

LOCALNEWS



Colleen Eckhart releases a butterfly in memory of a loved one Sunday.

Butterfly release offers time to reflect, celebrate

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

As a symbol of transformation, a butterfly represents everlasting life. The three stages of its short life — caterpillar representing the birth; chrysalis, death; and the butterfly, resurrection — remind us that life itself is precious and short.

These symbolic statements about the butterfly were read moments before about 300 monarchs were set free Sunday during Fairview Range Home Care and Hospice's ninth annual memorial butterfly release.

For friends and family members who released a butterfly in memory of a loved one who has passed away while in hospice care, the act symbolized the transformation of life to spirit and served as a reminder that as long as they're alive, their loved one will live on in memories.

"This is a time where we can take a time out and remember those who have died on hospice last year," Polly Hebig, branch supervisor of Fairview Range Home Care and Hospice, said of Sunday's event.

Polly Bjorkquist, volunteer/bereavement coordinator, said the butterfly has many symbolic meanings.

"It is a symbol of change, direction, transition, celebration, young love and soul," she said. "Like a butterfly, we are all beautiful in our own way."

The ceremony was ac-



Lori Foss, left, and Jody Chovan, smile as they release butterflies Sunday at the ninth annual Fairview Range Home Care and Hospice Memorial Butterfly Release at the AmericInn.



Sue Hamly watches as a butterfly balances on her fingers as Jadon Frank looks on.

companied by live music performed by Seth Berguson as well as stories and original poetry read by Paul Radford, Phyllis Karsnia and Norma Krats.

Before releasing the live butterflies, each contained in a special envelope, they were distributed to each participant. As the but-

terflies were released simultaneously into the sky, names of those who have died were read followed by the song, "I'll fly away."

During the release, several people in attendance were moved to tears as they reflected on and celebrated the lives of loved ones no longer living.

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