November is National Hospice and Palliative Care Month and the theme is “It’s About How You Live”. This is a great reminder that we are all living until the moment of death. Our role at Hospice is to help patients live well and experience quality of life right up until that moment occurs. An amazing team of nurses, physicians, social workers, chaplains and personal care aides and volunteers work with each patient and family to support their individual choices and preferences for this period of life. Hospice care is not something done “to” a patient, but “with” a patient; it’s holistic care that tends to a patient’s physical, spiritual and emotional needs, as identified by that patient. Hospice also supports family caregivers by reducing anxiety and uncertainty through education on disease process, day to day patient care and the grieving process.

Receiving Hospice services sooner has been demonstrated to increase both length of life and quality of life. Sadly, many people sign on to Hospice too late to get the full benefit of our services. While our team can help even if we serve a patient for only hours, when we have more time with a person, not only can we do more for that individual, but we can help the family as well. Signing onto Hospice service doesn’t mean patients are going to die in a day or two, it’s not uncommon for us to serve patients for months or even years!

There is a common feeling that signing onto Hospice means giving up...giving up hope, giving up control, giving up life. But far from giving up, signing on to Hospice is a commitment to a different kind of hope, it about taking charge of your life, it’s about how you live.
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.

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Hospice and Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley, Inc.
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Email: info@hospiceslv.org
Web: www.hospiceslv.org
Office Hours: 8:00am - 4:30pm
Monday through Friday

When her healthcare providers suggested Hospice to Janet Doerr in May of 2016, they gave her a prognosis of approximately six weeks. With the reality of her illness setting in, she returned home with the support of Hospice and took it one day at a time. Soon, the summer was coming to a close and the doctors said maybe she would have six months. The holidays came and she celebrated. Through the long winter days she continued to defy the odds and each prognosis given when she returned to visit the doctor.

Various Hospice staff members provided support several times a week. When asked what they did to help she replied “they do so much!” Resource Advocate, Brandy Walton helped connect her to resources and other programs that would be able to help while she was on Hospice. Other staff assisted by helping with light housekeeping, personal care and providing support to her husband, Tony. “All of this would have been a lot more difficult if they weren’t here” she added. Although the medical aspect of Hospice is very helpful to patients and their families, the real goal is to help the patient continue to live their life - whatever that may mean for them. While on Hospice Janet continued to enjoy her many flower gardens, put a new lawn mower to use, traveled to her favorite restaurant, Texas Roadhouse and continued many of her other favorite activities. Although her illness made some days difficult, the support of her friends, family and Hospice made each day better.

As winter turned to spring, Janet was approaching the one year mark of her original diagnosis. Having experienced the services of Hospice for that period of time, she wanted to do something to give back. Always up for a get-together with family and friends, she decided to throw a “life anniversary party” to celebrate living a full year longer than expected. She travelled throughout St. Lawrence and Jefferson counties requesting donations to be raffled off and spread the word that she wanted to support Hospice. Approximately 70 family and friends spent the evening visiting and celebrating Janet’s life anniversary. In total they helped to raise more than $1,500 to support the very services that helped Janet live comfortably at home for more than a year.

Hospice wishes to thank Janet and Tony Doerr for organizing the “life anniversary party” and the many friends and family who supported Hospice while celebrating Janet’s amazing life.
Darrell Dailey and David Pearson have served in the We Honor Veterans Program since its inception and provided needed insight and guidance as Hospice moved through each level of the program. Sponsored by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Association, the program is aimed at creating appropriate opportunities to recognize the service of veterans at the end of life and to educate those who care for them on illnesses and specific needs they may have due to their service. With the help of Darrell, David and many other veteran volunteers, Hospice patients who served their country are offered a recognition ceremony where they are presented with a pin and a framed certificate as small tokens of appreciation for their service. “Perhaps the most moving part of the ceremony is when the veteran volunteers render a hand salute to the patient” said Hospice Volunteer Manager, Linda Camaño. “Hospice serves veterans who have had military experience in conflicts since World War II. For each of them this experience was different, the welcome home they received was different, but for all of them this ceremony is very profound.”

This summer, the roles were reversed. Darrell and David were the ones being honored for their service. They joined nearly thirty area veterans who were inducted into the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame. A statement from Senator Ritchie at the ceremony summed up the qualities of those being inducted. “What is remarkable about the veterans being honored is that even after giving their all as members of our Armed Forces, they continued to serve their local communities - and make a difference.”

“The word ‘no’ rarely is rarely spoken by Darrell or David with respect to their service at Hospice. In some instances where a patient is rapidly declining they have made it to a home or hospital to ensure a pinning ceremony is done for a deserving veteran - once with only 15 minutes notice. They make the pinnings a very high priority and treat each veteran and family with the utmost respect” said Linda. “Hospice and those we serve are very fortunate to have such dedicated volunteers.”

Thank you for all you do Darrell and David! Congratulations!
Hospice Receives Support from Community Groups

The professionalism and respect Hospice showed for my mother in her month under their care was unbelievable. My father, myself and my brother can’t thank you and the program enough. People don’t realize how wonderful this service is until you need them.

~ Hospice Family

Hospice Helpers

Community Events

Become a Hospice Helper! Hospice Helpers are companies, organizations and community groups that organize various fundraising events and activities to benefit Hospice and Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley. We extend our most sincere thanks to these groups for their time and effort. Funds raised through Hospice Helpers are unrestricted and support patient care, which is our greatest need.

Be Creative! If your company or organization has a unique idea to raise funds for Hospice, or if you have questions about Hospice Helpers, contact the Development and Community Relations department by email at events@hospiceslv.org or at (315) 265-3105 or.

A special Thank You to the Hospice Helpers who raised important funds for Hospice of St. Lawrence Valley:

- Colton-Pierrepont National Honor Society, Annual Ski Challenge .......................................................... $941
- SUNY Potsdam Community Health Interns, Color Me Caring 5K Color Run ....................................... $775
- Janet Doerr, Life Anniversary Party .......................................................... $1,546
- Hermon-DeKalb 4th Grade Class, Bracelet Sales .......................................................... $33.50
- Potsdam Central School Seniors, Co-Ed Senior Lacrosse Game .................................................. $156
- Community Bank N.A., 46th Annual Charity Golf Tournament ........................................ $13,000
- Wanda Law and Family, 4th Annual Bob Law Memorial Golf Tournament ................................ $4,000
- Women In The Wind, SLV Vixens, 18th Annual Hospice Motorcycle Run ................................ $2,538
- One Stop Shop , Charity Vendor Fair .......................................................... $132
- Parishville AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, 14th Annual 5 Miles Walk-A-Thon ................................ $650
- Delmar Sportsman’s Tavern, 10th Annual Hospice & Palliative Care Benefit ................................ $2,400

Members of the Parishville AMVETS Post 265 Ladies Auxiliary and participants get ready to set out on the 5-mile Walk-A-Thon held each September. Hospice has been one of the recipients of the proceeds since it began.

Community Bank Golf Tournament Committee Members from left; Sherry Stone, Brenda Rand, Gina Boyd, Chairman David Peggs, Director of Development for Hospice, Kellie Hitchman, Dori Warren and Randy Pray.

Colton-Pierrepont Central School National Honor Society Students enjoy perfect winter conditions at the annual Cross Country Ski and Snowshoe-A-Thon.
Record Year for Swim a Mile for Hospice

The 8th Annual Swim a Mile for Hospice was a record-breaking year for participants and organizers. With 88 swimmers, this was the best turn out the event has seen to date. Swimmers and donors rallied together to help Hospice reach a major milestone in the lifetime of the event. Their hard work and perseverance paid off as the event raised nearly $33,000 to support the important services Hospice provides to the community. In addition to breaking a record for the amount raised at a single event, the lifetime total raised surpassed $200,000 - an incredible testament to the support of the community.

The weather in the days leading up to the event had organizers on the edge of their seats. With a large-scale storm wreaking havoc on the beach the night before the Swim, the odds seemed slight the Swim would be able to take place. We were overjoyed to awake the morning of the event to find clear skies and relatively calm waters. The atmosphere on the beach was buzzing with excitement, with everyone more than grateful to have their wishes for good weather met. It was truly an incredible year for Swim a Mile for Hospice!

We saw dozens of familiar faces who have been loyal participants year after year and happily welcomed many new-comers to the Swim. “It is always a very powerful day as many participants are swimming in memory of loved ones. That, combined with the satisfaction of completing the swim and hearing the total raised for Hospice, made for a very uplifting morning” said Director of Development and event organizer, Kellie Hitchman.

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Hospice Memory Trees

When a “star” in your life becomes a memory, that memory becomes a treasure. Share memories of those you treasure by joining with others in Hospice and Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley’s 2017 Memory Trees.

Beginning on Tuesday, November 21st and continuing through the end of December, two trees decorated with your stars of remembrance and tribute will be on display at the Hospice Center in Potsdam.

The form on the next page may be mailed or hand delivered to the Hospice Center. If you come in person, you may prepare the star yourself. Otherwise, volunteers will complete your star. All names are included in a memory book displayed alongside the tree.

Please feel free to come see the Memory Trees and read the Memory Book with the names of the loved ones being remembered.

Thank you for supporting Hospice in this special way.
The event could not happen without the generous support of the community. “Everyone worked hard to put on a great event. We rely heavily on our volunteers so it is especially touching when you see such a strong show of support from the community,” said Executive Director, Ruth Fishbeck. “Potsdam Recreation has graciously hosted the event each year at Postwood Park and Michelle Garrow has continued to help with beach organization and many other crucial aspects of the Swim.”

The safety of everyone involved was ensured by Hannawa Falls Fire Department, who patrolled the water with our team of power boats, kayakers, canoes and paddle boards. Potsdam Rescue Squad was also on stand-by on the beach in case of emergency; fortunately, no assistance was needed.

The 8th Annual Swim was generously sponsored by many local businesses including NuMED for Children; Northern Tribbs Swimming, Inc.; A Woman’s Touch Nail Salon; WWTI/ABC50; Sandstone Family & Cosmetic Dentistry; Massena Savings and Loan; J.C. Merriman’s, Inc.; S&L Electric, Inc.; and John C. Parcell IV, CPA. Additional businesses who sponsored swimmers in the event included Fun Unlimited, Hyde-Stone Mechanical Contractors, Mort Backus and Sons, and Howland Pump and Supply.

Everyone at Hospice is still in awe at the level of success at this year’s event. Hospice is deeply appreciative of the generous support from everyone involved. Safe to say we have set the bar pretty high for next summer! We hope you will all be a part of it once again in August of 2018!!!

Record Year Continued...

Pictured: Director of Development, Kellie Hitchman presents top fundraiser, Shauna Gall with two round trip tickets from Ogdensburg to Boston donated by Cape Air. Her total this year was more than $3,000! Rounding out the top three fundraisers was long time participant Jan DeWaters and Derrick Conway.
Dueling Pianos Returns!!!

Back by popular demand...Hospice is pleased to once again present Dueling Pianos! Having sold nearly 350 tickets at the first event the overwhelming feedback from our guests was to DO IT AGAIN!!! Cutting Edge Dueling Pianos will return to Cheel Arena on Friday, June 1st 2018. For those who missed the first show; dueling pianos features two baby grand pianos facing one another. The performers put on an all request show featuring anything the audience wants to hear. Whether its 50’s, 60’s, 70’s, 80’s, 90’s or current, rap, country, or rock and roll. Anything you can imagine, they can perform. A dueling piano show is extremely interactive and highly entertaining. The audience is thoroughly involved and participates throughout the entire event. The crowd is sure to be laughing, clapping, singing, dancing, and loving every minute the performers are on stage. Be prepared with your list of special requests to make your mark on this great show! Tickets are available for purchase beginning April 1st by calling Hospice at 315-265-3105.

We hope to see you there!

New Series Aimed at Starting Conversations

Recognizing life is a terminal diagnosis, Hospice is offering a new, original program called “Dying to Talk: Conversations about Facing Death and Embracing Life”. This free program offers community members an opportunity to gather together and talk about death. The first hour will be small group discussions on the topic of death and, after light snacks, the remainder of the time will focus on end-of-life plans. Advanced directives, funeral planning and other end of life issues will be discussed. “We wanted to provide the community with an opportunity to talk about death in a safe, comfortable environment,” said Mary Jones, Director of Family Support Services. “Hospice recognizes the value of these end-of-life planning conversations long before individuals in the community come on to our service.” According to American College of Emergency Physicians, two-thirds of Americans do not have Advanced Directives in place. Learning about different options and available programs is beneficial for adults in any phase of life. It’s not just about making plans, it’s sharing this information with family to ensure they have all the information they need in the event it becomes necessary for them to speak for you. It’s all about sitting down and having a conversation.

The Dying to Talk program is scheduling presentations for 2018. Consider hosting a program in your community to help start this invaluable conversation. For more information or to schedule a presentation, contact Hospice at 315-265-3105 or email events@hospiceslv.org.
Patient Referrals
Do you know of someone who might benefit from services offered by Hospice or the Advanced Illness Management team? If so, referring a patient is easy! Our admission staff will gather information and work with the patient’s physician to find the best program for you! **Call 315-265-3105 to learn more.**

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The Hospice Memorial Garden
Located behind the Hospice Center, the Memorial Garden is home to many symbols of remembrance engraved with loving messages and the names of many community members. Those who have chosen to permanently remember their loved ones here have also helped to ensure Hospice services will be available for others well into the future.

For more information on reserving space in the Memorial Garden visit our website at www.hospiceslv.org