

## Losing her husband, sharing her grief

They'd known each other for two decades, their paths crossing each week at church. And then, after all three lost loved ones, they were joined in grief.

That's when they found Legacy Hospice.

After Judy McKenzie lost her husband Leon in 2006, she desperately wanted to maintain their connection. She didn't want to lose touch with his memory. The hospice team had been there for Leon in his final days. And then it was there for Judy, helping her grieve his loss.

Legacy Hospice serves adults, children and their families with home-based care in the Portland metropolitan area and in communities throughout the Willamette Valley. Hospice services are also available in assisted living settings, adult foster homes and nursing care facilities.

Hospice workers are trained to treat the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of patients and support family members and other caregivers.

**"They're so connected to the patients. And when they die, they make it OK to grieve."**

— Judy McKenzie

When Leon was at Legacy Hopewell House near the end, Judy says, the staff met his every need.

Because it was hot, the hospice team took him outside to the courtyard, applied cold compresses and brought him plenty of water. The staff also reminded Judy to eat.

And then, after Leon passed away, hospice staff provided Judy with the emotional support she needed. She attended the annual Light Up A Life ceremony, when survivors gather to honor the memory of their loved ones.

In recent years, she had invited two friends from church to the ceremonies. All three drew strength from Legacy Hospice. Attending LUAL together became a meaningful and healing ritual that helped Judy see her husband's death from another perspective.

"It showed me that it wasn't just over," Judy says. "His memory will always be here."



Judy and Leon McKenzie



## Legacy Hospice provides grief support in uncertain times

They gathered in the courtyard on a warm spring afternoon, keeping their distance and sharing their sorrow.

It had been an especially difficult week. Eight patients at this assisted living facility had died of COVID-19 and the staff was struggling with their own feelings of loss.

So, Legacy Hospice grief counselors invited them outside to share their stories and work through their fraught emotions in the early, uncertain days of the pandemic.

**"Our team has been nothing short of outstanding."** — Petya Pohlschneider

This is the very heart of Legacy Hospice: meeting grief at its source, whether at a patient's home or in a care facility.

Legacy Hospice treats the needs of patients and supports their families. But hospice workers also work with caregivers, whether they are professional healthcare providers or friends and relatives. They all suffer loss in different ways.

In the courtyard that afternoon in June, caregivers grieved the patients who had passed and expressed their own fears about illness, family and work. The pandemic added another layer of stress for caregivers. They didn't want to bring the coronavirus home. One worried about hugging her son. Another had to care for a high-risk husband, navigate the unknowns at the grocery store and then go back to work the next day.

"That's exhausting," says Petya Pohlschneider, bereavement coordinator at Legacy Hospice. "Even the doctor was working seven days straight. She's in the front ranks, carrying the load. It's sobering."

The grief counselors listened and let the caregivers know their feelings of fear and anxiety were valid and real. And, most important, the counselors offered hope.

Legacy Hospice has been especially busy during the pandemic, despite the limits and challenges. The staff has adapted by providing virtual therapy for groups and individuals.

"Our team," Pohlschneider says, "has been nothing short of outstanding."

## "Amazing Grace" in her final hours

Dear Legacy Hospice:

On Monday, April 15, Sharon Zimmel passed away peacefully at her home.

That day, we joined hands and offered our most sincere gratitude for all of the loving care provided to Sharon during her last three months battling cancer.

Her hospice nurse had visited earlier that afternoon and sang two of her favorite songs, "Amazing Grace" and "In the Garden." Sharon was sleeping, but we are sure she heard this beautiful singing.

We cannot begin to express how much we appreciated her hospice nurse that afternoon. She always brought Sharon peace with her comforting demeanor.

Please convey our sincere appreciation for Legacy Hospice-McMinnville.

Best wishes,  
Joan Thomas



Joan Thomas (L) and Sharon Zimmel (R)

## Support Legacy Hospice-McMinnville with First Federal Savings & Loan

Members of First Federal Savings & Loan in McMinnville will soon have an opportunity to support Legacy Hospice. In January, First Federal will launch its annual Customer Ballot Program. Look for your ballot and vote for us. Last year, more than 50 donors chose Legacy Hospice, resulting in a donation of \$535. Thank you for your support!

## Light up a Life

a celebration of remembrance






### We can't be together, but we can still remember loved ones

Each fall, during our Light Up a Life ceremony, we gather to remember and celebrate loved ones we have lost. Unfortunately, due to current health and safety restrictions, we are unable to meet this year.

Though we can't be together in person, we will continue our tradition of remembrance. If you would like a star with the name of your loved one, please contact Petya at 503-414-5145 or ppohlsch@lhs.org and we will send one to you.

We are planning a social media post to share the stars. Details will be included with the star we send. We hope you can join us.

## Legacy Hospice By the Numbers (2019)

 patient services	 travel	 volunteers
<b>1,075</b> patients admitted to the home program	<b>197,667</b> miles travelled (the equivalent of circling the world 7.93 times)	<b>80</b> number of home hospice volunteers
<b>178</b> average daily patient count	<b>16,472</b> average miles per month (549 miles per day)	<b>3,360</b> hours of home hospice volunteer support received

## Legacy Hospice Pet Pals Program

Keeping patients and pets side by side

For more information about supporting Legacy Hospice Services, please contact Rachel Gitner at 503-413-6774 or rgitner@lhs.org.

