



Hospice of Cincinnati

The community not-for-profit hospice

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HOC goes smoke free

Hospice of Cincinnati joined TriHealth and all other Greater Cincinnati hospitals by implementing a smoke-free/tobacco-free policy on Nov. 16, 2006, for employees, medical staff and volunteers. On Jan. 1, 2007, this policy is extended to visitors, vendors and contractors. Hospice patients with a physician order will be allowed to smoke on a limited basis in designated areas outside the buildings.

Hospice of Cincinnati is sponsored by Bethesda Inc. in a collaborative community partnership with TriHealth and Mercy Health Partners.

Family opens heart and soul to staff



Robert Battle (far right) celebrates with his son and grandson during one of the special occasions of his life.

Robert Battle and his 13 children had dealt with many of life's tragedies. So when the 87-year-old was diagnosed with lung cancer and given a terminal prognosis, his family thought they could care for him without any help.

Four of his children moved back home to their father's Colerain Township home to nurse him through his illness. "My dad wanted to stay at home and have us take care of him," remembers his eldest daughter, Dolores. "We wanted to do whatever would make him happy."

"They always came together to care for one another," relates HOC nurse Jeannette Walker, who cared for Battle through his illness. "They didn't think they needed us."

While many people still think of hospice as managing patient care during the patient's final days, the Hospice of Cincinnati team is prepared to offer this care as long as they are needed. In this case, the care team became a part of the Battle family as they supported them for more than two years.

Once the family accepted the HOC team into their home, they realized how much was

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Age not a factor in volunteer's zest for life

It's 8 a.m. and Sister Antonine is at the start line for Hike for Hospice of Hamilton, leaning slightly on her trusty cane as she heads out into the bright fall day. But the walk doesn't start for another hour!

"Sister starts before everyone else so she can end the race with all the other walkers," explains Debbie Hauenstein, HOH account executive. It's with this same dedication and commitment to others that Sister Antonine has lived her life.

"We call her the energizer bunny," chuckles Reverend Lucy Vick, spiritual care manager,



Sister Antonine and HOC account representative Debbie Hauenstein at this year's Hike for Hospice of Hamilton.

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Message from the CEO



Thirty years of experience. Thirty years of caring for those about to die. Thirty years of responding to community need. The year 2007 offers much to celebrate at Hospice of Cincinnati as we mark 30 years of hospice service to the Greater Cincinnati community.

In 1977, we began as most hospices did at the time: making home visits with the help of a devoted cadre of volunteers. Despite financial struggles in those early years, Hospice of Cincinnati persevered, holding firmly to the belief that every terminally ill person and their family should have access to this kind of compassionate, comfort-oriented and personalized care. This clarity of purpose eventually grew into four inpatient care center locations, a nationally renowned bereavement program and holistic services that are second to none.

Not all hospices provide this comprehensive mix of care to the degree that HOC does. We are not bound by for-profit organizational directives focused primarily on bottom line financial returns. As **the community not-for-profit hospice**, we consistently direct our resources toward improving and expanding HOC care – efficiently and productively – with care excellence always a priority. Our non-profit status allows us to more clearly focus on our mission to provide the highest quality palliative care to all who need it, regardless of their ability to pay.

During Hospice of Cincinnati's 30-year journey, we have developed core competencies that can be applied in any community. The combination of these core competencies with the partnerships we develop in communities yield the best hospice care and bereavement support possible for families. But sometimes, we are drawn to do even more.

A natural step for a maturing organization is to move beyond the immediate community. Our employees answered the call beautifully in 2005 as the first hospice relief team to respond to the plight of displaced Hurricane Katrina hospice patient victims from New Orleans. And this fall, in response to a Sub-Saharan South Africa hospice outreach project initiated by our national hospice organization, we have established a sister partnership with an emerging hospice in the large black township of Mamelodi, South Africa (see page 3).

Whether it's assisting a local family such as the Battles (front page), or helping a new hospice in South Africa, HOC employees gain fulfillment and empowerment from helping others. They give of themselves daily to positively impact the quality of life of patients and families here in Greater Cincinnati. And when given the chance, they extend their professional skills and compassion to help, at least in a small way, other fellow hospices beyond our immediate service area.

I have no doubt that our shared mission has contributed to our success as the fourth oldest hospice in the nation and as a national leader in hospice care. It will continue to guide us as we move forward into our future!

All the Best,

Steve West
President and CEO

Employee of the Quarter

Cunningham proud to be part of team

“A real honor,” is what Marie Cunningham, HOC senior account executive, thinks about being named Employee of the Quarter. “When I think of everyone else I work with, there are so many people here who do an incredible job,” she says. “I am very humbled by this recognition.”

Cunningham began her health care career as lead EEG technician at Bethesda Oak Hospital. She moved into a position in Physician Relations and then made a change to Hospice of Cincinnati in 2002 as an account executive. “It was such a great fit,” she says. “I was already very familiar with Hospice of Cincinnati's services and many physician practices on the west side.”

As one of a team of four HOC account representatives,

Cunningham leads the Physician Relations Program. She calls on nursing homes and hospitals to ensure they know about HOC's varied services and how to best access them. “I really believe in our mission and am delighted to represent our program to those who need our services.”



Marie Cunningham

Cunningham also organizes a yearly social work conference, featuring nationally renowned speakers and offering end-of-life care education to professionals.

“The high quality of care our clinical team provides enables me to represent our program with great pride,” she says, complimenting the entire HOC team. “Everyone goes above and beyond what is expected. I think we all try and live HOC's mission every day.”

Chris Barnett, chief marketing officer for HOC and Cunningham's supervisor, offers due credit to Cunningham as well. “Marie is highly respected by her HOC peers, major accounts and physicians. She has earned this respect over time through her proactive service excellence, attention to detail, diligence in developing her referral base and poise under pressure,” he says.

“She never seeks the limelight for her achievements but always recognizes others on the team who work alongside her. This recognition and the remarkable growth of her accounts are indications of the high quality of her teamwork.”

One size does not fit all

Diversity Initiative seeks to reduce disparities in care

Within varying cultures lie varying approaches to end-of-life care. Hospice of Cincinnati has begun focusing on diverse attitudes regarding end-of-life issues within varying Greater Cincinnati ethnic and other cultural groups.

Initially, the HOC Diversity Initiative will focus on strengthening connections with the African American community to increase people's awareness and comfort level with hospice care. Besides attending community events to better educate African Americans on all aspects of hospice care, HOC also is turning the education inward and conducting training sessions for its employees.

"We want to make sure our customized care is also culturally sensitive," explains James Cowan, manager, HOC Diverse Markets. "We are helping our employees to become more culturally proficient by opening their eyes to how culture can affect preferences in patient care."

Part of understanding cultural differences is tuning in to spiritual and institutional barriers, which are especially prevalent in the African American community. Not wanting to "give in" to death, which can be perceived as a lack of faith, and reluctance of family members to let outsiders in for the care of their loved one are significant barriers.



Hospice of Cincinnati helped sponsor The Center for Closing the Health Gap's "Take a Loved One for a Check-Up Day," held Sept. 23 at the Cincinnati Zoo. Pictured are the Center's President and CEO Dwight Tillery; keynote speaker Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith, associate dean, Harvard School of Public Health; and HOC President and CEO Steve West.

Another challenge is getting the word out that HOC offers home care as well as inpatient care and that services are covered by Medicaid and Medicare. Many people simply think they cannot afford hospice care and fail to seek more information. Hospice usage is lower among African Americans when compared to the overall population, according to the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization.

It's not a cookie-cutter approach," Cowan asserts. "Our goal is to acknowledge each culture and to work within it to promote more positive end-of-life experiences for the whole family."

Reaching beyond our borders

Hospice of Cincinnati's expertise is now reaching beyond the borders of the United States to the AIDS-ravaged black townships of South Africa. On Oct. 20, representatives from HOC partnered with a mission team from Cincinnati's Crossroads Community Church in a global journey to support a country in desperate need of quality end-of-life care.

Responding to a national initiative for sister partnerships, encouraged by both U.S. and Sub-Sahara Africa national hospice organizations, HOC has begun working with Bophelong Community Hospice. The inpatient care unit in Mamelodi, South Africa, which is about 15 miles east of Pretoria, was erected with partial funding from Crossroads Community Church. Crossroads began ties with a local Mamelodi church about three years ago to help serve Mamelodi's population of 1 million, 40 percent of which is either HIV positive or suffers from AIDS.

"The visit was highly successful in gaining rapport, credibility and trust with the Mamelodi community," reports Steve



West, HOC president and CEO. "We look forward to nurturing this long-term relationship and are honored to help lead the national initiative to assist emerging African hospices."

The HOC team included West and senior operating managers Kathy Ritter and Linda Ruter. During their 10-day exploratory visit, they worked to help prepare the hospice for formal accreditation, to investigate educational and training opportunities, to assist with the start-up of a formal business plan and to help establish funding sources.

Watch for more information about the trip in the next issue of this newsletter.

From the Foundation

Giving Appreciated Property Is “Appreciated”

Gary Algie
Director, Planned
Giving/Major Gifts



As you reflect upon your assets and net worth, you might realize, “Wow, I sure have accumulated a lot of assets that I do not really need.” There can be, however, another slant to this outlook.

When we mature, we often gain a different perspective on life. A natural next step is to take a close look at the amount of assets we own versus what we actually need. This asset analysis often leads people to ponder, “Maybe I can use those items to help a charitable organization.” Such assets may include stocks, bonds or mutual fund shares, or a vacation home or lake home you no longer care to maintain.

The beauty of this outlook is that you can help yourself, too—especially if you give appreciated assets. When you donate an appreciated asset you have owned for more than one

year, you are generally entitled to an income tax deduction for the fair market value of the asset.

It does not matter how much you paid for that lake house 20 years ago. You can deduct it at today’s value. At the same time, donating an asset that has increased in value can potentially save you thousands of dollars in capital gains taxes, which would have been due if the asset were sold instead of donated.

Most important, giving an appreciated asset to Hospice of Cincinnati allows you to create a legacy that reflects your values and supports our mission.

For more information on the benefits of donating appreciated property, please contact Gary Algie at 513-745-1622 or gary_algie@trihealth.com.

Bereavement Offerings

For more information about any bereavement offerings, contact Alan Gruber MA, MSW, LISW, at 513-936-5811, Polly Peterson, MSW, LSW, at 513-936-5814, or Martin Lawson, MSW, LISW, at 513-792-6914.

Young adult grief support group is being offered by Fernside: A Center for Grieving Children. Young adults ages 18–26 years old who are grieving the death of a parent, sibling, or other close relationship are encouraged to attend to receive and give emotional support. For more information call 513-745-0111.

Blue Ash Evening Support Group

This evening support group meets for six weeks beginning Thursday, Jan. 11 through Feb. 15 and will address grief related issues. The group will meet from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the 2nd floor Community Room at the main location, 4310 Cooper Road. Call 513-936-5811 or 513-936-5813 for more information or to register.

Afternoon Support Group

This ongoing support group meets once a week on Thursday afternoons and addresses grief related issues. The meetings are from 1 to 2:30 p.m. and are held in the 2nd floor Community Room at the main location, 4310 Cooper Road in Blue Ash. Call 513-936-5811 or 513-936-5813 for more information or to register.

Parent Loss Support Group

This ongoing support group provides support for adults, ages 27 and older, who have experienced the death of a parent or surrogate parent figure. The group meets on Monday evenings from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the 2nd floor Community Room at the main location, 4310 Cooper Road in Blue Ash. Call 513-936-5814 for more information or to register.

Western Hills

This support group meets once a week on Tuesday afternoons to discuss grief related issues. These meetings are from 1 to 2:30 p.m. at Mercy Franciscan at West Park, Main Meeting Room, 2950 West Park Drive in Western Hills. Please call 513-936-5811 or 513-936-5813 for information or to register.

Fairfield

This ongoing support group meets once a week on Wednesday afternoons to discuss grief related issues. These meetings are from 1 to 2:30 p.m. at the Fairfield Community Arts Center, Green Room, 411 Wessell Drive in Fairfield. Please call 513-936-5811 or 513-936-5813 for more information or to register.

Volunteer *continued from cover*

Mercy Fairfield Hospital, who worked with Sister Antonine for years at Mercy Hamilton. “She knows everyone in Hamilton,” Vick says. “And if she doesn’t know them, she’s related to them.”

Sister Antonine has used her familiarity with the community to raise money for Hospice of Hamilton through the annual Hike for Hospice. Every year, she approaches friends and family to support the hike. This year, she collected \$1,000, the most money of any single walker. “Most years, she’s held this honor,” Hauenstein reports. “It doesn’t matter what the weather is, she’s always here.”

Born Julia Owens from a large family of 10 children, Sister Antonine joined the Sisters of Mercy at 21 and taught first grade for many years. After her own health crisis, her ministry shifted to health care at Mercy Hamilton Hospital.



Sister Antonine starts the Hike for Hamilton before the other walkers so she can cross the finish line with the crowd

HOC Board of Trustees member Sister Mary Lou Averbeck has known Sister Antonine as a member of the Sisters of Mercy for more than 40 years. “She is very tiny and looks very fragile,” Sister Mary Lou says, “but she’s made of steel with a heart of gold.”

Sister Antonine began walking in and raising money for the Hike for Hospice of Hamilton when it began eight years ago. “She’s very modest,” Hauenstein says. “She is also very determined. When she sets her mind to something, she does it.”

Sister prepares for the hike by walking daily, including facing some of the west side’s more daunting hills.

“Sister Antonine really inspires us all,” Vick confides. “She sets the standard for faithfulness to the ministry that we would all do well to follow.”

Family *continued from cover*

available to help keep their father at home and comfortable through his end-of-life journey. “They were always very open to any suggestions to keep him comfortable,” explains Jody Mitchell, HOC social worker.

Mitchell says the family really opened their hearts to the HOC team. “They welcomed us into their lives and allowed us to be an intimate part of their experience,” she says. “They treated us like we were part of their family.”

HOC chaplain Ed Bastien praises the Battles as an amazing family. “Our mission is to walk with our patients and families through their end-of-life journey. This family was so open and very willing to share their own spiritual struggles along the way.”

The journey together was a long one. More than two years passed from the time Battle was admitted to Hospice and his death on Sept. 11, 2006. “He outlived what his doctors thought. Although he continued to decline slowly, the cancer didn’t grow at the rate they thought it would,” Walker says. This gave the family an opportunity to develop a huge sense of trust with the HOC staff.

Because there was such a feeling of trust between the family and staff, the HOC team was able to alleviate frantic emergency room visits and an unwanted nursing home placement. “They knew we would be there for them, whenever they needed us,” Mitchell remembers.

Campers sail through grief at Camp WeBelong

Children ages 7 to 11 enjoyed a week at Camp WeBelong, Fernside’s summer camp, Aug. 10-13 at Joy Outdoor Education Center. “Sailing the Seas: A Voyage Through Grief,” provided campers the opportunity to enjoy typical camp activities, as well as to participate in activities that were instrumental in helping them navigate their voyage through grief.

Fernside thanks Kids 4 Kids for providing art supplies and TriHealth and A la Carte Dessert & Catering Company for providing healthy snacks. An anonymous donor provided substantial support for this year’s camp.



These messy campers and counselors enjoy the water carnival at Camp WeBelong.

A quarter century of pounding the pavement

Blue Ash Hike

The 25th anniversary of Hike for Hospice of Cincinnati came complete with sunny skies and warm hearts as about 1,200 pairs of feet hit the pavement Oct. 7.

The event raised more than \$93,000 for HOC, a 55 percent increase over last year's Hike. Walkers enjoyed great weather and a picnic lunch as well as the perennial appearance by WKRC-TV Channel 12's Cammy Dierking as master of ceremonies.

Co-chairs were Sandi Plummer and Beth Green. Committee members included Marie Bell, Grady Davis, Diana Fogel, Nicole Gunderman, Mary Kelley, Sherry Lewis, Robin Lippelman, Andy Mack, Judy Russell, Jerri Spurlock, J.C. and Betsy Stadnik, and Sandy Wagner.

Presenting sponsors were Great-West Healthcare and Starbucks Coffee. Lunch sponsor was Fifth Third Bank. Registration sponsors were Consolidated Health Services and Tape Products. Rest Stop sponsors were Ethicon Endo-Surgery Inc., Fleet Feet and Right At Home.

Major sponsors were John Morrell, Tradewinds Beverage Company, Channel 12 WKRC-TV, United Dairy Farmers and the Cincinnati Chapter of the GE Elfuns. Additional sponsors for this year's Hike were: Carington Health Systems, Fort Washington Investment Advisors and Therapy Support Inc.

Thanks to all our walkers and sponsors and to the City of Blue Ash and the Blue Ash Police Department for helping make this event another wonderful success!



The 25th annual Hike for Hospice of Cincinnati featured an endless line of supporters who helped raise more than \$93,000 for Hospice of Cincinnati.

Hamilton Hike

The 8th annual Hike for Hospice of Hamilton was held Saturday, Sept. 30, with hikers raising more than \$50,000 for Hospice of Hamilton, surpassing last year's hike by 35 percent.

Jazzercise of Fairfield provided a "warm-up" for hikers. There were raffle and door prizes, live music, games for children and even door prizes for four-legged hikers. Donuts, fruit, coffee, pizza and ice cream topped off the day.



Celebrating its best year yet, the Hike for Hospice of Hamilton raised more than \$50,000 thanks to the generous Butler County community.

1st Financial and Carington Health Systems were the Platinum Sponsors. A Diamond Sponsorship was provided by Harry's Corner in memory of Robbie Dalton. Silver Sponsors included Wal-Mart Colerain Ave. #1521, Sam's Club TriCounty #8132 and Weintraub Advertising.

Other major sponsors included: Heritage Health Alliance, Mercy Hospital, Internists of Fairfield, Tri-County Extended Care/Fairfield Pavilion, Focused Imaging Technologies, Chaco Credit Union, Miller Brewery, Butler County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, Rik Saylor Asset Preservation for Senior Adults, Chick-fil-A, Right at Home In Home Care & Assistance, Fairfield Jazzercise, and a donation in memory of Sylvia M. Thomas.

Prizes awarded for donations included Sr. Antonine from Mercy Hospital Fairfield in the individual category; the Mathews Family in the family category; Faith Church for church group; and "Robbie's Song" from Harry's Corner in the corporate category.

Thank you to all our hikers and sponsors for helping make this event the best yet!

For more information on next year's hikes, please contact Jerri Spurlock (Blue Ash Hike) at 513-745-1618 or jerri_spurlock@trihealth.com and Debbie Hauenstein (Hamilton Hike) at 513-792-6999 ext. 8158 or debbie_hauenstein@trihealth.com.

Sensation's sizzling sundries abound



Dr. and Mrs. Glen Hofmann (left) with Bryan Hofmann and Elisha Denza as they enjoy an evening of incredible edibles.

On Saturday, Sept. 9, A Gourmet Sensation welcomed more than 850 guests to dine on some of the finest foods and wines in the land. The event netted more than \$120,000 for Hospice of Cincinnati. Title sponsors Edyth and Carl Lindner, along with major sponsors The Cincinnati Hotel and Cutting Edge Selections, helped make this another banner year for this unique and scrumptious event. Chairs Suzanne and Youssef Costandi, MD, and a host of volunteers gave long hours to ensure a "Sensation" success.

Guests enjoyed delectable dishes prepared by 20 of the world's best chefs. Among the participating chefs were locals Clinton Jones and Noreen Nagao of the Palace at The Cincinnati Hotel and Jean-Robert de Cavel of Jean-Robert at Pigall's. In addition, four-star Mobile Guide chef Robert Waggoner of Charleston Grill, Charleston, attended along with two-star Michelin chef Michel Rostang of Restaurants Michel Rostang, Paris, France. This year the event also featured Jean-Louis Gerin of Restaurant JEAN-LOUIS in Greenwich, Connecticut, who was a James Beard winner as Best Chef of the Northeast.

Once again, Kathy and Michael Brown prepared a sumptuous pre-event feast for guest chefs and major sponsors. This was the 13th year the Browns have donated their amazing talents and time to this wonderful event.

Special thanks go to Edyth and Carl Lindner, Kathy and Michael Brown, The Cincinnati Hotel, Cutting Edge Selections, Meijer and Sandy and Bob Heimann.

For more information on next year's Gourmet Sensation, please contact Diana Fogel at 513-745-1617 or diana_fogel@trihealth.com.

Board member named Academy of Medicine president-elect

David W. Wiltse, MD, a member of the Hospice of Cincinnati Board of Trustees since 2001, has been named



David W. Wiltse, MD

president-elect of the Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati. The medical director of Pulmonary Services at Good Samaritan Hospital, Dr. Wiltse will become president of the Academy in September 2007. He has been a member of the academy since 1980 and an elected officer of the Board for the last five years.

While he graduated from Yale University School of Medicine, Dr. Wiltse is committed to his native Cincinnati and deeply involved in his educational work with internal medicine students at Good Samaritan.

The Academy of Medicine was founded in 1857 and is a not-for-profit, professional association for the physicians of Hamilton County. The mission of the Academy of Medicine is to advance the practice of medicine and promote optimal health for citizens of Greater Cincinnati through education, advocacy and communication.

Gerdsen receives Heart of Ohio Award



Leigh Gerdsen receives the Heart of Ohio Award from Jeff Lycan, President and CEO of OHPCO.

Leigh Gerdsen, Hospice of Cincinnati chief operating officer, has received the 2006 Heart of Ohio Award from the Ohio Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (OHPCO). This prestigious honor is given to hospice professionals who have made significant and repeated achievements in palliative care.

In his nomination, Steve West, HOC president and CEO, wrote, "Leigh is an inspiration to each and every staff member of Hospice of Cincinnati. She has always made our priorities crystal clear – to ensure comfort, dignity and quality of life to the terminally ill and their families and to spread the word to as many people as possible about the kind of assistance that hospice services can provide at this critical time of life." Gerdsen was recognized at the annual OHPCO Conference in November.

Teddy bears stuffed with tender loving care

There's nothing like snuggling up to a soft teddy bear for comfort when you are sick or distressed. As part of their mission to reach out to the community, members of Eastside Christian Church have been making handmade bears for hospice patients since April.

"It is such a joy to show love and concern for each other!" exclaims Corinne Rothan, the bear ministry's coordinator. "Hospice patients and their families need to feel other people's concern and thoughts." Church members 'sponsor' a bear by donating \$5 to help cover the cost of materials. This gives them naming rights, which many use to honor a lost loved one.

Volunteers Mary and Pat Eppert are the backbone of the ministry. They organize the volunteers, purchase all materials, sew the skins and recruit others to sew skins, and they make "special request" bears. Then they turn the bearskins over to bear workshop volunteers, who meet once a month to stuff the bears and give them personality. More than 30 people usually show up to help. "It is a very inspiring ministry," Rothan says. "It is really quite a spiritual experience to do something pleasing for others."

Rothan and her husband approached HOC volunteer coordinator Lisa Babis when they heard about the new inpatient care center opening in Anderson Township. "The



Mary and Pat Eppert, (left) show off some of the bears they have made with bear ministry coordinator Corinne Rothan.

impact of these bears has been amazing," Babis says. She remembers a home care patient who died, leaving a grieving fiancé behind. The bear ministry made her a special bridal bear. Babis remembers the young woman's reaction: "You people are angels."

Many congregants—including Rothan—have had personal experiences with hospice care. "They helped me through a very bad time when my husband was ill," she remembers. "Now it's my turn to help."

The teddy bears have migrated beyond Anderson Township; they are also going to patients with HOC's East and Central Long Term and Home Care teams. For more information about the bear ministry, please call Lisa Babis at 513-792-6999, ext. 8217.



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