IN THIS ISSUE

2 From the President & CEO
3 Nurses Honored Nationally
4 Grief Support Offers Hope & Healing
4 Letter from Our Families
5 Chefs Serve Treasured Memories
6 Green Team Champions Sustainability

IN HER OWN WORDS

Why I Walk to Remember
By Holly Craider, Family Caregiver

▷ I grew up in a single parent home, and my mom worked full time to support our family. As a result, I spent a lot of time at my grandparents’ home. I became close to both of my grandparents, but most especially to my grandmother. She was much more than my grandma; she was a second mother to me and my best friend.

▷ My mother and I moved in to care for my grandparents when they became ill. Grandpa was diagnosed with mesothelioma after having been exposed to asbestos. Grandma got sick shortly after he passed away, also diagnosed with cancer. In both cases, when their illnesses advanced to the terminal stage, our family chose hospice care.

▷ My grandparents’ doctors both recommended Hospice of the Western Reserve. We were told it had an outstanding reputation for its excellent patient and family care, and also for the support provided at its hospice houses.

Holly Craider shares a calendar she created in memory of her grandparents.
**FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO**

Dear Friends,

Spring is the season of new beginnings. After a long winter season, the grass is green and growing again, flowers are in full bloom and birds are singing and nesting as the cycle of life begins anew. As the temperatures warm, many of us find ourselves spending more time outdoors enjoying the beauty of nature all around us.

For families who are in the midst of caring for loved ones living with advanced illness, the changing of the seasons can be bittersweet. Warmer weather can be a catalyst for remembering special milestones and memories we have shared through the years such as family vacations, sporting events, picnics or quality time enjoying each other’s company at home.

At Hospice of the Western Reserve, we are committed to supporting caregivers and their families in the final phase of life so they can make the most of the time remaining. For some patients, compassionate care means home visits and medicine that relieves pain. For others, it means access to spiritual care, music therapy, or even specialized medical equipment that allows them to spend part of the day outdoors feeling the warmth of the sun or taking in the beauty of sailboats on Lake Erie.

I am constantly humbled and inspired by the creative ways the friends we have served choose to give back to help other Hospice of the Western Reserve families. Whether celebrating the life and legacy of a loved one at our Walk to Remember June 11, hosting a community fundraising event, contributing a financial gift or joining our volunteer team, your contributions are valued.

Your generosity makes it possible to offer much more than extraordinary medical care. We can provide life-enhancing comfort and care not covered under insurance benefits, such as art therapy, massage and Reiki services.

In this time of new beginnings, it is more important than ever to express our thanks to special friends and dedicated supporters who share their resources with us each year. We are deeply grateful.

Bill Finn
President and Chief Executive Officer

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**NOW THAT TAKES THE CAKE!**

TALK ABOUT A CREATIVE – AND DELICIOUS – WAY TO GIVE BACK!

This spring, the Ashtabula County Board of Realtors hosted its 26th Annual Cake Auction benefiting Hospice of the Western Reserve. Each year, the cakes are paired with fabulous auction items donated by community businesses and individuals. Through the years, the event has raised more than $120,000 for patients and families. Thank you for your ongoing support!
Hospice of the Western Reserve made one of the toughest experiences in life something that I remember as being peaceful and full of love. At first, care for each of my grandparents was provided at home. At the end, both transitioned to David Simpson Hospice House. The employees became an extension of my family. They were genuinely invested in the wellbeing of our grandparents.

The care allowed our family to come together and enjoy special time with my grandparents. The staff introduced us to pet therapy and counseling services. The nurses made sure that we, as caregivers, were also taking care of ourselves. They kept me full of amazing tasty chocolate chip cookies that smelled just like the ones made by my grandmother.

I knew I had to do something to give back to the place that had given so much to my family and me. Walk to Remember provides a meaningful way to do that while celebrating the life of my grandparents and the love and gratitude I still have for them.

Each year, I form a Walk team. Last year, I served as the Friends and Family Chair, as a community ambassador. Each year, I also hold an annual Ugly Sweater for Hospice Party and this money goes toward the Walk’s proceeds. This past December, we doubled our fundraising amount to over $3,500.

I live my life guided by the conviction that people will often forget what you said and did, but they will never forget how you made them feel. The tears the nurse shed when my grandparents passed are a testimony to the people employed at Hospice of the Western Reserve. They made my parents and our family feel important and cared for. It is my honor to give back. I will forever be indebted to them for their compassion and quality of care.

Holly Craider, Ph.D., is Dean of Access and Completion at Cuyahoga Community College – Eastern Campus, and a member of the Adjunct Faculty, Speech Communications. View a moving video testimonial from Holly at hospicewr.org/walk.
To each and every one of you who were involved in my Mom gaining her wings, I want to extend our heartfelt “thank you.” You have shown me why I work for Hospice of the Western Reserve. As I write this, I can truly say this is how it is supposed to be. We could be difficult at times, but you all just listened. You treated us as if we were your own family members.

As our Mom called it, she was “ready to go.” You each did more than you had to do. Mom loved you all so much to the point we weren’t allowed to visit on Monday afternoon for any reason because it was her spa day with “the hospice girls.” You allowed me to be her daughter but also allowed me to be the nurse in some ways, but not too much.

You each impacted us in your own way. Your love, compassion and even tears with us helped. You helped my Dad, too. Your Hospice Nursing Assistants are awesome and cannot be replaced. I cherish those girls because my Mom loved their dances and conversations, which got her through the days of being trapped in her own body. She got her wings and I was able to dress her and put her makeup on. I was able to take my Dad to her to say goodbye after she passed. To each of you, thank you.
Cleveland Chefs *Serve Family Memories* at Hospice Houses

**MEAL TO REMEMBER HAS BEEN BRINGING CLEVELAND’S TOP CHEFS**
to David Simpson Hospice House and Ames Family Hospice House since 2012. Recently, the program also began serving families at the Medina Inpatient Hospice Care Center.

The program connects families visiting patients at Hospice of the Western Reserve’s three inpatient care units with restaurants in the community. Through the generous donation of dinners prepared by Cleveland’s top chefs, families are able to enjoy a gourmet meal and conversation around the dinner table. Scoperta Importing, Inc. donates fine wines to accompany each dinner.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the program, from setting the tables with fine linens and creating centerpieces to assisting with serving and clean up. Since the program’s inception, virtually every independently owned restaurant in Cleveland has participated. Many are repeat donors, including Beach Club Bistro, which has returned to David Simpson Hospice House a record-breaking 10 times!

**First Medina Meal Honors Chef’s Parents**

George Santosuosso, owner of the popular Italian restaurant Santosuosso’s, was the first chef to donate and serve a Meal to Remember in Medina. George saw the experience as a way to honor his late parents. His father, Johnny, was longtime owner of the critically acclaimed Johnny’s Restaurant and Bar on Fulton.

When they became ill toward the end of life, both Johnny and his wife, Florence, received care from Hospice of the Western Reserve. Florence died in 2015 at age 89, followed by Johnny, in 2016, at age 91. George smiled as he recalled family memories, and recounted how much his parents enjoyed traveling and spending time together.

“Holidays and birthdays had special meaning for them,” he said. “During their 69 years of marriage, they never missed a single holiday or birthday. They always made it a point to be together.”

He described a conversation he had with his father on the last day of his life: “Dad’s birthday was on St. Patrick’s Day and I was visiting him the day before. I remember sitting by his bed and holding his hand. I said: ‘Dad, tomorrow is your birthday. Is there anything special you’d like?’ He opened his eyes and he had a smile on his face. He said, ‘George, I have a date with your mother and you’re not invited.’ He passed away later that evening.”

George said he feels honored to have provided the dinner to hospice patients and their families. “It was the last dinner together for many of these families. Knowing I had the privilege of providing it means a lot to me. “What hospice did for us was very special. They cared for our mother and father as if they were their own parents. They cried with us, laughed with us and felt pain with us. They became a part of the family.”

**LEARN MORE**

Inquiries from restaurants are always appreciated. For more information about Meal to Remember, please send an email to Lori Scotese at lscotese@hospicewr.org.
Agency Green Team Champions **Sustainability**

What does sustainability mean to you? At Hospice of the Western Reserve, sustainability is a core value. Its layers of meaning relate to providing the best care for our patients, families and community. Sustainable business practices support our fiscal well-being. Sustainable operations promote healthy living for those who work, stay and visit in our facilities. Environmental sustainability improves quality of life for all.

The Hospice of the Western Reserve Green Team convened in 2009 and influences agency sustainability on every level. Led by Kathy Gatto, Vice President of Support Services, Green Team efforts started off very hands-on. As one of its first activities, Green Team members donned hazmat suits and did a dumpster dive to determine what type of waste was being produced and where sustainability efforts could make the biggest impact. This (gross but effective) method of getting to know the agency’s habits allowed the Team to set goals for immediate improvement.

Single stream recycling kicked off at the Lakeshore Campus. All teams were urged to use personal coffee mugs and disposable cups were phased out. Foam trays were banned and old-school light bulbs were swapped with high-efficiency bulbs. Low flow toilets were installed to reduce water waste and energy saving motion sensors replaced light switches. And that was just the beginning.

“To encourage our staff to embrace change, the Green Team did the math and demonstrated how operating money could be used for patient care,” Kathy said. “Buying a case of disposable coffee cups, for example, cost the same as renting a Geri chair for a month. Measuring cost savings and Agency impact are extremely important; sustainability outcomes are factored into most major decisions.”

Sustainability efforts range from small—celebrating Earth Day by handing out misprinted, donated coffee mugs—to true flagship projects like building Ames Family Hospice House. Our west side hospice care center opened in 2012 and was awarded LEED Gold Certification.

Two years later, Ames Family Hospice House received an “Emerald Partner in Change” award from Practice Greenhealth, a national nonprofit organization devoted to promoting environmental stewardship and best practices in the health care community. That same year, David Simpson Hospice House, earned a “Partner for Change Award” for continuously improving and expanding upon mercury elimination, waste reduction, recycling and source reduction programs. Then in 2015, HMC Hospice of Medina County and Hospice of the Western Reserve merged. The Gold LEED Certification of Medina’s newly built inpatient unit was a factor in the decision to partner.

The Agency’s commitment to sustainability is evident in large and small efforts. “Food waste is costly to dispose of because of its weight, so our hospitality staff found innovative ways to manage the garbage generated by cooking hundreds of meals each week,” Kathy said. “Onsite composting turns food and flower waste into nutritious top dressing for our memorial gardens. Donated fruit and vegetable peels keep the goats and chickens happy at two nearby farms.” Continually finding ways to reach for sustainability demands innovation and the willingness to make changes. And even small changes can make a big difference in our operations.
The Green Team Recycling Efforts in 2016

The Green Team is responsible for educating staff, volunteers and visitors about sustainability opportunities at all sites. Recycling—diverting useable materials away from landfills—is the most obvious way anyone at our facilities can participate in our sustainable practices. And even the smallest effort makes a big difference, for the agency and for the planet. Here are just a few examples of our 2016 recycling numbers and why we make the effort.

- **284 pounds of lightbulbs recycled**
  - **Why?** Light bulbs contain mercury. Poisonous mercury vapors cause nervous system damage in people and animals.

- **217 pounds of batteries recycled**
  - **Why?** In landfills, batteries corrode, leaking toxic heavy metals into the ground water. If they are incinerated with other trash, we breathe the heavy metals in pollution.

- **3,672 pounds of kitchen grease recycled**
  - **Why?** Cooking oils can damage sewer lines and leach into the water table; recycling transforms it into a high calorie additive for commercial animal feed.

- **288 cubic yards**
  - **Why?** In 2016, the Agency’s single stream recycling program diverted 288 cubic yards of recycling from landfills. That is enough plastic, glass, cardboard and paper to create a two-foot-wide path stretching from David Simpson Hospice House to the Headquarters building on St. Clair Ave.

- **$250**
  - **Why?** The Medina Inpatient Hospice Care Center’s recycling program kicked off on Earth Day. Every garbage dumpster costs up to $250 to empty. The recycling dumpsters cost only $30. By increasing recycling and decreasing garbage, the Agency demonstrates sustainability in financial operations and environmental impact.

- **1,640 pounds of electronic waste**
  - **Why?** Our vendor is certified as a responsible reseller and recycler of electronic parts. That means devices are disassembled and their metals, plastics and minerals can be reused responsibly.

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**Hospice of the Western Reserve**

**WAREHOUSE SALE**

Quality, Gently Used Fine Home Furnishings

September 8–9 • December 1–2

17876 St. Clair Avenue, Cleveland
hospicewr.org/warehouse

**DONATIONS NEEDED.** For more information, visit hospicewr.org/warehouse. To donate, please call 216.255.9090.

We are unable to accept mattresses and boxsprings.

**SHOP ANY TIME.** Between Warehouse Sales, visit our Life’s Treasures Thrift Shop in Medina. Learn more at hospicewr.org/resale.

**VOLUNTEERS ARE VITAL MEMBERS OF THE HOSPICE TEAM.** To learn more about how you can volunteer, visit hospicewr.org/volunteer.
Celebrate Life!

Sunday, June 11

Rain or Shine • Gates open at 7:30 a.m.
Walk begins at 8:45 a.m.
Closing Celebration at 9:30 a.m.

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo
3900 Wildlife Way, Cleveland

Enjoy live music, food, family/team photos, crafts, facepainting and more.

For every $100 raised or donated, a Comfort Buddy by Warmies® will be donated to a Hospice of the Western Reserve patient!

Register or donate today!

hospicewr.org/walk
216.383.5291