



Maureen Horgan, the stepping stones supervisor at Providence Hospice of Seattle, works with patient Brandon Brauns. "Beets and Beans: Living and Dying with Hospice" is a half-hour documentary produced by local filmmaker Sue Perlmut of ClosetoHome Productions. Photos provided

Filmmaker focuses on hospice

'Beets and Beans' features scenes from city Hospicare

By James Pelligrino
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ITHACA — Filmmaker Sue Perlmut is set to premiere her documentary, "Beets and Beans: Living and Dying with Hospice," which was filmed at Ithaca Hospicare as well as a hospice in Seattle.

Two showings will take place at Cinemapolis at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Thursday. The film attempts to dispel some myths about what it means to work with a hospice provider. The video interweaves the journeys of patients, caregivers and family members at different points in their interactions with hospice services.

"It's about two hospitals, but it's also universal," Perlmut said.

Twenty years ago, Perlmut's mother died at a hospice in California. She was shocked to find that the treatment her mother received and the support she personally received from the staff was routine procedure for hospice.

"Hospice has a philosophy and the people who work for hospice believe in that philosophy, and live that philosophy, and make end of life a very different experience," Perlmut said.

Perlmut's father was in hospice for only two days when he fell ill years later, but the experience was very similar. That's when Perlmut decided she should give back to hospice in some way. She tried volunteering,



Joe Smellow is the Intergenerational Nature Program Coordinator at Hospicare in Ithaca.

but thought that she could give back the most by spreading the word about hospice through a documentary.

When asked what this documentary says about the hospice in Ithaca in particular, Perlmut explained, "It says that Ithaca is a place that can have a hospice program that is a model for other hospices around the country, that Ithaca has the resources in people, in funding and in philosophy that can support a model. Not all hospices have a residence and not all residences are as fine as the one we have here."

"Beets and Beans" was funded by the Park Foundation, the Ithaca Rotary Club and the Hospice Foundation. Trailers for the film can be seen at the "Beets and Beans" website at <http://beetsandbeans.com>.