

## **February 2018 Caregiver of the Month: Maxine Hessel!**



### **A Daughters Love**

Maxine Hessel, a resident of Arizona, uprooted her life and moved to Missouri in 2011 where she stayed to care for her aging mother, Lorna, for over six years. Prior to this, Lorna would spend four months of the year with Maxine in Arizona. In 2011, Lorna was residing in an independent living apartment in Cape Girardeau, Missouri and fell. This is what led Maxine to give up her job in Arizona and move to Missouri to care for Lorna.

During this time, Lorna suffered from a number of medical conditions including COPD and dementia. After multiple facility admissions, resulting in poor care and injuries, Lorna's condition deteriorated. As a result, Maxine began providing quality of life care for Lorna which allowed Lorna to age at home with dignity and respect.

Maxine's care for Lorna brought hope and life to each day. "I can't take all of the credit for taking care of mother. A home health agency provided her eight hours of respite care. I also give praise to St. Francis Hospice. Mom received hospice on three separate occasions and they were a great support for us."

Together, they provided for Lorna's personal care needs including feeding, bathing, and dressing Lorna. Maxine also ensured Lorna's medical and social needs were met by arranging for weekly or monthly visits by a massage therapist, pastor, podiatrist home-care, and friends. Lorna's granddaughter, Nancee, regularly styled her hair and gave her manicures, further demonstrating to Lorna that she was valued and loved. Lorna was always dressed in an attractive blouse and earrings. Maxine took great care of Lorna's skin ensuring she never had a bed sore. Each month, Maxine brightened Lorna's room by covering the ceilings, walls, and windows with bright and cheery décor.

"We shared many interests such as traveling and creating fabric arts. Together, we made a yoyo coverlet that was placed on her casket for her funeral...she passed away on 1/17/18 at the age of 95."

Maxine's caring nature expanded outside of the home. Lorna was the inspiration for Maxine starting a mission of outreach to people who are shut-ins and shut-outs known as F.R.O.G. (Fully Relying on God). Maxine, her sister Marline, and Lorna would create CD covers that had artwork with an inspirational message on the inside. They were attached to a decorated paper bag for that particular month with treats inside. These "goody bags" were provided to care centers in Cape Girardeau and Perry Counties as well as to the Memory Group at Lutheran Children & Family Services, and to the Veterans Home.

Maxine shares a few tips that every caregiver should know: "In order to be truly happy, a person needs someone to LOVE, something to DO and something to HOPE for. Be the person that the care receiver can LOVE. GIVE the care receiver something to do (even if it is to listen to you read or sing). Encourage them to have a DREAM ...share your dream (s) with them. SMILE, it will make you look younger and make them feel younger."

Maxine still maintains her home in Arizona. Now at 67, she will soon be starting her own journey home.