

## August 2018 Caregiver of the Month: Anita Cline!



### Family Devotion

Anita Cline began taking care of her 93 year old mother-in-law, Mary, eight years ago when Anita's husband passed away. Mary did not have any other children, which left Anita to take on the role of making sure Mary was taken care of. Mary has dementia. She has also fallen on multiple occasions which led to surgeries and long roads of recovery, which Anita has seen Mary through.

While Mary remained independent in her home, Anita would sneak over to her house every morning while she was sleeping to check on her, as Mary likes to sleep in. Several evenings during the week, Anita would go back to Mary's house when she got off work and they would watch Jeopardy together. Anita set up her meds, assisted her with grooming, and maintained her finances and the home. On Fridays they would go out to eat and do the grocery shopping. On Sundays Anita would take Mary to church. After church they would go out to dinner together and enjoy rides through the countryside.

Last August, Mary went to live in an assisted living facility as she required more oversight, yet Anita continues her caregiving duties. She administers shots into Mary's hip daily, and is Mary's biggest advocate making sure she is receiving the quality of care that she deserves. She continues to navigate the Medicare system making sure that the billing is done correctly. Anita frequently has lunch with Mary. They play cards together with Mary's peers and Anita fits right in just as if she is one of them.

"Being a caregiver is a commitment. It becomes your number one priority, just as if you were taking care of your own child," says Anita. "As a caregiver it's important that you know the mental, emotional and physical needs of the person you are caring for by developing a relationship and having a bond with them. A caregiver can be anybody, but if the relationship is not there, there may be some dissension if you are not on the same page."

Even though life tends to slow down as you age, Mary remains active, and she and Anita continue to go on their outings. Mary finds peace in the outdoors. Her favorite activity is to watch the eagles on the Eagle Bluffs that overlook the Missouri River. "It really is a cool experience," says Anita.