Home care keeps couple together

BATAVIA – Home health care is helping one Batavia couple stick together.

Through a contract with the Veterans Administration, James MacRae, a quadriplegic, has been receiving the services of HomeCare & Hospice for more than a year.

Mr. MacRae is one of 7.6 million people across the United States receiving home health services, according to the National Association for Home Care and Hospice.

Two hours per day, seven days a week, a home health aide arrives in the morning to help Mr. MacRae’s wife Joan get him out of bed and ready for the day.

“At 9 a.m., Jim wants up – he’s just not a bedridden person,” said Mrs. MacRae.

Mr. MacRae has strived to live an active life since the car accident that put him in a coma for nine months and placed him in a wheelchair at the age of 23. His motorized chair is operated by a breath control tube. Adept at operating electronics, he has small computer and remote control attached to the chair help him operate a variety of household devices. His computer is voice-activated.

His wife is his caregiver much of the day, but there are some aspects of Mr. MacRae’s care that require two people. The couple was referred to HomeCare & Hospice at the end of a 2008 hospital stay.

“They do an excellent job. They’re very well trained. It really lightens our work load,” he said.

“It allows us to be together as a couple. The aides and nurses are willing to learn the way we do things. We’ve done it so long we know what works. They’ve bent over backwards to learn how we do things. They work with us.”

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How is the word “community” defined? By some definitions, a community is a group of people sharing a common environment or common interests. It may be our city, village or neighborhood – the place where we share life with other people. It is where we find comfort, where we feel at home.

Part of the comfort of home is the sense of control over our environment. Think back to the time when you moved into your first home or apartment. You felt truly independent. The kitchen and bathroom were all yours. Remember how it felt to know that you could decorate it the way you wanted? Remember the pride you took in mowing or gardening, doing your part to beautify your neighborhood?

There are times in our lives when we may choose to leave our homes or communities: when we make a job change, retire, upgrade our lifestyle or move to be near family. We may do so with mixed emotions, but the choice is still ours.

Unfortunately, circumstances such as chronic disability or illness can force us to leave our homes when we would otherwise choose to stay. Health and safety concerns often necessitate some to leave for a nursing home or other care facility. It is ironic that, just when we need the comfort of home the most, it becomes a place we cannot navigate or sustain on our own.

The good news is that Total Senior Care, a new way of delivering health care, has been successful in delaying or preventing institutionalization for a number of nursing home eligible Cattaraugus County seniors for a year and a half -- and it has now expanded into 10 Allegany townships.

Total Senior Care is a program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (P.A.C.E.). The goal of a P.A.C.E. is to keep nursing home eligible seniors, 55 years of age and over, safely in their home with the help of the program. As of Aug. 1, Total Senior Care is accepting participants from the Allegany County townships of Amity, Angelica, Belfast, Bolivar, Clarksville, Cuba, Friendship, Genesee, New Hudson and Wirt.

We are thrilled to be able to expand this innovative way of delivering care so that more people may benefit. Our goal and our dream are for Total Senior Care to someday grow into all of Allegany County and into Genesee and Wyoming counties. This was our vision when the staff at HomeCare & Hospice began laying the groundwork for Total Senior Care over five years ago.

As exciting as it is to provide new services in our communities, we are just as proud to continue providing the range of caring assistance we have been growing at HomeCare & Hospice since 1971. We are there for our neighbors who need us at home for to help with recovery from accident or illness, chronic conditions that limit activities of daily living, or hospice services to cope with life-limiting circumstances.

Helping people remain in their homes and communities is at the heart of everything we do. We are so thankful to all of our community members who lend their support to this mission in a wide variety of ways.

-- Carol L. Mahoney, CEO
Total Senior Care expands into 10 Allegany County townships

The innovative health care program that has been helping frail elderly in Cattaraugus County is now open to residents of southwestern Allegany County.

Starting Aug. 1, Total Senior Care’s Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) began accepting participants from the townships of Amity, Angelica, Belfast, Bolivar, Clarksville, Cuba, Genesee, Friendship, New Hudson and Wirt. PACE began serving Cattaraugus County residents since March 2009.

Total Senior Care is designed to provide the entire continuum of care and services to seniors with chronic care needs, while maintaining their independence in their homes for as long as possible. Following the PACE model, it delivers all needed medical and supportive services to its participants.

The program is open to persons who are certified as eligible for nursing home care, are 55 years of age or older, are able to live safely in the community at the time of enrollment and reside in the specified Allegany County townships.

“As a managed long-term PACE plan, Total Senior Care offers comprehensive services to frail seniors,” said Carol L. Mahoney, President and CEO of Total Senior Care.

For more information on the program, call 1-800-339-7011.

Home care couple, cont’d

He gets a bath four times a week and that allows his skin care to be top notch, said Mrs. MacRae.

The pair met when Joan was working as a home health aide for another agency that cared for Mr. MacRae and she filled in for his regular aide.

“The first time was strictly professional. The second time I filled in it seemed a bit different. I taught him to play dominoes; I was his arms. As we were playing dominoes we were talking and laughing, it was different. We went to an Irish dance and I pushed him in his wheelchair. It wasn’t long after that he proposed,” she said.

Mrs. MacRae no longer works outside the home, but devotes her time to her husband. Though she is home with him much of the time, she could not give him all the care he needs by herself. She said that without the help of HomeCare & Hospice, she and Jim would have to live apart.

She added, “If we didn’t have the agency in, Jim would have to be in a group home and we wouldn’t be able to be together as a couple. We are blessed by being together.”

For information on home care services call 1-800-339-7011.
15th Annual Tree of Life ceremonies planned during holiday season

The HomeCare & Hospice Foundation is planning the 15th Annual Tree of Life ceremonies in six locations.

The ceremonies help persons who have experienced loss to honor a family member or friend at the holiday season. These events will take place in the four counties served by HomeCare & Hospice: Allegany and Cattaraugus, Genesee, Wyoming, counties.

At the ceremonies, family members and friends hang ornaments on a holiday tree in remembrance of their loved one. A member of a hospice patient’s family shares their story and assists in lighting a remembrance wreath.

Each year, the HomeCare & Hospice Foundation offers an ornament as an option for remembrance, but the ceremony is not limited to families who have received hospice services.

In honor of Tree of Life’s fifteenth anniversary, a pewter “memory tree” ornament is being offered. The ornament is inscribed with the sentiment, “When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure.” It can be engraved with the name of a loved one and will adorn one of the six Trees of Life.

“We hope that this memory tree ornament will become a cherished keepsake in your family’s holiday ornament collection. Everyone is invited to attend our tree lighting ceremony to personally add their ornament on the tree and celebrate the lives of those we have lost, with our friends and neighbors,” said Jacqueline Czwojdak, development coordinator.

Participants are encouraged to take their ornament home after the ceremony. Otherwise, the ornaments will remain on the tree and be mailed out in mid-January.

The ornament is available for a suggested donation of $12.50, with engraving, shipping and handling included. Additional options include giving an ornament as a gift, or purchasing a memory tag bearing a name for $5.

While the deadline to order an ornament in time to have it engraved before the ceremonies is Nov. 15, the ornament can still be purchased after that time and engraved once the ceremony has taken place.

An order form is included with this newsletter. Additional order forms can be obtained by contacting Jacqueline Czwojdak at (800) 719-7129 or Wendy Leffler at (877) 277-2615 or they may be downloaded at www.homcare-hospice.org.

Tree of Life ceremonies are set as follows:
— Olean, Total Senior Care - Dec. 1 at 6 p.m.;
— Wellsville, David A. Howe Memorial Library - Dec. 2 at 5 p.m.;
— Little Valley, VFW Post 8734 – Dec. 3 at 2 p.m.;
— Arcade, Fire Hall - Dec. 4 at 1 p.m.;
— Batavia, Richmond Memorial Library - Dec. 8 at 6 p.m.;
— Warsaw, Five Star Bank - Dec. 14 at 5 p.m.

Trees will be displayed throughout the holiday season.
elders, aged 55 or over, who might otherwise be at risk for placement in an institutional setting. The program has had a positive impact on the lives of our Cattaraugus County participants and we are pleased to extend services into 10 Allegany County townships at this time,” said Carol L. Mahoney, president and chief executive officer of Total Senior Care.

Allegany County Office of the Aging Director Kimberly Toot said the program will provide seniors with more options for maintaining their independence.

“Our mission is to keep older people in their homes and living with dignity. Part of dignity means having a choice. I think our seniors now have another choice, which adds another service for people in Allegany County and we are delighted. PACE just might fit the bill,” said Toot.

“It is good to have the range of services they provide. It is very welcome,” added Pat Schmelzer, Allegany County Commissioner of Social Services.

The PACE Center, at 519 N. Union St. in Olean, serves as the hub of the program. On weekdays, participants are transported to and from the center. They arrive to a light breakfast and socialize with their peers. Throughout the day, participants can take part in activities, exercise, eat a hot lunch or enjoy live entertainment.

The center also offers nursing; recreational therapies; meals; nutritional counseling; social work and personal care. An on-site clinic, operated in cooperation with Olean General Hospital, provides primary care and physical and occupational therapies. PACE is financially responsible for medically-necessary treatment by specialists such as audiologists, dentists, optometrists, podiatrists and speech therapists. Transportation to these appointments is provided.

Services extend beyond the center into the home. The program arranges for home health care, as needed, and provides for home modifications, such as wheelchair ramps and grab bars.

Each participant’s care is coordinated by Total Senior Care’s Interdisciplinary Team (IDT), which is comprised of members of each discipline providing care: the medical director, nursing, home care, social work, physical and occupational therapies, activities, nutrition and transportation. The participants and/or their family caregivers are encouraged to participate in weekly care-planning sessions. Payment for Total Senior Care may come from a variety of sources. Most PACE participants are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid, but some third party payments and private pay are accepted. Enrolled participants covered by Medicare and Medicaid will pay no out-of-pocket expenses or fees for any authorized PACE services, including no co-payments for medications.

“Everything is taken care of. It really takes the worry out. You don’t get a bill,” said participant Jack Huselstein.

The program was created under a three-way agreement among Total Senior Care, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the New York State Department of Health Division of Managed Care. It is New York state’s only rural Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) program. It is one of 14 rural PACE programs in the country.

Development of the program began in 2006, when Home Care & Hospice became one of a handful of non-profit agencies in the country awarded a U.S. Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) grant to create a rural PACE program. This designation was required in order for HomeCare & Hospice to be eligible to apply for federal funding of PACE, which was received in the amount of $500,000. Additional grant funding by the Community Health Foundation of Central & Western New York was instrumental.

For information on Total Senior Care, call (716) 379-8474 or 1-866-939-8613.
Hospice Walk raises more than $19,000

OLEAN -- More than $19,000 was raised at the 14th Annual Hospice Walk June 5.

The three-mile walk along the Allegany River Trail benefited the HomeCare & Hospice Foundation and proceeds will be used to provide hospice services for patients in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Genesee and Wyoming counties. The event, formerly known as the Hike for Hospice, was co-sponsored by St. Bonaventure University and Mix 101.5, which broadcast live from the Walk.

A total of 113 walkers were registered, according to HomeCare & Hospice Development Coordinator Jacqueline Czwojdak.

“We are simply overwhelmed by the response and amount that was raised. It is wonderful to see a community come together for such a great cause. Everyone that is here today has been touched by Hospice or realizes how important Hospice is and what a difference it makes in the lives of patients and their families facing terminal illness,” said Czwojdak.

Names of those honored appeared on flowers placed on stakes at the starting line and along the trail. As walkers traveled the trail, they could see names of the people for whom they were walking.

The top individual pledge-earner was Patti Bokman of Allegany with $807, Debbie Glass of Whitesville with $800 and Linda Bess of Olean with $530. The winners chose from among three prizes: a trip for two to Myrtle Beach, S.C.; two season tickets to St. Bonaventure University basketball and a three-month family membership to the Olean YMCA. Walkers who raised $50 in pledges were entered into a drawing for prizes donated by local businesses.

Walk sponsors included Cutco, A&J’s Pizza, Indeck, Olean Medical Group, McHone Industries, Com-Ton Inc., BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York, Fox Financial, Rinker Oil, Community Bank and Dresser-Rand.

“We sincerely appreciate all of the sponsors, donors and volunteers who gave us their time or resources this year. We’d like to say a special thanks to Scott Kruse this year for his dedication and putting together a team of 55 walkers, the biggest team in the Walk’s history” said Czwojdak.
The HomeCare & Hospice Guild raised $1,715 through its Third Annual Spread the Comfort Quilt Raffle.

The funds raised will help provide medical care and social/emotional support for patients and families coping with end-of-life issues.


The quilts were crafted or donated by Tina Fishbaugh of Allegany, Rachel Elser of Allegany, Stacy Penird and Charlotte Sniezak of Olean, Caralyn McCoy of Humphrey and Marylyn Sauln of Allegany, Marjorie Litteer of Olean, Creekside Fabrics of Arcade, Heart in Hand Quilters Group of Arcade, Samantha, Andrea and Paula Harris of Olean (in memory of Beverly Bronson), Jacqui Gledenning of Olean, Carol McNee of Cattaraugus and Cheryl Schmittendorf of Great Valley.

“We truly appreciate everyone who participated in the annual quilt raffle,” said Jacqueline Czwojdak, development coordinator.

HomeCare & Hospice was the recipient of $2,182 in proceeds from the Robey Memorial Golf Tournament held July 17 at the Serenity Hill Golf Course in Friendship. The tournament was organized by Gerald and Sharon Smith in memory of Mrs. Smith’s late father, John Robey. Over the past four years, the agency has received a total of $7,102 from the tournament. Pictured are: (from left) Mrs. Smith, HomeCare & Hospice Chief Financial Officer Susan Nelson, and Mr. Smith.
Belief Statement
We believe that HomeCare & Hospice:
- Offers essential care to our community;
- Combines dignity and comfort with compassion to create, strengthen and extend a supportive environment to our community;
- Recognizes integrity as the central element of every human interaction;
- Maintains an obligation to assure services into the future;
- Values and respects its employees and volunteers; and
- Enriches and respects quality of life for all.

From that belief emanates this vision…
It is the vision of HomeCare & Hospice to exceed the expectations of our community. As a result, we will be viewed as the premier choice for home care and hospice services, education, support and employment.

Today, make a difference.

HomeCare & Hospice
1225 W. State St., Olean, NY 14760
INFORMATION REQUEST

Name:______________________________________________
Address:____________________________________________
____________________________________________
Phone Number:______________________________________

I am interested in learning more about the following:
- Hospice Care/Services
- Hospice Friends
- Financial Support
- General Information About This Organization
- How I can help by volunteering
- Please ADD someone I know to your mailing list (name and address attached).
- Please CORRECT my information as per the enclosed mailing label.
- Please REMOVE my name from your mailing list.
- Please SEND only one copy to this address.

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