



impressions

LEGACIES OF LOVE AND FINGERPRINTS ON THE WORLD

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BAZINGA!

Patient delighted with special gift

Senior Independence Hospice patient Gertrude “Gert” Lowther has a tall, handsome, very smart man keeping her company these days – in the form of a life-sized cardboard image.

When the Greater Cleveland region’s hospice staff heard how much Gert loves the TV show “The Big Bang Theory,” they decided to organize a special surprise for her as part of their Make it Happen program.

Make it Happen is Senior Independence’s wish fulfillment program that brings special moments of meaning and joy to patients.

For Gert’s surprise, the hospice team was able to find a life-sized cutout of her favorite Big Bang character, Sheldon Cooper.

They also bought buttons with some of Sheldon’s most popular sayings, and were able to secure an autographed picture of Sheldon and the rest of the show’s cast.

Gert cracked up when they surprised her and her daughter with the special Sheldon gift.

“Sheldon makes me laugh. He’s a great conversation piece,” said Gert.

She added that she was also delighted and amazed at all the effort the hospice staff put into making it happen.

One of her nurses, Kim Evans, said this project has made many people happy and it all began with Gert talking about her favorite TV show.



“She is a wonderful lady with a great laugh. She lights up a room with that laugh,” Kim shared. ●

You can help hospice patients like Gert experience special moments of joy and meaning by making a donation to the Make it Happen program. A reply envelope has been enclosed for your convenience should you choose to send your gift today.

ON THE COVER: *Hospice patient Gert Lowther and her daughter pose with Gert’s new roommate, cardboard Sheldon! Gert also received an autographed photo of the cast of her favorite show, “The Big Bang Theory.”*

ABOVE: *As part of its Make it Happen program, Senior Independence Hospice helped bring a little extra joy to hospice patient Gert by providing her with a cardboard cutout of her favorite TV character.*

RUNNING FOR A CAUSE

Employees race to raise money for hospice

Two Senior Independence staff members in the Mahoning Valley region recently raised more than \$1,500 for the Make it Happen program by running a half marathon.

“To me this was much more than another race; it was a mission to inspire others and come together for a greater cause,” said Dr. Heather Hrina Medvec, therapy supervisor, who coordinated the fundraiser.

Heather was joined by co-worker Ryan Scragg, a hospice case worker, and her husband, Matt, a police officer. They obtained pledges of \$1 for each mile

they ran in the 13.1-mile segment of the Cleveland Marathon in mid-May.

“All of the money went to the Mahoning Valley region’s Make it Happen program because it’s something we are very passionate about. Our goal next year, which will mark 10 years of hospice, is to raise \$10,000 to represent 10 years,” Heather explained.

Heather has been involved in other philanthropic efforts and encourages others to do the same. “I love doing volunteer work. It brings me great joy to give to others. I feel God has blessed me in many ways and as a way to say thank you, I like to give back,” she shared.

The group trained for five months, running hundreds of miles as they prepared for the half marathon.

They stayed together the whole time and finished in just under 2 and a half hours. ●

BELOW, LEFT: *Hospice Case Manager Ryan Scragg and Therapy Supervisor Heather Hrina Medvec pose together after running a half marathon in support of Senior Independence Hospice’s Make it Happen program.*

BELOW, RIGHT: *Ryan Scragg was determined to finish the 13.1 mile race, even in the snow! Ryan and colleague Heather Hrina Medvec raised money to benefit Senior Independence Hospice patients in the Mahoning Valley region.*



SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

Chaplains provide additional level of care

Our spiritual care coordinators come from many backgrounds. One worked as a military chaplain. Another did mission work all over the world. A third spent many years as a nurse.

Now, their daily work supports hospice patients, family and staff. Whether offering prayer to patients in need or leading a grief support group for those left behind, they provide care in many forms. Here's a look at the special people who attend to the spiritual needs of those we serve:



Mike Peebles

Central Ohio
Region

A pastor who has served in Nigeria, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and England, Columbus native Mike Peebles always carries a portable speaker with him so his patients can hear their favorite music loud and clear.

From music to spiritual and emotional support, Mike's main goal is to minister to those in need, regardless of their religious background.

When family members are having a difficult time, Mike is there to provide a listening ear and offer prayer and words of comfort.

Mike and other members of the hospice team sometimes create a church service in a patient's home. Spiritual songs that are familiar to the patient are sung. Mike provides a short message or sermon, and even communion if the patient desires.



Joyce Gordon

Greater Cleveland
Region

After years as a geriatric nurse, Joyce Gordon felt called to bring spiritual care to hospice patients. "I feel as if I have come home to where I was meant to be. Every day is a gift and each moment with my patients is an opportunity to bring peace and comfort to people in need," she said.

Joyce focuses on support and encouragement. She sees a "real hunger" for spirituality in the patients, family and staff.

"During a visit I listen deeply to the stories of their life. By giving voice to their personal history and present concerns, the process of spiritual healing can begin. With their permission, I will read a devotional that resonates with our conversation," she explained. "Even if they can't communicate, I will sit at their bedside and pray or softly sing, knowing that God is fully present."



James Fawcett

Akron/Canton
Region

James Fawcett was a military chaplain assistant and even served in Iraq. So he especially enjoys working with veteran hospice patients and their family members. James says many of the veterans he's visited are touched by their interactions.

Hospice patients can have strong spiritual needs, and chaplains like James can provide much needed comfort. "Many of our patients feel isolated," he said. "We can bring caring, compassionate companionship and, for those who are religious, we can bring encouragement through spiritual sources and prayer."

James added that he has also felt privileged to participate in the funerals of some of his patients. "It's an honor to be a resource for families during their time of grief," he explained.



Daniel Tayman

Mahoning Valley
Region

Like his colleagues, Daniel Tayman makes himself available to staff in addition to patients and their families.

Those who take care of hospice patients come to care for them deeply, and grieve right along with family members. "If I can put a little wind in their sails, I feel I've made a difference for them on that day," Daniel said.

The Air Force veteran has been a pastor since 1990, and brings positivity to all he does. He looks out for what he calls "sprinkles on a cupcake" opportunities to cheer and brighten someone's day.

And whenever possible, Daniel likes to give little surprises. "It's amazing to see what a sweet treat does to the outlook of a patient and even their family. Smiles all around!" he shared.



Vincent Flippo

Greater Toledo
Region

Vince Flippo's theology degrees and experience have prepared him to help patients and their family members adjust to the realities of death and the dying process. Sharing in the patient's life review can lead to discussions of deeper concerns with which the patient might want help.

One of Vince's patients asked for help with writing letters to leave for his sons of whom he was so proud.

"He was unable to write very well by this point and could barely speak. However I will treasure that day he and I grappled through the heartfelt words and the deep, loving emotions as we cried and worked to leave letters to his boys," he shared. "The fact that he included me in something so personal is among my highest honors," Vince said. ●

SPECIAL WISHES FULFILLED

Make it Happen is a special Senior Independence program that brings moments of joy and meaning to those nearing the end of their lives by fulfilling their life-enhancing wishes. Here are some of the wishes this program has helped to come true:

Marjorie Boroff's 85th birthday celebration was a foot-tapping good time as a bluegrass band was brought in to provide her favorite music. Many members of her large family attended and there were sub sandwiches and cake on the menu. "Marjorie was in high spirits and was beaming from ear to ear," said a hospice staff member.



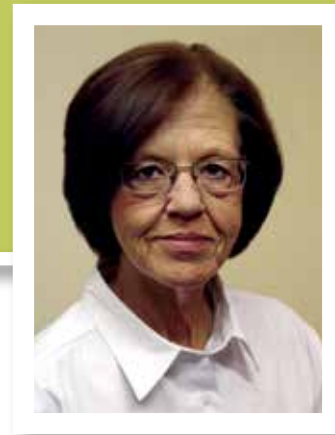
Floyd Ackerman loves banana ice cream, and it was the highlight of his Make it Happen event. Hospice staff held an ice cream social for Floyd, and his friends and family came to enjoy the sweet celebration. "He was so joyful that day," a family member said, adding, "The hospice team is truly a special group."

Richard Stewart enjoyed a special Super Bowl party that included snacks, a football-field cake and a nickel. Richard and his brother had a long-standing nickel bet on the game so the hospice team helped him send a nickel to his brother who lives out of state to keep the tradition going. ●



DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

By Sue Brookins, MSN, RN, ACHPN, CNS
Corporate Director of Hospice



THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Did you read our April issue of *Impressions*? April was National Volunteer Month, and we celebrated the occasion by dedicating the newsletter to our hospice volunteers, all over the state, who give so much to enrich the lives of our hospice patients.

But we don't need a designated time of the year to show our appreciation for volunteers. We love them every day!

Volunteers who work directly with patients provide some of the most compassionate, loving care that one human being can give to another. From visitation and spiritual support to errands and light housekeeping, each act, each word, each moment, is a loving touch for people during a difficult time.

And volunteers who work in the office are just as important to patient care. Whether assisting with Make it Happen events, filing and photocopying, or making telephone calls, these volunteers are completing the circle of care for our patients and families, sharing their love for humankind behind the scenes.

Hospice volunteers are a valuable part of the care we provide for each and every patient. If you'd like to learn more about opportunities to volunteer with Senior Independence Hospice, I encourage you to visit seniorindependence.org/hospice/volunteer for more information. ●

The last good thing that may happen
in a person's life is a *hospice volunteer*.

~ Unknown



Thank you for your generosity

The following donations were made between March 1, 2016 and May 31, 2016 in support of Senior Independence Hospice. If you believe your name to be omitted or printed in error, please accept our sincerest apologies and call the OPRS Foundation at 1-800-686-7800.

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WRESTLE MANIA!

Patient has room decorated, receives special keepsakes

Every day of hospice patient Harold Keeler's life centers on watching videos of World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) matches.

Senior Independence Hospice staff members noticed Harold's enjoyment of WWE, and they also noticed the bare walls in his room. Enter the Make it Happen program and the blank view in Harold's room has been transformed into a wrestling panorama.

Carol Davis, volunteer coordinator in the Mahoning Valley region, said their team decorated Harold's walls with WWE logos and life-sized graphics of WWE wrestlers.

Senior Independence also contacted the WWE, who sent a package of gifts including DVDs, autographed pictures, programs, a shirt, hat, headband and special book. ●

