Compassion, Comfort and Care
When it's Needed Most

Inside This Issue:
A Strategy for the Best
A Year of Palliative Care
Hospice Continues Honoring Veterans
Flag Dedication
Tastes of Autumn - Violi’s Finale
The mission of Hospice and Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley is to enhance the quality of life through compassionate care for people affected by advanced illness and grief.

Board of Directors
David Hornung, President
Elaine Scott, Vice President
David Moulton, Treasurer
Gale Lawler, Secretary
Margaret Bass
Gary Canfield
Laureen Drake
David Ferris
Chad Green
Linda Griffin
Helen Hutchinson
Marlinda LaValley
Robin McClellan
Frank McLaughlin
Jim Morrison
Rev. Thomas Patterson
Barbara Potter

Dr. Sandra McCloy, Medical Director
Dr. Gary Berk, Team Physician
Dr. Federico Loinaz, Team Physician

Hospice and Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley, Inc.
6805 US Hwy 11
Potsdam, NY 13676
Tel. (315) 265-3105
Fax (315) 265-0323
Email: info@hospiceslv.org
Web: www.seriousillness.org/slc

Office Hours: 8:00am - 4:30pm

©2014 Hospice of St. Lawrence Valley, Inc.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).

A Strategy for the Best
By Brian Gardam
Executive Director

Every few years we form a Strategic Planning Committee to steer our direction for the near future. The committee – composed of board members, staff, and friends of hospice and palliative care – is charged with assessing our strengths, spotting where we can do better, and surveying the landscape to understand how we will be affected by changes going on around us. It’s not an easy job. Even as we stay committed to our core mission – enhancing the quality of life for people affected by serious illness and grief – the environment in which we carry out that mission is constantly evolving.

Just looking at this year alone, we have had many changes in what we do and how we do it. Some of these were our own initiative, and some were imposed on us from outside.

• We launched clinical palliative care services for people struggling with chronic progressive diseases, generally at earlier stages in their illness than the typical hospice patient. Our nurse practitioner, Marie-Paule (Missy) Heylen, is now providing consultations for people throughout the county to assess their illness, develop appropriate goals for care, and relieve pain and other symptoms.

• We undertook recruiting and interviewing candidates to succeed Sue Cappione, who, after 25 years providing key leadership for Hospice, is retiring in December as Director of Patient Care. This process took several months, coming to a very positive conclusion with the appointment of Gayle Hammers to the job.

• A dedicated work group led by Nancy Vosbrink boosted our recognition of our veteran patients with special pinning ceremonies performed by a cadre of veteran volunteers. Collectively, they achieved recognition as a Level 4 Hospice-Veterans Partnership, becoming only the second hospice in the state to achieve this.

• In recognition of the value of our very special community bereavement services lead by Mary Jones and Kay DePerno, BOCES agreed to help fund our work to enable schools respond to tragic deaths of students and staff.

• We struggled with new federal regulations that charged us with paying for almost all medications used by hospice patients, whether or not they were prescribed for their terminal illness. The federal government eventually backed off, but only after costing our program hundreds of hours of labor and tens of thousands of dollars.

Continued on page 7
In February 2014, Hospice of St. Lawrence Valley launched its sister program Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley. Since its debut, Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley has been working with St. Lawrence County residents to support individuals and their families living with one or more chronic illnesses to improve their quality of life by providing compassion and comfort through symptom management. The goal is to achieve the best quality of life for patients and their families by focusing on providing relief from the symptoms, pain and stress of serious illness.

Palliative Care offers comfort and support for the whole person, meeting not only their physical needs, but their psychosocial and spiritual needs as well. The Palliative Care Team is composed of a physician, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, social worker, and chaplain who work together as a “GPS” to assist patients and their families in navigating their illness. Often, dealing with a progressive illness can be overwhelming and confusing and the Palliative Care Program works with a patient’s primary care provider to offer that extra layer of support that patients and families may need.

The development of the Palliative Care Program involved an immense amount of work and effort on behalf of several individuals in the Hospice family. Staff members involved in the construction of the program worked to establish relationships within the community at the four hospitals in St. Lawrence County as well as with numerous healthcare providers. These relationships were formed through a number of presentations and educational consultations. The efforts of the team paid off and the Palliative Care Program now has contracts with all four hospitals as well as an establishment of privileges for the program’s providers in hospitals in St. Lawrence County. Additionally, the program has initiated relationships with providers throughout St. Lawrence County and has worked with more than 50 providers to ensure that options for palliative care are available to patients.

The Palliative Care Program has seen a lot of growth since its debut. More and more providers and hospitals are referring patients to the program. To date, the program has had more than 160 initial consultations and has seen a positive growth in the number of patients being served. The census has gradually grown and currently averages 75 patients per day.

Missy Heylen, the program’s Nurse Practitioner conducts approximately 20 visits per week to follow up with Palliative Care patients. Not only does each patient receive assistance with managing distressing symptoms, they are also assisted with decisions for treatment options, understanding the pros and cons of treatments, finding resources, and understanding their disease progression. Members of the Palliative Care Team take special care to educate the patients and their families about all aspects of managing their illness. All of the patients in the Palliative Care Program have been engaged in end-of-life discussions and approximately 90% of the patients in the program have completed an Advanced Directive.

The Palliative Care Program has shown substantial growth in its first year. Team members are working together to develop a system to track and measure key quality indicators that will better show the successes of the program. It is the belief of those involved in the Palliative Care Program that it will continue to grow be successful in the future.

For more information on how the Palliative Care Team can help you and your family, please call 262-0861.
Hospice Continues to Honor Veterans

In August, Hospice and Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley earned recognition as a Level Four Partner in the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) We Honor Veterans program. This is the highest level of partnership and is a distinction that only one other Hospice in New York State has achieved.

In navigating each level of the partnership Hospice has worked to provide education on the needs of veterans at the end of life for staff, volunteers and the community. Additionally, a Military History Checklist has been integrated into the admissions process for new patients. This has assisted Hospice in linking veterans with benefits and programs in the community and has helped enhance the care provided by our staff. Learning of a patient’s service to our country upon admission allows our staff to organize a pinning ceremony. The pinnings are greatly appreciated by the patients and their families and are a source of great pride for the staff and volunteers who perform them. The Hospice Veterans Partnership created as a level three requirement continues to meet every other month. This year, members of the partnership worked with veteran service organizations in St. Lawrence County to establish a fund for replacement medals to ensure veterans receive the medals they earned while serving.

In addition to completing the requirements for the We Honor Veterans program, Hospice has initiated a number of events and ceremonies to recognize veteran staff, volunteers and patients. A wall of honor located in the Hospice Center recognizes each of our seven veteran staff and volunteers. A flagpole was installed at the entrance of the building and a dedication and posting ceremony was held. The Honor Guard of the Edward C. Seymour VFW Post 1231 performed the very moving ceremony and Retired Colonel William Murphy of the Fort Drum Retirees Association spoke of the significance of the flag. The flag serves as a great reminder for all who enter the building of the sacrifices of those who so bravely served our country.

Hospice remains dedicated to providing education, honor, dignity and exquisite care for our veterans.

Warriors in Transition
Sled Hockey Tournament

Mark your calendar! On March 6th, 7th and 8th 2015 members of the Warriors in Transition Unit of Fort Drum will take to the ice in the 3rd Annual Sled Hockey Tournament. They will be joined by teams from Syracuse, Buffalo, Ottawa and other areas. Games will take place at the Roos House on the SUNY Canton campus.

Canton native and Fort Drum coach Mark McKenna founded the team several years ago to give wounded soldiers the opportunity to be a part of a team. Through sponsorships and community support he acquired the needed equipment and recruited interested soldiers. “Watching the teams compete is an amazing experience. Whether you are a hockey fan or not, you won’t regret coming to a game” said McKenna. Game times and additional events will be announced in early 2015.

Hospice is proud to partner with the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME), the Warriors in Transition Unit, the Wounded Warriors Project and several local veterans groups to present this exciting event. We hope you will join us and fill the stands in the arena as these brave athletes take to the ice.
Members of the Edward C. Seymour VFW Post 1231 Color Guard post and salute the flag.
A Heart-felt Thank You to the Violi Family

This year, *Tastes of Autumn* held special significance for event organizers and the Violi Family. This marked the fourteenth and final year the event was held at the popular Massena restaurant. Each year the Violi’s welcomed Hospice staff, volunteers and guests for a day of great food and company to support Hospice. The event quickly took on a very family-centered feel, much like their restaurant and attracted a following of guests who regularly attended. Upon learning of the announcement that they would retire at the end of September, members of the Hospice Board of Directors and staff gathered for dinner at Violi’s Restaurant to acknowledge the significant contributions Ross and Dominick have made to Hospice and the community. “The funds raised throughout the course of the event assisted Hospice in providing services to countless patients and their families. The impact of their kindness and generosity is beyond measure” said Executive Director Brian Gardam. “We wanted to do something very profound to honor the Violi Family” he continued. The Board of Directors presented Ross and Dominick with an engraved paver that will mark a tree in the Hospice Memorial Garden dedicated to the Violi Family. “We felt a fixture in the Memorial Garden was a very appropriate recognition” remarked Lainey Scott, Event Chair and Vice President of the Board of Directors. “From the moment we approached them about doing the very first event they have been nothing but supportive. Ross, Dominick and their staff have always gone above and beyond to ensure we had everything we needed to treat our guests to a fabulous experience. They have made a permanent impact in the lives of many community members through their support of Hospice and they will be permanently recognized in the Memorial Garden” she continued.

The Violi’s support of Hospice went beyond their brief retirement. In one final show of support, Ross contacted event organizers. “Well, the building is still there. Let’s do the event one last time” he said. Plans for *Tastes of Autumn- Violi’s Finale* quickly took shape. It was very easy to gather the chefs and needed volunteers as many of them have been involved for several years and they appreciated the significance of the Violi’s re-opening the restaurant to host the final event. The Finale turned out to be a record year as nearly 200 guests attended and raised more than $12,600. Over the course of the fourteen year event, *Tastes of Autumn* has provided nearly $90,000 in support of the important care provided to the patients and families served by Hospice.

To Ross, Dominick, the Violi’s Staff and our faithful supporters- Thank You- for fourteen wonderful years of *Tastes of Autumn*.  

*Tastes Event Chair and Vice President of the Board of Directors, Lainey Scott presents Dominick and Ross Violi with an engraved paver to mark the tree dedicated to the Violi Family in the Hospice Memorial Garden. Also pictured is Kellie Hitchman, Director of Development and Community Relations for Hospice.*
Grief During the Holidays  
December 13, 2014 and January 10, 2015  
An education program for those grieving the death of a loved one during the holidays. The workshop is free of charge. Pre-registration is required by calling 265-3105.

Camp Healing Hearts  
June 25, 2015 at the Hospice Center  
This day camp is designed to help children who have experienced the loss of a friend or loved one. Hospice staff lead activities aimed at helping campers learn to cope with the loss.

Swim a Mile for Hospice  
August 1, 2015 at Postwood Park in Hannawa Falls  
This unique fundraiser is a non-competitive swim on Hannawa Pond in Potsdam. All swimmers, from recreational to expert are welcome to join the fun!

Hospice Volunteer Training  
Offered quarterly throughout the year, this training is a great opportunity to learn about the many opportunities to become involved as a Hospice Volunteer. Contact Jennifer Brailsford for more information at 265-3105.

A Strategy for the Best  
Continued from page 2  
We know there are more opportunities and challenges on the horizon. New York State is promoting a redesign of how health care providers work together, with the goal of reducing avoidable hospitalizations by 25% over the next five years. This goal cannot be achieved without the active participation of hospice and palliative care, and we have been very involved in local coalitions of providers designing the new projects. More changes are expected from the federal government, including new quality reporting measures (a very good idea) and fundamental changes in how hospices have always been paid by Medicare (remains to be seen whether this is good or bad). And there is always the challenge of the increasing costs of what is needed to serve our patients within budgets that get tighter and tighter.

The Strategic Planning Committee has already decided on the priorities for its plan: To be an organization that provides exquisite hospice and palliative care services while continuing to be a great place to work, and is appropriately aligned within the health care system. With our record, we can be confident that we can succeed.

Congratulations Sue!  
On December 19th, Director of Patient Services, Susan Cappione, will celebrate her well-deserved retirement. For twenty-five years she has led the nursing staff in providing skilled, compassionate care for patients and their families in their greatest time of need. During her tenure, she has witnessed many changes within our Hospice. In the early years the patient census was in the single digits. Today, Hospice proudly cares for approximately 75 patients throughout St. Lawrence County each day. She began her work reassuring families that they could help care for their loved ones, keeping them at home and has remained a steadfast advocate for the patient throughout her career. Her knowledge, compassion and sense of humor will be greatly missed.

Best wishes in the next phase of your journey, Sue!
# Hospice Memorial Garden Reservation Form

I would like to memorialize/honor my loved one, ________________, in the Garden with a gift to Hospice of $ ____________ for the following Garden feature(s) (select from list below):

Name: ___________________________ Phone: ___________________________

Address: ___________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4” x 8” Memorial Paver</td>
<td>$125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorial Grove Tree</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12” x 12” Memorial Paver</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24” x 24” Corporate Paver</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Name the Hospice Memorial Garden in its Entirety</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When ordering a paver, please print desired engraving below:

4” x 8” Pavers: 3 lines, up to 14 characters per line (incl. spaces).

12” x 12” Paver: 6 lines, up to 15 characters per line (incl. spaces)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line 1</th>
<th>Line 2</th>
<th>Line 3</th>
<th>Line 4</th>
<th>Line 5</th>
<th>Line 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Payment Method** (Please circle one:)

- Check (payable to Hospice of St. Lawrence Valley)
- Mastercard
- Visa
- Discover

Name on Credit Card: ___________________________

Card Number: ___________________________

Exp. Date: ___________________________

Signature: ___________________________

Please cut out and return form to: Hospice of St. Lawrence Valley, 6805 US Hwy 11, Potsdam, NY 13676