



Hospice of Cincinnati

The community not-for-profit hospice

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HOT OFF THE PRESS!



Hospice of Cincinnati's first-ever *Report to the Community* recently rolled off the presses. If you would like a copy, please call 513-792-7965.

Hospice of Cincinnati is sponsored by Bethesda Inc. in a collaborative community partnership with TriHealth and Mercy Health Partners.

Nuxhall's visit homerun with fan

David Kerl is a Reds fanatic. In his younger years, he closely followed every game, noted every stat and knew every player. "He always looked forward to every season," says his granddaughter, Lisa Ray, director of nursing at TriCounty Extended Care Center where the 103-year-old lives.

Kerl told Kathy Kiefer, his primary HOC nurse, that he had always wanted to meet Reds star Joe Nuxhall. Working with other staff members, Kiefer was able to arrange a visit. Nuxhall visited Kerl to help celebrate his 103rd birthday in July. "He is a very conservative person," Ray says. "I haven't seen him smile that way in years!"

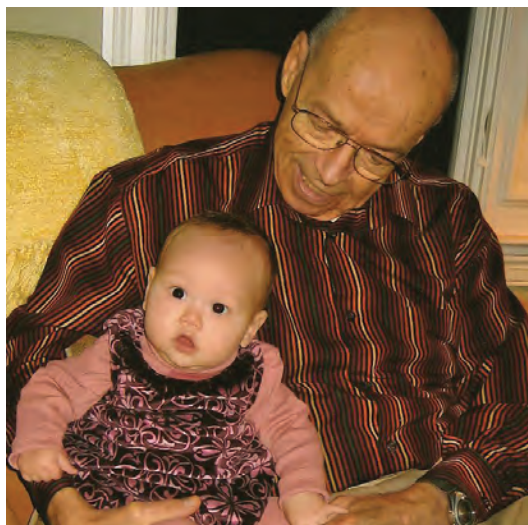
Kerl remembered Joe Nuxhall from his youth when he played football for Hamilton High School. "My grandfather recalled specific games and players," Ray says. "Joe was absolutely amazed that my grandpa could recall all of that." She is grateful Hospice of Cincinnati has



Joe Nuxhall's visit to Hospice of Cincinnati patient David Kerl delighted the die-hard baseball fan.

taken over the management of her grandfather's care. "Hospice has truly improved his quality of life."

Easing life's final journey



Richard Emery cherished time with his family, especially his grandchildren.

Margaret and Richard Emery had seen several friends travel life's final path hand-in-hand with the caring staff of Hospice of Cincinnati. And their oldest daughter was in the Blue Ash Inpatient Care Center for her final days. So when Richard's heart failure entered its final stage, Margaret moved him to Hospice of Cincinnati – East in Anderson. "I especially liked the fact that it is so close to where we live," she comments.

It was the little extras that made Richard's time there so special and that helped make his final days comfortable and calm. A CD player in his room allowed him to listen to his favorite music. "Every once in a while, he'd start singing," Margaret remembers. The large, inviting patient room also had a refrigerator, enabling her to bring in Richard's favorite breakfast food—cantaloupe—to eat every morning.

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Message from the CEO

For 30 years, we have been known as “the community not-for-profit hospice” in Greater Cincinnati. And while new hospices have sprung up, including for-profit hospices, Hospice of Cincinnati continues to be the clear market leader by a wide margin because we are never satisfied with simply providing care. With support from our generous community, we go beyond the basics of care to offer patients and families the highest quality, most comprehensive services available that preserve quality of life and personal dignity.

Sometimes going beyond is a matter of tuning in. And that’s just what one nurse did when she found out about her patient’s dream to meet Joe Nuxall (see front page). Doing that little extra made a huge difference for this patient. And this is but a typical example. Countless more happen every day – in our inpatient care centers, patients’ homes and in long-term care facilities. No matter where a patient is, our care consistently attempts to go beyond the basics.

This same dedication exists behind the scenes by the many people who support direct patient care. Whether working in Education Services or Accounting, our employees are committed to what they do and contribute to HOC’s ability to grow and serve more families in our community. A recent outstanding effort and outcome by two employees – heading up a project team to ensure HOC’s promptest possible reimbursement by Medicare for our caregiving services – will help us continue to operate with maximum financial efficiency (see story, this page). As another example, much behind-the-scenes work is occurring as we prepare to offer Butler County residents a new, greatly expanded Hospice of Hamilton location by early next year (see back page).

But it’s not just our staff who go above and beyond. Nearly 600 volunteers provide the Hospice of Cincinnati difference to the many thousands of patients and families we serve each year. And our generous community supports our work via their financial donations and other gifts. In fact, a new generation of HOC supporters is growing strong in their gifts of time, talent and treasure (see page 3). We also were honored recently when Boy Scout Troop 271’s Ian McLaughlin chose HOC for his Eagle project (see page 4).

Hospice of Cincinnati could not do what we do without the dedication and support of so many who believe in our mission of providing quality, compassionate, comfort-oriented and personalized end-of-life care to all who need it, regardless of ability to pay. It is this combined effort of HOC and our community that has propelled us to recognition as the community’s premier end-of-life resource.

All the Best,



Steve West
President and CEO



Employee of the Quarter

Teamwork results in success

Teamwork is key to Hospice of Cincinnati’s caring culture. Approaching patient care as a team, from the bedside to the back office, is one reason why 99 percent of those whose loved ones have received HOC’s care would recommend us to a family member or friend.

While most people associate the high quality of our teamwork with our frontline caregivers, what goes on behind the scenes is also a major reason why HOC has earned the reputation as a highly caring and efficient organization. It was a team of two—Carlotta Gons and Pam Westrup, RN—who recently worked together to put a critical behind-the-scenes process into place. Their success was noted when they were jointly named Employee of the Quarter.



Carlotta Gons and Pam Westrup RN

Achieving timely and comprehensive Medicare Hospice reimbursement is a critical function for HOC. However, this function has become more challenging over the last several years due to HOC’s considerable recent growth and the cumbersome, manual process that previously existed. Medicare

Hospice regulations require signed certifications of a patient’s terminal illness by his attending physician and HOC’s medical director before HOC can submit a bill to Medicare, and these certifications must be obtained within two days of a patient’s admission to receive maximum reimbursement.

Gons and Westrup, who work in HOC’s referral center, developed a new automated process that makes it easier for HOC to track the certifications and communicate their status throughout the organization. The new process optimizes HOC’s ability to achieve full Medicare reimbursement. “It really is a big deal because if we don’t obtain these certifications in a timely manner, then we can’t get reimbursed for the services we provide,” Gons says.

“This project was far above and beyond their normal responsibilities,” comments Kathy Ritter, manager of Clinical Services. “They have improved a procedure that is crucial to our ability to be reimbursed. It takes absolutely meticulous follow-up.”

If you do not wish to receive future issues of Hospice of Cincinnati’s quarterly newsletter, or any other future fundraising communications from Hospice of Cincinnati of Cincinnati, Ohio, you may request to be deleted from our mail list. Please send a letter to the below address requesting to be deleted from the Hospice of Cincinnati mail list.

ATTN: Hospice of Cincinnati List Manager
Bethesda Foundation Inc. • 10506 Montgomery Road, Suite 304 • Cincinnati, Ohio 45242

A new generation of HOC supporters

A new generation of supporters is developing at Hospice of Cincinnati. These young people bring youth, vitality and a passion for helping others. The following stories offer a glimpse into how this new generation is making a difference at Hospice of Cincinnati.



Grace Bertsch: Turning compassion into action

Grace Bertsch wanted to volunteer for an organization where she could make a difference. “She is an incredibly compassionate person,” says her mother, Brenda. For the past four

years, Grace has volunteered at the Blue Ash Inpatient Care Center every Sunday. “I serve lunch to the patients, feed them if they need it ... really, anything the nurses need me to do,” she explains. For her dedication to Hospice of Cincinnati, Grace recently was awarded the Simon Lazarus, Jr. Human Relations Award by the American Jewish Committee. “She works in a setting that would be overwhelming to most teenagers, and even many adults,” said her nominator. “She does it with a calm smile and a warm heart.” A 2007 graduate of Summit Country Day School, Grace received a \$500 savings bond, which she plans to use to help defray expenses at Xavier University this year. “This experience has helped give me a better look at death and dying and how people get through it,” Grace says.



Kylee Fitzgerald: Fundraising starts at early age

Kylee Fitzgerald loved her grandmother. So when her grandmother moved to Hospice of Cincinnati’s Blue Ash Inpatient Care Center, she visited often.

“Kylee called it grandma’s new home,” remembers her mother, Robyn. “She loved playing on the playground and visiting the play room.”

Kylee thought so much of her grandmother that when she was at her other grandparents’ street sale, she came up with an idea to raise money. Kylee sold water bottles for 50 cents each and raised more than \$55. “We were so proud of her for thinking of this!” Robyn exclaims.

Kylee made a sign that said, “Grandma has bad cancer so hospice can take care of her.” The results, Robyn says, were amazing. “People stopped by to talk about friends and family who had been helped by Hospice of Cincinnati. It was wonderful to hear all the stories about how Hospice has touched so many people.”



Chad VonLehman: Event supporter gets repaid

Chad VonLehman had played golf with his priest, Father Len Wenke, many times. But the clergyman had never before brought VonLehman the kind of luck he had at this year’s Hospice Summertime Classic, an event that supports HOC’s children’s bereavement program, Fernside. VonLehman won a jaguar lease with a hole-in-one on the 3rd hole! “I was getting ready to hit the ball when

Father Len said, ‘Chad, I see a jag in your future.’ The ball went right in the hole.”

A 25-year-old law student, VonLehman benefited from Fernside’s services when he was 12-years-old upon the death of his father. “I remember a lot of camaraderie with other kids, playing basketball and eating pizza,” he says. Participating in the annual golf event is his way of giving back.

Easing Life

continued from cover

Hospice of Cincinnati's lovely solarium provided a quiet, peaceful place for Richard to visit with his great-grandchildren. "I was so grateful Richard was here long enough to hold the babies," Margaret says.

Hospice of Cincinnati's care extended to Margaret as well. "They brought me supper when I was there through the dinner hour," she says. And HOC grief counselor Polly Peterson supported Margaret after Richard passed away. "We had wonderful conversations," Margaret recalls. While she feels she is not ready to attend a grief support group, she knows the support will be there for her when and if she needs it. For now, she is simply thankful for the care that Richard received while at HOC. "Everyone there was so wonderful."

Outreach effort replaces misconceptions with information

Pastor James Cantrell says the biggest misconception his congregation had about Hospice of Cincinnati was that it is simply a place to send your loved ones to die. "Most people didn't know that Hospice of Cincinnati would come to them in their home," says the pastor of Zion Baptist Church in Avondale. James Cowan, HOC manager of Diverse Markets, is working diligently to eliminate these misconceptions among varying communities and cultures.



To increase awareness of hospice care, HOC participated in the Black Family Reunion in August. Visitors to the booth received information and trinkets, and even had the opportunity to win prizes by demonstrating their knowledge about hospice care. More than 200,000 people of all ages visited this annual family-oriented event.

Cantrell notes. "They didn't realize that Hospice can help you get to a point where you are feeling better, then you can go back home and have a life for a while."

In partnership with HOC's Education Department, Cowan also has trained HOC staff to be more aware of and sensitive to the needs of varying ethnic groups. "Religion, belief systems and culture can greatly impact the way in which people approach death," he says. "We need to be aware of this and work with each individual patient and family to meet their specific needs."

To better reach the African American community, Cowan has done a great deal of partnering with churches like Zion Baptist and other churches located in Avondale, Evanston and Walnut Hills. "African American congregations typically rely heavily on their ministers for information," Cowan contends. In addition to working with churches, Cowan has met with senior citizen groups and community organizations to encourage an accurate information exchange about end-of-life issues and HOC services.

Cowan also has worked with churches and community leaders in organizing focus groups to assess awareness and perceptions regarding HOC. "Most people thought Hospice was only for the very end," Pastor

Another good turn

Ian McLaughlin, a senior at Elder High School and a member of Boy Scout Troop 271, completed his Eagle Scout project by making 30 beautiful bird feeders to hang in the gardens of the Blue Ash Inpatient Care Center. The wood was donated by Home Depot in Western Hills, and George Custer of Awards & Sign Graphics donated the plaques for the bird feeders.

Congratulations, Ian, on your accomplishment, and thank you for your gift to our patients!



Left to right are: Ken Peters, Dan Beard Council; Barbara McLaughlin and Timothy McLaughlin, parents; Ian McLaughlin; Barbara Kitchen, HOC volunteer coordinator; Steve West, HOC president and CEO; Jamie Favret, RN, manager, Blue Ash Inpatient Care Center; and Stan Snodgrass, assistant scoutmaster, Troop 271.

From the Foundation

Spend unused retirement assets wisely

Gary Algie
Director, Planned
Giving/Major Gifts



Thousands of Greater Cincinnatians have taken advantage of generous tax incentives provided by Congress to encourage savings for their retirement. These plans — IRAs, tax sheltered annuities, 401Ks, Keoghs and others — have assets that build tax-free for retirement use.

Many people do not realize that no matter what the size of their estate, these unused assets are included as part of the taxable estate at their death. They are subject to IRS income tax and can also be subject to federal and state estate taxes as well. Therefore, the taxing of these assets can easily exceed 50 percent of their value.

Rather than see unused retirement assets go toward taxes, investors can direct these assets to be used as charitable gifts to

Hospice of Cincinnati. In doing so, the assets become fully deductible from the estate and bypass tax obligations.

Additionally, charitable gifts can benefit heirs as well when they are established as trusts. In some cases, the income that heirs receive from trusts can be higher than if they had received an outright sum directly from the estate. By naming heirs as trust beneficiaries, they receive income from the trust for a designated number of years, at which time the remainder of the trust then goes to Hospice of Cincinnati.

If you would like to discuss ways to protect your assets while helping further the mission of Hospice of Cincinnati, please call me for more information at 513-745-1622 or send e-mail to gary_algie@trihealth.com.

Greens and gab help Fernside



Contributing to this year's successful Hospice of Cincinnati Summertime Classic were event chairs Jackie West; Fritz Turton, president and CEO, Bunnell Hill Development; and Sharon Streck, owner, Coco's at Park Place.

Presented by Wal-Mart, the sixth annual Hospice of Cincinnati Summertime Classic, held June 3 and 4, raised more than \$212,000 to benefit Fernside, Hospice of Cincinnati's children's bereavement program.

This two-day event offers the opportunity for both golfers and non-golfers to support Fernside. On Sunday, more than 350 guests enjoyed the festive summertime-fair-themed dinner at the Northern Kentucky Convention Center as well as a silent auction that featured more than 120 unique packages. Channel 12 WKRC's Cammy Dierking hosted the evening's program, and entertainment was provided by The Buffalo Ridge Jazz Band.

Monday's golf tournament was played in two flights with more than 220 golfers. Fernside alumnus, Chad VonLehman, had a hole-in-one and won a two-year lease on a Jaguar. Jaguar of Cincinnati sponsored all hole-in-one contests.

Organizers extend special thanks to presenting sponsor, Wal-Mart, as well as our other generous major sponsors including TriHealth, Mercy Health Partners, Ablecare Medical, American Nursing Care, AmeriMed, Fifth Third Bank, Hospice Pharmacia, Nippert Jewelers, Patient Transport Services, Staples, Therapy Support and WMKV 89.3 FM.

Planning for the 2008 Summertime Classic is underway! Please contact Diana Fogel at 513-745-1617 or diana_fogel@trihealth.com if you are interested in serving on next year's committee, volunteering at the event, golfing or considering sponsorship.

Bereavement Offerings

Grief support groups are available at our Anderson, Blue Ash, Hamilton and Western Hills locations. For information about these programs and other Hospice of Cincinnati bereavement services, please call: Alan Gruber at 513-686-8120, Martin Lawson at 513-792-6914, Claire Peasley at 513-686-8121, or Polly Peterson at 513-686-8122.

Grief and the Holidays

This adult meeting focuses on ways to cope with your grief during the holiday season and other special days. Please choose one session.

Nov. 28, 1-2:00 p.m.

Dec. 6, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Dec. 13, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Dec. 19, 1-2:00 p.m.

Group size is limited to 12 participants. For more information or to register, call Polly Peterson at 513-686-8122.

Blue Ash, 4310 Cooper Road

Blue Ash grief support group

Jan. 10 – Feb. 28, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

2nd Floor Conference Room, 4310 Cooper Road.

Contact Alan Gruber at 513-686-8120 for information or to register.

Western Hills, 2950 West Park Drive

Western Hills grief support group

Dates to be determined, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Mercy Franciscan at West Park, 2950 West Park Drive.

Contact Claire Peasley at 513-686-8121 for more information or to register.

Training opportunities for new volunteers

Interested in volunteering at Hospice of Cincinnati?

Hospice of Cincinnati offers numerous volunteer training classes throughout the year. To become a volunteer, please visit our website, hospiceofcincinnati.org, or call Judy Russell at 513-792-6989. We look forward to hearing from you!

All the information you need with a touch of your mouse

Hospice of Cincinnati is constantly updating our website to provide current information about our comprehensive end-of-life services. We recently redesigned the site to make it more user-friendly for families who look to us for guidance with their end-of-life journey. One new feature, an interactive questionnaire, can help you decide if hospice care is appropriate for your loved one, and new links help connect you with other resources and information.

So please, take a minute to visit www.hospiceofcincinnati.org. We hope you'll find just what you need.



Caregivers who are struggling to care for their loved ones can answer these questions to help them determine if it is time to call Hospice of Cincinnati.

Great ways to support HOC during the holidays



Do you like to give music as gifts? Do you need to re-supply your stash of holiday greeting cards? You can buy these items and cross a few

things off your holiday list while helping HOC at the same time.

Soothing sounds

Delicate sounds from a harp and hauntingly rich tones of a Native American flute can fill the homes of people on your gift list. The Adagio Trio—featuring a harp, flute and cello—has several albums available for purchase. “Stillpoint”, “Sanctuary” and “Evensong” are compilations of classical, folk, Irish and religious music. “Winter Gift” has a variety of holiday music. Each CD is \$15, with \$4 donated to HOC.

Franchot Ballinger’s CD “Quiet Heart” demonstrates the ancient sounds of the

Native American flute. Ballinger also donates a portion of each CD to HOC. CDs are available for purchase at HOC inpatient care centers in Blue Ash, Hamilton, Anderson and Western Hills with a portion donated to HOC.



Charming cards

Order your holiday cards from the Bethesda Auxiliary, and let your heart be warmed this winter with the knowledge that proceeds from the sale of these adorable cards will benefit HOC. Cards are

available with and without a holiday message. Cards with holiday message are \$12 for a box of 12. Inside message reads: “Warmest thoughts and Best Wishes for a wonderful Holiday Season and a very Happy New Year.” Cards without holiday message (blank inside) are \$8 for a box of 10. To order, contact Jerri Spurlock at (513) 745-1618 or email at jerri_spurlock@trihealth.com.



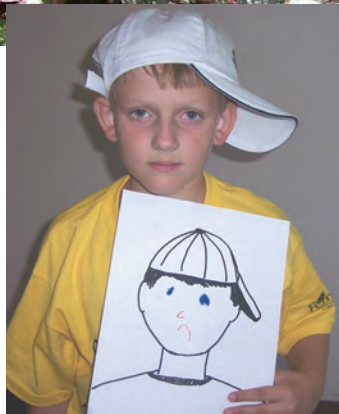
Celebration of Life!

Help families facing terminal illness celebrate life. Purchase lights, in honor or memory of a loved one, to decorate our main campus this holiday season, and know that your gift will brighten the lives of families throughout Greater Cincinnati. Lights can be purchased for \$25 each. Please call Diana Fogel at 513-745-1617 for more information.

Fun at camp leads to healing

Camp WeBelong campers rode the ups and downs of grief with this year’s new theme, “Life as a Roller Coaster.” Held at Camp Joy in August, camp provided children ages 7 to 12 the opportunity to participate in camp activities, including canoeing, fishing, hiking and swimming. And they were surrounded by volunteer camp counselors and peers who have experienced similar loss. Daily sharing circles provided the opportunity for campers to express their grief using fun activities centered on the amusement park theme.

Many thanks to our sponsors who helped make Camp WeBelong possible: Summertime Kids, Cincy Kids 4 Kids, Honeywell and an anonymous donor.



A messy but satisfying shaving cream activity for the entire crew at Camp WeBelong.

This camper feels safe showing his real feelings, surrounded by other grieving children and counselors trained in helping children deal with their grief.

HOH gets better space, more permanent home



This spring, Hospice of Hamilton will serve Butler County residents in a new 16-bed inpatient care center that will offer more amenities, more space and a more permanent location.

Providing the highest quality end-of-life care close to home continues to be one of Hospice of Cincinnati's highest priorities. To solidify HOC's commitment to Hamilton and surrounding Butler County communities and to meet growing demand, 24,000 square feet of the former Pillsbury plant at 1010 Eaton Ave. soon will provide a permanent home for HOC's affiliate, Hospice of Hamilton.

Leased space at HOH's current inpatient facility at Sunrise Assisted Living has become inadequate. Only 11 rooms are available, and they do not provide the space and family room

that has increasingly become such an important part of hospice care. Last year, more than 900 patients and their families sought care from HOH. The physical layout at Sunrise simply does not provide the privacy families need during this very difficult time in their lives.

The new facility, scheduled to open this spring, continues a longtime commitment to the Hamilton community that began in 1996. When complete, it will include a 16-bed inpatient care center to better meet the growing demand of Butler County residents. This long-vacant facility will be restored to highlight its historical attractiveness in a beautiful Hamilton neighborhood. It will include larger patient rooms and gathering spaces, new amenities such as a chapel and kitchen area, and beautifully landscaped, peaceful gardens. Enhanced holistic services for patients and families will be possible as well as expanded bereavement services.

"Our intent is to offer a more permanent inpatient care center, modeled after our flagship Blue Ash center, that will serve the Butler County community in many years to come," comments HOC President and CEO Steve West. "The facility will elicit the same ambiance, quality and comfort that has become synonymous with the Hospice of Cincinnati name."

Hospice of Hamilton's new inpatient care center will open this Spring.



The community not-for-profit hospice

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