



# impressions

LEGACIES OF LOVE AND FINGERPRINTS ON THE WORLD

**ONE SMILE  
AT A TIME**  
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# MAKING IT HAPPEN – ONE SMILE AT A TIME

A social worker's perspective, in her own words

The Make it Happen program is central to our mission at Senior Independence. It makes a difference not only in the lives of patients and their families, but to staff and volunteers as well.

Oftentimes, our Make it Happen initiatives come to fruition through a simple conversation with a patient. That's why it's important for staff and volunteers to keep their eyes and ears open.

Sometimes, when the Make it Happen program is explained to patients and their families, we're told they can't think of anything they'd want to do one last time. It's then up to us to discover something that could be memorable for the patients and their families.

On one of my December visits, I noticed that hospice patient Barb Posadny's birthday was coming up. I told her that our office loved Wixey's cakes and asked if she'd like one. Barb said, "Of course!" but stated that the cake had to be chocolate.

I called Barb's family to see if they'd be able to join our staff for a small birthday party,

and to find out if Barb had a favorite food or restaurant. They told me that Barb really wanted a steak one more time.

That's when the planning began. Transportation, flowers, dinner reservations and chocolate cakes were arranged – but then the weather got in the way. The day we were supposed to take Barb was the coldest day of the year, so I rearranged for the party to take place two days later when it was not going to be quite as cold.

But the chocolate cake from Wixey's had already been ordered, so we decided to take it to Barb at her assisted living residence on her actual birthday to surprise her. Barb was so happy and smiled ear to ear. When I spoke to her daughter afterward, she said that she had never seen her mom so happy.

Two days later, Barb went to Mancy's Steakhouse and had a lovely evening with her family and the hospice team. Barb enjoyed a delicious dinner and even had a drink or two! The pictures say it all: Barb had the time of her life, and that evening will



be one that her family will remember forever.

Events like these show how our hospice team can make a difference, even if it's as simple as getting a cake for a patient. When we're able to make memorable moments for the families we serve, then we have done our job. ●

**ON THE COVER:** *Thanks to Senior Independence Hospice and the Make it Happen program, Barb Posadny got to enjoy a special birthday dinner with her family.*

**PICTURED ABOVE:** *Hospice patient Barb Posadny was thrilled with her chocolate birthday cake, which was part of her special Make it Happen wish.*

Special thanks to Erin E. Glatter for her testimonial. Erin is a medical social worker and bereavement counselor for Senior Independence Hospice in Toledo.

# CALLING ALL FRIENDS & FAMILY!

## Unique fundraising program makes giving back fun

Friends & Family Fundraising is a unique way for an organization, group or individual to hold an event to benefit Senior Independence Hospice.

Think about your kids' schools, clubs and teams, as well as your church or civic organization. Do these groups do service activities?

### *Anyone can do a Friends & Family Fundraising event!*

Large or small, the possibilities are endless!

And the best part? Friends & Family Fundraising events bring together those who care about your loved one, while raising money to extend a hand of compassion to other families needing hospice care.

When you host or participate in a Senior Independence Friends & Family Fundraising event, your donations will be used to sustain and enhance hospice services for patients and families, helping with:

- Make it Happen events
- Needed equipment and supplies
- Transportation costs to serve rural patients
- Items that bring comfort to patients and families
- And so much more

You can visit our website, [seniorindependence.org](http://seniorindependence.org), and click on "Ways to Give" for event guidelines, an application, a free event promotion kit and more.

Help is also available from the OPRS Foundation. For guidance or to learn more, please contact Kathie Gannon, director of fund development, at 800-686-7800, ext. 117 or [kgannon@opr.org](mailto:kgannon@opr.org). You can also fill out the enclosed reply envelope and send it back to us, and Kathie will contact you! ●



### **Are you interested in hosting a Friends & Family Fundraising event, but need some ideas to get you started?**

Here are some examples:

- Dinner party
- Bake sale
- Golf outing
- Car wash
- Silent auction
- Block party
- Race/walk team
- Lemonade stand
- Garage sale
- Chili cook-off
- Craft sale
- Pancake breakfast
- Bowling tournament
- Holiday gift wrapping
- Home party (makeup, jewelry, etc.)



# COMPLEMENTING CARE

## Donors and volunteers provide additional comfort

With support from donors and volunteers, Senior Independence Hospice is using alternative therapies like aromatherapy, Comfort Touch massage, pet therapy and more to help enhance the well-being of patients.

Through the generosity of others, Senior Independence Hospice is using these unique therapy techniques to improve patients' quality of life by alleviating symptoms of pain and anxiety, while helping to improve comfort and mood.

On these two pages, we share with you examples of how the generosity of a few is helping Senior Independence Hospice enhance quality of life for many.

## Grant brings aromatherapy to patients

Senior Independence patients in the Greater Cleveland region can breathe a sigh of relief – and relaxation – thanks to a grant from the Western Reserve Junior Service League.

Through this grant, Senior Independence has been able to implement an aromatherapy program to help enhance the well-being of those it serves.

“We are very grateful for this generous gift that will help to improve the quality of life for patients by complementing traditional care plans and creating a positive, healing environment,” said Eileen Yates, executive director

of Senior Independence’s Greater Cleveland region.

Aromatherapy could be especially helpful to hospice patients as it has been known to provide benefits like relaxation and stress relief, mood enhancement, relief of minor discomforts, improvements in sleep and much more.

Connie Wolf, RN, oversees the aromatherapy program. She always instructs patients to relax, take deep breaths and go to a peaceful place in their minds as they enjoy the aromatherapy. “I’m a true believer,” Connie declared.

“It just brings all your anxieties down.”

Eileen is pleased with the success of the program thus far, sharing, “We’re always looking for ways to bring comfort and peacefulness to patients’ lives, and if that can be done through aromatherapy I think it’s a wonderful thing to be able to offer.” ●



## Special volunteers spread joy

Fans crane their necks to get a better look as he walks by, hoping he'll stop for a visit.

He's Milo, the goldendoodle therapy dog whose sociable, affectionate personality is cheering hospice patients wherever he goes.

Milo belongs to volunteer Libbey Eicher, whose own positive experience with pet therapy led her to bring Milo into her life and train him as a therapy dog. "My experience really inspired me to do the same and help other people," Libbey explained.

Libbey particularly sought out the opportunity to bring Milo to hospice patients. "It's something I'm passionate about," shared Libbey, who has a part-time job at a nursing home and has worked with hospice patients in the past.

Senior Independence's volunteer coordinator, Jennifer VanVorhis, couldn't be happier with Milo and Libbey.

"Patients have been delighted by Milo and Libbey's visits," stated Jennifer. "There was one patient who all but jumped out of bed when we stopped to see her!"

Milo's training and certification through Therapy Dogs International prepared him for the delicate task of working with hospice patients. And his calm and friendly demeanor is an added bonus.

"I think Milo enjoys [being a therapy dog]," Libbey said, noting that Milo loves people and especially loves it when people pet him.

But there's no doubt in Libbey's mind who the real star of the show is when she and Milo go on visits. "I don't think they even notice me – it's just the dog!" she joked, but added that seeing the smiles on patients' faces is priceless and makes it all worthwhile. ●



**PICTURED ABOVE:** *Hospice volunteer Libbey Eicher poses with Milo, her goldendoodle therapy dog. This dynamic duo donates their time to bring joy to patients in the Greater Toledo region.*

Are you interested in becoming a hospice volunteer?

Call the regional office nearest you (listed on the back cover), or simply fill out the enclosed reply envelope and send it back to us.

You could make a difference in the lives of hospice patients!

# GENEROSITY ON THE GO

## Residents help fund golf cart to expedite hospice trips

For Senior Independence Hospice patients who live at OPRS' Mount Pleasant Retirement Village, the wait time for a visit from their hospice nurse could soon be much shorter.

With help from charitable gifts, a golf cart has been purchased to provide the nurse with more convenient and rapid transportation around the large, 110-acre campus.

The request for the cart came from Cheryl Withrow, regional executive director of Senior Independence's

Southwest Ohio and Miami Valley regions.

“Our nurse was walking back and forth across the campus or using her own car and trying to find parking,” Cheryl explained.

As Gift Planning Director Whitney O’Neal pointed out, “It’s much more efficient to just jump on a golf cart and go, versus having to get in a car, drive to the destination and then find a parking spot.”

Whitney says she was confident that she could find

donor support for the project since so many people have been touched by hospice at some point in their lives.

Whitney shared the idea with Mount Pleasant residents Robert Boonstra, James and Viola Bruner, and Kenneth Shinn. “They were more than happy to help fund the cart and help their fellow residents,” Whitney said. ●

**PICTURED BELOW:** *Thanks to charitable donations, hospice nurse Denise Shearer now has a golf cart to drive around the large Mount Pleasant campus.*





## PAYING IT FORWARD

Grateful daughter now a donor

“Phenomenal.”

That’s how Beth Santell describes Senior Independence Hospice.

Because of the compassionate care extended to her late mother, Shirley Babcock, Beth has made hospice a priority in her life through charitable giving and volunteering.

Although Beth had no prior experience with hospice, she quickly recognized the benefit it provided to her mother, to herself and to her family. “It was rewarding for my family to care for Mom in her own home, but it could also be physically and emotionally draining,” Beth explained, adding, “Hospice allowed us time away to care for ourselves, so we could better care for Mom.”

“From the outset, people at Senior Independence were great,” Beth shared. The experience made a lasting impression in her life and inspired her to give back.

Beth says the decision to make charitable gifts to hospice was an easy one. “We have to be able to give back to hospice; they do so much for so many people,” she stated.

And using the convenient online giving option made giving back to Senior Independence Hospice even easier. In fact, Beth simply set up a recurring monthly donation so her gifts happen automatically.

Though she now lives in Florida, Beth’s experience with Senior Independence Hospice still has an impact on her life.



She has even become a hospice volunteer, visiting nursing homes in her local area “because there is a need out there.”

Beth’s feelings about hospice and giving back are reflected in a quote that’s displayed on her mother’s memorial bench: “To live in the hearts of others is to never die.” ●

**PICTURED ABOVE:** *Beth Santell (left) was so grateful to Senior Independence Hospice for the care given to her mother, Shirley (right), that she chose to give back through charitable donations.*

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If you're like Beth and would like to give back to Senior Independence Hospice, our online giving option makes it easy for you.

Simply visit our website and click the “Make a Donation” button. You can then choose the frequency of your donation: one-time, monthly, quarterly or annual. It’s that easy!

# Thank you for your generosity

The following donations were made between December 1, 2013 and February 28, 2014 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 800-686-7800.

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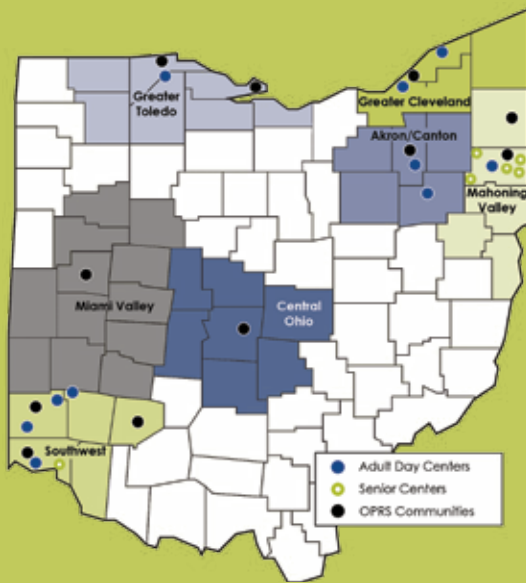
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Greater Toledo: 419-865-1499  
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24/7 Assistance: Phone: 855-579-4967  
Fax: 855-579-4968

## WILL YOUR HEALTH CARE WISHES BE HONORED?

If you're not sure, we can help

April 16 is National Healthcare Decisions Day, a nationwide event to encourage the public and providers to take action on advance directives.

All adults can benefit from thinking about what health care choices they would want made on their behalf if they were unable to speak for themselves – and writing those decisions down in an advance directive so that others know what they are.

Senior Independence Hospice offers free advance planning sessions throughout Ohio. We can help you plan conversations

with your family on end-of-life and health care wishes, and identify necessary related documents to ensure your wishes, or those of a loved one, are clear and enacted.

To schedule an educational session in your church, place of business, senior community or other location, please call the Senior Independence office nearest you at the respective phone number listed above.

You can also visit [seniorindependence.org/community-care/adult-education](http://seniorindependence.org/community-care/adult-education) for more information and to download advance planning materials. ●

Special thanks to the Cleveland Foundation, which in 2008 provided a grant to fund start-up costs, staff training and materials to implement advance care planning programs within Senior Independence Hospice.