

Federal Law Extended

IRA Proceeds Can Become Tax-Free Charitable Gifts

Again this year, federal law allows charitable gifts from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) without paying taxes on the distribution. Here are a few of the key features of this gift option:

- IRA investors who are at least 70 1/2 years old can make direct charitable transfers up to \$100,000.
- Gifts may be designated to support programs or areas of your choice.
- The gift (money directly transferred to the charity) is not included in the IRA owner's income and is not taxed. In Ohio, you also avoid paying state income tax.
- This law is an extension of a bill signed into law in 2008 and applies to distributions made throughout the 2009 tax year.

If you would like more information about this opportunity or would like to discuss another type of year-end gift to Hospice, please contact Ken Frisch, Director of Development, at 419-931-3189 or kfrisch@hospicenwo.org. ■

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life changing for these men and women," says Bill Weaver. "Some of them have been holding their feelings inside all of their lives and this is what led to their abusive behavior.

"This is not an easy group to run," he adds. "It is very emotional to hear these people speak out loud — often for the first time in their lives — about the terrible things they have held inside."

Hospice of Northwest Ohio offers a variety of bereavement groups which are free and open to anyone in the community, whether or not they have a prior relationship with Hospice. We invite you to call 419-661-4001 or visit hospicenwo.org for workshop information and schedules. ■

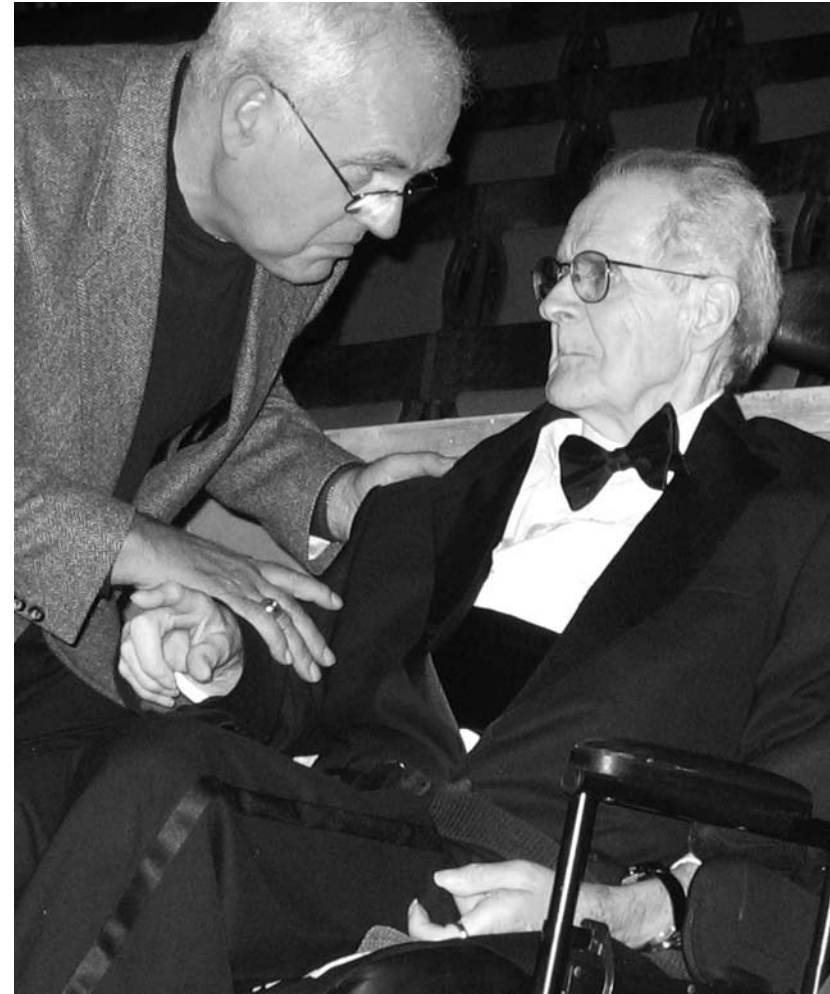
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If You No Longer Wish to Receive This Publication....

Please contact us at 419-661-4001 to have your name removed from the "Passages" mailing list. ■

Passages

Positive Memories Made Possible



Funded by donations and made possible through the extra efforts of staff, volunteers and community organizations, these experiences give patients something to look forward to...and something very special for their loved ones to remember.

Meeting, Greeting and Eating

For example, when one of our elderly home care patients confessed to having a bit of a crush on local TV personality Dan Bumpus, Hospice arranged for him to visit her at her home. And, when Jamie Farr was in town last summer, he made a special stop at our Toledo Center to see a patient who grew up in his neighborhood. Likewise, one of our nursing home patients — a lifelong fan of golf — received a visit from Nancy Lopez.

Though Chuck E. Cheese's is a destination coveted by most young kids, going there seemed like an impossibility for a pediatric patient with a compromised immune system. At our request, however, the restaurant opened at an off hour so the patient and his siblings could enjoy some normal "kid time" there together.

Many adults have also enjoyed a meal from their favorite local restaurant, delivered right to their door.

Sharing Memories

Several patients have written memoirs and, with the help of staff and volunteers, their thoughts have been

transcribed, edited and turned into books for their loved ones. Others continue to express their thoughts on Memory Gift Videos produced by our Volunteer Department.

And, though it's not unusual to help send patients to reunions, weddings and graduations within the region, we also have enabled those with relatives out of the country to connect through the use of a web camera and Skype.

Enjoying Favorite Pastimes

Hockey fans have been to see the Toledo Walleye play at the new arena and baseball fans have made one last trip to see the Mud Hens. We've enabled patients to go fishing, play golf, visit their favorite state parks, attend concerts and comedy shows and have sent them to the Toledo Zoo.

For Frank Sniadecki, left, his wish was to take a trip to the Toledo Museum of Art to celebrate his 80th birthday. Confined to a wheelchair, Frank traveled by ambulette with a Hospice volunteer, received a private guided tour from a museum docent and got a special birthday serenade on the piano in the Great Gallery. ■

Wearing a tuxedo as he does every year on his birthday, patient Frank Sniadecki visits the Toledo Museum of Art with Hospice volunteer Dennis Wroblewski.

For patients and families whose lives have been consumed by a terminal illness, even the simplest of celebrations can be difficult to arrange. But with the assistance of Hospice of Northwest Ohio's *Positive Memories* program, hundreds of patients have not only celebrated special occasions, but have seen end-of-life wishes come true.

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Hospice Helps Correctional Facilities Provide Life-Changing Grief Support

At the Correctional Treatment Facility (CTF), where residents have been convicted of drug-related crimes, many have used substance abuse as a way to deal with a lifetime of grief and loss. Through its partnership with Hospice, CTF has enabled many of its residents to finally face their grief as they prepare to re-enter society.

According to Bill Weaver, Deputy Director for CTF, "Several Hospice bereavement counselors (who have special training in the relationship between unresolved grief, substance abuse and incarceration) worked with us over a period of weeks and taught us how to conduct grief workshops for our residents.

"The sessions are completely voluntary and, at any given time, we have about 30 of our 100 residents involved," explains Bill. "Some we identify through assessment and suggest the group would be helpful for them; others learn about it and ask to attend. It is not unusual to have multiple sessions going on at the same time to accommodate everyone who is interested."

Crisis Intervention
At the Lucas County Jail, Hospice Bereavement Counselor Char Brock, LPC, has been called in to work one-on-one with several female prisoners. "These women," she explains, "were dealing with loss of life as they knew it. They were facing significant time away from



Bill Weaver and Colleen Hartford both conduct grief support groups at the Correctional Treatment Facility in Toledo.

their families, especially their children. One was coping with the death of a child."

"For these women, grief was complicated by their incarceration," says Diane Myers, Women's Services Counselor at the jail. "They were a danger to themselves and we needed help for them right away. I am a licensed social worker, but I knew they needed support from someone who specialized in grief and loss. Hospice of Northwest Ohio was very responsive and we noticed a big difference in these women during their ongoing visits with Char."

A Life-Changing Effort

"The grief support workshops have been a fantastic addition to the services we offer and have been

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How You Can Help Hospice!

"Smoke the Turkey" Run Thanksgiving Morning

The Seventh Annual Rick Gomez Memorial "Smoke the Turkey" 5K Run / Walk will again benefit Hospice of Northwest Ohio. Held on Thursday, November 26 at the St. James Club in Sylvania, the event starts at 9 a.m. with a free Fun Run for kids at 8:30 a.m. The participation fee is \$25 per person with lots of great prizes awarded. Bring the whole family for this popular event that will help raise funds and burn calories on Thanksgiving morning. For information, call the club at 419-841-5597 or go to stjamesclub.net.

Watch for Light Up a Life

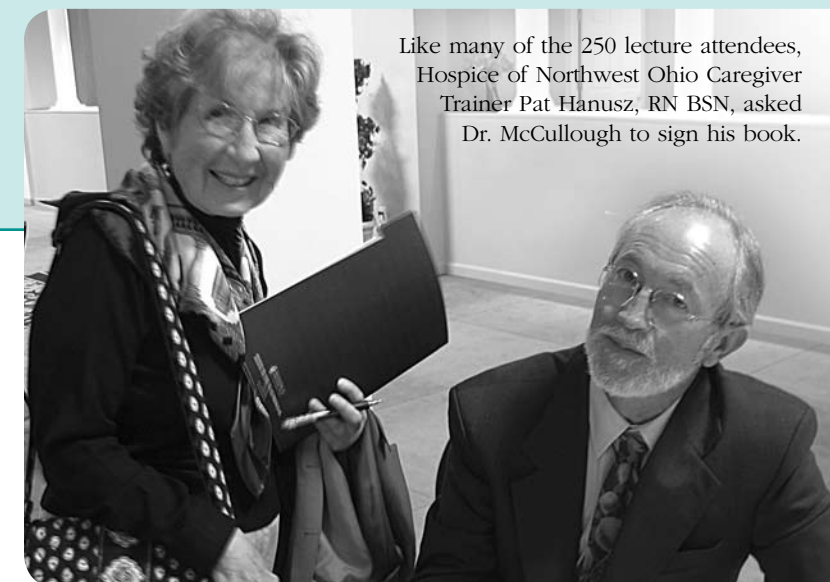


LIGHT UP A LIFE

Please watch your mail for our annual year-end request to "Light Up a Life" with a gift to Hospice of Northwest Ohio. If you don't receive yours by early December and wish to make a year-end contribution in memory or in honor of someone special, please call Beth Nowak at 419-931-3119.

Do You Shop at Kroger?

If so, you can help raise funds for Hospice simply by using your Kroger Plus card when you buy things there. All you need to do is go online and sign up for the Kroger Community Rewards program and designate Hospice of Northwest Ohio as your charity of choice. Kroger will periodically distribute a contribution check to all the charities named, and the amount given will be based on the amount spent by the supporters of each organization. The more people who sign up on our behalf, the more we will receive! This is a wonderful opportunity for Hospice to raise much-needed dollars and it is effortless on the part of those who participate. Please take a few moments to sign up to help Hospice of Northwest Ohio at www.krogercommunityrewards.com. ■



Like many of the 250 lecture attendees, Hospice of Northwest Ohio Caregiver Trainer Pat Hanusz, RN BSN, asked Dr. McCullough to sign his book.

"Slow Medicine" May Mean Better Medicine

News flash. We are in an aging society. With 85 to 90-year-olds comprising the fastest growing age bracket in America — and more than 68,000 centenarians accounted for in the 2007 census — caring for the elderly has become everyone's business. At any given time, 50 million U.S. households are providing care for an aged or chronically ill loved one... and those who are not are certainly helping to pay for it.

"We all need to adjust," says Dennis McCullough, MD, a noted geriatrician and author who has coined the term "slow medicine" to describe a shift in resources that provides the best quality care for the elderly. "Yes," he says, "high-tech medical treatment can resolve a crisis, but we need to be more mindful of how it will impact a patient's ongoing quality of life. Slow medicine does not ration care," he

emphasizes. "It actually gives more care, but a different kind of care."

Seeing the Big Picture

The featured speaker at Hospice of Northwest Ohio's fourth annual Dr. Sharon Erel Lecture, Dr. McCullough says slow medicine provides care within the context of patient and family values and promotes a slower pace of intervention and decision making.

"Most medical practitioners today are specialists who tend only to the issues that apply to their areas of expertise," he explains. "We often receive 'charades of care' provided in a brief appointment at a doctor's office. This does not begin to address the whole picture of the patient's life," he says, "and what they and their caregivers may be enduring to make it through every day.

"Too often the elderly (and their families) feel rushed into making decisions for treatments and procedures that may provide a short-term fix with little long-term benefit." Besides being costly, this is often traumatic, painful and disruptive to patients' lives.

Making Sound Decisions

Trust and patience are the keys to establishing long-term relationships with seniors that result in their having a good quality of life. Adult children need to become more intimately involved with their parents' lives, earlier on, and bring other trusted advisors and friends to the table as well. They all need to better understand the ebb and flow of chronic diseases and aging, and to be better informed about the various, lower-tech options for managing them.

"This will help assure," says Dr. McCullough, "that when their parents do decline, there are a number of people available to support them in their decision making and planning — not only about health care, but about how and where they live and conduct their lives. Studies show," he notes, "that older people will make good decisions that are consistent with past decisions and values if they are not rushed."

Dennis McCullough, MD is the author of *My Mother, Your Mother: Embracing "Slow Medicine," the Compassionate Approach to Caring for Your Aging Loved Ones*. For more information visit www.mymotheryourmother.com. ■

"It is very emotional to hear these people speak out loud — often for the first time — about the terrible things they have held inside."

Rekindle the Holiday Spirit! Free Grief Workshop on December 6

For people of all ages who will be grieving this holiday season, Hospice of Northwest Ohio is presenting **Facing the Holidays After the Loss of a Loved One**. To be held Sunday, December 6 from 3 to 5 p.m. at our Toledo Center, the free workshop provides support, meaningful activities and coping tips for everyone in the family. Participants will be divided by age group, with sessions designed for kids, teens and adults. To register, please call the Bereavement Department at 419-661-4001 no later than December 2.