



Mission: Education

Part of Hospice Alliance's mission is "caring for the terminally ill and empowering those who support them." We believe knowledge is power, which is why we are committed to offering education in our community.

Many of our healthcare partners ask our nurses, social workers and other specially trained staff to provide education to enhance the care they provide to their residents. Our staff is also available to attend events and meetings to not only provide information about hospice and Supportive Care Management – a special kind of palliative care – but also volunteer opportunities and bereavement services, as well as the importance of having a Healthcare Power of Attorney.

If your company provides an information or health fair for employees, or a group you are a member of (such as a Bible study, cultural or service group) welcomes guest speakers to inform and educate, consider inviting a representative of Hospice Alliance!



Connie Dues, MSW, educates residents and their family members at Harvest Home about the importance of completing a Healthcare Power of Attorney.

Our Newest Keepsake Offering: Heartbeat Recordings

About a year ago, our Music Therapist, Heidi, mentioned a program she had heard about and thought would be a wonderful gift to give to patient families in our care - heartbeat recordings.

We applied for grant dollars to purchase equipment, and in July of 2023, the generous members of the Rotary Club of Kenosha West chose to support our mission. With the funds, we were able to purchase a Mac laptop, editing software, digital stethoscope, microphone, midi keyboard, CDs and sleeves. We are so grateful for their support, and it's been wonderful to offer this additional method of remembrance.



Making connections with patients, often through one-to-one sessions along with communication with family builds the trust necessary to collaborate to create a Heartbeat Project memento.

Our Music Therapist Heidi's process begins by using the specialized stethoscope to record our patient's heartbeat. Then, she edits the track to isolate a couple of beats, reduce background sounds, clean up the audio quality, and loop it so it can be played for longer.

If the family would like, the heartbeat can be combined with a meaningful song that the patient loved, or the family loved together.



Music therapist, Heidi, uses a specialized software to integrate a patient's recorded heartbeat with the specially chosen song to create the one-of-a-kind keepsake.

Heidi covers the song chosen, playing all instruments herself. If there isn't sheet music readily available, this involves her listening to the song and figuring out the notes to play. She times the music to the heartbeat, adjusting the tempo she plays at, so each song is unique to that person.

The family can also choose to create their own song, and is welcome to be involved in the recording either way.

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A Message from our Executive Director



Rita Hagen,
Executive Director

At Hospice Alliance, we pride ourselves on our quality, compassionate hospice and Supportive Care Management services. I'm honored to take our mission one step further, seeking opportunities to "empower" and "add-life-to-days," which are two other attributes featured in our Mission Statement.

In this edition of *Hope Notes*, you'll learn more about how we accomplish both and the important support necessary. Our cover story features our

Music Therapist, Heidi, and a hope she had to offer a patient's heartbeat as the rhythm for a chosen song. Reading further, you'll learn of the relationship we've developed with the Threshold Singers, who visit our Hospice House regularly to offer peace and comfort to patients reaching their last minutes with us here.

And, finally, you'll learn about our comprehensive bereavement program which provides support to all members of our community, young and older, who can benefit from education and guidance in navigating a most difficult time.

These programs and projects are a result of grants from community service clubs, the funds raised at our annual An Evening of Wishes fundraiser (also featured in this newsletter) and donations from generous supporters like you. If you too see value in the services of Hospice Alliance beyond traditional hospice and palliative care, please consider sending a gift in the enclosed envelope.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rita".

Rita Hagen, MSN, RN
Executive Director

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If the patient is able to be part of the process, this option is available, as well. Some even choose to record a meaningful message alongside the heartbeat.

Once the music or message is combined with the heartbeat track, the song can be sent via email, CD, or transferred onto a USB drive. If

"Having a copy of the heartbeat in a song is just priceless. There's just no words I can put to it, it's all emotion."

- Nancy

the family isn't sure about creating something with it yet, their loved one's heartbeat can still be recorded to cherish as is, or to create something with in the future.

As of April, Heidi has created about 30 heartbeat recordings, and over 20 have been converted into a cherished song. "Having a copy of the heartbeat in a song is just priceless. There's just no words I can put to it, it's all emotion." - Nancy, one of the first to receive a Hospice Alliance heartbeat recording of her husband, Jim.

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- instagram.com/hospice.alliance
- linkedin.com/company/hospice-alliance
- community mailings: hospicealliance.org/outreach

Sold Out! An Evening of Wishes 2024



Our 2024 Hospice Alliance Honoree, Good Value Pharmacy, is represented by company leader, Alex Berce and his Mom, Shari, pharmacy owner. GVP is a long-time partner of Hospice Alliance, always working to serve our patients quickly and with compassion.

Our honoree of the evening, Good Value Pharmacy, has partnered with us since we opened our Hospice House in 2003. GVP's representative, Alex, recognized his staff for getting medication to our hospice patients the same day the order arrives at their pharmacies, making a huge difference in our patients and families final days together. He and his mother, Shari, strive to continue the legacy their father and husband, Phil Berce, left in the community.

Guests also welcomed our Music Therapist, Heidi, to the podium, where she spoke about our newest keepsake offering for families in our care - heartbeat recordings, and the option to transform this memory into a cherished song.

This year, attendees enjoyed a fun twist at the end of the evening with a lively game of Heads or Tails. Guests competed with their tables for the beautiful floral centerpieces, and the last player standing took home a basket of alcohol donated by the event planning committee and sure to stock their bar! Exits were quicker and much appreciated thanks to our new software setup at check-in.

A big thanks to our wonderful community for coming out and supporting our not-for-profit mission. Contributions from this night make a profound difference in the lives of patients and families who turn to Hospice Alliance for support in their most vulnerable time.



An Evening of Wishes proves to be an opportunity for friends to gather for an evening of good food, drinks, and lots of laughter, all for a good cause.

On the first Saturday in March, our Hospice Alliance team eagerly welcomed a sold out crowd into our annual gala-style fundraiser, An Evening of Wishes, at The Club at Strawberry Creek.

We received a record amount of donations from local businesses and generous members of the community: 126 silent auctions and 12 live auctions! Some new items included Blackhawks penthouse suite tickets, a golf simulator get together, and an axe throwing party featured in our live auction.

Our honoree of the evening, Good

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The 268 An Evening of Wishes guests enjoyed perusing and friendly competitive bidding on 126 silent auction items as they enjoyed drinks and appetizers prior to the start of dinner.

* 1 of 3 out of 57 Hospices in Wisconsin to Reach Level 5 WHV Status!

Hospice Alliance is proud to share that we have been approved for another year of level five status in our We Honor Veterans program! This year, we learned that there are 57 hospices in Wisconsin in the We Honor Veterans program, and we are one of only three who have achieved the highest level five status! Thank you to our staff committee members, and our Veteran volunteers who greatly contribute to our monthly heroes cafe's and pinning ceremonies and a number of the other projects to recognize and honor our veterans.



Veterans and We Honor Veterans Committee members gather at Berkot's Super Foods for coffee and comradery. Veterans of all eras and branches of service find connections at the monthly gathering.

* The Lake County Threshold Singers

Every month, we are grateful to welcome the Lake County Threshold Singers into our Hospice House. This wonderful group of women volunteer their time to sit with our hospice patients and soothe them with their calming songs. Sometimes they sing bedside for our neighbors nearing their end-of-life journey, and other times they are able to chat with guests who fondly listen from their recliners. Every now and then, they sing to family members of our hospice patients, comforting them with personalized lyrics and compassion for a knowingly difficult experience. Songs like, "we are all just walking each other home" and "now is your time to

be blessed" move our staff, who listen outside patient rooms. We are grateful for the time they give, and the kindness they share with those in our care.



Lake County Threshold Singers share their beautiful voices with a Hospice House patient. Their gift of song benefits not only our patients but their families and loved ones who are with them during an emotional time.

* Our Pet Therapy Volunteers Brighten Days



Pet Therapy partners, Susan and Hamish visit with home patients as well as residents of assisted living communities. The eager beagle is always ready to make a new friend and spread his tail wagging cheer!

We are fur-ever grateful to the loving teams of Pet Therapy volunteers that support Hospice Alliance.

At this time, we are lucky to have four active teams - Susan and Hamish (Beagle), Dave and Grace (Golden Retriever), Cecile and Timber (Australian Shephard), and Kristin and Onyx (Black Lab). We also have one team expected to return this summer - Peter and his two pups, Roxy (Cane Corso) and Pancho (Yellow Lab).

Our volunteers and their companions provide Pet Therapy to individual patients, or in common spaces at senior living communities, spreading the love to many residents at once. We are always excited to welcome new Pet Therapy volunteers to brighten days in Racine and Kenosha. If interested - please contact us at (262) 652-4400.



Timber, an energetic Pet Therapy pup is always ready to "sit and stay" for the pets and scratches of all those he meets. Hospice Alliance dogs (and their partners) are the most popular "people" in the room wherever they are!

Hospice Alliance Offers Signature Events for Those Who've Experienced Loss

Hospice Alliance is committed to offering a robust bereavement program to benefit our patients' families and loved ones, as well as to the communities we serve.

"Bereavement Support is a Medicare regulatory requirement. However, the stipulation is very vague. How a hospice chooses to fulfill the requirement says a lot about the overall care and commitment to the community," said Rita Hagen, Hospice Alliance's Executive Director.

Annually we offer three special events. They are the Service of Remembrance, which takes place in the early summer, and Ring and Remember, which is our fall event. Planting Memories is the youth-focused, interactive, outdoor keystone event of Connections (our Children's Bereavement program), which is held each August. Invitations are sent to those who have lost a loved one within the previous calendar year for each event.

"All three of our offerings have been well-attended by not only our hospice families who have recently experienced a loss, but also by anyone in our community who might benefit. All are welcome. Sometimes, people might want the support years after a loss...and we are still here for them," added Jenny Sytkowski, Bereavement Coordinator.

From special events and customized mailings throughout the year after a loss to one-to-one and group support opportunities for all ages, Hospice Alliance's comprehensive bereavement offerings are made possible in part through grants and donations. Learn more and consider supporting these important offerings by visiting hospicealliance.org/grief-support.

Service of Remembrance being held Wednesday, June 26th at Kemper Center features our Memorial Brick Dedication.

Ring and Remember scheduled for Thursday, November 14th in Founders Hall at Kemper Center features the resonant sound of a handbell choir.



Especially for children who have experienced the loss of a loved one, and their trusted adult, **Planting Memories** is Thursday, August 15th in the Hospice House garden.



Upcoming Events

For more information visit www.hospicealliance.org



Veterans Cafe

Berkot's Super Foods
690 W. State St., Burlington, WI
Every 2nd Thursday,
8:00AM - 10:00AM

Connections - Planting Seeds of Hope

Children's Grief Support
Hospice Alliance
October - May, 3rd Thursday, 5:00PM

Service of Remembrance
Kemper Center
June 26, 2024, 5:00PM

Poker Run
Riverside Marina Clubhouse
949 Erie St., Racine WI
July 20, 2024, 2:00PM

Planting Memories
Hospice Alliance
August 15, 2024, 5:30PM

Serving Our Seniors Expo
Gateway Technical College
Kenosha
October 3, 2024,
9:00AM-12:00PM

Ring and Remember
Kemper Center, Founders Hall
November 14, 2024, 5:00PM

Evening of Wishes
The Club at Strawberry Creek
March 1, 2025

Hospice Alliance Dining for Donations

May 23rd – DeRango's
4:00PM - 9:00PM

June 26th – El Camino Kitchen
11:00AM - 9:00PM

July 17th – Ruffolo's Special Pizza II
4:00PM - 9:00PM

August 22nd – Mason's Eatery & Pub
4:00PM - 10:00PM

**Sept. 19th – Infusino's Italian Restaurant
& Pizzeria (Kenosha),** 4:00PM - 10:00PM

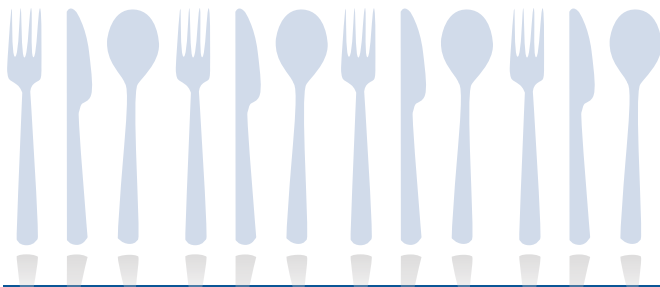
**October 22nd – Tuscany Bistro Bar
& Grill,** 4:00PM - 9:30PM

**Nov. 4th, 18th & 25th – Milwaukee
Burger Co.,** 5:00PM - 9:00PM

December – TBD

Visit hospicealliance.org for updates

Thank You For Your Support!



**For more information visit
www.hospicealliance.org**



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