

# PROGRESS 2007

## Iowa Hospice moves to new location, services grow

OSKALOOSA — It was March 3, 2006, when the Oskaloosa branch of Iowa Hospice treated their first patient in Oskaloosa.

A year has passed since that day and many changes have come as well with a patient load that has tripled in size in number of patients served at one time.

A new, bigger office, located at 210 High Ave. E., from their original spot at 223 First Ave. E., was needed to meet the needs of their patients.

A new full-time massage therapist and music therapist has been added as well.

But, despite the tremendous growth Oskaloosa's Iowa Hospice has undergone, one thing is under — the quality of health care has not faltered.

The top priority of Iowa Hospice remains serving their patients and their families with top-notch care. It also focuses on educating the community and serves as a "bridge" between patients

and medical professionals. The end result is patients and their families have a high level of satisfaction with their care, important conversations about care decisions can occur, and patients avoid needless suffering.

Medicare and Medicaid-certified, we use the team approach to patient and family care ... case manager RN, licensed social worker, chaplain, home health aide, medical director, primary physician, volunteer, licensed massage therapist, licensed music therapist. Other allied health professionals as needed.

Family satisfaction scores continue to be higher than averages for hospices nationwide. A strong focus on customer service is what differentiates Iowa Hospice from others and it is what will help ensure the long-term growth and success of Iowa Hospice.

The 24-hour staff availability provides both

patients and families security in knowing that help is only a phone call away.

Iowa Hospice also offers bereavement services for a minimum of one year after a loss of a loved one. They can also serve as a bereavement resource to anyone in the community including schools, business, individuals and church.

A non-profit Iowa Hospice Foundation, separate from Iowa Hospice itself, has been set up from which funds are used locally.

Iowa Hospice, which has 100 plus employees, has assisted an ever-growing number of families covering 50 counties in Iowa with the Oskaloosa office alone serving an 11-county area.

For more information on Iowa Hospice, call toll free (866) 298-9725, email [info@iowa-hospice.com](mailto:info@iowa-hospice.com) or visit their Web site [www.iowa-hospice.com](http://www.iowa-hospice.com).

The Oskaloosa branch can be reached at (641) 676-1799.

## Hammer Medical Supply serving Oskaloosa for about 25 years

Hammer Medical Supply, located at 113 High Ave. East, has provided Oskaloosa with quality medical products and services for about 25 years.

The staff at Hammer Medical Supply rent and sell all types of medical equipment spanning the spectrum from bathroom aids to wheelchairs and oxygen systems. Many items are available on a monthly rental basis. Hammer Medical carries a wide line of walkers, crutches, canes and other mobility aids.

Hammer Medical places a high value on customer service. For example, the organization displays its quality customer service through ensuring the experience of its employees. Hammer Medical has recruited a staff of six employees. They are Judy Van Veldhuizen LPN, manager; Sarah Hockey-Lanphier, certified respiratory therapist; Jeff Adams, rehabilitation technician; Sue Junge and Michelle Christy, customer service representatives; and Dan Beal, delivery service technician.

In addition to the number of in-store products and services they provide, Hammer Medical also does in-home assessments, in-home delivery and equipment set-up, and they educate their customers on how to use their new equipment. Their overall goals are convenience for the customer and providing all the normal

health care needs of a hospital, at home, including the newest technology in computerized wheelchairs, stairlifts, and minivators for homes schools and churches. Hammer Medical provides services not only to Mahaska County, but the also provide services to Marion, Monroe, Poweshiek and Keokuk counties.

With insurance restraints becoming tighter with each passing year, the staff at Hammer Medical make sure to take the time to check with insurance companies on customers coverage and product coverage before arranging final purchases. They file claims, and do prior authorizations whenever necessary.

Van Veldhuizen said the company looks to continue growth for 2007, with a lot of the growth coming from the baby boomer generation.

Van Veldhuizen has a cautiously optimistic outlook for the future due to new Medicare regulations that are in effect.

"Business is good, but due to a lot of new Medicare regulations, reimbursement will be lower and it may be harder for consumers to get their products and equipment qualified for insurance reimbursement," she said.

Van Veldhuizen believes that the success of Hammer Medical supply stems from the positive work relationship

between community, physicians and the customers.

"Mahaska County is a great community to work with," Van Veldhuizen said. "The physicians and therapists are very easy to work with. We are thankful for every one of our referrals and we are pleased to provide services to each of our customers."

Hammer Medical Supply is a member of MAMES — the Midwest Association for Medical Equipment Services — and VGM — Van G. Miller, a major force in U.S. home healthcare.

Hammer Medical Supply, which began as a pharmacy in Des Moines in 1872, expanded to include home medical equipment in 1965. The Oskaloosa store stems from the home medical equipment side of the business. The corporate offices for Hammer Medical are located in Des Moines and there are six branch offices in Oskaloosa, Ottumwa, Creston, Chariton, Newton and Clive.

You'll find every member of the Hammer Medical staff to be knowledgeable and accessible. At Hammer, there is commitment to personal service and that is the most important aspect of their business.

For more information, give Hammer Medical Supply a call at 672-2501.

## Tschetters offers flowers for any occasion

Quinton and Carolyn Tschetter started their business in 1993 in the basement of their home near Oskaloosa, Iowa. They started off as a dried flower business making arrangements, wreaths and swags from dried herbs and dried flowers. After having success in the first year, they decided to remodel the barn on the property and open a retail store, Tschetter's Red Barn. In 1996, Quinton added antiques and furniture repair to the store's floral offerings.

It wasn't until 2001 that the Tschetters started selling fresh cut flowers. They found that the dried flower market was very much a niche market and the local demand became saturated rather quickly since the arrangements lasted so long. The move to fresh cuts seemed logical.

Today their markets include florists, farmer's markets, walk-ins, weddings, funeral flowers and a subscription service. It was 2003 when they started selling at the Des Moines Farmer's Market. A reporter stopped by for a brief visit and that led to an interview and eventually to a full page story about Tschetter's Flowers on the front page of the agriculture section of the Des Moines Register. The Tschetters agree, "That coverage put us on the map."

At the Farmer's Markets, the Tschetters primarily sell ready-made bouquets, though stems and custom bouquets are available. They market their flowers as a high-end product, including lilies, a premium flower, in almost every bouquet.

They are advocates of presentation and education. Their bouquets are displayed in vases, and stems are held in black florist buckets for a uniform appearance. When a customer selects a purchase, the bouquet is wrapped in green tissue, then placed in a floral sleeve. The green tissue has become a source of brand identification as customers recognize and search for the flowers wrapped in green tissue.

Every bouquet is sold in water, with a packet of floral food. They offer a 'tips' sheet for postharvest care and communicate with their customers to ensure they understand the importance of the tips and how long their bouquet should last. Lately they have been working to educate their customers about buying lilies with more closed buds to enjoy the bouquet longer.

The Tschetters provide flowers for a number of weddings each year. Some people buy only the stems, others buy all the arrangements and bouquets, while

some buy for the reception only. The Tschetters employ a wedding designer to best meet the often specific vision of a bride. They've found that many of their wedding customers come from contacts made at the farmer's market and referrals from previous customers.

The business subscription service might be considered part sales, part marketing. They offer the deep discount price on their arrangements for much less than they would bring at retail price. The bouquets are delivered to businesses each Monday, from May to October. Private customers can also avail themselves of this service, but they pick up their bouquets at the shop.

The key to the discounted price is their use of 'left-over' flowers. The flowers that are brought back from the farmer's market are not good enough to sell as florist quality, but they certainly have a week's worth of vase life, if not more, so they are used to create the subscription bouquets. It's not unusual for customers to call or come in requesting a bouquet just like they saw at one of the local businesses. Sunflowers and lilies are usually in their bouquets, but they try to catch the customer's eye with design flair and variety from week to week.

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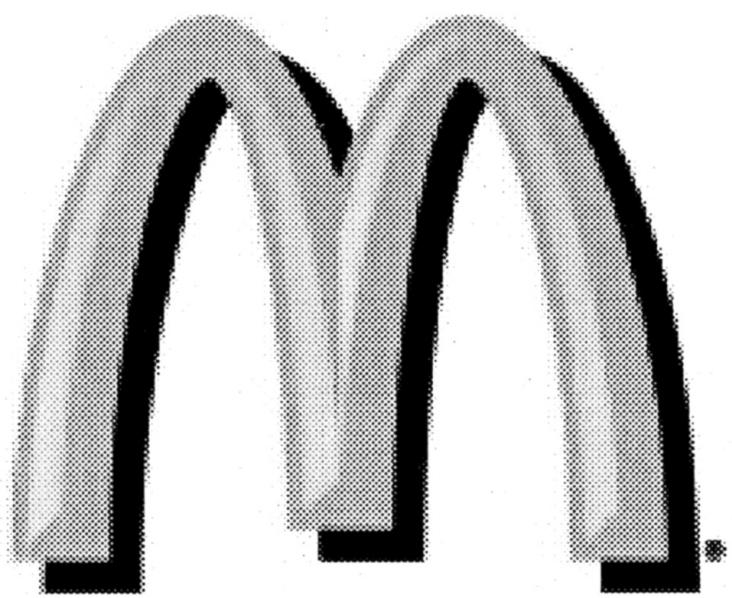
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