

Purpose

A PUBLICATION OF
WESTERN RESERVE CARE SOLUTIONS

SPRING 2024



**There is a crack, a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in.**

**- Leonard Cohen
"Anthem"**

SPRING 2024

VOLUME 2 • ISSUE 1

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.



at



Purpose is produced by the Marketing Communications team at Western Reserve Care Solutions. To contact the team, or request the digital edition, please send an email to communication@hospicewr.org.

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A LETTER FROM BILL FINN



As Winter's grip gradually loosens its hold and with the arrival of Spring, a season of growth unfolds. As the needs of patients and families grows, our staff and services respond with customized care to meet those needs. Our services have grown to meet the requirements of a diverse 16 county area and we are privileged to have cared for more than 100,000 Northern Ohioans since our inception. As the population experiences a demographic shift toward an aging society, an increasing number of individuals are opting for hospice and palliative care delivered in the comfort of their homes. To address this growing need, we have expanded our team and services to meet those needs and provide specialized care for our patients and families, wherever they call home.

This Spring marks two-years since Hospice of the Western Reserve joined with Stein Hospice and in those two years, Stein Hospice has obtained a 3 Star rating and continues to improve. Through Stein Hospice, we have expanded our reach into Erie, Huron, Ottawa, Sandusky, and Seneca counties, and delivered individualized end-of-life care to more communities while increasing access to our comprehensive and compassionate services.

Looking ahead, we envision a future marked by intentional growth, a strategic commitment to expanding our reach, and enhancing the quality of end-of-life care for even more individuals and families. Our team remains committed to ensuring that high-quality, community-based not-for-profit hospice care is available to all in need.

I invite you to explore the invaluable services offered by Hospice of the Western Reserve and discover the many ways you can join us in supporting our mission.

Bill Finn
President and Chief Executive Officer

Heartfelt Contributions

Located on a bustling street near Medina Town Square, Life's Treasures Thrift Shop is home to a diverse collection of items ranging from clothing and accessories to household goods and furniture. With a mission to support HMC Hospice of Medina County, an affiliate of Hospice of the Western Reserve, proceeds from the shop support the patients and loved ones in our care. Life's Treasures sister store, Encore Resale Marketplace, is nestled just off Cleveland Road, just east of downtown Sandusky. Encore offers an equally robust offering of secondhand items and unique finds, with proceeds benefitting Stein Hospice, an affiliate of Hospice of the Western Reserve. Both shops provide an eco-friendly and affordable shopping experience while contributing to the local community.

Our thrift stores help the community grow while making an impact. Whether someone is purchasing items to furnish a new home or dropping off items ready to be rediscovered and cherished by someone new, all proceeds benefit the patients and families in our care. These shops serve as vital conduits for community generosity, and items procured in the shop are graciously donated by the residents of Medina County and Sandusky County. The small staff and volunteers are at the heart of the shops, sharing their time and talent to support our mission and keep the store running smoothly.



LIFE'S TREASURES IN MEDINA



ENCORE THRIFT SHOP IN SANDUSKY



Lynda Pursur has been a volunteer with Hospice of the Western Reserve (HWR) since 2008 and came to Life's Treasures two years after it opened its doors. As a retired bus driver for Medina City Schools, Lynda spends her time volunteering for local organizations, and has a special place in her heart for Hospice of the Western Reserve. Lynda's mother-in-law, father-in-law, and mother were all in our care and she knows how impactful compassionate care can be. "I come here to support the people who are in hospice," says Lynda. "I appreciate where the money we raise goes, and it stays here locally in Medina County."

One day in 2022, **Dawn Milici** was grabbing lunch across the street from Life's Treasures and saw a sign on the door that was recruiting volunteers for the shop. Having retired from the printing industry, Dawn was looking for a way to give back to the community. Her mother had received hospice care in an assisted living and after witnessing how much it helped her mother, she wanted to become a hospice volunteer. With a smile and a thank you, she likes to remind people who are donating items that the money raised in the store will benefit the patients and families at HMC Medina County. "I really enjoy the people and seeing what items will come through the doors," says Dawn. "I think it's important to let them know that what they are doing is helping other people."



Susie Rebert is new to volunteering at Hospice of the Western Reserve, having started at Life's Treasures in January 2023. As a Registered Nurse, Susie worked at a hospice care center in Columbus, and both of her parents were in hospice during their final days. Now retired, Susie moved back to the area to be closer to her family. "Volunteering for Hospice of the Western Reserve just made absolute sense to me," says Susie. Susie hopes to eventually take volunteer training to do hands on care at our inpatients units and will continue to volunteer at Life's Treasures. "Medina is such a great community of people, and the shop helps support the ones who really need it," says Susie.

Continued on page 5

Teresa Voight has been the Manager of Encore since 2019 and first came to know the store after her daughter volunteered for Stein Hospice. After meeting some of the volunteers at the shop and getting more familiar with the organization, she knew she wanted to work somewhere that she could make a difference. "I worked a job 44 hours a week for many years and never felt as fulfilled as I do now that I work here," says Teresa. Her enthusiasm for the team of volunteers that she works with and her personal connection to hospice care are part of the reasons she enjoys the role so much; both Teresa's father-in-law and grandmother were in hospice care. "I wish more people knew that the money from the store goes directly back to the community and Stein Hospice," says Teresa. "This place is making a difference, and you can be part of that."



In 2020, **Chris Zess** started volunteering for Encore after retiring from education. Although she does not have a personal connection to hospice, she feels connected to the people who donate items to the shop. "They may have had family members at Stein, and they feel good about donating to a cause that helped them," says Chris. "I feel good meeting them, and everyone just feels good about it." Chris enjoys working alongside her fellow volunteers and feels that it has been a gratifying experience. "Not everyone is comfortable working with end-of-life care, and this is another amazing way to support the organization."



From working in the office to sewing blankets for patients, **Janet Gebelle** has served in many roles since starting her volunteer journey in 2021. After having a positive experience with her mother in hospice care and retiring in 2019, she felt she was ready to get involved. "I was so impressed with how they cared for my mom, and I knew Stein utilized volunteers for a lot of different things," says Janet. Janet keeps volunteering at Encore because of the team she works with and the impact she sees on the community. "You can go to a lot of other bigger places and their money supports other great organizations," says Janet. "But Encore is raising money that goes directly towards patients and families at Stein Hospice."



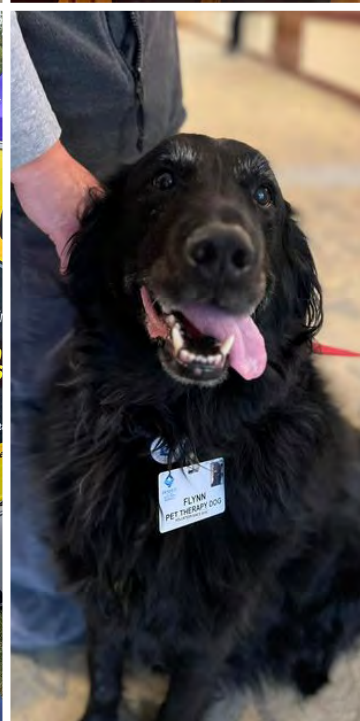
A Milestone Celebration: Warrensville Heights Home Care Team Joins in Honoring Marie Cheatham's **110 Years**

Reaching the remarkable milestone of a 110th birthday serves as a moving reflection of a person's extraordinary journey through time. It symbolizes a lifetime filled with experiences, triumphs over challenges, and the wisdom gained along the way. Such a celebration not only marks the person's longevity but also encapsulates the profound growth, resilience, and the wealth of memories accumulated over more than a century—a testament to the richness of a life well-lived. At Western Reserve Care Solutions, we understand that celebrating these occasions is rooted in a commitment to honoring the individual's unique journey and the relationships that have shaped it.

Several members from Hospice of the Western Reserve's Warrensville Heights Home Care team were honored to join the celebration of Marie Cheatham's 110th birthday. The party to celebrate her 110th birthday was planned by Mrs. Cheatham's loving family and sponsored by her apartment complex, Carnegie Tower at Fairfax. Joanne Walton is a Hospice Nursing Assistant and has been caring for Mrs. Cheatham for several months. Joanne was able to attend the party, along with other team members, to help support Marie and celebrate alongside her friends and family. "Each day is different, and each patient is different," says Joanne. "Events like these are amazing to be a part of and it's so special when we can help provide care and support to make it happen."

IN THE COMMUNITY

At Western Reserve Care Solutions, we firmly believe that our roots in the community are the very essence of our mission. We understand that true impact is born from genuine connection and involvement. That is why we care deeply about being an active and integral part of every community we serve!





The Healing Haven of
Gardens

The gardens at our hospice houses serve as tranquil retreats, providing a peaceful environment that are designed to enhance the overall well-being of patients and families, offering a respite from the clinical environment. Through the vision and generosity of a grant designated by the trustees of the Hanes Family Foundation of the Cleveland Foundation, Hospice of the Western Reserve initiated the first phase of the Hanes Family Children's Garden at David Simpson Hospice House in 2023. The Hanes family has a longstanding history with Hospice of the Western Reserve, the very first bricks in the Vista Walk honors one of their family members who was in our care. The Hanes family often enjoys large gatherings with young children running and playing together, and with such a close connection to HWR, the children's garden at David Simpson Hospice House was a natural fit.

"We put a lot of time and research into our grant-making," said a spokesperson for the Hanes family. "We choose projects that honor the interests of our family, benefit the community – especially children and families, and are run by non-profit organizations that we trust and respect."

In the Fall of 2022, Ken Roby, a local custom metalwork shop owner, designed whimsical metal signage featuring a Great Lakes theme to acknowledge donors and elevate the gardens ambiance. In the spring of 2023, the concrete path and pavilion base was poured, and the garden beds were meticulously prepared and planted. The garden is home to a butterfly bush, evergreens, hydrangeas and a variety of other plants and flowers.

Through its thoughtful design and compassionate purpose, the Hanes Family Children's Garden has become an integral component of our holistic care, addressing not only the physical but also the emotional needs of children and their families during one of life's most profound transitions.



How long can an individual stay on hospice?

Enrollment in hospice requires a prognosis of less than six months, determined through periodic evaluations by the nurse practitioner and physician, with documented decline for qualification. While some patients, admitted with severe conditions, may pass within days, others may experience a gradual decline and remain on hospice for years. On average, hospice stays last about two months, and 90 percent of patients pass away within the initial six months of enrollment.

If an individual pursues hospice, does all other treatment stop?

No. While hospice care primarily emphasizes symptom management and avoids extensive diagnostic testing, curative treatments, and repeated hospice admissions, disease-focused interventions may still be employed to alleviate symptoms. For instance, if the patient develops an underlying infection like a urinary tract infection or pneumonia, antibiotics may be administered to enhance the patient's comfort. In cases of congestive heart failure, appropriate medications can be utilized to address the condition, ultimately improving symptoms, and enhancing the patient's quality of life.

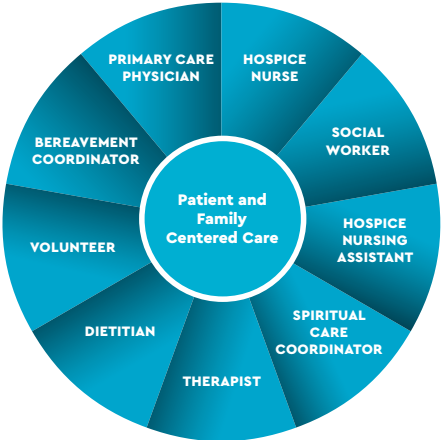
Will the patient or their loved ones be a part of the decisions that are made?

Absolutely. Not only are patients and their loved ones part of the decisions that are made, but the hospice philosophy also specifically focuses on patient-directed

ASK A PHYSICIAN

Alexandros Nicolozakes, MD

Associate Medical Director



goals, which include family and loved ones. This was one of the fundamental concepts of the modern hospice movement developed by Dr. Dame Cicely Saunders. The patient and family are surrounded by a team comprising a physician, nurses, hospice aids, social workers, spiritual care coordinators, bereavement counselors, and even volunteers.

Can a patient still see their doctor if they want to?

Certainly! The patient retains the freedom to choose. If they prefer to maintain their relationship with their own physician or nurse practitioner, they can do so, with the Medicare benefit covering these hospice-related visits. Moreover, our hospice organization is equipped to offer a dedicated primary care physician or nurse practitioner to ensure seamless and continuous care for the patient.

What happens if a patient gets better?

It is not uncommon for patients to grapple with illnesses that, while not inherently terminal, significantly impact their life expectancy due to their severity. Once enrolled in hospice, however, there's room for recovery and improvement, particularly when a holistic approach is taken to address both the disease and symptom management. The typical criterion for hospice enrollment is a prognosis of less than six months. Despite this, instances arise where patients experience recovery and improvement beyond this initial estimate. In such cases, patients may surpass the six-month prognosis, leading to their transition out of hospice care.



Harmony and Healing: The Transformative Impact of Art and Music Therapy in Hospice Care

Art and music therapy are clinical services that have emerged as powerful and versatile modalities to meet the individualized needs of patients and their families. These therapies are facilitated by trained professionals who skillfully tailor each session to the unique needs and preferences of the patient. In the compassionate realm of hospice care, art and music therapy offer a profound source of growth and well-being and can be a valuable form of emotion regulation and symptom management for individuals and their families. According to the American Music Therapy Association's (AMTA) recent Workforce Studies, approximately 62.2% of hospices and home-health agencies in the US offered music therapy, with music therapy being the third most offered Complementary and Alternative Therapy provided in conjunction with traditional hospice care. The National Library of Medicine places Western Reserve Care Solutions among an elite 22% of hospices in the country that employ an art therapist.

Music therapy in hospice care incorporates evidence-based interventions designed to meet the psychosocial and physical needs of patients and their loved ones. To deliver music therapy, individuals must undergo rigorous training, which encompasses a bachelor's degree in a

music therapy program, a supervised internship, and successful completion of a board-certified examination, and Western Reserve Care Solutions has been approved internship site for over 25 years. Currently, three certified professionals work within our service area, providing music therapy to patients at home, care facilities, and our inpatient units. This therapeutic approach, offered towards the end of life, effectively addresses the physical, emotional, spiritual, and cognitive needs of both patients and their families.

"Music is the medium in which we are using," says Natalie, a Western Reserve Care Solutions Music Therapist. "But music is used to reach far deeper goals." If someone were to play an instrument, it could be therapeutic, but the way in which a music therapist manipulates the music to impact the different parts of the brain transforms music from entertainment into therapy. It is because of this transformation that music therapy can look so different from patient to patient. Music therapists employ diverse approaches from playing a song in different rhythms from start to finish, singing a familiar song multiple times, or assisting with songwriting and composing. Whether a person is creating music, playing it, or listening to it, the goals can be, but are not limited to, reducing anxiety,

developing coping skills, managing pain, and processing and verbalizing emotions. The versatility of music therapy allows it to cater specifically to the individual needs of each patient.

I was referred to see the high school age son of a patient, his father, who was at home in on hospice. The son's mother was the patient's primary caregiver and referred me to meet with him. Over time, he started to express his anticipatory grief through interventions and counseling in the music therapy visits. One of the interventions used was song writing where he would give me the words and together, we talked about the memories he had with his father. We started to include his mother and together, they would sit, talk, and work on the verses of the song. Although you do not have to be a musician to participate and benefit in music therapy, the son did play the guitar and created a melody for the song. I then took the words and verses and made them into lyrical phrases. The patient was not able to communicate, but to incorporate him into the song, we recorded his heartbeat and used that as the backing to the song. Ultimately, the son was able to process his emotions using a creative outlet, we had the whole family was involved, and created a piece of legacy work that they then played at the father's memorial service.

Art therapy enriches the lives of patients and families through the encouragement of creativity and artmaking and provides with an outlet to explore and communicate their thoughts and feelings. To become an art therapist, an individual must earn a master's degree in art therapy or related field, complete a supervised internship, apply for the Registered Art Therapist (ATR) credential, and take a board certification examination. Western Reserve Care Solutions has two Board-Certified Art Therapists who work both with patients at home, at inpatient units, community centers and even virtual workshops. Desiree Benedict, who primarily works with patients and families actively in hospice and palliative care, comes equipped with a traveling trunk of art supplies. When working with the patients and clients, her goal is to meet them where they are in life and to work on what is most important them. "My sessions can include addressing the emotions that come with end-of-life issues," says Desiree. "Other times it can be involve working on artwork to leave behind for loved ones after they've passed."

Art therapy can be utilized to help practice self-compassion and explore thoughts and emotions related to grief. Mollie Borgione is the Art Therapist for Western Reserve Grief Services and primarily works with the bereaved. She facilitates the Healing Arts Program, and art therapy workshops at our campuses, virtually, and in the community. Those who attend Healing Arts workshops can expect to experience a variety of art opportunities, such as drawing, painting, and sculpture. The Healing Arts Program also includes a monthly group, Fabric and Feelings, where participants come to

I visited a 91-year-old patient that had never painted before but had an interest in learning how to paint with watercolors. When I met her, her family had bought her different watercolor. I asked the patient what she was most interested in learning to paint, and she selected a landscape. After several visits and hard work, the patient completed her first watercolor landscape painting. She was so proud of her accomplishment and went on to paint more landscapes. A copy of the first painting she created now hangs in the art walk at David Simpson Hospice House. This is an excellent example of how, even in the end of life, positive new experiences can still happen. Personal accomplishments can play an important role of providing positivity in a time that can be generally overwhelming or negative for people.

gather with others who are grieving and create all things fabric, sharing both their grief experiences and fabric arts knowledge with each other. "Don't be afraid to join a workshop," says Mollie. "You don't have to be an artist to get the benefits."

Art therapy is a complementary intervention that can have a positive impact on the holistic well-being of the patients in our care and those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. It can be enjoyed by anyone who may be open to it, regardless of their experience with art. "I often hear people say that they can only draw a stick figure," says Desiree. "Well, that's what I can draw too, but you don't need to have developed art skills to reap the benefits of art therapy and there is no right or wrong way to create art."

Getting Involved: The Journey of a Stein Hospice Volunteer

After retiring from the manufacturing industry, **Frank Bennett** was ready to embark on a journey of purpose and compassion. "I wanted to do something that would make someone's life a little better," says Frank. He answered an advertisement from Stein Hospice seeking volunteers to help within the community. Stein Hospice, an affiliate of Hospice of the Western Reserve, provides services to patients and families in Erie, Huron, Ottawa, Lorain, Sandusky, Seneca, and surrounding counties. As a resident of Green Springs, Frank knows how important support is for the community. In rural areas, accessibility to hospice care can be limited, and our team of paid staff and volunteer employ a collective effort to bridge gaps and ensure that residents receive the necessary support. Among these efforts include 24/7, every day of the year response to patient needs and home care visits from staff and volunteers.

After completing the volunteer training program, Frank began companion visits to patients receiving care at home. Companion visits can vary with each individual and volunteers may engage in meaningful conversations, run errands, and sometimes just offer a silent, reassuring presence. "There was a patient I visited who had late-stage dementia, and I wasn't even sure she remembered my visits," explains Frank. "One day, the patient's daughter told me her mother always remembered the times that I would visit, and that meant the world to me."

Since he began his volunteer journey, Frank feels that volunteering for Stein Hospice has offered him the opportunity to grow personally and gain fulfillment. "The people that I have met are kind, genuinely nice individuals," says Frank. "Everyone is so polite, and this work has made a huge difference in my life."



Nicky Bucur: Treasured Volunteer

In 1996, **Nicky Bucur** visited a friend in the care of the newly opened David Simpson Hospice House and had brought his guitar along to play some music for her. While he was there, he was told that the agency was looking for some musical entertainment for patients and families to enjoy. "I started playing the piano in the atrium about once a week," says Nicky. "After about a year, I was receiving requests to visit patients, so I took volunteer training program." After some time, Nicky started branching out to visit patients at home and then was invited to complete the Spiritual Care Training. A Spiritual Care volunteer is a specially trained volunteer who goes through additional education focused on the different spiritual care needs of patients. They work closely with the Spiritual Care Coordinators and these volunteers are more aware of the unique spiritual needs of patients and families. Nicky continued to use this comprehensive training in all his volunteer roles, including respite visits and vigils. Additionally, Nicky honors veterans during recognition ceremonies with his music. Honoring the veteran status of hospice patients through music is of utmost importance as it recognizes and pays tribute to their service, sacrifice, and dedication to their country. By Nicky incorporating patriotic songs, the music becomes a bridge that connects the present moment with a veteran's past service. In 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic started, Western Reserve Care Solutions had to pivot in their approach to volunteering. Nicky was one of the first to jump into action and help in distributing personal protective equipment (PPE) to the hospice sites. Whether playing the piano at an inpatient facility, providing peaceful music for grieving families, strumming upbeat guitar music at a fundraiser or veteran's celebration, or offering companionship, Nicky does it all. "Knowing that what you have to offer and what you do has meaning, that's the fuel to keep volunteering," says Nicky.

In the Fall of 2023, Nicky received the prestigious 2023 Most Treasured Volunteer Award from The Center for Community Solutions. To receive this award, these treasured volunteers need to give their time freely for a cause that benefits others. "Nicky's ability to bring light into the life of our patients and families, even if for a short while, is what ultimately drives his volunteerism," says Tyler Poulakos, Volunteer Service Manager, Western Reserve Care Solutions. "We are lucky to have him as a part of the team and we are thankful for his willingness to consistently make a difference."

HPCC 2024 Award Winners

Western Reserve Care Solutions is committed to delivering expert care through a team of skilled professionals. Each year, the Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center (HPCC) announces Certificant of the Year Awards to recognize certificants for their contributions to advancing expert care. We are thrilled to congratulate four staff members who were selected as 2024 Certificants of the Year!

Dianna Leitch, LPN, Mentor Alt Central

After returning to school to be a nurse, Dianna Leitch was working at an assisted living facility when a coworker suggested she explored joining Hospice of the Western Reserve. "I had a lot of misconceptions about hospice, but I felt a calling to work here," says Dianna. Dianna came to HWR with over 20 years of healthcare experience and has been committed to her profession and hospice and palliative care since 2015. "Dianna is a vital part of our team and our agency's success," says Stacey King, Clinical Team Leader, Hospice of the Western Reserve. "Dianna is a self-starter that takes initiative to learn new methods to stay up to date on providing the best, evidenced-based nursing care to the patients she serves." Dianna's care and compassion for the family and patients she serves does not end at their death. Dianna will call and offer condolences to the family and will share memorable visits with the family. Dianna has been referred to as "the calm in this storm" and truly demonstrates that this is not just a job, but her passion. To receive the CHPLN® of the Year Award, Dianna demonstrated excellence in the professional practice of hospice/palliative care, sought out opportunities for advancement of knowledge and experience in hospice/palliative licensed practical/vocational nursing practice and provided leadership through mentorship of others in hospice/palliative care. "I have a lot of support from my team and everyone takes care of each other," says Dianna. "I feel very honored to spend time with families, educate them, and ultimately help them through this process."



Ryann Demshar, STNA, Nursing Assistant Mentor Alt East

Ryann Demshar started working at Hospice of the Western Reserve in 2006 and over the last 15 years, she has strived to enhance patient comfort by providing personal care and going out of her way to assist with life enrichments. Her passion for this work started after her step mother became ill and within 4 months, she was in hospice care at David Simpson Hospice House. "I saw how much of a difference good people can make in a challenging situation," says Ryann. "I knew I wanted to work in hospice care after that." Ryann takes her job seriously and has demonstrated tremendous growth in communication, leadership, organization, teamwork and problem solving. She spends times with patients and families to gain an understanding of what is important to them and learns what they need. "The physical care she provides is exceptional," says Dawn Nickels, Team Leader, Hospice of the Western Reserve. "The time she spends bedside is beyond compare and she understands the need to truly be present in a patient's life." Ryann shows time and time again that she is willing to go the extra mile, and keeps families and patients at the forefront of every visit. To receive the CHPNA® of the Year Award, Ryann demonstrated excellence in the clinical practice as a hospice/palliative nursing assistant and provided leadership through mentorship of others in hospice/palliative care. "This is such rewarding work and I feel really honored to be selected," says Ryann. "There are so many amazing people who work here and it's great to be recognized for just doing a job I love."



Jennifer Palmer, MSN, RN, Pediatric Team Leader

Jen Palmer just celebrated 20 years at Hospice of the Western Reserve and in the two decades, she has continuously demonstrated her broad medical knowledge about Pediatric Hospice and Palliative Care. "Sometimes I can't believe



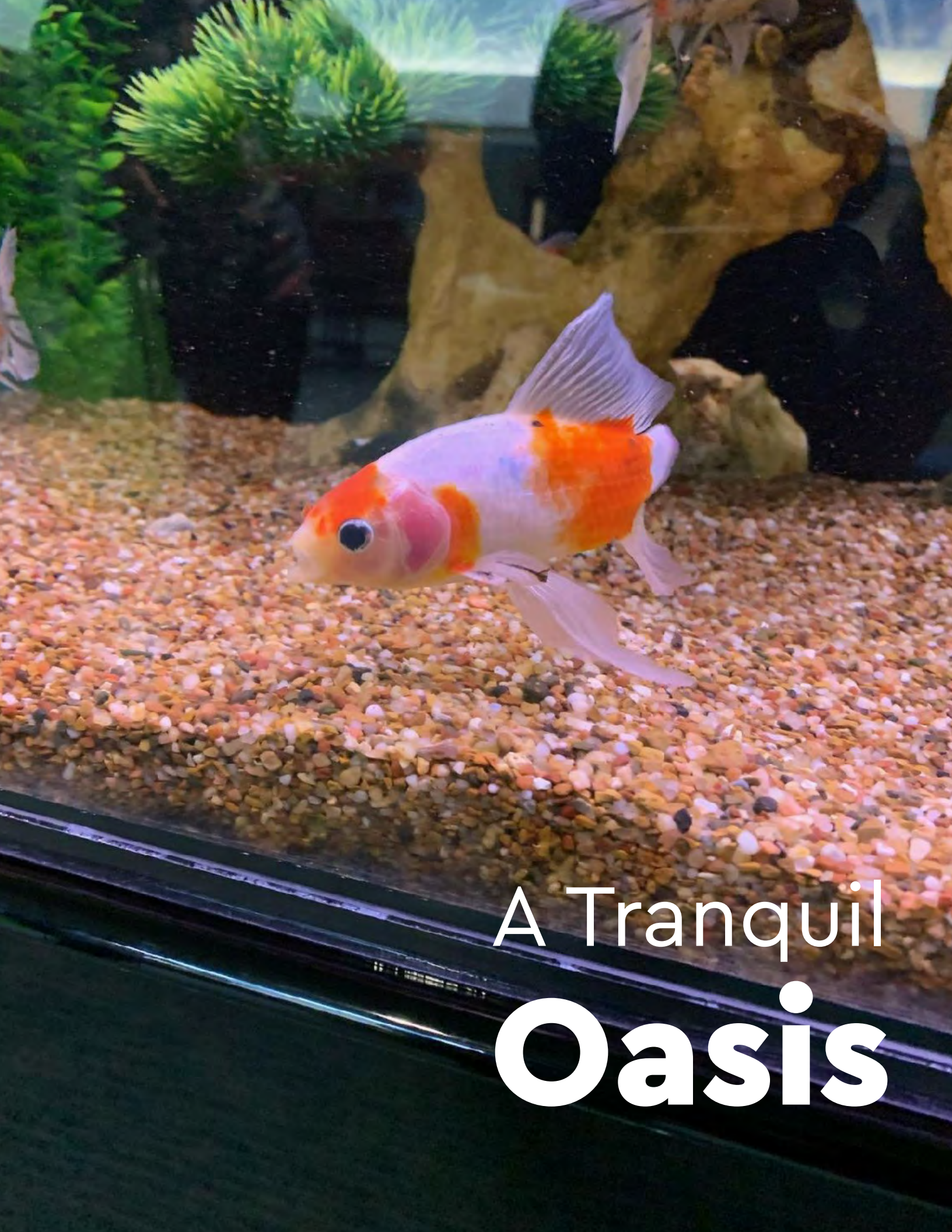
that 20 years have gone by," says Jen. "When I started my career, I didn't think I would be in one place for so long, but I love the work I do and the team I work with." Jen has a unique passion for pediatric hospice and palliative care and remembers the medical and social history of every child who is in her care. She advocates for her patients and has great clinical instincts, often taking on challenging cases and helping patients tremendously with symptom management. She pursues opportunities to learn from others across the country, collaborate with her team, and find new ways she can further support the patients in her care. "One of Jennifer's outstanding qualities is her ability to inspire and motivate her team," says Michelle R. Miller, Pediatric Social Worker, Hospice of the Western Reserve. "She leads by example, always displaying a high level of professionalism, empathy and respect for others." CHPPN® of the Year Award recipients must personify excellence in the professional practice of hospice/palliative pediatric nursing, make contributions in at least one of the following areas of hospice/palliative pediatric care: clinical practice, education, or research and provides leadership through mentorship of others in hospice/palliative care. "In the Peds world, most places have whole hospital teams that get recognized for this award," says Jen. "It is very humbling that I was selected, and I have an amazing team who supports our work."

Julie Findley, APRN-CNP, ACHPN, Clinical Director of Patient Services

Julie Findley first came to Hospice of the Western Reserve in 2003 as a home care nurse and worked on various teams before returning to school to become a nurse practitioner. She rejoined the organization in 2019 and worked as a Nurse Practitioner. "I was always drawn to hospice care," says Julie. "I have always been a nurse who recognized that death and dying can be challenging and I wanted to be there for patients and families." With nearly 30 years in the healthcare field, Julie has actively participated in Hospice of the Western Reserve clinical pathways initiatives, is a member of the HWR Practice Standards Committee, quality improvement projects, and day to day clinical improvements as a part of our Pharmacy Standards Committee. "One of Julie's most remarkable qualities is her unwavering dedication to professional development and the advancement of nursing practice," says Robert Anker, Chief Medical Officer, Hospice of the Western Reserve. "She consistently seeks opportunities to enhance her knowledge and skills." To receive the ACHPN® of the Year Award, Julie demonstrated personified excellence in the professional practice of advanced practice hospice/palliative nursing, made contributions at the advanced practice level in at least one of the following areas of hospice/palliative care: clinical practice, education, or research and provide leadership through mentorship of others in hospice/palliative care. "I don't do the work for the accolades," says Julie. "This makes me feel appreciated, but it's the day-to-day interaction with patient and families that is the most rewarding."



"This is such rewarding work and I feel really honored to be selected. There are so many amazing people who work here and it's great to be recognized for just doing a job I love."



A Tranquil Oasis



Dave Mandley's passion for goldfish began when he was only four years old when his father gave him his first goldfish bowl in hopes of entertaining him when he was sick. That gift introduced him to a fish that everyone is familiar with, but do not truly understand. As a teenager he spent hours at the original Cleveland Aquarium and SeaWorld meeting others who shared his curiosity about goldfish. When SeaWorld closed, Dave decided to take on the challenge of finding new homes for their 380 Koi. He gained a fresh perspective about responsible care, breeding, and management of large fish populations.

Dave's beloved wife Debbie, who often enjoyed looking at his fish, was cared for at David Simpson Hospice House. "Debbie found peace and harmony with my fish," says Dave. "I hoped that by bringing it to those in hospice care, others would find comfort in watching the fish too." It was the exceptional care that Dave and his wife received while at David Simpson Hospice House that inspired to reach out to the agency and offer to share his expertise.

After the passing of his wife, Dave utilized our Grief Services and met with his individual Bereavement Coordinator to process his grief through counseling.

His Bereavement Coordinator encouraged Dave to return to David Simpson Hospice House and fulfill his desire to honor his wife. To thank the Grief Services team and his Bereavement Coordinator, Dave named a fish at the David Simpson Hospice House 'Pita'.

When the Ames family graciously decided to install a tank at Ames Family Hospice House in Westlake, Dave worked with Bob Plona, Director of Facilities, to facilitate the installation and ensure the fish were adapting to their new environment. "We all appreciate everything that Dave has done to assist us with these opportunities," says Bob. "The tanks provide our patients and families with a comfortable distraction, something else to talk about while they are with us".

With tanks at both David Simpson Hospice House and at Ames Family Hospice House, these fish offer a calming and serene respite for patients, families, and staff. It is a simple, but effective addition to our houses and brings moments of joy to everyone who sees them.



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**SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 2024
CLEVELAND METROPARKS ZOO**

REGISTRATION OPENS APRIL 17, 2024

CELEBRATE LIFE!

The Walk to Remember is a time for family and friends to come together and enjoy a fun day out to honor of the memory of those we hold close to our hearts but are not physically with us.

Monies raised support programs such as pediatric hospice, bereavement services, expressive therapies, and customized programs for veterans.

