November 16, 2009

The Sweet Smell of Memories Past

A social worker at Hospice of the Western Reserve was assigned to an elderly woman suffering from severe dementia. Her husband, who was also in poor shape, was her only caregiver. The husband struggled to meet the needs of his wife, and was so thankful for the services of Hospice of the Western Reserve.

One day the husband mentioned to the social worker that his wife’s favorite flower was the gardenia, and how he would love to find one for her. It was the flower he gave her when they attended their first dance together, and it was the flower she carried at their wedding.

The social worker spent an entire weekend searching local shops and florists for the elusive gardenia, a rare flower for the area and even rarer for the winter season. The social worker was ultimately successful, and took the gardenia to the wife the next day. Upon smelling the flower the wife had a moment of clarity. Although she had suffered from dementia for months, she knew exactly who her husband was, where she was, and most importantly who she was. The couple was able to savor their short time together and they were so grateful for the dedication of the social worker.

Do you have a story to share? Visit: http://www.hospicewr.org/tell_us_your_story_form.asp
For a full archive of stories and testimonials, visit http://www.hospicewr.org/template.asp?id=94.

Hospice of the Western Reserve is a community-based, non-profit agency providing comfort care and emotional support to terminally ill adults, seriously ill children, and their families, regardless of disease or ability to pay. Care is provided wherever the patient lives: in the home, a nursing facility, our hospice residential facilities or a hospital.

For more information contact: 216-383-2222 or 800-707-8922