

Hospice House Soon to Become Home

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The St. Mary's Hospice House is now under roof and awaiting the internal touches, such as walls dividing rooms and finishes to make the house into a warm, comfortable home for terminally ill patients in the last weeks of their lives.

Although the six-bedroom house is slated for completion in early summer, community support is still needed through both monetary donations and in-kind donations of construction materials such as shingles, carpet, tile, appliances and furnishings.

Naming opportunities are still available for the building, patient rooms, dining room, kitchen, children's playroom and the bereavement counseling room. There are also legacy donor opportunities for \$10,000 to honor a loved one on the Wall of Remembrance.

"It's really going to be a beautiful interior — it will look like a home," said Kathy Franzen, director of Hospice of St. Mary's. She said each room will have a different identity, much like a home, and a big family-style kitchen.

The house, which is about a mile off State Route 5 in Callaway, will serve patients generally in the last two to four weeks of life who may no longer be able to receive care in their own homes due to complicated treatment or family constraints. The house will be staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week to meet the needs of patients.

"The house will fill a great need in our community," Franzen said. "People want to come home to die, but family can't always fulfill the demanding role of a 24-hour caregiver."

Hospice of St. Mary's provides care regardless of a patient's ability to pay and Franzen said the organization relies heavily on fundraising money. The Board of Directors of Hospice of St. Mary's, Inc., looks forward to the creation of an endowment to sustain Hospice House operations. To learn how you can help Hospice of St. Mary's, call (301) 475-2023 or visit www.smhwecare.com/hospice.