

Every Day Matters

A NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF GENESIS HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Spring is a beautiful season. It signifies renewal as our world wakes up from a winter's nap. It's a time of healing from the wounds – both physical and emotional – that often accompany cold weather. And it means growth, which is something we all aspire for in our personal lives as we watch the flowers, plants and trees begin their journey of blossoming in spring.

Growth is also a part of our Hospice Care program at Genesis HealthCare System, especially now as we continue building the J.W. & M.H. Straker Foundation Hospice House, the new inpatient facility taking the place of Morrison House. Last year we broke ground, and this year, we expect the facility to open. The photo above shows the progress we are making.

The new building will honor the legacy and comfort of Morrison House as cherished elements such as the beautiful stained-glass panels and the reflection room are being incorporated. An extra room is being added to enhance capacity and flexibility. All patient rooms will offer access to semi-private gardens and include private bathrooms designed to better accommodate families. The new space will also bring together our home care and inpatient teams under one roof, fostering collaboration and continuity of care.

The new inpatient facility is possible through the generosity of individuals and organizations in our communities as we reached our fundraising goal of \$7.4 million. We are forever grateful for your support. It means we can continue to grow, just as spring blossoms, and embrace our journey to provide compassionate, high-quality end-of-life care for those we love.

Pebbles Kieber

Pebbles Kieber, MSN, RN, OCN

Director, Genesis Cancer, Palliative Medicine and Hospice Services

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FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

Doug's wife and family gathered to remember him

The Labaki family

Doug Labaki was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, more commonly known as ALS, in December 2023. His wife of 44 years, Anita, a former hospice nurse, was determined to honor Doug's wishes by taking care of him at home. She worried about how to provide the best support for him.

Anita knew she could trust Genesis Hospice Care to help. They listened to Anita's concerns and provided solutions such as delivering an adjustable bed, oxygen, a shower chair and more. With their help, Doug was able to stay at home.

"Doug didn't want to prolong his life," said Anita. "He wanted to spend the rest of his time with friends and family while keeping his dignity. The Hospice Care team allowed him to do that and more."

Finding peace at Morrison House

As Doug's needs changed, the family made the difficult decision to move him to Morrison House.

At Morrison House, the Hospice Care team continued to provide comfort to Doug, along with emotional and spiritual support for his family. Tim Patton, Genesis Hospice Care chaplain, was there to provide comfort and spiritual care throughout their stay.

"I cannot say enough nice things about Morrison House," said Anita. "Morrison House had everything we needed. The nurses took time to explain everything to our sons, giving us the space to be together as a family. I cannot thank them enough for the compassion they showed."

Celebrating Doug's life

"Doug was one of the kindest people you'd ever met," said Anita. "He was a gentle, kind and loving person. I can't pick just one favorite memory or trip we went on together. I loved them all, but most importantly, I loved raising our boys together."

Doug and Anita's children, Brian, 41, and Aaron, 38, all remember Doug fondly. "Our favorite memory with our dad is sitting out by a fire and having a drink," said Brian. "We always told each other stories, and I will always remember those times." They celebrated Doug's life at the end of April 2025.

"We couldn't have done this without the Genesis Hospice Care team," said Anita. "We are forever grateful for their kindness and guidance."



HONORING CLYDE ADAMS, JR.

When Clyde Adams, Jr. was diagnosed with non-ischemic cardiomyopathy, a weakened heart, he faced a new chapter in life. At 80 years old, Clyde chose Genesis Hospice Care as they had already cared for his parents and mother-in-law.

Before Clyde became a hospice patient, he served in the Air Force for 20 years as a civilian firefighter and an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). Someone who stepped forward to serve, protect and lead. That chapter of life didn't end when Hospice Care began. It remains an essential part of who he is today.

Through the We Honor Veterans program, the Hospice Care team took time to recognize Clyde's strength, values and experiences shaped by his military service. The recognition honored his identity, courage and commitment that defined so much of his life.

"My care with Genesis Hospice Care is fantastic," said Clyde. "All the nurses that come to my house are wonderful and help get what I need for my care."

Clyde continues to work on his woodworking projects, creating over 100 Christmas ornaments and the cabinets in his home. With the support of the Hospice Care team, he finds joy and peace in the comfort of his home.

Family and friends remain an important part of Clyde's life. Visits are filled with laughter, flipping through the memory book of his Air Force days and moments spent admiring his latest woodworking creations. Surrounded by loved ones and a caring team, Clyde feels supported physically, emotionally and spiritually, making each day meaningful in new ways.

Clyde's story is a reminder of the impact of compassionate care. With the dedication of Genesis Hospice Care, he continues to live each day with purpose, dignity and knowing that every day matters.



Photo above: Clyde created a display for his flag and pin from the We Honor Veterans ceremony



Spiritual Matters

You might be wondering – who is this person who has been writing this column since we started the newsletter? For a change-up I thought I would say a little bit about myself and how I came to be the one writing these Spiritual Matters articles.

I went to college to study geology. After getting my degree, I moved out west and worked in the geophysical exploration business, living in many places from North Dakota to Texas to California and everywhere in between. I worked long hours nearly every day of the week, and I saw some amazing places. For the most part I enjoyed what I did. After some years though, I felt a pull in another direction, one quite different than the path I was on. I sensed God calling me into ministry, though I had no idea what kind. Frankly, I was resistant to the idea. With my introverted personality, ministry of any kind seemed a bad match. Yet God’s push persevered, and I entered seminary.

After five years of studying subject matter a far cry from science and math and thinking I would never finish, I did just that. Having felt a path toward chaplaincy during my time at seminary, there was more education and training to come. With two more years of chaplain residency at the University of Tennessee Medical Center, I could now look for a position. Genesis HealthCare System had an opening at the hospital. I was hired, moved to Ohio, and after six months in the Spiritual Care department, a position opened in Hospice Care. Save for a seven-month interlude in Oregon (as a hospice chaplain and bereavement coordinator), I have been here for approximately 25 years – the longest I have lived anywhere.

I have been privileged to be a part of many of our families’ lives as they have journeyed through hospice. I have been honored to officiate funerals and be present with those who lost a loved one to suicide. I have struggled to understand the meaning of life amid death. I have questioned God’s presence and desire for our lives. I have spent much time contemplating questions that will not be answered. I have seen my own faith and understanding of it take different paths of discovery. But I trust this has all been a part of God’s desire for my life and spirit, though I must admit that my understanding of it is marginal at best. Of my own desire and initiative, this would never have been the path I would have chosen for myself. In some mystical way, God spoke to me and set me on this journey, allowing me to use gifts I did not know I had. Hopefully in some small way, I can continue to bring comfort and light to those going through a dark night of the soul.

Tim Patton, MDiv, BCC
Chaplain

Every Day Matters
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Hospice Care Gala planned for November

While we reached our fundraising goal of the Hospice Care Capital Campaign to build the J.W. & M.H. Straker Foundation Hospice House, we continue to seek funding to support hospice patients and their families now and in the future. The annual Genesis Hospice Care Gala is one way for us to benefit our patients and their families.

This year, the Hospice Care Gala will be held on Saturday, Nov. 7, at the Zanesville Country Club. The evening includes a delicious dinner, music and dancing, a silent auction and much more. Sponsorship opportunities are available. If you’re interested in learning more about the gala, contact the Genesis HealthCare Foundation at 740-454-5052.