The Russell's, Clovis, New Mexico Hope Lodge guests (Caregiver Story)

By: Carley Thompson

## **American Cancer Society Hope Lodge is Home Away From Home**

## **Caregiver Expresses Gratitude for Free Lodging**

LUBBOCK, Texas – Month Date, Year -- For Robert and Donna Russell the American Cancer Society Hope Lodge in Lubbock became more than just a convenient place to stay. It became their home away from home, and it changed their outlook on life.

Cancer first came into the couple's lives in 2000 when Donna was diagnosed with melanoma. Now, cancer-free and one of nearly 12 million cancer survivors in the U.S., she's serving in the role as caregiver to her husband, Robert who's undergone radiation treatment for prostate cancer.

When the Russell's of Clovis, NM first received the news of Robert having to travel 100 miles away for treatment, they knew they needed to secure lodging near the hospital for a lengthy amount of time. They had previously stayed in hotels; however, they dreaded the lonely atmosphere it provided, along with the costly financial expenses. Fortunately, the Cancer Center suggested the American Cancer Society Hope Lodge which provides a temporary place for cancer patients and their caregivers to stay for free when their treatments are far from home. Guests are greeted with open arms and receive a private bedroom and bathroom. The facility also includes a kitchen, laundry facility, and comforting gathering spaces.

The couple knew that Hope Lodge was an amazing opportunity that they couldn't pass up, but they also couldn't help but feel apprehensive about staying at such a place. "We didn't like to talk about our problems to people", said Donna, "But after our first day at the Hope Lodge that changed. We did a complete 360 and formed a new outlook on life. We found a home away from home at Hope Lodge and a family we never thought

we'd have."

She added, "The atmosphere at Hope Lodge was very welcoming and an overall uplifting and positive experience. The staff was amazing and there's plenty of stuff to do: reading, watching TV, crafting, relaxing, and even playing Nintendo Wii! The Hope Lodge really did give us a whole lot of hope, and we thank the American Cancer Society for that."

## **About the American Cancer Society**

The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end suffering from cancer. As a global grassroots force of more than three million volunteers, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. We save lives by helping people stay well by preventing cancer or detecting it early; helping people get well by being there for them during and after a cancer diagnosis; by finding cures through investment in groundbreaking discovery; and by fighting back by rallying lawmakers to pass laws to defeat cancer and by rallying communities worldwide to join the fight. As the nation's largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, contributing about \$3.4 billion, we turn what we know about cancer into what we do. As a result, more than 11 million people in America who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more about us or to get help, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.