



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **A Time of Remembrance**

Pull Quote

"Our goal for Guy after he was diagnosed with ALS was to be able to stay at home. Guy and our family were treated with care and compassion by everyone involved."

**—JOAN LAFONTAINE, GUY'S WIFE**

**PARK RAPIDS, MN (NOV. 17, 2017)** – This holiday season, CHI St. Joseph's Health will light up the Christmas Tree on Main Street in memory of Guy LaFontaine of Walker.

Wonderful husband, father, grandfather, employer, and friend – these are the words Joan LaFontaine uses when describing her husband, Guy. A Walker native, Guy moved to California with his family when he was a boy, but his heart remained in Minnesota. Following their marriage in 1972, Joan and Guy moved to Walker in 1973, where Guy owned a business and the couple raised their three children.

Last year, Guy and Joan faced a hard decision. Following his ALS diagnosis and lengthy illness, Guy's neurologist recommended the 64-year-old consider hospice. Joan shared that while deciding to opt for end-of-life care was difficult for both of them—she and Guy knew that being at home was best for him and their family.

"Guy's nurse and Hospice Care team were very helpful and took care of everything he needed, from medications to physical problems. If he needed something or had a problem, all I had to do was call – anytime, day or night. As a family of faith, it was important and comforting to us that Hospice Care was faith based," Joan says.

“We will be forever grateful to Hospice and the special care my husband, myself, and our family received. We will always remember and have a special place in our hearts for the “team” who lovingly cared for him until the end of his life,” Joan added.

CHI St. Joseph’s Health Hospice Care is about helping patients and families live as fully as possible. Providing care tailored to the wants and needs of each individual patient and their families is key. Generous donors to CHI St. Joseph’s Health Hospice Care make a difference in the patients, families, and loved ones facing end-of-life issues for whom we provide care.

“Our Hospice team is compassionate and delivers expert care,” says Jessica Jensen, RN, CHI St. Joseph’s Health Interim Hospice Care Director. “We focus on quality of life and are able to do that because our team is highly experienced and trained to provide pain and symptom management.”

Families are centered in care, as they are coached on how to care for the patient. Patients are assisted with medical needs and also the emotional, psychosocial, and spiritual needs that accompany end of life.

“We believe hospice is about living as fully as possible,” Jensen says.

During this holiday season of thanks and giving, the public is invited to join Hospice Care in a celebration of life and memories by giving a gift in honor or in memory of a loved one.

Gifts of \$25 or more to the Hospice Care Light Up A Life program help to bring individualized care to those in need of pain and symptom management, counseling, spiritual care, and respite services. Your support ensures quality hospice care close to home and 100 percent of your gift remains local.

The LaFontaine family is among 158 patients and their loved ones who received Hospice Care through CHI St. Joseph's Health this past year. Providing specialized quality healthcare with an emphasis on comfort and dignity has been Hospice Care's unique privilege for 30 years. Hospice Care has a passion for helping people live each day to the fullest, making more meaningful moments possible.

Please plan to attend the community tree-lighting ceremony at 6 p.m. Friday, Nov. 24, Main Street, Park Rapids and celebrate the season in honor or memory of those dear to you.

Donations can be made at CHI St. Joseph's Health south lobby in the Light Up a Life gift box, at participating area businesses in Park Rapids and Menahga or mailed to CHI St. Joseph's Health Foundation at 600 Pleasant Avenue, Park Rapids, MN 56470.

### **Cutline**

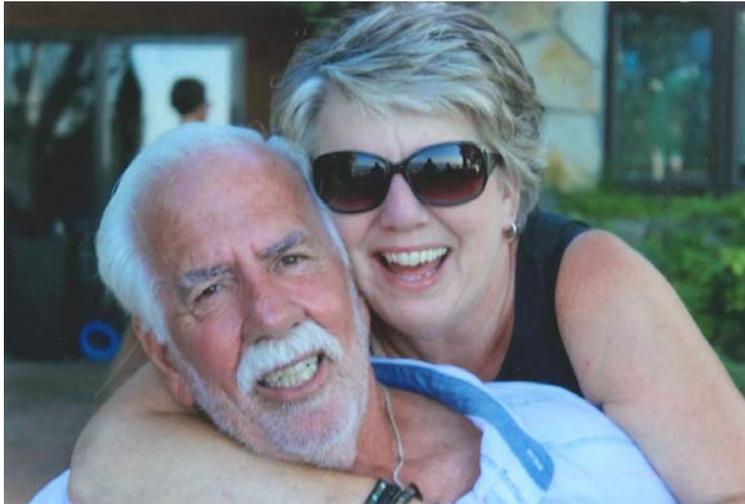


Photo of Guy & Joan: Guy was born April 10, 1952 and passed January 21, 2017

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### **About CHI St. Joseph's Health**

*CHI St. Joseph's Health is a 25-bed critical access hospital serving communities in Hubbard, Becker, Cass and Wadena Counties since 1946. In recent years, CHI St. Joseph's Health's award-winning teams received several national honors including: The Joint Commission Top Performer on Key Quality Measures in surgery; Top 100 Critical Access Hospital, HealthStrong; WomenCertified's America's Best Hospitals Women's Choice Award in obstetrics; and the Studer Group Fire Starter Healthcare Organization of the Month among other national, regional and state recognitions.*

## **About CHI**

*Catholic Health Initiatives, a nonprofit, faith-based health system formed in 1996 through the consolidation of four Catholic health systems, expresses its mission each day by creating and nurturing healthy communities in the hundreds of sites across the nation where we provide care. The nation's third-largest nonprofit health system, Englewood, Colorado-based CHI operates in 18 states and comprises 103 hospitals, including four academic health centers and major teaching hospitals as well as 30 critical-access facilities; community health-services organizations; accredited nursing colleges; home-health agencies; living communities; and other facilities and services that span the inpatient and outpatient continuum of care. In fiscal year 2015, CHI provided almost \$970 million in charity care and community benefit - an 8% increase over the previous year -- for programs and services for the poor, free clinics, education and research. Charity care and community benefit totaled more than \$1.6 billion with the inclusion of the unpaid costs of Medicare. The health system, which generated operating revenues of \$15.2 billion in fiscal year 2015, has total assets of approximately \$23 billion. Learn more at [www.catholichealthinitiatives.org](http://www.catholichealthinitiatives.org).*

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