



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Celebrating Life

Pull Quote

"Hospice Care allowed Bert to live at home for what turned out to be the last two months of his life—that was an incredible gift to us and our family."

—**JANET AHERN, BERT'S WIFE**

PARK RAPIDS, MN (NOV. 7, 2014) – "Bert was the love of my life," says Janet Ahern, Bert's wife. "We were married for more than 52 years. He was a brilliant man and historian who could remember virtually anything he'd ever read."

Bert, a distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of Minnesota, Morris, was known for being endlessly positive and one of the best problem-solvers on campus. Janet noted that while deciding to opt for end-of-life care was difficult for both of them—she and Bert both felt incredibly supported by CHI St. Joseph's Health Hospice Care staff and their Hospice Care volunteer, who also happened to be a close friend.

"Hospice Care allowed Bert to live at home for what turned out to be the last two months of his life—that was an incredible gift to us and our family," Janet says. "He'd been in and out of hospitals several times, but Hospice allowed him to be at home, have home-cooked meals, and to look out over the lake from his bed." As generous supporters of CHI St. Joseph's Health Hospice Care, donors make a difference in the care provided to patients, families, and loved ones facing end-of-life issues.

CHI St. Joseph's Health, Hospice Care is about helping patients and families live as fully as possible. Providing care tailored to the wants and needs of each individual patient and their families is key.

"Our Hospice team is compassionate and delivers expert care," says Jill Grimes, RN, CHI St. Joseph's Health Hospice Care Director. "We focus on quality of life and are

able to do that because our team is highly experienced and trained to provide pain and symptom management.”

Families are centered in care, as they are coached on how to care for the patient. Patients are assisted with medical needs and also the emotional, psychosocial, and spiritual needs that accompany the end of life.

“Everyone deserves quality care at the end of life,” Grimes says.

During this holiday season of thanks and giving, the public is invited to join Hospice Care in a celebration of life and memories by giving a gift in honor or in memory of a loved one.

Gifts of \$25 or more to the Hospice Care Light Up A Life program help to bring individualized care to those in need of pain and symptom management, counseling, and respite services. Your support ensures quality hospice care close to home and 100 percent of your gift remains local.

The Ahern family is among 139 patients and their loved ones who received Hospice Care through CHI St. Joseph’s Health this past year. Providing specialized quality healthcare with an emphasis on comfort and dignity has been Hospice Care’s unique privilege for 29 years. Hospice Care has a passion helping people live each day to the fullest, making more meaningful moments possible.

Please plan to attend the Park Rapids downtown tree-lighting ceremony at 6 p.m. Friday, Nov. 25 and celebrate the season in honor or memory of those dear to you.

Donations can be made at CHI St. Joseph’s Health south lobby in the Light Up a Life gift box, at participating area businesses in Park Rapids and Menahga or mailed to CHI St. Joseph’s Health Foundation at 600 Pleasant Avenue, Park Rapids, MN 56470.

Cutline



Bert Ahern, July 12, 1942 - July 6, 2016

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About CHI St. Joseph's Health

CHI St. Joseph's Health is a 25-bed critical access hospital serving communities in Hubbard, Becker, Cass and Wadena Counties since 1946. In recent years, CHI St. Joseph's Health's award-winning teams received several national honors including: The Joint Commission Top Performer on Key Quality Measures in surgery; Top 100 Critical Access Hospital, HealthStrong; WomenCertified's America's Best Hospitals Women's Choice Award in obstetrics; and the Studer Group Fire Starter Healthcare Organization of the Month among other national, regional and state recognitions.

About CHI

Catholic Health Initiatives, a nonprofit, faith-based health system formed in 1996 through the consolidation of four Catholic health systems, expresses its mission each day by creating and nurturing healthy communities in the hundreds of sites across the nation where we provide care. The nation's third-largest nonprofit health system, Englewood, Colorado-based CHI operates in 18 states and comprises 103 hospitals, including four academic health centers and major teaching hospitals as well as 30 critical-access facilities; community health-services organizations; accredited nursing colleges; home-health agencies; living communities; and other facilities and services that span the inpatient and outpatient continuum of care. In fiscal year 2015, CHI provided almost \$970 million in charity care and community benefit - an 8% increase over the previous year -- for programs and services for the poor, free clinics, education and research. Charity care and community benefit totaled more than \$1.6 billion with the inclusion of the unpaid costs of Medicare. The health system, which generated operating revenues of \$15.2 billion in fiscal year 2015, has total assets of approximately \$23 billion. Learn more at www.catholichealthinitiatives.org.

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