



# Family Hospice & Palliative Care

## Brothers at heart



**Rick Rector, left, received a heart transplant on February 13. His brother, "Bo Bo" Valerio (right), gives a "thumb's up" status update.**

**Rick Rector** was born with a congenital heart defect known as dextrocardia, meaning his heart was backwards in his body, essentially, and had only a single valve. He and his family had lived for most of his 22 years knowing that at some point a heart transplant would be necessary to save Rick's life.

Due to the defect, Rick's skin tone had always had a blue cast to it, and he was known as "blue boy" in the Spring Hill community he still calls home. Early on, Rick learned to "own the look" rather than succumb to teasing at the hands of others. "God made all kinds of people, some pink, some white, some brown. I'm a blue person," said Rick, with the wisdom of someone who takes nothing for granted, asks thoughtful questions and remembers every kindness.

Nonetheless, Family Hospice Clinical Nurse Liaison **Steve Jackson** was elated when he saw Rick following his February 13 heart transplant "as pink as a newborn." He knew that pink was a very good sign.

Steve had been following Rick at home since last fall

See **BROTHERS AT HEART 4**

**To make a referral, call 1•800•513•2148**  
**For bereavement support, call 412•572•8829**  
**To volunteer, call 412•572•8806**  
**To make a donation, call 412•572•8457**

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## Mission Statement

The Mission of Family Hospice and Palliative Care is to provide compassionate, quality comfort care that enhances the lives of people with life-limiting illness and their families.

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## A Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

Though a current temperature of 23 degrees suggests otherwise, signs persist that spring approaches, and we are reminded that the only constant is change.

Ask patient Rick Rector. He can tell you that February 12 unfolded as a day like any other; he'd just finished a good meatball hoagie when the phone rang, he was offered a new heart, and his life changed. Ask volunteer Virginia Lehman, who keeps discovering she can do things she's never done before, even though "how" isn't always obvious at the beginning. Even Ivan, our beloved full-time service dog, has moved on to warmer temperatures in Florida, and now his sister, Isabelle, is settling into his former role.

Family Hospice succeeds as an organization because staff, volunteers and benefactors always adjust to the changing needs of our patients, our families, and our community.

Our gratitude for your loyalty is profound. I borrow the words of one of our hospice families taken from a letter we received just before Christmas:

*"You stood with us and gave us strength. You have touched our lives forever and we will forever cherish each and every one of you."*

As Family Hospice did for this family, you, by means of your support, have done for Family Hospice.

Yes, change comes, and with it, opportunity. Thank you for helping us to make the most of those opportunities on behalf of 3,800 patients and families across nine counties in Western Pennsylvania.

Gratefully,

Franco Insana  
Interim President & CEO



Christine Michaels describes how the peace memorial (pictured) came to be.

## Exhibit honors legacy

Family Hospice's first-ever art exhibit has been staged in honor of **Dr. Richard Michaels**, an infectious disease pediatrician and member of Physicians for Social Responsibility.

Dr. Michaels lived out his life on Family Hospice's program two years ago. He and his wife, **Christine Doreian Michaels**, were instrumental in establishing a permanent peace memorial on Pittsburgh's


North Shore. The memorial is a sculpture entitled "The Unkillable Human," created by artist **Frederick Franck**. It evokes the carbon shadow of a human being visible in the aftermath of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima.

The exhibit is a product of Family Hospice's Quality of Life Program, which lends tangible form to the celebration of legacy and valued relationships. Program

Coordinator **Paula Church** has been collaborating with Christine to celebrate Dr. Michaels' legacy as an advocate for peace locally and globally.

Paula took a series of photos of the sculpture and the surroundings. Christine explained, "Dick had worked since the Vietnam War to eliminate nuclear weapons, so this unflinching photographic essay by Paula is a fitting memorial to him."

Hosted in January by the **Undercroft Gallery** in Shadyside, the exhibit married Paula's work with poems written by Christine about grieving Dick's decline and death. Christine read a sampling of her poems during the exhibit's opening as well as haikus she composed to correspond to Paula's photographs.

"The show made such an impression on people from a bereavement perspective. It spoke to individuals of all ages and backgrounds," reflects Paula. Based upon its success, Christine is pursuing opportunities to mount the exhibit for other audiences in other spaces. 



**Paula Church**




Guest traces loved one's name

## Celebration of Life Wall unveiled

Family and friends gathered at The Center for Compassionate Care in Mt. Lebanon in November for the unveiling of the Celebration of Life Wall, now bearing 68 names in honor of loved ones.

**Lisa Turbeville Markowski**, of Family Hospice's Board for Institutional Advancement, honored her father, **Harry R. Edelman III**, in this way. Explained Lisa, "My father lived life to the fullest, contributing much to the community and to seniors in particular in his lifetime. Hospice is something he would wholeheartedly want to be available and accessible to everyone."

Cost per engraved line is \$1,000. Proceeds benefit Family Hospice's Future Fund, providing free care for qualified indigent patients, education for the public and clinical staff, and capital needs.

To reserve space for a loved one's name, use the coupon on p. 8 or visit [www.FamilyHospice.com](http://www.FamilyHospice.com). 

## BROTHERS AT HEART

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under Family Hospice's palliative home care program for the management of medications necessary to keep Rick's heart pumping. Palliative home care supports individuals with a serious illness who are continuing life-prolonging treatment.

Explains Steve, "A person who elects hospice opts to forego further aggressive care and focuses solely on quality of life; the palliative home care patient may have or desire other treatment options but can still benefit from Family Hospice's expertise in achieving and maintaining comfort and emotional support." Currently, 10% of Family Hospice patients receive palliative home care.



Steve Jackson

***"The palliative home care patient may have or desire other treatment options but can still benefit from Family Hospice's expertise in achieving and maintaining comfort and emotional support."***

**Steve Jackson, Clinical Nurse Liaison**

Steve's visits served as a bridge between the hospital and home while Rick was evaluated, approved and wait-listed for a heart transplant, and they became the foundation of a bond that both Rick and Steve cherish. "Steve's like a brother to Ricky," says Rick's father, known as Big Rick. "I called him in the middle of the night when there was a heart for Ricky, and he came to see us in the hospital that day." Steve agrees, "He's the little brother I never had." He now visits Rick as a member of the extended Rector family.

The word "loyalty" is written across Rick's forearm. It's an attribute he practices and appreciates in all his relationships. A month out from surgery, Rick confesses that he has to learn confidence in his new heart, but he's walking three to four times a day and wants Steve to resume his nursing visits once he is able to return home, a loyalty Family Hospice looks forward to reciprocating. 🤝

## Welcome Isabelle

Like a family awaiting the birth of a child, anticipation was running high on a recent afternoon in Family Hospice's Mt. Lebanon center. The moment of arrival was unmistakable as staff clamored to meet the new addition.

Enter **Isabelle**, Family Hospice's newest full-time therapy dog. A five year-old Golden Retriever trained at New Hope Assistance Dogs in Warren, PA, "Izzy" is sister to former service dog Ivan, who recently relocated to warmer climes in Florida.

Izzy visits with patients and families primarily at The Center for Compassionate Care on weekdays but visits other sites as dictated by caretaker **Dave Fiumara's** responsibilities. Dave serves as Family Hospice's Director of Administrative Services.



Izzy is one of 12 therapy dogs tending to families across our nine-county service area.



**Transitions**, a program designed to increase understanding of and access to end-of-life care for African-American families in the Greater North Side, is undertaking a grass-roots educational initiative at area high-rises. **Transitions RN Victoria Jackson** is making monthly visits to several sites to address concerns like how to speak with your doctor about your wishes and how medications are used to achieve comfort.

Here **Transitions RN Victoria Jackson** (standing) describes the program to residents at West Park Court. Call 412-231-3103 for more information.




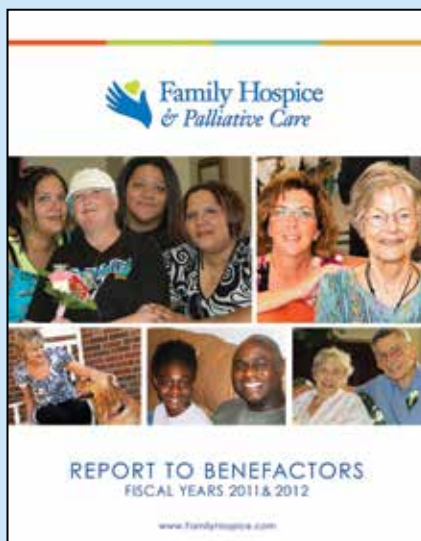
Family Hospice's reach extends to Amish communities in Mercer County.

## Growth continues

A recent survey of hospice organizations shows that Family Hospice is a leading provider in Pennsylvania, ranking first in patients served in Allegheny and Mercer counties. An average daily census of 450 patients means that Family Hospice has grown by 100% since 2000.

Data shows more people are accessing hospice services than ever before. However, not all hospices are growing.

“We owe our strength in the market place to a number of factors,” says Interim President and CEO Franco Insana. “Affiliation agreements with UPMC, Presbyterian SeniorCare and Jefferson Regional Medical System fortify resources, including the expertise of more palliative care certified physicians than any other provider in the area. This gives us credibility among professionals. Additionally, our outreach via education, public relations and advertising connects us to the public. And by continuing to operate with integrity in relation to regulatory mandates, we can avoid the pitfalls that have placed other hospices in jeopardy.” 



The Report to Benefactors for Fiscal Years 2011 and 2012, along with a complete list of donors, is available on our website at [www.FamilyHospice.com](http://www.FamilyHospice.com). From the home page, select **Make a Gift**, then **Report to Benefactors** from the drop down menu.

For a hard copy of the report, contact Rachel Kelley-Lore at [rkelly-lore@FamilyHospice.com](mailto:rkelly-lore@FamilyHospice.com) or 412-572-8457.


## Being present

*In 2012, Cathy Latorre was a Robert Morris University BSN candidate completing a clinical rotation at Family Hospice's Center for Compassionate Care in Mt. Lebanon. She shared her thoughts after caring for a young patient and family that make for a worthwhile reflection about the essence of hospice care.*

“This experience helped me understand the value of silence and presence. I'm very outgoing, and it comes naturally to me to use words to help others. But in this situation there were no words to make any of this right. There is nothing right about so young a person losing his life.

I found that saying nothing and sitting quietly with the family spoke louder than any words. I'll use this newly learned skill moving forward and remember how powerful it was.

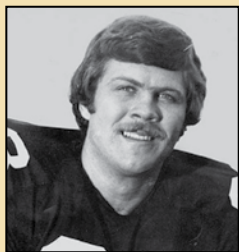
I've found that even though many bad things happen in the world, people are generally good and will come together to help others when needed. Not just because we were all in the health care field, but because we were all people, we understood that there was an entire family around the patient in need of unconditional love and support.

I can assure you that I have never in my life seen more compassion than I did that day.” 



Cathy Latorre is a nurse at our Mt. Lebanon Center

## Steeler great joins golf benefit



**Mike Wagner**

Join celebrity golfer and long-time Steelers safety **Mike Wagner** for Family Hospice's Annual Golf Benefit which returns to Valley Brook Country Club in McMurray on May 6. Having raised \$1.6 million in its 26-year history, the Golf Benefit remains a mainstay of philanthropic support for the 17 patient and family programs provided across nine counties in Western Pennsylvania.

We extend our gratitude to Co-Title Sponsors Bobby Rahal Automotive Group and First National Bank for getting the event off to a great start. Contact Special Events Coordinator Christine Jamison at 412-572-8812 or visit [www.FamilyHospicegolf.com](http://www.FamilyHospicegolf.com)



to register or to learn about additional sponsorship opportunities. Registration deadline is April 26.

Registration opens at 9:30 a.m. with a shotgun start at 11:00 a.m. Lunch is on

the course, and a reception featuring heavy hors d'oeuvres, a silent auction and awards begins at 4 p.m. 🙌

## Bella's on board...are you?

Meet therapy dog Bella, connect with the Family Hospice community and be informed about end-of-life issues.

"Like" us on Facebook. Visit [www.Facebook.com/FamilyHospicePA](http://www.Facebook.com/FamilyHospicePA)

We are hoping to reach **1,000 'likes' by National Volunteer Week** which begins **April 21**



Planning is kicking into high gear for "Soul to Sole," Family Hospice's inaugural dance party benefit featuring Pittsburgh's premier funk and soul band, **House of Soul**. The party gets underway on June 14 at **J. Verno Studios** on the South Side.

The venue exudes "cool" with great lighting, comfortable lounge spaces, a spacious dance floor and even a photo booth! Food and libations from fine local establishments complement the vibe.

An entertainment-themed silent auction with autographed memorabilia from artists including Bon Jovi, Madonna, Pete Townshend, Justin Bieber, David Sedaris, Carrie Underwood, Burton Morris and more is sure to generate excitement. And interest around the "Most Outrageous Soles" footwear contest is already running high.

Event proceeds support services provided to 3,800 patients and families cared for annually by Family Hospice. Tickets go on sale April 19. Visit [www.FamilyHospice.com](http://www.FamilyHospice.com) or call Christine Jamison at 412-572-8812 for more information. 🙌



**Don't miss House of Soul on June 14!**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Activities

**May 6: Annual Golf Benefit**, Valley Brook Country Club, 425 Hidden Valley Rd., McMurray. Enjoy a full day of camaraderie through 18 holes on this challenging course. Unwind at the reception, beginning at 4 p.m. See p. 6 for details.

**June 14: "Soul to Sole" Benefit**, J. Verno Studios, 3030 Jane St., South Side. Live music, dancing and food sampling from some of Pittsburgh's finest restaurants...join us for our inaugural event at this great venue. See p. 6 for details.

**For information and registration for these events, visit [www.FamilyHospice.com](http://www.FamilyHospice.com) or call Christine Jamison at 412-572-8812.**

### Education

**May 7: "Conversations about driving,"** presented by the Alzheimer's Association. Presbyterian SeniorCare, 835 S. Main St., Washington. Registration 5:30 p.m., program 6 to 7 p.m. Dinner served. Register with Kelley Mercurio@srcare.org or 724-250-4981.

**June 4: "What is it like: the world through the eyes of a person with Alzheimer's disease,"** presented by the Alzheimer's Association. Presbyterian SeniorCare, 835 S. Main St., Washington. Registration 5:30 p.m., program 6 to 7 p.m. Dinner served. Register with Kelley Mercurio at kmercurio@srcare.org or 724-250-4981.

### Compassionate Caregiver Training Program

**All sessions are offered by appointment; contact David Colley at 412-572-8740.**

**The Center for Compassionate Care**, 50 Moffett St., Mt. Lebanon. Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to Noon.

Sessions can be scheduled at other times if caregivers cannot attend otherwise.

**The Center for Compassionate Care/Canterbury**, 310 Fisk St., Lawrenceville.

**Grove City Medical Center**, 631 North Broad St., Grove City. Fridays.

**Longwood at Oakmont**, 500 Route 909, Verona.

### Bereavement

**Apr. 9: Growing through Grief – Rebuilding Hope**, Jefferson Regional Medical Center, 565 Coal Valley Rd., Jefferson Hills. 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. James Bibro Pavilion, Homestead Baldwin Room. Sessions are on Tuesdays, except for Monday, Apr. 29. Runs six consecutive weeks through May 14. For information and registration, call 412-572-8829 or visit [www.FamilyHospice.com](http://www.FamilyHospice.com).

**Mar. 27: Growing through Grief – Rebuilding Hope**, Southminster House, 801 Washington Rd., Mt. Lebanon. 1 to 3 p.m. Runs six consecutive Wednesdays through May 1. For information and registration, call 412-572-8829 or visit [www.FamilyHospice.com](http://www.FamilyHospice.com).

**Apr. 7: Spring Ecumenical Memorial Service**, Beth El Congregation, Cochran Rd., Mt. Lebanon. 2 p.m.

Light reception follows. For information or to volunteer in support of the event, call 412-572-8829.

**April 14: Center for Compassionate Care/Canterbury Memorial Service**, Canterbury Place, 310 Fisk St., Lawrenceville. 2 p.m. McVay Auditorium, first floor. Light reception follows. For more information or to volunteer in support of the event, call 412-572-8829.

**April 20: Celebration of Life Ecumenical Memorial Service**, Bidwell United Presbyterian Church, 1020 Liverpool St., Manchester. 2 p.m. Open to anyone in the community who is grieving the loss of a loved one. Repast immediately following. For more information or to volunteer in support of the event, call 412-231-3103.

### Camp Healing Hearts

**Open to the community at no cost. For grieving children ages 6 -12 and their caregivers.**

**Pre-registration is required. 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Register at [www.FamilyHospice.com](http://www.FamilyHospice.com) or 412-572-8829.**

**June 8: The Center for Compassionate Care**, 50 Moffett St., Mt. Lebanon.

**June 22: Bidwell United Presbyterian Church**, 1020 Liverpool St., Manchester.

**July 27: Gentle Shepherd Church**, 3480 Shenango Valley Fwy., Hermitage.

### Ongoing Bereavement Support Groups

**Baldwin Community United Methodist Church**, Parlor, 5001 Baptist Rd., Whitehall. **First Thursday of every month 7 to 8:30 p.m.**

**Grove City Medical Center**, 631 North Broad St. Ext., Grove City. **Third Tuesday of every month 6 to 7:30 p.m.**

**St. Paul Homes**, 339 East Jamestown Rd., Greenville. **First Thursday of every month 6:30 to 8 p.m.**

**Shenango Valley Senior Center**, 220 North Buhl Farm Dr., Hermitage. **Second Wednesday of every month 1 to 2:30 p.m.**

**Southminster House**, 801 Washington Rd., Mt. Lebanon. **Second Tuesday of every month 1 to 2:30 p.m.**

**The Center for Compassionate Care**, 50 Moffett St., Mt. Lebanon. **Third Monday of every month 7 to 8:30 p.m.**

# Volunteer shares unique talent



Virginia Lehman (center) is surrounded by her hand-made puppet friends.

“What am I getting myself into?”

**Virginia Lehman** keeps asking herself this question, and she keeps moving forward regardless.

She asked this of herself when urged by her husband **Russell's** physician to accept hospice care in order for him to remain at home. Married nearly 55 years, Virginia and Russell had raised three children in their 100-year old home on six acres of property in West Middlesex. A committed and fastidious caregiver, Virginia recalled, “I didn’t like letting go of Russell and involving others in his care.”

When the suggestion was made that the

spiritual care specialist might be of benefit, Virginia questioned what value that would have, but she’d come to trust **Heather Rice** and **Patti Brown**, the nurse and hospice home health aide caring for Russell, and so she yielded.


It proved to be a good decision for many reasons. Spiritual care specialist **Jeff Harter** became a steadfast support for both Russell and Virginia. He encouraged Virginia to attend a grief support group sponsored by Family Hospice, which she attends still. And he recognized in Virginia qualities and talents that prompted him to invite her to become a hospice volunteer.

Says Jeff, “Virginia is a woman who

embodies hope even in situations that would cause many people to despair. She is able to convey that sense of hope to fellow bereaved without minimizing anyone’s feelings.”

Again and again, Virginia has allowed trust to prevail over uncertainty, as she grows in diverse roles as a volunteer. Her most unique contribution has brought a whole new dimension to Camp Healing Hearts, Family Hospice’s annual camp for grieving children and their caregivers. Over the years, Virginia has fashioned by hand a small “village” of puppets, some life-size, and has used them to entertain at events throughout her community. This past year, with Jeff’s encouragement, Virginia created heart-shaped puppets “Hope” and “Sonny” just for Camp.

Virginia and Jeff collaborated on an original puppet show for the children at both the Hermitage and Mt. Lebanon camps. The simple message and story was met with delight by the children, who were then invited to take the stage and manipulate the puppets themselves.

Virginia confesses she still asks, “What am I getting myself into?” But now she answers that question for herself, “One day at a time, I am just doing what I like doing and giving back a little of what was given to me.” 

## Please engrave the following name into the Celebration of Life Wall

(20 characters, including spaces. Please print clearly)

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Your address \_\_\_\_\_

City, \_\_\_\_\_

State, \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your \$1,000 tax-deductible check to Family Hospice & Palliative Care, Mail to: Family Hospice, Development Office, 50 Moffett St., Pittsburgh, PA 15243

Payment may also be made by credit card:  VISA  MasterCard  American Express

Your card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Or complete the form on the website, [www.FamilyHospice.com](http://www.FamilyHospice.com); click on Celebration of Life Wall at the bottom left of the homepage.

**HURRY! Deadline for next engraving is May 15**