



# Hospice of Cincinnati

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THE NATION'S  
FOURTH OLDEST  
HOSPICE

FALL 2018



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## A special homecoming makes what seems impossible, possible

An Army veteran of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Johnny Ayers spoke little about his top secret experience in the Army. However, his pride in his country was something he passed on to his son, John, and his grandchildren. To honor Johnny's military service and the Hospice of Cincinnati staff who cared for him at his end of life, John organized the donations to fund a flag pole that proudly flies the American flag in front of The Margret J. Thomas Inpatient Care Center in Blue Ash. The Ayers family, along with Johnny's close friends and fellow veterans Jim Sferra and Walt Korn, funded the project.

"I felt compelled to do something different to support Hospice of Cincinnati in a way that I know would resonate with my father," John says. He speaks fondly about everyone with Hospice of Cincinnati who was involved in his father's care. He specifically notes a few who literally went the extra mile—or miles—in this case.

Suffering from congestive heart failure for years, Johnny's final wish was to see his country lakeside home one last time. "My wife, Amy, and I totally renovated the house with the intention that he would move in with us," John explains. "We gutted the interior, renovated the deck and replaced the landscaping. My dad really wanted to see the results."

Unfortunately, John would not recover from his most recent hospital admission. The family had previously discussed end-of-life care with Johnny's doctor and was prepared for the next step. When it became apparent that Johnny needed to move

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*John Ayers and his wife, Amy, honor his father, Johnny, and all other veterans with their donation of this flag pole, located in front of The Margret J. Thomas Inpatient Care Center in Blue Ash.*

## Lobert to retire



After more than 20 years of dedication to improving the knowledge of and access to end-of-life care in Greater Cincinnati, Hospice of Cincinnati President and CEO Sandra Lobert recently announced her plans to retire later this year. A search is currently underway for a new President and CEO. Stay tuned for news on the search as well as a story in the next newsletter on Hospice of Cincinnati's growing reach under Lobert's leadership.

# CEO Message: Creating better experiences

## DID YOU KNOW...



Hospice of Cincinnati team members love their jobs. And it shows! Hospice of Cincinnati's job satisfaction scores were among the highest in a recent TriHealth-wide team member engagement analysis. The annual study looks at satisfaction levels from all facets, including job role, management/leadership, specific department and overall organization.

High job satisfaction improves retention of dedicated and skilled team members. Hospice of Cincinnati is proud to report these average staff tenures.

- All staff..... 9.3 years
- All nurses ..... 9.0 years
- Patient care specialists ..... 6.2 years
- Social workers... 15.5 years
- Chaplains..... 7.7 years
- Counselors ..... 14.2 years



There is no guidebook for living out the end of life. Illnesses are different. Family dynamics are different. Goals, beliefs and personalities are different. In a way, this makes what we do at Hospice of Cincinnati challenging.

In a way, it makes what we do so much more rewarding.

We are inspired by our mission to create changes that make things better.

When families hear there are no more treatment options for their loved ones, we're here to say, "Yes, but there is so much more that can be done."

We can increase a loved one's comfort. Support their emotional and/or spiritual needs. We can help families find meaning during this sacred time in their lives.

During my 20 years of involvement with Hospice of Cincinnati, I've watched our team members and volunteers pour their hearts into their work daily as they live our mission to create the best possible and most meaningful end-of-life experience for all who need care and support in our community. I'm constantly amazed at their ability to listen and observe and then discover what they can do for each individual patient and family to create a more meaningful experience. Our front page story on the Ayers family and Bob Bush's story on page 5 illustrate this beautifully.

There's always more that can be done. Long-time supporters Eddie and Arlene Goldstein understand this, too. They recently made a gift to ensure even more support for grieving families, as you'll see on page 3. Turn to page 4 and learn how we're expanding our understanding and approach to addressing the many types of pain.

We journey with more than 5,000 patients and their families each year, supporting an equal number of unique end-of-life experiences. It's our daily desire and privilege to work with each family we serve to create their own best possible and most meaningful end-of-life experience.

Warm Regards,

Sandra Lobert  
President and CEO

## OUR MISSION

**Hospice of Cincinnati creates the best possible and most meaningful end-of-life experience for all who need care and support in our community.**

# New Anticipatory Grief Program to meet underserved need

Thanks to a generous grant from our long-time supporters Eddie and Arlene Goldstein, Hospice of Cincinnati has created a new program to support Hospice patients and families dealing with anticipatory grief—the Anticipatory Grief Program. Eddie is a former trustee and board chair of Hospice of Cincinnati and a true believer in the value of supporting families through grief.

“Anticipatory grief is defined as grief that occurs before a death,” explains Nancy Glorius, Hospice of Cincinnati Chief of Clinical Operations and System Development. “The patient and family may anticipate myriad losses, including the loss of their companion, changing roles in the family, potential financial issues, the loss of future plans and triggers from past episodes of grief.”

President and CEO Sandra Lobert expresses gratitude for the new program. “Eddie’s motivation to give is so inspirational,” she says. “He believes that the benefits of this new program will make a difference in many lives and will help to make the world a better place. We wholeheartedly agree.”

Glorius explains that anticipatory grief is unique. “We see more anger and loss of emotional control as families deal with the difficult balance between hope for recovery and letting go,” she says. Goldstein’s grant funds two social workers—Deb Athans, LISW-S, MSW, and Holly Mundon, LISW-S, MSW—who respond to referrals made by Hospice of Cincinnati team members.

The new program will help families facing the loss of a loved one connect with the resources they need—such as Fernside—or community resources for a surviving spouse who does not



*The new Anticipatory Grief Program will identify resources for those without an adequate support system, in addition to providing more extensive emotional support by Hospice of Cincinnati grief counselors.*

have an adequate support system. It also will provide extensive emotional support to individuals and families provided by experienced grief counselors.

“There is usually a lot going on with the family when I get involved,” Athans says. “They may have experienced multiple losses in a short time, the caregiver is sick...they are in a situation where there are multiple challenges and their normal coping systems are just overwhelmed.”

Athans will cover the East and Margret J. Thomas inpatient care centers and their field offices; Mundon will cover the Hamilton and West inpatient care centers and field offices. For more information on Hospice of Cincinnati’s Anticipatory Grief Program, contact Hospice of Cincinnati at 513-891-7700.

## Anticipatory grief services include:

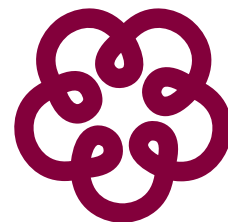
- Educating families regarding the experience of anticipatory grief
- Providing resources to guide decision-making
- Developing plans for immediate after-death support
- Providing continued, compassionate Hospice presence and point of contact for assistance after the death

## Hospice of Cincinnati needs you!

Hospice of Cincinnati needs volunteers for a variety of positions. No medical experience is necessary, and comprehensive training is provided. Volunteers are needed to:

- Serve meals and visit with patients at the four inpatient care centers: Anderson, Blue Ash, Hamilton and West at Twin Towers.
- Visit patients in their homes and in long-term care facilities.
- Work as Eucharistic ministers, escort-greeters or clerical support.
- Provide patient haircuts at the four inpatient care centers and in patient homes—must be licensed.

For more information, please contact Judy Russell, Volunteer Services, 513-246-9168 or [Judy.Russell@TriHealth.com](mailto:Judy.Russell@TriHealth.com).



### The Goldstein Family Hospice of Cincinnati and Fernside Grief Center



Promoting Healing for Life After Loss

The Goldstein Family Hospice of Cincinnati and Fernside Grief Center is the first comprehensive bereavement center in Greater Cincinnati focusing on both adult and children’s grief. Services are free and available to all. For more information about our programs and how to register, please call Hospice of Cincinnati at 513-891-7700, Fernside at 513-246-9140, or visit [HospiceOfCincinnati.org/grief-services](https://www.HospiceOfCincinnati.org/grief-services).

# Presentation improves understanding of four components of pain

Creating the best possible and most meaningful end-of-life experience means looking at the needs of the whole patient, particularly when dealing with pain. “More and more, we are realizing that a physical symptom is just one component of a patient’s pain,” says Manish Srivastava, MD, Hospice of Cincinnati Medical Director.

A new “Hospice Patient’s Total Pain” presentation aims to remind team members about the importance of addressing all four components of pain—physical, psychological, social and spiritual. Deana Birkenheuer, MSN, RN, Manager, Professional Development and Education, developed and facilitates the mandatory continuing education program. Monnie Caine, Chaplain, The Margret J. Thomas Inpatient Care Center, and Jody Mitchell, MSW, West Field Team, are co-facilitators.

Caine explains that by using active listening to identify and address all four components of pain, team members have the opportunity to build relationships that can lead to creating sacred moments with patients. “These sacred moments are gifts from our patients and we want to make sure to thank them for sharing,” she says.

Birkenheuer tells the story of a patient at the Hamilton Inpatient Care Center who required increasing amounts of

pain medication to alleviate his physical pain. He continued to complain of escalating pain despite medication. During one night shift, a nurse sat with him and discovered he was dealing with a great deal of emotional pain due to unresolved issues with some family members. After talking this through, his pain decreased. He passed away peacefully several days later.

Dr. Srivastava gently reminds team members, “A lot of times, we might be able to help them [patients and families] more by just listening to what their concerns are.”

Clinical team members, including nurses, personal care specialists (hospice aides), social workers, chaplains and managers are required to attend this presentation. However, all other team members are strongly encouraged to attend.



## Community Gives Back

### Wine Festival supports Fernside with every glass

Giving back one glass at a time, the Cincinnati International Wine Festival raises funds for more than 36 local charities annually through celebrating the wine industry. Fernside, an affiliate of Hospice of Cincinnati, has received more than \$35,500 from the festival since 2011 for programming to support grieving children and families.

The funding began after Stacey Meyer, a wine industry professional, recommended that Fernside apply for a grant because of the support they had given her after the loss of her mother, explains Debbie Dent, Executive Director, Cincinnati International Wine Festival. “Once the board learned more about the positive impact Fernside has had on the lives of grieving children, they awarded a grant and have continued to do so every year since,” she

says. “As a grant recipient, you are required to provide volunteers for the festival. It takes over 400 volunteers every year, and Fernside is always there with terrific volunteers to help make the wine festival successful.”

One of the largest, premier wine events in the country, the

Cincinnati International Wine Festival has granted more than \$5.6 million to Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky arts, education, and health and human services area charities since its inception in 1991.

“The wine festival has become a valued partner of Fernside,” says Lori Asmus, Hospice of Cincinnati and Fernside Development Officer. “We are very grateful for this partnership and hope the community will support the festival, knowing they are supporting Fernside and so many other worthy charities.”



Hospice of Cincinnati and Fernside Development Officer Lori Asmus accepts this year’s grant of \$5,500 from Cincinnati International Wine Festival Executive Director Debbie Dent. Fernside has been an annual beneficiary of the festival, which will be held in March. Visit [winefestival.com](http://winefestival.com) for more information.

# GRATEFUL GIVING

## She listened as their hearts told their story

As Bob Bush's brother, Walter, lay in bed on the other side of the hospital wall, Bob reflected on his younger brother's life. How Walter had lived quietly and generously, served bravely in the military and how sadly, he'd leave no spouse or children behind to remember him.

Bill McMillen, a close friend, talked openly with Bob about Walter's increasing anxiety about dying. As caregivers for Walter, they decided together it was time for Hospice of Cincinnati to take care of him.

Familiar with Hospice of Cincinnati, they thought they knew what to expect. But a referral visit from Donna Noel, RN, surpassed their expectations. Donna met with the devoted men to discern their goals for Walter's care.

"I found out these two men were the only people Walter had in his life and that Walter was very afraid," she recalls. They wanted help in easing Walter's anxiety and physical pain, and they wanted him to be baptized before being discharged from the hospital.

Donna listened to and supported their goals. However, it was her manner that most impressed Bob and Bill.

Shortly following Walter's death earlier this year, Bob and Bill contacted Hospice of Cincinnati to make a generous gift in memory of Walter and in honor of Donna. "They were overwhelmed by Donna's kindness, sensitivity and skill," says Development Officer Lori Asmus.



*Heart-healing care prompted a generous donation from Bob Bush (center left), and friend Bill McMillen (center right). Chief Marketing Officer Janet Montgomery and President and CEO Sandra Lobert (far left) accept the gift along with Admissions Manager Sue Breeden, Chief of Clinical Operations and System Development Nancy Glorius and Fernside Executive Director Vicky Ott.*



*A boulder memorial and Fat Albert Blue Spruce, planted in Walter Bush's memory at The Margret J. Thomas Inpatient Care Center, recognize the gift.*

"I think what they were most grateful for was sitting down as one human being to another and just talking about this man and his life," Donna says. "That he wasn't a statistic or someone sick in a bed with severe confusion and anxiety. We talked about the kind of man he was and his younger years."

"I felt that they needed to tell his story."

The men told Donna how Walter was a Korean War veteran, a hard worker and had always been able to take care of himself

and others. He was a giver, not a taker, they said, and that if you were his friend, you were his friend for life.

"So then it became laughter and smiles from the reminiscing," she continues. They also told her of Walter's lingering emotional pain from a long-term relationship break-up.

"Pain is not always physical," Donna says. "It can be spiritual and emotional, too. That's why it's important to take the time to see the whole person."

Donna then met with Walter.

"It was just holding his hand and assuring him he's not alone." She recalls the fear in Walter's eyes and telling him, "We've all been out here for an hour just talking about how we can get you back home and get you comfortable."

She then visited with Bob and Bill a little while longer, even as her phone continued to buzz.

"That's what they thanked me for at the end of our visit. They said, 'We know how busy you are, and you took the time to sit with us.'"

### Do you want to say "Thanks"?

Consider recognizing a Hospice of Cincinnati team member with a gift to the Grateful Family Program. Contact Lori Asmus at 513-865-4598 or [Lori.Asmus@TriHealth.com](mailto:Lori.Asmus@TriHealth.com) to learn more, or visit [BethesdaFoundation.com/ways-to-give](http://BethesdaFoundation.com/ways-to-give).

**Thanks for making a difference!**

Gifts made in memory or in honor of loved ones help provide experienced and compassionate care to thousands of Hospice of Cincinnati patients and families each year. Please visit [HospiceOfCincinnati.org](http://HospiceOfCincinnati.org) to learn more about the impact of your donation and to view a complete listing of tribute gifts.

## Melodies at the Riverfront

A variety of live bands had guests on their feet dancing at this year's Gourmet Melodies, which raised more than \$88,000 for Hospice of Cincinnati. Held Aug. 11 at Anderson Pavilion in Smale Riverfront Park, the event treated guests to delectable bite-sized foods provided by the Anderson Pavilion catering team, along with fine wines and craft beers provided by Heidelberg Distributors. A spectacular view of the Cincinnati skyline capped off the evening. Many thanks to our sponsors, including our Presenting Sponsor, TriHealth.



(left to right) Mark and Mary Clement, Michael Zavatsky, Sandra Lobert and Antonia Mitroussia enjoy delightful tunes and delicious foods at this year's Gourmet Melodies, benefiting Hospice of Cincinnati.

## Harvest Home Parade



West Inpatient Care Center nurse Jordan Lindle and her children, Lucas and Elijah, ride on Hospice of Cincinnati's float in this year's Harvest Home Parade.

## Possible

*Continued from page 1*  
from Bethesda North Hospital directly to The Margret J. Thomas Inpatient Care Center in Blue Ash, the Hospice of Cincinnati transition team stepped in to help.

"It was unbelievable. Not only did they arrange for the patient transport service to detour to our home in Goshen, they also took dad on a tour of as much of the house as was possible on a gurney," John says.

He and Amy made his dad's brief homecoming a big event. "We invited as many friends and family as possible, parked his 1947 Studebaker pickup truck in the front yard and recorded his reaction when he saw the transformation of every room in the house," John remembers.

"Hospice of Cincinnati made what seemed impossible possible for my dad."

Hospice staff was a big help to John once his dad settled into the Thomas Center. "You get here and it is pretty overwhelming," John admits. Hospice of Cincinnati chaplain Monnie Caine helped ease Johnny's passing and was honored to write and read a reflection at the dedication of the flag pole.

"John's donation has really helped us honor our veterans in a more visible manner," says Lori Asmus, Hospice of Cincinnati and Fernside Development Officer.



This memorial plaque captures the intentions of the Ayers family flag pole donation.

### Want to learn more?

If you'd like to support Hospice of Cincinnati, we can help explain the many ways to give. Contact Lori Asmus at 513-865-4598 or [Lori\\_Asmus@TriHealth.com](mailto:Lori_Asmus@TriHealth.com) to learn more, or visit [BethesdaFoundation.com/ways-to-give](http://BethesdaFoundation.com/ways-to-give).

**"I felt compelled to do something different to support Hospice of Cincinnati in a way that I know would resonate with my father."**

# Volunteers honored for direct patient care

*Congratulations to the following volunteers who were recognized at the annual Volunteer Celebration Luncheon with Donna West Memorial Direct Service awards.*

## Janet Fette

### Central/Blue Ash Team

Eighteen years ago, Janet began serving patient meals twice a week at The Margret J. Thomas Inpatient Care Center in Blue Ash. Now Janet's passion is providing healing touch every Friday to patients and staff there and visiting patients in home care and long-term care settings. Additionally, she makes monthly donor thank you calls and supports all of Hospice of Cincinnati's fundraising events. "Janet is a multi-service volunteer who is always willing to serve and support wherever we need her," says Jo Ann Ropp, Volunteer Services Manager.



*Janet Fette enjoys providing patient Paul Strait with healing touch therapies.*

## Jan Teets

### North/Hamilton Team

A master's-degree-trained nurse, Jan gives a very special gift to many of her patients and families. During her time with them, she compiles their loved one's life stories and gifts the family a written copy after the patient passes away. A grateful family member says, "Thank you for giving me my husband's life story— what a wonderful tribute to him! A big thank you to wonderful people like yourself who volunteer their time and their hearts to hospice patients. We will never forget all you did for him."



*Jan Teets talks with Patricia Pater about her life, compiling a life story for her family.*

## Michelle Emerling

### East/Anderson Team

Michelle Emerling came to Hospice of Cincinnati in 2007 with a great deal of hospice and volunteer experience and a wicked sense of humor. According to staff, "Michelle brings laughter to many in difficult situations." Michelle loves working with ALS patients but also has a special place in her heart for those who have served our country in the military.



*Michelle Emerling helps bring peace and serenity to Beverly Rahe, a patient at the East Inpatient Care Center.*

## Donna Parker

### West Team

A retired nurse, Donna became a Hospice of Cincinnati volunteer to continue spending quality time helping others. Supporting the West Long-Term Care Team, Donna loves the relationships she builds with patients. "Part of the hospice experience that people don't understand is not what I bring to the patient but what they give to me," she says. "I love my [volunteer] job."



*Hospice of Cincinnati patient June Lyons enjoys working on a puzzle with Donna Parker.*

## Congratulations

and many thanks to these volunteers as they celebrate service milestones with Hospice of Cincinnati. Their dedication and support is an integral part of our care team providing each patient with personalized, high quality care.

### 25 Years

Jamie Abrams  
Bobbie Ford  
Wanda Owens

### 20 Years

Valerie Badinghaus  
Jean Beiting  
Fred Kleiser

### 15 Years

Shari Brooks  
Linda Creach-Bley  
Barb Litchfield  
Linda Medcalf  
Linda Olasov  
Tom Schmick

### 10 Years

Deborah Catanzaro  
Raymond Cook  
Jane Dewey  
Nelson (Woof)  
Dewey  
Paul Hischemiller  
Rhona Joseph  
Denise King  
Kim Lacey  
Alex (Woof) Lacey  
Diane Livengood  
Katherine McClanahan  
Pat Miceli  
Janet Myers  
Kathleen Otten

Kimberly Riddle  
Ellen Scully  
Scout (Woof) Scully  
Gail Shaw-Courtney  
Donald Shiflet  
Denise Spurlock

### 5 Years

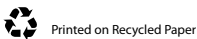
Robert Becker  
Cynthia Budig  
Peggy Sue Butler  
Diane Cook  
Mia (Woof) Cook  
Thomas Dorrington  
Carrie Doubts  
Robert Douglas  
Cynthia Durham

Mary Jo Freedman  
LaDonna Fritz  
Becky Gardner  
Bette Griffith  
Lucy Heavey  
Cindy Hyden  
Mary Jane Knueven  
Leba Litwack  
Patricia Marck  
Lisa Martin  
Thomas Miele  
Ivonne Morales  
Connie Noonan  
Kate Phipps  
Karen Pitzer  
Sharone Racer  
Dolores Sollecito

Elizabeth Spear  
Bunny (Woof) Spear  
Charles Stenken  
Flora Streicher  
Ellen Tom  
Mary Weisenborn  
Carolyn Williams



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## Fernside support comes in many shapes and sizes

A diverse blend of volunteers and community organizations form the backbone of Fernside. Volunteers facilitate weekly support groups, among other activities, while community organizations provide many of the essential materials group leaders use to help children express and cope with their grief. The following are a few of the many organizations that support Fernside in unique ways.

**The Cincinnati Women's Club** sews pillowcases for evening support group activities. Since almost half of children who attend Fernside express problems with bad dreams following the death of a loved one, children draw pictures and words on the pillowcases to help bring them comfort.

**Common Thread**, a teen sewing group at St. Catherine of Siena in Westwood, makes comfort objects for children experiencing challenges in their lives. The group sews a variety of items for patients at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and memory flags for Fernside. The flags—based on traditional Tibetan prayer flags—feature a long strip of fabric with different color blocks that help children tell their story of loss and express their feelings.

**Project Linus**, a national nonprofit with a local chapter, supports children who are seriously ill, traumatized or otherwise in need through the gift of new, homemade blankets and afghans. Lovingly created by volunteer "blanketeers," Project Linus provides cozy, colorful fleece blankets for Fernside camp participants. "It's like giving them a big hug," comments Sally Ries, Fernside Volunteer Coordinator.

**The Cincinnati Woodworking Club** designs, hand carves and finishes memory boxes for every child who attends Fernside's summer camp each year. Woodworker Earl North has been creating memory boxes for 12 years. "I had a kid sister who passed away when she was 32, and she left two young children," North explains. "There was nothing like Fernside to help them." North says he continues to do it year after year because, "it's the right thing to do for the right reason."



*The Cincinnati Woodworking Club hand carves themed memory boxes to donate to Fernside's summer camp each year. This superhero race car memory box was designed for the "Superheroes: Discovering the Power Within" summer camp.*

### Share your talent

If you or your group have a unique talent and would like to support Fernside, contact Sally Ries, Fernside Volunteer Coordinator, at 513-246-9140 or at [Fernside.org](http://Fernside.org).