

LIFT

Grief is a process, not a state. –Anne Grant

July 2020
Bereavement Newsletter

Living Is For Today
West Texas Rehab's Hospice of San Angelo

A NOTE FROM KAREN

Remember the classic George Gershwin song, “Summertime, an’ the livin’ is easy”? It is certainly summertime, and though it’s hot, the good news is that lockdowns are over, restaurants, churches and businesses are re-opening, and living is far easier now than it was a few months ago! The HOSA bereavement department is also planning on re-opening for in-person support activities. The first event will be the monthly support lunch, Tuesday, July 21, followed by the Sole Mates Mall-Walking group Thursday, July 23. While things are unpredictable, and we might have to change plans at the last minute, we hope not because we are looking forward to seeing you in person again! In the meantime, the bereavement staff is available for bereavement support via phone and computer chats. We’d love to hear from you, so don’t hesitate to call 325-658-6524 for more information.

Monthly Luncheon

Tuesday, July 21, 11 a.m.
Outback Steakhouse
4505 Sherwood Way

Sole Mates Walking Group

Thursdays, July 23, 30, 8:30 a.m.
Sunset Mall
Chick-fil-A food court area

For information about the support groups or luncheon, and to verify these events will take place, contact Karen Schmeltekopf, HOSA Director of Bereavement, at 325-658-6524 or kschmeltekopf@wtrc.com.

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YOU ARE INVITED TO HOSA’S 35th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

FRIDAY, JULY 10

3:00 PM

WTRC CONFERENCE CENTER
WEST TEXAS REHABILITATION CENTER
1925 UNIVERSITY AVENUE

On Friday July 10 – 35 years to the day since the newly organized Hospice of San Angelo admitted its first patient on July 10, 1985 – HOSA is having a birthday party, and you are invited! Since that time HOSA has served over 11,500 patients and their families and has grown in every way. The following milestones show our growth in service as the first hospice, and the only non-profit hospice, in our area.

HOSA MILESTONES

1985 – HOSA established; admitted first patient July 10; serving only Tom Green County

1989 – Received Medicare certification; established bereavement program

1990 – Joined Texas-New Mexico Hospice Organization (TNMHO)

1991 – Established Building Bridges

1995 – Joined Texas Non-Profit Hospice Alliance (TNPFA)

1996 – Acquired and moved into its suite on the 11th floor of the Cactus Hotel

1999 – Acquired the Landy House on S. Jefferson for bereavement services

2003 – Received Community Health Accreditation Partner (CHAP) with commendation

2006 – Acquired durable medical equipment (DME) operations

2012 – Added Brown, Kimble and Mason counties to service area, enlarging to 15 counties

2013 – Added full-time Medical Director

2014 – Added full-time Nurse Practitioner

2016 – Named a 2016 Hospice Honors Recipient for high family satisfaction scores

2017 – Named a 2017 Hospice Honors Recipient for high family satisfaction scores;
purchased property on S. Chadbourne to house DME

2018 – Merged with West Texas Rehabilitation Center

GRIEVING ALONE

Death is hard for a family during normal times, but a death during a pandemic has been especially hard for those who have lost a loved one.

Angie Lane, Director of WTRC Hospice Services, points out in practical terms the challenges COVID-19 has imposed on those who have recently lost a loved one. She talks about how people cannot group together and are unable to spend time with the ones they love. Grandparents are separated from their grandchildren, folks are unable to travel for funerals to support the ones left behind, and weekly visits to loved ones have all stopped. "People are afraid," she says. "The outside world as we know it is halted. People are more alone, and they are grieving alone."

"What about patients in nursing homes?" she asks. "Patients can't see their loved ones unless they're dying. The nursing facilities are doing their best to protect our elderly, but the separation is not something anyone is used to. It's frustrating and heartbreaking for families."

"Folks are more alone now in their grief," she says. "We rely on our bereavement team to give additional support to our bereaved."

Writer/educator Julie Flynn Badal recently wrote about the communal nature of mourning rituals and potential problems for those who are denied access to community while grieving. "But in this period of social distancing, many people now find themselves grieving in isolation," she writes. "As a result, our grief might remain unexpressed, get congested, or be postponed. Unprocessed grief can have traumatic impact and can result in anger, rage, violence, depression, and substance abuse. Most bereavement counselors agree that it's important to grieve consciously and intentionally in order to heal, grow, and move forward."

The bereavement team at Hospice of San Angelo understands the challenges of grieving during this unprecedented time of isolation and distancing. They are here to support you as you heal, grow, and move forward.

NOTE

Angie Lane, in her role as Director of WTRC Hospice Services, oversees the operations of both Hospice of San Angelo and Hospice of the Big Country in Abilene. Her comments in this newsletter are part of an article about the challenges facing the two hospices during the pandemic. You can read the entire article in the summer issue of Round-Up, which will be available in late July.

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