



impressions

LEGACIES OF LOVE AND FINGERPRINTS ON THE WORLD



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POOCHES**
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PLEASING POOCHES

Therapy dogs bring joy to patients

Unconditional love on four paws – that’s what walks in the door when Senior Independence Hospice patients in the Central Ohio region are greeted by therapy dogs.

Mackie, Macy and Mollie are three popular visitors who bring good cheer to patients on a regular basis. The beloved dogs and their owners enjoy the visits just as much as the patients, and bring smiles to many faces when they appear.



Mackie

Mackie the Scottish terrier tries to visit with everyone he meets: people, dogs, grouchy cats and once, a hen, according to his owner, Sheila Lehman.

“The great thing about Mackie is that he never tires of giving affection,” said Sheila. “He’s proud to be a therapy dog and I’m blessed to be a part of his team.”

Sheila recalled patients confined to chairs, beds or by the deterioration of their own

minds who were momentarily cheered by the presence of the happy little dog as they smiled and reached for him. One man who rarely spoke boomed out, “Bye, Mackie!” when it was time to leave.

Sheila is director of nursing at a home health agency and a registered nurse, so she understands the benefits of therapy dogs.

“Mackie loves everybody. He makes them happy, and that is what the Lord would want us to do,” Sheila stated.

Macy

As soon as Karen Esposito drives into a parking lot, her Labrador retriever, Macy, gets excited and can’t wait to start her duties as a therapy dog.

Karen said many residents know when she and Macy are expected. “It gives them something to look forward to,” she explained.

Macy and Karen couldn’t make it to their visits one week and a patient told them he missed them.

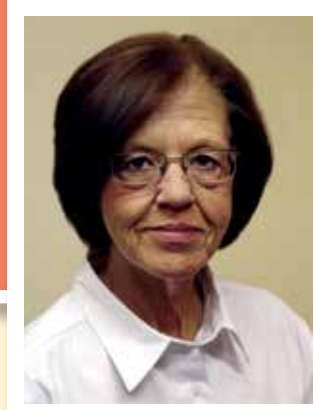
Karen works with Senior Independence Volunteer Coordinator Stephanie Joseph in deciding where to visit. Macy doesn’t bother with the planning, she just loves to go and see her friends!





DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

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



CHOICE & DIGNITY

Remember the days before increased airport security?

We could walk with our loved one into the airport concourse, through the gate, and practically make sure that they were seated on the plane.

That is how I see hospice; families walk the journey with their loved ones as far as they can possibly go.

As a society, it's hard for us to understand or accept that death is a part of life.

Too often when attempts to prolong life extend beyond the possibility of success, it unintentionally robs patients of their choices and dignity in their final days.

Hospice focuses on the humanity of each patient, with respect for the life they lived and who they are as dignified individuals regardless of physical decline. And that can make all the difference.

If I am fortunate enough to choose where, how and with whom I will die, I will. And I can do all of this with one simple decision: choosing hospice. ●

Sue Brookins has been a Senior Independence employee for 18 years, and is excited to share her experiences with you.

Look for her column in future issues!



Molli

Are Cindi Stokes and her therapy dog, Molli, close? The bichon frise was the flower “girl” at Cindi’s wedding! “She’s my baby,” Cindi said.

Cindi and Molli work together to bring joyful moments to hospice patients and others.

Cindi said their visits give patients “five minutes to get away from their troubles. It gives them peace of mind.”

Cindi has always believed in giving back to her community, and she especially enjoys helping others by working with the dog she loves. ●

ON THE COVER: *Sheila Lehman and her therapy dog, Mackie, wait to visit with hospice patients. Mackie is one of several therapy dogs that help brighten the days of Senior Independence Hospice patients in the Central Ohio region.*

A HERO'S HOMECOMING

Veteran receives special welcome

Air Force veteran Larry Dickson is still talking about how much he enjoyed his Honor Flight experience.

Larry, who is a patient with Senior Independence Hospice in the Central Ohio region, was flown to Washington, D.C. along with a companion and other veterans to tour the WWII and other national memorials.

Much to their delight, Larry and the rest of his Honor Flight group returned to Port Columbus International Airport to a huge ceremony that included Senior Independence staff, Boy Scout troops, active and retired military personnel and many others who waved and cheered for the veterans.

“It’s a once-in-a-lifetime, memorable experience for these veterans.”

According to Stephanie Joseph, Senior Independence volunteer coordinator, Larry, a Korean War veteran, said he thought it was indescribable to be so honored.

Between the flight and the reception at home, Larry’s enjoyment lasted long after the day was over. “He was so excited, he stayed up the whole night talking to his roommate about the trip,” Stephanie said.

Veterans pay nothing for the Honor Flight experience, and Senior Independence used funds from its Make it Happen program to pay the costs for the home health aide who accompanied Larry.



Senior Independence has sent patients on Honor Flights about once a year, and it has been tremendous for everyone involved.

“It’s a once-in-a-lifetime, memorable experience for these veterans, and that’s what you keep hearing them say,” Stephanie said. ●

ABOVE: *Senior Independence Hospice patient Larry Dickson was treated to a trip to Washington, D.C. thanks to the Honor Flight program, and returned home to a special ceremony put on by Senior Independence staff and others.*

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Shining a light of gratitude on those who give back

You can find volunteer Ginny Greenlee (*below*) at Senior Independence's Southwest Ohio office every Tuesday.

There, she puts together guidebooks and communication logs; files, copies and assists with mailings; helps create keepsakes for patients and families; and makes sympathy cards by hand.

"Ginny does so much, and she's very kind, thoughtful and creative," said Kate Moore, hospice volunteer coordinator.

Ginny is also very involved in the greater community. She serves on several committees at Llanfair Retirement Community, her home

and part of Senior Independence's sister company, OPRS Communities. Ginny also belongs to the Order of the Eastern Star, is active in her church and knits baby caps for a local hospital. And if that's not enough to keep her busy, she's also the mother of three and grandmother of six.

Ginny recalled some advice she was given the day of her husband's funeral – advice she didn't take: just stay on the couch for two weeks. "Until I got over it, I guess," Ginny said. "But if I just sat on the couch for two weeks I'd be mighty sick. I just won't do that."

The main thing, Ginny explained, is to keep moving. "Who wants to sit around? That's boring!" she said. ●

Give back

Become a hospice volunteer

The contributions of volunteers like Ginny are essential to the important services provided by Senior Independence Hospice.

You can share your skills and interests to help enrich the lives of hospice patients and their families.

Whether you prefer companionship visits or office work, there's an opportunity for you!

Visit www.seniorindependence.org/hospice/volunteer for more information, or call the regional office closest to you (*listed on the back cover*).

You can make an impression in the lives of those we serve!

www.seniorindependence.org



PRESERVING MEMORIES

Donors help fund life review program

Thanks to donors whose charitable gifts paid for a video camera and tripod, Senior Independence Hospice patients in the Greater Toledo region are creating lasting memories for their loved ones.

Called a life review, this process involves an interviewer gently asking questions to stimulate memories. These conversations are recorded on video.

Volunteer Coordinator Jennifer VanVorhis said life reviews are different from the casual video that might be taken at a family event. “What’s recorded there is not always as meaningful. This gives us a history, an account of the patient’s life,” she explained.

Jennifer heard about life reviews at a meeting and wanted to bring the idea to Greater Toledo hospice patients.

“Life reviews help patients reminisce and show that their lives had value. It’s also a nice gift to share with families,” Jennifer said. “I

would give anything to see my grandpa on video and hear his voice again.”

Vincent Flippo, hospice spiritual care coordinator, agreed that this is an extraordinary gift for families.

Vincent explained that these life review videos can give grandchildren a chance to see and hear the grandparent they never got to know. “Can you imagine pulling out the recording and saying, ‘This is your grandmother?’” asked Vincent.

Executive Director Wendy Price Kiser said, “I believe that this is a wonderful opportunity for our hospice patients to share their lives and leave a legacy with their loved ones to enjoy and share for a long and lasting time.” ●

BELOW: Senior Independence Hospice staff members interview a patient to help create her life review video. Thanks to donated funds, which paid for a video camera and tripod, patients are able to create lasting memories for their loved ones.



HELPING HANDS & CARING HEARTS

Volunteers & staff transform patient's yard

Helping hands motivated by caring hearts recently transformed an overgrown yard for a hospice patient and his wife.

Carl Sharlow is served by Senior Independence Hospice's Greater Toledo region, and lives in a country home in the Toledo area.

Carl is friends with hospice volunteer Todd Runion, who saw how out of control the Sharlow's property had become, with some weeds as tall as trees. Todd asked Volunteer Coordinator Jennifer VanVorhis for help, and a team of volunteers was soon organized.

The volunteer work crew trimmed trees, bushes and weeds, stained a deck, painted a driveway bridge, created a beautiful rock garden and mulched the whole area.

"It was a busy, busy day. I was so proud of our crew," said Jennifer, who also gave a lot of credit to Todd. "He's the reason that this actually happened," she said.

Todd was pleased to help his friend Carl, and, in particular, to help with a hospice project. "Hospice has always been near and dear to me. We used hospice for my dad," he said.

Carl's wife Nancy was so excited about her refurbished front deck that Todd took her shopping to buy a chair so she could sit outside and enjoy the space.

"She got out there and helped, too," Todd said of the diminutive Nancy. "She was a real trooper!"



Nancy was very appreciative of all the hard work. "We can't thank you enough for the volunteers who came over that day," she wrote to Senior Independence. ●

ABOVE, TOP: Nancy Sharlow, the wife of hospice patient Carl, waves as she and Senior Independence staff and volunteers work to tidy up the couple's yard.

ABOVE, BOTTOM: Hospice patient Carl Sharlow looks on as Senior Independence staff and volunteers transform his yard. Carl's friend, hospice volunteer Todd Runion, worked with Volunteer Coordinator Jennifer VanVorhis to set up the special work day, which was much appreciated by the Sharlows.

Thank you for your generosity

The following donations were made between June 1, 2014 and August 31, 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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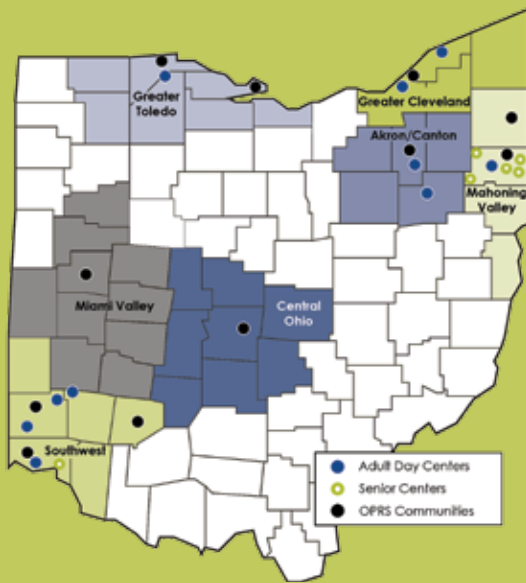
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HAND IN HANDS

Special photo program captures essence of hospice

Cara Lageson, volunteer coordinator for Senior Independence's Miami Valley region, is creating special keepsakes for hospice patients and their families: framed canvas photos of their hands that visually express the essence of hospice.

The result is meaningful, emotional and a cherished memory for all.

"Patients really love the pictures and their children get teary-eyed. They are really thankful and they think they are beautiful," said Cara of the reactions she has been getting to these special gifts.

These photo gifts are paid for as part of Senior Independence's Make it Happen program, which is supported by charitable donations; there is no charge to the patient or their family.

These gentle moments of comfort with a loved one can be displayed and cherished by a family for generations to come. "It's a blessing to be able to give that to someone," Cara said. ●

MAKE *IT* HAPPEN
MAKE A DIFFERENCE

ABOVE: Through its Make it Happen program, which fulfills the life-enhancing wishes of those nearing the end of their lives, Senior Independence Hospice's Miami Valley region is creating cherished memories through special photos of patients' hands.