HOSPICE NEWS
Providing Peace, Comfort, & Care in the Kittitas Valley since 1983

Still Growing After All These Years

Director’s Note
Not long ago I came across a poem written from the perspective of an inpatient in a rest home. The gist of the poem is the patient reflecting on her life and asking “what do you see when you look at me?” Specifically she asks “do you see a crabby old woman, not very wise, uncertain of habit with far away eyes?” Her poem goes on to describe who she really is with her memories of being a small child in a loving family and moving on to her teen years with “wing on her feet.” She continues to move through the years of her life and her accomplishments with proud recollections of her children, her husband and grandchildren and much more.

At this point, you may be asking, where am I going with this story. The truth is that often as hospice providers, we see people at end-of-life, and while we know that our patients have lived fulfilling lives, we don’t have the opportunity to experience all of who they may have been. That was not the case for one recent hospice patient.

(It is important for you to know that the story that follows is submitted with permission from the patient’s family. Hospice Friends is committed to protect patient and family privacy and never shares information without express consent.)

Fred Rarden was 83 years of age when he entered into hospice care in January of this year. His diagnosis is not important suffice to say that dementia was evident and his ability to tell his story at that time was limited at best. However, Fred left a rare gift for his family in that he had previously written his spiritual autobiography.

He had been a Methodist minister and his faith and spiritual journey are an integral part of his existence. I am pleased to share his story...so please, sit back, relax and meet.....

Reverend Fred A. Rarden.

A SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF FRED A. RARDEN

My spiritual autobiography begins where all such accounts do: birth and early childhood. Born at home in a small SE Colorado town, eldest of four children - two other brothers and a late-arrival sister - I was first child born to a railroad worker, himself son of a homesteader “dried out” by the capricious weather that spelled doom for hundreds of dry-land farmers in the early 1920’s. Mother was the eldest daughter of a struggling domestic worker striving to provide for three girls after being abandoned by her husband. Childhood and school years were typical of the time. However, I stood out among my classmates because I was the only one to wear eyeglasses; that proved to be a mixed blessing: no one dared to pick on the “kid with the glasses” (a realization I often took advantage of); on the other hand no one wanted that same kid on...
Still Growing After All These Years

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their team. Feelings of inadequacy brought on by the "glasses syndrome" were offset in part by the fact I did excel in spelling and reading; every team wanted me for those competitions. I could also run just fast enough to elude the occasional bully and to qualify for grade-school track teams; that brought some sense of achievement.

Religious awareness was instilled in me through sporadic attendance at Sunday school and Vacation Bible School. The junior high music teacher also conducted the orchestra at the Methodist Church and I soon found myself playing a tremulous second cornet in the ensemble that included neighbors and friends. If it hadn’t been for a family move halfway across the nation, I might have grown up to be another Al Hirt or Harry James!

"THE MOVE" came in 1941 when my father took a job at a naval shipyard in California. From a small prairie railroad town to a much larger, cosmopolitan and crowded war-boom city proved a traumatic experience for the "kid with the glasses." I couldn’t muster enough self-confidence to keep up with the music; school-work was passable but not outstanding. High school achievements included editing the school newspaper for one semester, and turning out for football. The former was an expression of some talent and interest; the latter was a yielding to peer pressure in a vain hope of gridiron glory.

During the high school years I only attended the local Methodist church youth group a time or two, never feeling comfortable among other teens who seemed to be so socially accomplished. But whenever the subject of religion came up (as it frequently did) I always voiced a measure of sympathy and acceptance for others religious involvement and commitment while having none of my own.

18 months in the Army were spent typing payrolls (!), not at all what I had envisioned when I enlisted for the Armored service. During that time I attended chapel services once or twice during basic training, mostly just for something to do. I did receive a commendation upon discharge for exemplary service rendered, but I was unconvinced that the military could not function without my presence, so it was off to the old home town for junior college with two high school buddies. Again in the midst of the parties and fun-seeking there were a few occasions when I attended church, usually on Easter and at either the Methodist or Episcopal Church.

University days in Eugene, Oregon displayed the same pattern: studies, partying (returned GI's and all that) and an occasional Sunday morning at church, usually in the company of a young lady. Through all the school years, the military, and university, I had no real sense of direction or vocation, no clear vision of who I was or where I headed.
30+ years of service in local churches brought the usual satisfactions and frustrations. Worship leadership proved to be the most rewarding, marked by those high moments when even I was caught up in the glory and majesty of truly worshiping God. Gradually there came the dawning awareness that the good or achievement that came in my ministry was the result of the working of God’s grace in and through me. That realization brought a sense of freedom and release as I approached each day’s ministerial tasks. Still, right to the day of retirement there has been a wondering as to why I was in ministry and who I was as a clergyman.

Spiritually, my life has brought more growth in retirement than during the active years. More free time for reflection and meditation no doubt have contributed to the growth. I find myself cherishing more than ever times of quiet and silence, in private devotions or in corporate worship. Settled liturgies that convey the sense of timelessness nurture my spirit; I find little or no refreshment from the popular worship “frenzies” that admittedly do feed the spirits of many. When once I sought some rational explanation for the unexpected events in life, I am now more ready to accept mystery as the essence of the God-human relationship. Aspects of the Catholic piety - sign of the cross, holy water, veneration of icons - provide for me a welcome relief from what I have perceived as the sterility of much classic Protestant worship piety. Increasingly I appreciate the richness of orthodox (maybe even Orthodox?) devotion for the color, movement, sensual awareness that it can bring. “Smells and bells”, when their meanings are understood, to me are enrichments to worship - a substantial move from my small-town Sunday School upbringing!

Unlike the spiritual journey, which continues into life beyond life, this life-sketch now comes to an end. ●

Fred proves that even "big kids" can have fun at the park

Director’s Note
Fred died peacefully on April 13th at the Belair House in Cle Elum where he had been gently cared for during the final days of this life.

It doesn’t matter whether or not we share his faith; we can learn from him that life is a process. He tells us that he wasn’t born with faith or spiritual serenity. Rather it is a quest for each of us to find the answers for ourselves and continue to live to the last moment.

Fred’s son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Connie, tell me that since dad died, they have been amazed and enriched that many have shared with them how much Fred had meant in their lives and the “gifts” that he spread to those who were privileged to know him. Pray that we all leave a legacy of love that will be remembered far beyond our days.

Roger Hiles

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Please consider your tax deductible gift today by filling out and returning the enclosed contribution envelope.

Thank You For Sharing Our Mission
Linda Stewart...Quilt Winner 2012

Linda Stewart bought a five-dollar raffle ticket from Peggy Haynie thinking, "I've never won anything and probably won't this time either." On February 21, 2012, Linda was proved wrong when she was notified that she was the lucky winner of the Hospice Friends 2011-2012 Quilt Drawing.

Hospice Friends was once again honored to receive a hand crafted quilt created by Mary Kay McPhillips of Ellensburg.

Now in its eighth year, ticket sales for the annual Quilt Raffle kicked off at the Tree of Love gatherings in December. This quilt, as they all have been, is a beautiful work of art crafted by McPhillips. The detail that she puts into her work is evident and the love in every stitch comes at no extra charge.

According to Stewart, the neutral tones in this years piece fit perfectly into her home décor. The colors range from muted golds, to warm beiges and ecru highlighted by luscious creams. The special touch provided by Mary Kay is a personalized panel on the back of each piece she creates for Hospice Friends.

Linda Stewart is the director of the Family Birthing Center at Kittitas Valley Community Hospital. Peggy Haynie also works in that department and sold the winning ticket to her boss.

Peggy tells us that Linda is an absolutely wonderful person to work with and that she "adores" her. Thanks Peggy for being a great Hospice Friends volunteer and a supportive friend of your director.

For Hospice Friends

The Western Art Association (WAA) was formed in 1972 to promote interest in western art, artifacts and to preserve our unique western heritage. Thanks to its dedicated board members and the WAA membership, this non-profit corporation has remained alive and healthy for over 30 years.

The Association views the Ellensburg National Art Show & Auction as their primary annual event. Hundreds of community volunteers rally to make this weekend an enjoyable success for all. It is their intent to provide a first class forum for new and established artists to display and sell their artwork as well as share their creativity and technical skills with the public.

Something new is being added to this year's show and Hospice Friends is the intended beneficiary. A painting entitled "Blackfoot Hunt" was donated to the WAA by Reed Larsen for the purpose of placing it in the 2012 show. Reed's intent is that the painting, completed in 1991 by artist, Jim Thomason, be sold at the 40th Annual Show with the proceeds going to benefit Hospice Friends.

JoAnn Wise, treasurer of the organization and director of WAA's Goodey Gallery at 309 North Pearl Street in Ellensburg says that it is not certain at this point exactly how this piece of artwork will be sold. The board is in the process of determining the process, but the work will definitely be available for sale at the show and the proceeds will go to Hospice Friends.

The information for the 2012 show is in the left banner of this page. Please stop by and check out this great painting and place your bid to support Hospice Friends.

It's Art with an H for Hospice Friends.
Dear Friends;

I know I could say (he) and I thank you for your caring and skillful service to us during the time that we received hospice services. Roger (and his board of directors) added spiritual support services in 2009. This support is provided to their clients and to our hospice patients.

(Hospice Friends spiritual care does not focus on religion or morality - rather it "Explores the culmination of a person’s quest to discover the ultimate and transcendent meaning and purpose of his/her life. Spirituality reflects the essence and substance of that person - the values, thoughts, emotions, motivations, dreams, experiences, assumptions and relationships that make the person a unique individual")

The program offers support through home visits, one on one in a private setting or in group settings. Roger is also working to complete a certification in grief and loss studies at the Center for Loss and Life Transition in Fort Collins, Colorado.

In 2011, Roger and the board of directors implemented a policy to provide additional respite days to our hospice patients. When additional days are required (beyond the allotted Medicare benefit), Hospice Friends will cover the costs for up to five additional days.

Roger has been an inspiration to many of us in the home health and hospice program and has a passion for showing caring and concern for each one of us as well as our patients.

My reason for nominating Roger and this program for Community Service Program (person) of the Year is to honor a program that aids us in providing support to our community, ourselves and our patients. Without this program and Roger, we would not be as rich a community, a program or a people."

When Roger received notification that he had been selected, his first comment was, "While this award may have my name on it, I know that in truth it is recognition for Hospice Friends programs. I am honored and humbled to accept it on behalf of an organization that truly makes a difference in the lives of the people of Kittitas County."

Many Thanks

A Loving Wife
Touched by Hospice Friends

Article Submitted By: Sherrill Boehm

Director, Kittitas Valley Home Health & Hospice
Companionship the bereaved is not about assessing, analyzing, fixing or resolving another’s grief.
Instead, it is about being totally present to the mourner, even being a temporary guardian of her soul.

As a bereavement caregiver, I am a companion, not a “guide”—which assumes a knowledge of another’s soul I cannot claim.

To companion our fellow humans means to watch and learn. Our awareness of the need to learn (as opposed to our tendency to play the expert) is the essence of true companionship.

Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt

Two Hospice Friends staffers have embarked on a quest to complete studies in bereavement companionsing in order to be of even better service to our clients.

Janine Yoder and Roger Hiles have entered into this program, and study under the tutelage of noted author, educator and grief counselor, Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D. The Center for Loss & Life Transition in Fort Collins, Colorado was founded by Dr. Wolfelt in 1983 and is an organization dedicated to furthering our understanding of grief and loss, and is the setting for all instructional seminars.

Upon completion of 150 hours of class instructions, Yoder and Hiles will receive the Death and Grief Studies Certificate, a program endorsed and accredited by Colorado State University.

Thus far, Janine has completed 60 hours of training. Specifically, she has received instruction in “Support Group Facilitation” and “The Spiritual Dimensions of Death, Grief and Mourning”. In June 2012, she will attend her third session entitled, “Comprehensive Bereavement Skills.”

Hiles, to date, has completed 90 hours of classroom instruction. The three sessions that he has completed are: "Comprehensive Bereavement Skills", "Exploring the Spiritual Dimensions of Death, Grief and Loss" and "Counseling Skills Fundamentals". In May he will attend "Exploring the Shadows of the Ghosts of Grief", and will complete his certification in December.

Dr. Wolfelt’s courses center on his companionship philosophy, which in short teaches that as a bereavement caregiver, you are a companion, not a "guide." Companionship is the art of bringing comfort to another by becoming familiar with their story, their experiences, and their needs.

In a message, Dr. Wolfelt writes, "...Supporting those who support the bereaved is my life’s work and passion. I simply love to teach, and am so gratified that thousands of caregivers have participated in my small-group seminars over the past 20 years. How gratifying is to be able to share the art of compassionate care giving with people from across North America and the world.”

The focus of these trainings are to provide students with:
- A greater familiarity with the grief process.
- An enhanced ability to relate effectively to the grieving person or family.
- A development of skills to cope with personal feelings related to death and grief.
- To fine-tune skill in the helping relationship.
- To expand knowledge of current developments in grief and loss disciplines.
- A heightened awareness of resources in the areas of death, dying and bereavement.

Yoder says of her experiences in Colorado that for her, “The hands on experience of the small group format allows me to not only learn, but to practice the skill that I am learning in a safe and sacred environment. Also, to encounter and spend time with others from around North America who share the compassion for bereavement care is astounding.”

Roger says that, "One of the most important things that Dr. Wolfelt drives home is the fact that every journey is unique and each person’s experience is their own. Our task is to be a companion to them no matter their path; not attached to outcome; no rewards for speed; stepping aside to allow divine momentum an opportunity to do it’s work.”

Save The Date For Tree of Love 2012

The Hospice Friends Tree of Love Memorial Gathering will be a bit different from years past, and we wanted to make sure you all know well in advance. Please plan to attend one or both of the following ceremonies in December.

ELLENSBURG
Wednesday - December 12, 2012
6:00 p.m.
Ellensburg Library Plaza

CLE ELUM
Friday - December 14, 2012
6:30 p.m.
Upper Kittitas County Senior Center
HOSPICE FRIENDS DEPENDS ON THE GENEROSITY OF OUR DONORS TO CONTINUE FORWARD WITH OUR MISSION OF PEACE, COMFORT AND CARE.

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**Hospice Friends** is a non-profit charitable organization that provides peace, comfort, and care to the elderly and anyone facing a life-threatening illness in Kittitas County. We work in coordination with

*Kittitas Valley Home Health & Hospice, a department of Kittitas Valley Community Hospital, to provide quality care in the home, nursing home, or hospital in a professional, empathetic, and confidential manner. Hospice Friends promotes a caring community without affiliation to any specific religious orientation or political view. All of our services are free of charge.*

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