

# Celebrating Life's Stories®

A NEWSLETTER FOR OUR FRIENDS

VOL. 3 | ISSUE 1 | SPRING 2020

## Ohio's Hospice LifeCare Unveils New Mobile Care Unit

**To provide transportation options for patients and to allow families to ride alongside their loved ones, Ohio's Hospice LifeCare now offers a mobile care unit.**

"Having our own mobile care unit to transport our patients helps us extend our care and compassion to those patients located throughout our service area," said Kurt Holmes, executive director of Ohio's Hospice LifeCare. "Our mobile care unit will help support our mission and improve access to care for our patients."

Almost \$100,000 was raised from the community for the mobile care unit. The unit was funded in part by funds donated at the 14th annual Spring Gala. More than \$58,000 was given for the purchase of the mobile care unit and other programs and services at Ohio's Hospice LifeCare.

The mobile care unit started running in December and has already made an impact on timely transports and cost savings.

In addition, Ohio's Hospice LifeCare received a \$10,000 grant from the Laura B. Frick Charitable Trust and a \$20,000 grant from the Wayne County Community Foundation for the mobile care unit. An individual from the community also donated \$10,000 for this project.

"Thank you to our sponsors, friends and staff members, as funds raised from the gala and donors will benefit anyone in our community who is facing end-of-life illness," Holmes said. "Because of generous support, we are able to offer a mobile care unit in addition to providing compassionate care and support through our programs and services."



OHIO'S

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# Continuing Our Legacy of Care



Kurt Holmes  
Executive Director  
Ohio's Hospice LifeCare

**Spring is such an optimistic time of year, especially after our harsh and gray winters in Ohio.** In spring you can smell the promise of newly turned earth, from backyard gardens to open farmland. Something new is beginning to take root. But as anyone who gardens knows, it isn't as simple as throwing seeds down on the ground. The land has to be cleared, the soil needs to be prepared, and the seeds and plants need to be readied — all before the first row can be established.

Ohio's Hospice LifeCare's mission is the same. We have almost 40 years of community support and dedicated service behind every patient visit. Because our communities have been so supportive, we have been able to expand our service to more and more of our neighbors. This support also means that Ohio's Hospice LifeCare has been able to add palliative care services to our mission, improve the speed to care with our in-house mobile care unit, and broaden our reach to ever more communities in need.

As the world of long-term care changes, we also will be changing. We are broadening our care to individuals earlier in their active lives and helping those with care coordination challenges long before they have need of hospice care. Your past generosity means that this legacy of care can continue. With your continued support, Ohio's Hospice LifeCare will be there for future generations of our neighbors.

## Ohio's Hospice LifeCare Opens Hospice Care Suite at Pomerene Hospital

**To best meet the needs of patients in Holmes County, Ohio's Hospice LifeCare recently opened a hospice care suite at Pomerene Hospital in Millersburg, Ohio.**

The suite features a patient room, waiting area and a family area with a large dining table. The furniture, decor and finishings create a home-like atmosphere, allowing families to spend quality time with their loved ones who are in hospice care.

"We have had such a history in the community between Ohio's Hospice LifeCare and Pomerene Hospital," said Kurt Holmes. "We wanted to meet the growing needs of this community."

Ohio's Hospice LifeCare and Pomerene Hospital have been longstanding partners in providing end-of-life care for people in Holmes County. Through this partnership, patients can receive short-term symptom relief close to home.



"We are pleased to offer this service to the community, right here in Millersburg," Holmes said. "We appreciate the partnership we have with Pomerene Hospital, and we will continue to build on that partnership."

The new suite and family room were funded with generous support from donors in the community. In addition, Homestead Furniture donated the furniture.

Jason Justus, CEO of Pomerene Hospital, said the new suite will be a great asset for the community. "We are pleased to be able to work together to meet this need in the community," he said.



# Mark Ritchey Retires After More Than 45 Years of Nursing

**After more than 45 years of devoted service, Mark Ritchey, an RN care manager with Ohio's Hospice LifeCare, retired on Jan. 31.**

"I had been a nurse for 45 years, four months and 18 days," Mark said. "At the end of the day, I feel that I may have made a difference in someone's life."

Born into a family of nurses in Idaho, Mark's family moved to Long Beach, California, when he was 9 months old. He has many great memories of stories shared about nursing. "I would listen to my parents' nursing stories as a child," Mark said. "I knew that's what I wanted to do as a profession!"

He graduated from Long Beach City College with an associate's degree. He soon learned that hospice nursing was the type of nursing that he wanted to do.

"I lost both of my parents in my early 20s. After working all day, I nursed them in the evening," said Mark, whose wife, Patti Ritchey, is an LPN with Ohio's Hospice LifeCare. "I can appreciate how valuable our hospice care services are to our patients and families."

He met his wife on a blind date when she came to California from Ohio to visit her brother. Less than a year later, they married. After a few years, they made the decision to move to Ohio. "Because I lost both my parents, my wife and I wanted our children to know their Ohio grandparents more than one week out of the year," he said.

Throughout his career, he has worked in area hospitals in the intensive care unit, cardiac catheter lab and the operating room. He also has worked in a long-term nursing facility, a long-term acute care



hospital, and a dialysis center in addition to hospice care.

Nursing has continued to be a family affair. In addition to his wife, his daughter is an RN, his daughter-in-law is an LPN, a niece is an RN, and another niece is a doctor. "I'm extremely proud of them," he said. "We have some unique conversations when we are all together!"

Even though he is retiring, Mark will ease into retirement as he continues to work as a nurse with Ohio's Hospice LifeCare on an on-call basis. Thank you, Mark, for your dedicated service to our patients and families. We wish you the best as you begin the next chapter of your life!

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# Spring Gala: Last Call To Attend

Join us for our Spring Gala: Tailgating for Team Ohio's Hospice LifeCare on Saturday, March 28, at 5:30 pm, at the Shisler Conference Center in Wooster!

Our Spring Gala ensures continued care and services to anyone in our community facing end-of-life illness. Because of generous support from donors in the community, we can continue to provide complementary and innovative therapies in addition to grief support at no cost. Special thanks to our generous sponsors for supporting our Spring Gala!



## Special thanks to our Lead Sponsors:

Greg and Kathy Long

## Presenting Sponsors:

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Thank you to our community and sponsors  
for their outpouring of support!



For tickets, please visit  
[www.OhiosHospiceLifeCare.org/Gala2020](http://www.OhiosHospiceLifeCare.org/Gala2020)  
or call 800.884.6547.

For sponsorship information,  
please contact Katherine Ritchie  
at 330.264.4899 or 800.884.6547.

# Grief and Bereavement Services for Our Community

**Thanks to generations of community support, Ohio's Hospice LifeCare offers grief and bereavement services to anyone in need throughout our community.** Our team of counselors and social workers provide support and education to anyone in need of healing. Services include individual counseling, support groups and community education with a focus on processing loss and coping with grief.

Workshops are held the first Monday of every month. These groups are a safe venue for those who have lost a loved one. It is not necessary to share openly in this group setting to receive support.

Thanks to the generosity of the LifeCare community, your family, friends and neighbors have professional bereavement support to process their grief without the burden of payment.

If you would like more information on grief support, please contact David Hargrave at 330.264.4899. To learn more about supporting our grief support services, contact Katherine Ritchie at [KRitchie@LifeCareHospice.org](mailto:KRitchie@LifeCareHospice.org) or 330.264.4899.

## Bereavement Workshop Dates:

- **April 6:** Death's Impact on the Family System
- **May 4:** Healing After Sudden Death:  
When You Didn't Get to Say Goodbye
- **June 1:** Living Losses:  
Facing the Addiction of a Loved One
- **July 6:** Always My Child — Parent Grief
- **August 3:** When Healing Is Difficult —  
Complicated Grief

*Celebrating Life's Stories* is published semiannually for patients, families, staff members and friends of Ohio's Hospice LifeCare.

Kent Anderson, CEO, Ohio's Hospice  
Kurt Holmes, Executive Director, Ohio's Hospice LifeCare

Ohio's Hospice LifeCare has the privilege of providing superior care and superior service to members of our community. If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please call us at 330.264.4899.

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