

Every Day Matters

A NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF **GENESIS HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE**



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Letter from the director

Dear families and friends,

As a charitable, nonprofit organization, Genesis Hospice

Care relies on an exceptional group of people – our volunteers – to help us provide compassionate, end-of-life care for those in our community. People who volunteer for hospice have often experienced the care first-hand through a loved one’s journey, and they know how meaningful it is to have the support they need.

Medicare requires that 5% of our total patient care hours be delivered by a volunteer. This requirement includes activities like telephone calls, visiting patients in their homes, providing art or music to patients at the bedside, transportation for shopping, doctor’s visits and errands, and time spent on paperwork.

We are so grateful to our volunteers for the important work they do to make every day matter to our patients and their families.

Pebbles Thornton

Pebbles Thornton, MSN, RN, OCN

Director, Genesis Cancer, Palliative Medicine and Hospice Services



Ben Jennings

Ben Jennings graduated from Ohio University with a Bachelor of Science (BS) Degree in Education in the spring of 1969. In September the same year, the United States government drafted him to join the Army. He was sent to Vietnam.

Unlike many veterans, Ben does not mind talking about his military service. He was in the field the majority of the time and experienced a lot of combat. When his military service concluded in 1971, he was hired by Nationwide Insurance as an agent in Zanesville, where he established his own agency. In 1982, he and his family relocated to Logan, Ohio, where he acquired another Nationwide Agency. Ben and his wife Celeste ran a successful agency together in Logan for 30 years. Throughout his career, he has volunteered for several nonprofit organizations.

Upon retirement, Ben and Celeste moved back to Zanesville. Ben continues to volunteer with several organizations that support veterans – the American Legion, the VFW, the AMVETS and as a member of the VFW Post 1058 Honor Guard. He is also a board member of the Veteran Appreciation Foundation.

Ten years ago, the VFW Board was approached by a Hospice representative, who presented the We Honor Vets, a program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization in collaboration with the Department of Veteran Affairs that they wanted to establish in Zanesville. The goal of the program is simple – to care for and honor those who have served when they reach the end of life. Ben was excited and immediately signed up to be the first volunteer.

When veterans enter the Genesis Hospice Care program, they are paired with a We Honor Vets volunteer. Patients are then presented with a certificate, a pin and a commendation for their service. Veterans in the program receive regular visits from veteran volunteers like Ben. In addition, veterans are included in special programs. One amazing example is assembling and delivering Christmas presents to veterans in Hospice in December. Ben enjoys this volunteer activity during the holiday season.

“When you’re a veteran and you visit another veteran, there is a common bond and shared experience to discuss,” Ben said. “It makes it easier for patients in Hospice to open up because they know you understand the military experiences they’ve had. Volunteering for We Honor Vets and other organizations is so rewarding. I feel a sense of accomplishment when I can help someone feel better. Helping others has become my purpose in retirement.”



FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

The Quinn Family

Siblings Gretchen Booth, Carolyn Quinn and Patrick Quinn have advice for people caring for aging family or looking ahead to a time when they will be, and that is to learn about hospice care as early as you can. They know this from listening to their mother talk about the 12 years she was a home hospice volunteer for Genesis and from supporting their father and then their mother when they were patients. Both parents received hospice care from Genesis in their homes.

Gretchen's husband was a patient at Morrison House and died six months after their dad died. "Most people don't know what to do when a loved one fails," said Gretchen. Hospice teaches families how to make it possible for someone to remain at home if that's what they want. A Genesis Hospice Care nurse will go to a patient's home and explain how the program works, what a family can expect from a hospice team and, most importantly, what happens to your loved one as the or she moves ever closer to the end of life.

"We would get scared over a new or worsening symptom," said Carolyn. "You're upset anyway because you're losing someone you love, so it was beautiful to have a medical professional reassure us that we weren't hurting our Mom or Dad in any way."

Whether a loved one is receiving care in-home, at Morrison House, a nursing home or assisted living facility, "The care is almost too good to be true," said Patrick. A hospice nurse is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to answer questions or assist with medical concerns.

Everything the Quinn family needed including prescriptions and supplies, doctors' visits and visits from a social worker and chaplain for the patient and the family was provided. "We call it Total Care," said Gretchen. "Pat, Mom and I benefited from the grief services after Dad passed. It felt good to be supported by someone who understands grief."

Patrick is grateful for the care and concern of the Genesis Hospice Care team during a dark time in his life. He also admitted he is more comfortable about getting older now, because he knows the same level of care will be available for him if he needs it.

Gretchen summed up the willingness to meet and talk about their shared losses. "We want to make people aware of Genesis Hospice Care and Morrison House," she said. "Our father and mother taught us to step up and help others. I'm sure they are pleased by this."

Spiritual matters

Forgiveness

What does forgiveness look like to you? Has it been hard over your lifetime to forgive others for a perceived wrong someone may have done to you? Maybe you have been on the other end of asking forgiveness from another person, which can sometimes be difficult to do. There is yet another aspect of forgiveness: forgiving oneself. It is this one that may be the toughest one of all for any one of us to completely understand and then to accomplish.

I recently read an editorial piece from an issue of *Palliative and Supportive Care*^{*}, a journal that addresses the many issues involved in this aspect of health care. The author, William Breitbart, M.D., a palliative medicine psychiatrist, speaks on forgiveness and existential guilt, which is an academic way of viewing ourselves and what we have done with our lives, and then being able to offer ourselves forgiveness at end-of-life for all the ways in which we feel we did not measure up to perfection. It is reviewing our life and being honest with ourselves that we are imperfect and fallible, needing forgiveness to say it's okay. This may be a pressing issue that weighs on some people when they are faced with a terminal illness. Suddenly, they have been given a limit on the time that is left for them, so they examine their lives and see how they have fared. I believe all of us must admit that we need to forgive ourselves for a less than perfect life when we are faced with this scenario.

As Breitbart points out in his editorial, forgiveness is directed to the self, not to the event. So, if there was something shameful that occurred in our life, forgiveness must be directed to the person, as opposed to the shameful act. Only in this way can the guilt that we hold onto over some misdeed be truly forgiven. This may not be an easy task to accomplish. Forgiving ourselves I believe is one of the more difficult aspects of life with which we struggle. We like to hold onto things and mull them over, even if it has been many years since we did something for which forgiveness may have been given and genuinely received.

When we get to the end of our life and have time to look back and review the times we could have done something better or reached out to someone in need but didn't, or we inflicted pain on someone, Breitbart reminds us that we must love ourselves unconditionally. We must be able to love ourselves just as we are – just as God loves us.

I think there must be a spiritual dimension to all of this as well. Even though forgiveness is directed to us, it is not our body we are forgiving but our soul, that which makes us who we are, that which is unconditionally loved and needs forgiven as we look to our passing from this earth to what lies ahead. In doing this, we leave all that has burdened us over a lifetime and are able to face death without baggage we need not carry. It puts our soul at rest, with love purposing our next journey.

Forgiveness of our existential guilt is the greatest gift we can give to ourselves as we face our own death. Love yourself, forgive yourself, knowing that God has given each of us the ability to do just that.

Tim Patton, Chaplain
Hospice and Palliative Care

^{*}William Breitbart, *Palliative and Supportive Care*, (2018), 16, 244-248, Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Non-profit vs for-profit Hospice

In the United States, there are two main types of hospice care providers: for-profit and non-profit. For-profit hospices are businesses that operate with the goal of making a profit, while non-profit hospices are organizations that operate with the goal of providing care and services to patients and their families. For-profit hospices are typically owned by investors or private equity firms who are focused on maximizing profits. Non-profit hospices, on the other hand, are usually owned by community organizations, religious organizations or other non-profit entities.

When it comes to hospice care, there are significant differences between for-profit and non-profit hospices that patients and families should consider when choosing a provider.

Ownership and funding

For-profit hospices are owned by investors or private equity firms who aim to generate profits. In contrast, non-profit hospices are owned by community organizations, religious organizations, or other non-profit entities. The ownership structure can impact the care and services provided by the hospice.

For-profit hospices may receive funding from a variety of sources, including private insurance, Medicare and Medicaid. Non-profit hospices may receive funding from donations, grants and government programs. The funding structure can impact the hospice's financial resources and its ability to provide high-quality care.

Mission and values

For-profit hospices are primarily focused on generating revenue and profits for their owners or investors. As a result, they may prioritize cost-cutting measures over patient care, which can impact the quality of care provided. Non-profit hospices, on the other hand, are focused on providing compassionate care and support for patients and their families. They prioritize the patient's well-being over profits, which can result in higher quality care and more comprehensive services.

Quality of care

Research has shown that non-profit hospices tend to provide higher quality care than for-profit hospices. Non-profit hospices tend to have higher staffing levels, more extensive services and fewer regulatory violations than for-profit hospices.

According to a study by the Office of Inspector General (OIG), for-profit hospices were found to have higher rates of live discharges and lower levels of care for patients with higher levels of pain or in need of more extensive services. The study also found that for-profit hospices were more likely to bill Medicare for higher levels of care than what was provided.

In contrast, non-profit hospices were found to provide more extensive services, such as bereavement counseling, and have lower rates of live discharges. They also had fewer regulatory violations and deficiencies.

Bereavement Support

We offer in person bereavement care to those grieving and in need of additional support. Options are listed below. Please reach out to Kelli at 740-454-5353 for additional information.

General Grief Support Group
Survivors of Suicide Support Group
Individual and Family sessions

Do you have some free time?

Consider being a volunteer

Every volunteer has a unique contribution to make at Genesis Hospice Care. We have a specific need for volunteers who are willing to go to patients' homes for companionship. We serve a 35-mile area, so if you live in outlying counties such as Coshocton, we could use your help. Call us at 740-454-5682 for more information on volunteering for Genesis Hospice Care and Morrison House.

Veteran Gift Bags

Genesis Hospice Care has teamed with several local veteran organizations for the past five years to ensure the veterans in our hospice care receive holiday gift bags. This project began with the local American Legion but has since had the assistance of the Veterans Appreciation Foundation, Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Disabled American Veterans. Each year we give our United State Veteran patients in Genesis Hospice Care a very generous gift bag filled with much needed and comfort items. Bags usually include but not limited to blankets, T-shirts, slippers, socks, toiletries, puzzle books and food as well as a thank-you card for their service.

Sherrie Grubb, Genesis Hospice Care, works with Rick Miller to ensure each bag is customized to each veteran. When bags are delivered to Genesis Hospice Care, Sherrie enlists the help of a few of our Veteran volunteers, who then deliver the gift bags to our patients' residences. This gives the Veteran volunteers the opportunity to meet and socialize with our patients. We are thankful each year that we are chosen to give these gifts and honor our veterans.

Walk to End Alzheimer's

The Genesis Hospice Care team was the largest team in the 2024 Walk to End Alzheimer's and the third largest fundraiser. They raised \$2,651.26 for Alzheimer's Foundation research. "To say I am proud is an understatement," said Pebbles Thornton, MSN, RN, OCN, Director of Cancer, Palliative Medicine and Hospice Services. "Our walk team included Genesis Hospice Care staff, volunteers and family members of hospice patients. I want to thank everyone who joined us and give special kudos to Cassie and Tiffani for co-leading our team."

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is published twice a year for friends of Genesis Hospice & Palliative Care.

Matt Perry
President & CEO

Pebbles Thornton
Director, Genesis Cancer, Palliative Medicine and Hospice Services

Sherrie Grubb
Volunteer and Marketing Consultant



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Winter Wonderland Gala

BENEFITING GENESIS HOSPICE CARE

The first annual Winter Wonderland Gala to support Genesis Hospice Care and Morrison House was an immense success. More than 180 attendees joined us on Nov. 11, 2023, at EagleSticks Golf Club to enjoy socializing with friends, a fabulous meal created by our own Chef Clay Simmons and his team, music and dancing from the fantastic Bluewater Kings Band, and more. The event's purpose was highlighted by a touching video testimonial of a Hospice patient's son, who described the impact our Hospice program had on him and his family during his father's stay at Morrison House.

We are grateful to Park National Bank as our presenting sponsor and to all our sponsors who helped us achieve success with our inaugural event.

A variety of onsite opportunities to support our mission of providing care regardless of a patient's ability to pay raised more than \$17,000. We're thankful for the generous organizations and individuals who donated products that helped us create 48 raffle baskets for a silent auction. We also created the Snow Angel fundraiser to coincide with the Gala. Snow Angel figurines were purchased and personalized in memory of a loved one. People purchased 240 Snow Angels, which added \$4,000 to the funds supporting Genesis Hospice Care patients.