEERS

We had the joy of inducting another group of new volunteers to our ranks in the fall of 2021. We are excited to welcome: **Sally Behel, Caroline Dewey, Rob Gieselmann, and Mary Pat Gunderson**. This group was the second volunteer class of 2021, and they also experienced the adapted training virtually. Since COVID continues to prevent our usual new volunteer welcome party, please make sure to introduce yourself and welcome them at our next in person get-together!

OPEN STAFF POSITIONS

We aren't immune to the workforce shortages that are plaguing the country and our own community. As a result, we currently have a **part-time RN** position open as well as a **part time or full-time social worker** position. If you know of any qualified interested candidates, please send them our direction!

MEMORIAL TREE

Our organization transitioned to hosting the Memorial Tree Service on our own property this past year, thanks to the generosity of the Dumkes and Lynn Campion and Ted Waddell and Mike Turzian at Sun Valley Garden Center. The evening went off without a hitch and we are so grateful to have a tree at our new location. The presence and reverberance of over 500 names read in the service hung in the air, looking over us along with the stars and the small crescent moon peering above Baldy in the background. If you missed the actual service, please feel free to check out the filmed version on our website: <https://hpcwr.org/>



Help Us! Sign Up!

1. **1. Help with the Annual Report Mailer on Friday, February 18th@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 **Monday, February 28th.**
2. **Help with the Annual Letter Mailer on Friday, May 13th@ 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 27th.**

Groups

Spring Bereavement Support Group begins March 2 If you know of anyone that may be interested in joining the group, have them call the office.

Caregivers' Support Group meets twice a month...the first Thursday of each month at 11am at the Senior Connection in Hailey and the third Monday of each month at 4pm at the hospice office.

Our F.R.O.G.S. Support group for children between the ages of 6-12 who have lost a parent or close relative is meeting on the fourth Thursday of the month from 4:30-5:30pm.

National Health Care Decision Day is April 16. Host a dinner party, talk to your book club, or just phone a family member, but pass the word to others about the importance of giving thought to Advance Healthcare Directives. Advanced HealthCare Forms are at the office.



In-Services-RSVP 208.726.8464

In-services:

February 8: 1-2pm (virtual). *When a Friend Loses a Loved One*: Lisa Wild is facilitating a virtual health talk with St. Luke's Wood River. Lisa Wild brings her expertise, compassion, and sensitivity to address this tough issue, often when our own grief also is a factor. How can we help a friend who has suffered a loss? What can we say or do? While there may not be any specific rules to follow, Lisa will bring some suggestions on how you can help. Please join through the St. Luke's website if interested: <https://www.stlukesonline.org/communities-and-locations/classes-and-events/when-a-friend-loses-a-loved-one-health-talk>

March 24: 2pm-3:30pm (virtual). *The Latest Hospice Information*: Erik Griffin, RN attended the National Hospice and Palliative Care Conference virtually this past fall and is excited to share what he learned. Erik is currently obtaining his bachelor's degree in nursing and will be using this educational presentation for a school assignment. Therefore, he will have it videoed in advance but he will be joining us live for further discussion and to answer any questions. This is a great opportunity to hear about the most recent research, care and treatment of hospice patients.

April 6th: 10:30-12pm (virtual). *Volunteer visiting with the non-verbal, less interactive, and memory impaired patients*. Join Criss Fallowfield and Lisa Wild as they share some tips for volunteering with this challenging population group. Whether you are a seasoned volunteer with some ideas of your own or whether you feel at a complete loss of how to have a meaningful visit with this type of patient, this class is for you!

SPECIAL RECONGINTION



Laura Theis

In case you missed it, there was a big thank you to *all* of our volunteers in the Idaho Mountain Express at Thanksgiving. We especially acknowledged **Laura Theis** for her tireless dedication to getting our Electronic Medical Health Record (EMHR) developed. Laura has spent over 220 hours in the past year and a half programming our new platform. Continuity of patient care continues to be improved from this one change to our practice and we keep finding more ways that this computer program can enhance our many systems. Chelan Keeter, RN, continues to work behind the scenes alongside Laura, adjusting the program to meet our needs.

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PLACE
STAMP
HERE

To provide excellence in serious illness and end-of-life care and bereavement services; as well as support and education for patients, families, and caregivers.