



Anna Wilson, Hospice Social Worker

## 25 Years of Pike County Hospice

Autumn leaves fell quickly this year as snow already blankets the ground. This year has been a significant one for those of Pike County Hospice as we have been celebrating our 25th year as your only local, not-for-profit hospice provider. November is National Palliative Care and Hospice month, so what better time to reflect on 25 years of compassionate service and care to our communities and their families? Although many believe hospice is a scary word, hospice services are an extremely helpful and supportive resource to individuals and their families as they navigate through the transition to the end of life.

Hospice is a highly valued resource that can be a final parting gift not only to the patient who receives the highest quality of compassionate health care but serves as an added source of support for the patient and their one's loved ones who are struggling to find their way through this time.

Pike County Hospice rebranded a new look for our 25th year celebration, the hummingbird, and like the hummingbird although we may be a small, we are a rare community service capable of great things. The hospice staff often say that it is never too soon to talk about hospice and that is because although it is a delicate and uneasy conversation for most, sharing your final wishes about your preferred hospice provider is of the utmost importance regardless of one's current age or health condition. Having this conversation, not only allows you to be in the driver's seat but it also paints a clear roadmap of what your wishes are so there is no added turmoil, confusion, or disagreements amongst your family and loved ones if the need arises.

James 4:14 reads, "How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it's here a little while and then it's gone." Pike County Hospice considers working with your family not only a gift but an honored blessing. We often are asked, "How can you do this type of work, isn't it a hard and sad job working with people who are terminal?" Our response is, "Yes, it CAN BE. However we receive the blessing of hearing treasured memories, sharing laughter and tears, and playing an active role in providing quality of life care as well as a peaceful transition at the end of life... and THAT is truly a gratifying feeling."

Through our relationships with families Pike County Hospice staff are often reminded of how priceless the gift of life truly is. Yes, it is true, life is full of adversities, busyness, to-do lists, and worries that try to steal our love for living, with the result being a life of regrets—however, working in hospice reminds each of us that a life of regrets is not what one desires. It calls to us to live life intentionally everyday with purpose, love, and joy.

This season we want to thank you for welcoming us into your homes and your families. We are honored to be your hometown hospice provider for 25 years and those years to come. May this be a season of thanksgiving and joy as we live each day to the fullest despite adversities and shortcomings. We graciously welcome any community member to attend our Monthly Bereavement support group. This group meets the first Monday of the Month at 6:00p.m. with Brother Don Amelung facilitating. For additional bereavement resources, support, or to make a referral to hospice please contact Cori Sheppard, Pike County Hospice Program Manager at 324-2111.