



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 4, 2012

Survivors Find Bereavement Service in Roosevelt Ceremony

EDISON – Keeping with more than a decade of tradition, late October once again marked a “celebration of life,” for individuals who spent their final days in Roosevelt Care Center’s hospice program.

More than a dozen family and friends of the past year’s hospice patients, were invited back to share memories, connect with staff and fellow attendees and in some cases, even participate in the Oct. 20 ceremony.

“Some come to find closure; some come to reflect on the good times and others on the pain,” said the Rev. JoAnn Ihnat, a resident chaplain who’s led the service for four years now. “Everyone has a different feeling but everyone is there for the same purpose – to celebrate the wonderful life that has ended.”

This year’s theme was “Light a Candle and Remember Me” and keynote speakers included Roosevelt Administrator Dr. Frank Damiani and Paul Abbey, Director of Resident Services for the Middlesex County Improvement Authority, the organization charged with the operation’s oversight.

For this year’s programming, participants lit candles, shared prayers, musical selections and dissertations and read the names of the deceased aloud.

Typically, invitations for the celebration are mailed out months in advance.

“We can only hope they’ll come,” Ihnat said. “There’s never been a door closed here. That door remains open and we are connected even if years pass by.”

Aside from the ceremony, Roosevelt offers an array of bereavement support systems, from groups and networks to one-on-one assistance.

“Ironically, as one life ends another lifelong relationship begins here at Roosevelt,” Damiani said. “It’s our mission to not only see to the comfort of the patient, but also their families and friends, both in the here-and-now and the long run.”

MEDIA CONTACT: Jane Leal, 609-655-5141, jl@mciauth.com