



# Journey

A PUBLICATION FROM HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE

WINTER 2020-2021

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## STAY IN TOUCH

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## OUR MISSION

*Hospice of the Western Reserve provides palliative and end-of-life care, caregiver support, and bereavement services throughout Northern Ohio.*

*In celebration of the individual worth of each life, we strive to relieve suffering, enhance comfort, promote quality of life, foster choice in end-of-life care, and support effective grieving.*



Being together  
*matters.*

THE STORY OF EVA ROSENBERG

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## Dear Friends,

I hope you and your family are staying safe and well. A year ago, none of us could have imagined our entire way of life would be uprooted. COVID-19 has touched our families, friends, businesses, schools, places of worship – even our holiday traditions. It has physically separated us when we are most in need of togetherness.

Sometimes, adversity – although unwanted – inspires innovation. This is certainly true at Hospice of the Western Reserve. We have adapted and found creative new ways to fulfill our mission in the community.

By expanding telehealth capabilities, nurses, social workers and spiritual care coordinators are conducting video-based visits and maintaining regular contact while observing social distancing.

No one should be alone at the end of life, so our nurses still make in-person visits during the admissions process and whenever they are needed to keep patients comfortable. Hospice nursing assistants provide personal care, supporting each person with dignity and compassion. Nurses and nursing assistants always follow CDC guidelines, wearing masks and gloves.

In the last few months we've seen how it's often the little things that mean the most, like arranging a virtual jam session with our music therapist for a patient who plays the harmonica, or connecting a family via the web so they can watch as one of our veteran volunteers honors their loved one's military service.

We are inspired by our volunteers and the thoughtful ways they are providing support, whether it's sewing hundreds of masks for our families, arranging pet therapy window visits at nursing homes or making weekly calls to check on families between visits.

Grief support is more crucial than ever. Our bereavement team has created a virtual memorial service so families can come together online to honor their loved ones through music, poetry and comforting messages from their care teams. Web-based workshops allow participants to create art memorializing their special person. A selection of virtual grief support groups is creating vital connections with others in this time of social distancing.

As we begin a new decade together, we are so grateful for your support of our important work. We could not do it without you. We wish you a safe and healthy 2021, and we look forward to a time when we can all be together again.



**Bill Finn**

*President and Chief Executive Officer*



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## Being together *matters*

At Hospice of the Western Reserve, we have always known that being together matters. Helping families stay connected is what we are all about, and that is never more important than at the end of life. The coronavirus pandemic has brought this into heartbreaking focus.

We believe no one should die alone and afraid. Fortunately, by thoughtfully modifying our processes and finding creative ways to incorporate technology, we are continuing to keep families safely connected – even in the last moments.

Our patient Eva Rosenberg is a perfect example. Eva lived a life filled with purpose and meaning. She was an early advocate for women's equality, a passionate civil rights supporter and a proponent of better wages and working conditions for teachers.

Eva volunteered for the AARP and re-established the Hebrew Congregation of Chautauqua, serving as its president for many years. At age 95, she received an award from the Rose Institution at Menorah Park for taking more than 200 college-level courses in a lifelong learning program. At 102, she showed only minor signs of slowing down.

Eva's greatest fear was dying alone. During the pandemic, assisted living communities faced the difficult choice of restricting visitation to protect their residents. As a result, Eva was unable to see her family for 10 weeks.

As Eva's health declined, her Hospice of the Western Reserve nurse collaborated with the facility to allow Eva to safely see her family again. Her children embraced her, and they were able to tell their mother just how much they loved her.

If you believe that being with family at the end of life matters, you can help. Your gift allows us to continue to help families like Eva's, and to provide the services that set our care apart when they are most needed. To make a gift, go online at [hospicewr.org/donate](https://hospicewr.org/donate), or give us a call at **855.475.0245**.

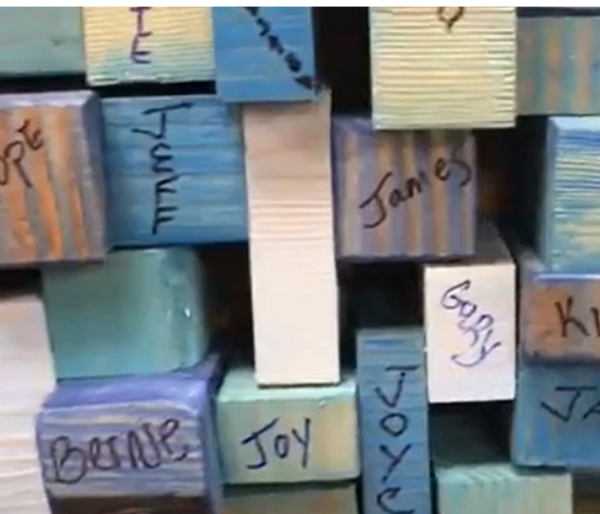




Virtual veterans recognition ceremony



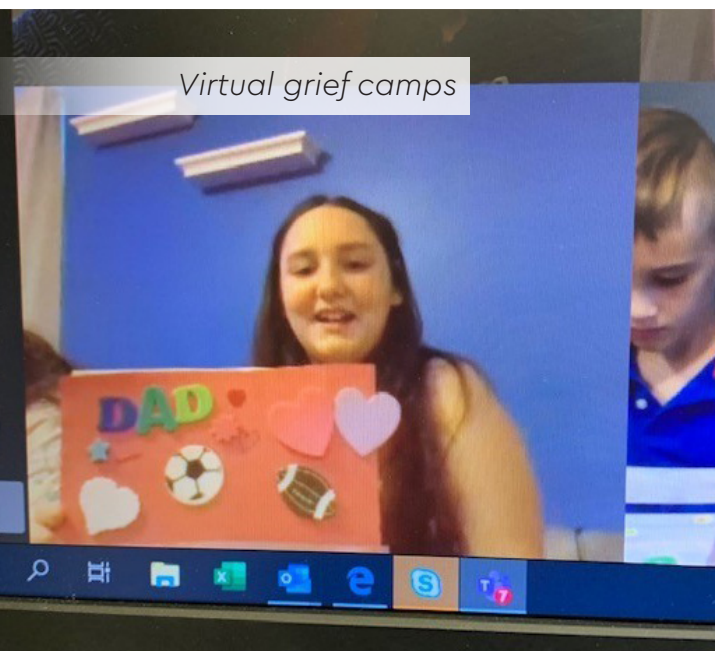
Therapy dog window visits



## Your family. Our purpose. Together.



Every life deserves to be remembered. This patient memorial sculpture pays tribute to every patient receiving care from the Ashtabula team over the past year. Team members have handwritten the first names of every person on the diamond. Pictured is team leader Cathy Westcott.



Virtual grief camps



Music therapy



# One-Stop Shopping:

## Christmas Treasures Relocates Inside Life's Treasures

Shopping at Christmas Treasures is always one of Medina's most eagerly anticipated holiday traditions. This year, bargain hunters can look forward to the same experience but with the added convenience of one-stop shopping. Rather than operating as a stand-alone location, Christmas Treasures has relocated inside Life's Treasures Thrift Shop, 317 S. Court St., Medina. Christmas merchandise is available throughout the holiday season. The store is following all COVID-19 guidelines and has protocols in place to protect everyone's safety.

The popular resale shop is operated by volunteers from HMC Hospice of Medina County. All revenue benefits patients and families in Medina County. Revised hours for the store are Monday – Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"Visitors will find a large selection of lifelike trees, wreaths, centerpieces and ornaments in dozens of styles. Other items include collectible Santas and snowmen, lights, stocking stuffers, books and CDs, holiday apparel, china, garlands, bows and cookie tins," said store manager Stephanie Furey.



### AMES FAMILY HOSPICE HOUSE

30080 Hospice Way  
Westlake, Ohio 44145-1077  
440.414.7349 or 835.281.5727

### ASHTABULA OFFICE

1166 Lake Avenue  
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440.997.6619

### DAVID SIMPSON HOSPICE HOUSE AND LAKESHORE CAMPUS

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### HEADQUARTERS

17876 St. Clair Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44110  
216.383.2222 or 800.707.8922

### LORAIN COUNTY OFFICE

2173 N. Ridge Road E., Suite H  
Lorain, OH 44055-3400  
440.787.2080

### HMC HOSPICE OF MEDINA COUNTY

5075 Windfall Road  
Medina, OH 44256  
330.722.4771

### THE ROBERTSON BEREAVEMENT CENTER

5075 Windfall Road  
Medina, OH 44256  
330.725.1900

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22730 Fairview Center Drive  
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*Life's Treasures volunteers are needed to help in many roles, whether it's working behind the scenes to help organize, price and display merchandise or serving customers. Hours are flexible to accommodate almost any schedule. For more information, stop in and ask for the manager on duty or call 330.723.2045.*



*Journey* is produced by the Marketing Communications team at Hospice of the Western Reserve. To contact the team, or request the digital edition, please send an email to [communication@hospicewr.org](mailto:communication@hospicewr.org).

For previous issues of *Journey*, visit [hospicewr.org/journey](http://hospicewr.org/journey).

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Jude and Bill Stigelman

## Hospice Care Inspires Legacy Gift

When Bill Stigelman retired, he had some free time and was looking for meaningful ways to spend it. With his background as a former pharmacist and a military veteran, a fellow Hospice of the Western Reserve board member thought he could add a useful perspective and expertise. He had no idea that his own wife, Jude, would need HWR's services in just a few short years.

When Jude was diagnosed with terminal metastatic lung cancer, she embarked on an intensive treatment regimen that included radiation, chemotherapy and palliative care. Once active treatment had run its course, Jude and Bill turned to Hospice of the Western Reserve.

The morning of Jude's first full day at David Simpson Hospice House, Bill arrived to stay with Jude, only to find her bed gone and her room empty. After a few seconds of dark thoughts, he realized she was outside on her own personal patio soaking up the sun! Her nurse had asked if she would like to go outside.

"From the first moment Jude set foot in David Simpson Hospice House, she couldn't have received more tender, loving care," Bill said. "To this day, I marvel that not once during Jude's six-plus weeks there did she, her sister Molly or I ever experience anything but the best care and support."

Since Jude's death, Bill has been a dedicated member of the Hospice of the Western Reserve Board of Directors. His contributions range from lending clinical expertise, to leading the annual Walk to Remember fundraiser as a committee member and "Team Jude" organizer, to serving on the planned giving committee. "I made the decision to honor Jude's memory by making meaningful contributions, including a legacy gift designation in my will," said Bill.

**To learn how you can include Hospice of the Western Reserve in your estate plans, contact Holly Selvaggi at 216.255.9066 or [hselvaggi@hospicewr.org](mailto:hselvaggi@hospicewr.org).**

## Honoring Loved Ones During the Pandemic

Since the beginning of the healthcare crisis, life has changed dramatically. For those who are grieving, these changes can be especially overwhelming. Not being able to hold a funeral or celebration of life causes feelings of anxiety, frustration, sadness and isolation in a world of unfinished business. Because there is no definitive end date to grief, the landscapes of our lives are forever altered no matter the circumstances.

When we're not able to begin the grief process as our customs and beliefs have taught us, how do we honor loved ones in the meantime? Here are a few ideas to consider:

- *Plan a virtual memorial with those closest to you. You can do this via Zoom, Microsoft Teams, FaceTime or other platforms. Share favorite memories and photos of your loved one on the web*
- *Look through photos and create a book or board that you can use in the future at a celebration of life*
- *Light a candle while listening to your favorite music and take time to remember*
- *Create a legacy book with stories of your time together*
- *Write daily to your special person in a journal. You don't need to share it with anyone if you don't want. This spiritual connection can provide a healing way to release your deepest thoughts and feelings*

Regardless of how you choose to honor your loved one, you are not alone. Western Reserve Grief Services provides a variety of support options, including a private Facebook group, virtual support groups, the healing power of art therapy through virtual Healing Arts Workshops and other online resources. We continue to be here for you. **For more information, call 800.707.8922 or go online: [hospicewr.org/griefandloss](http://hospicewr.org/griefandloss).**



# HWR Clinicians Earn National Recognition

Congratulations to Judy Bartel, Chief Clinical Officer, and Nancy Washko, Hospice Nursing Assistant, for achieving national awards from Hospice and Palliative Care Credentialing Center, the organization that provides specialty certification to 15,500 healthcare professionals nationwide. Judy has been named "Certified Hospice and Palliative Care Administrator of the Year" and Nancy was named "Certified Hospice and Palliative Care Nursing Assistant of the Year."

## Judy Bartel



**Judy is recognized as a pioneer and national leader in both serious illness and hospice care.**

She entered palliative nursing when it was a comparatively new specialty. She innovated a dementia care program that adapts communications and engages individuals in care decisions earlier in their disease process and a renal disease model that integrates palliative care with dialysis services. One of her crowning achievements was developing Western Reserve Navigator (WRN), a community palliative care program, one of very few of its type in the country. WRN helps patients living with advanced illness maintain independence and prevent hospitalizations by managing symptoms at home. The program earned a national Circle of Life award from the American Hospital Association in 2019.

This year, the COVID-19 pandemic presented previously unimaginable challenges. Judy's strategic leadership helped HWR's clinical teams navigate and adapt to the pandemic's changing complexities. She collaborated with other clinical leaders who dealt with the pandemic before it arrived in Ohio. She continues to confer and share best practices with colleagues across the U.S.

## Nancy Washko



**Nancy joined HWR in 2014. "From the moment she interviewed for the position, it was clear that she had a heart for hospice," said Lisa Carrigan Tomm, RN, BSN, clinical team leader.**

"She serves as a wonderful mentor and role model for our new Hospice Nursing Assistants. She shows them that what matters most is making the best of every single day our patients have left."

"When I think of a person I want caring for me at the end of my life, I see Nancy Washko," added social worker Julia Wasilewski. "She is loved by so many for her calming and compassionate demeanor. She is a wonderful listener and many of our patients and their loved ones feel comforted by her willingness to provide supportive presence and validation."

Some of the most touching comments about Nancy's work come from a former patient's husband, who was married to his wife for nearly 50 years. He reflected on the exceptional care his beloved wife received. She had been coping with a dual diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and multiple myeloma:

"Nancy shared with me that she had spent many years working in another profession," he said. "Then, her mother became ill, and ended up in hospice. When Nancy witnessed how lovingly the nursing assistants cared for her mother, she knew that she had received a calling to do the same for others. She not only does everything the nursing assistants are paid to do, thoroughly and tenderly, but she does it with a spirit of sacredness. Her example communicates an expression of love for the value and dignity of life."

Mark your calendars for Sunday, June 13, 2021, for the Walk to Remember, Hospice of the Western Reserve's largest community fundraiser of the year. As the pandemic and necessary adjustments continue to evolve, we will provide additional details. Whether we end up gathering together for a traditional event, in smaller family groups or virtually, your participation matters. Proceeds from the Walk allow HWR to continue providing services not covered by insurance like our pediatric hospice program, Healing Arts workshops, virtual grief support groups and award-winning palliative care program.





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## 100 for Hospice Event Benefits Medina County Families

Twelve years ago, Medina business owner and philanthropist Pat Spoerndle decided to put his passion for golf to work to give back to his hometown community. That's when the concept behind his unique annual fundraiser, 100 for Hospice, was born. The event's name signifies the percentage of money raised that goes directly to Hospice of Medina County and the number of holes of golf Pat plays in one day. He solicits donations from individual donors and Medina businesses to support his efforts.

Most in-person fundraisers had to be canceled this year due to the pandemic. However, the unique solo nature of Pat's signature event inspired him to continue. So, on Aug. 24, he once again took to the links to play 100 consecutive holes of golf in a single day at Fox Meadow Country Club. Joining him was "Centurion" Mark Dorman, who earned the opportunity to participate with Pat on the golf course due to his generous \$10,000 contribution to last year's event. This year's outing raised an amazing \$34,500 for Hospice of Medina County. Since its inception, the event has raised more than \$354,000.

"We are incredibly grateful to Pat for his ongoing dedication to helping hospice families in Medina, especially during these extraordinarily challenging times. We appreciate the generous support of so many businesses and individuals in the Medina community," added Bill Finn, President and CEO.



Pat Spoerndle