





Honoring the Volunteers of Oxford Christian Church

The volunteer department at Harry Hynes recently had the pleasure of presenting a heartfelt plaque of gratitude to the incredible ladies of Oxford Christian Church. This dedicated group crafts a variety of beautiful items for our patients, including cozy blankets, clothing protectors, catheter bag covers, soft pillows, and other thoughtful creations. Their handiwork brings comfort and warmth to those in need.

When they aren't crafting for us, these remarkable women extend their kindness to the Linus Project and the Oxford Police Department, donating blankets that spread love and care throughout the community.

A special mention goes to Volunteer Connie Ruyle, who lovingly created and donated a veteran's dignity quilt for our Hospice Center at St. Francis. This quilt, a symbol of honor and respect, accompanies veterans on their final journey from the in-patient unit, ensuring they are wrapped in dignity and compassion. Her quilt joins an additional dignity quilt handcrafted by volunteer Mary Blake.



Quilt created and donated by Connie Ruyle



Quilt created and donated by Mary Blake

Volunteers Make Waves

The dedicated volunteers within the Harry Hynes coverage area were honored at our annual volunteer appreciation events. Hosted in Southeast Kansas and Wichita, this year's theme, "Volunteers Make Waves," featured an evening of dining, fellowship, and delightful door prizes.

In 2024, our volunteers contributed nearly 5,000 hours to supporting our patients and their loved ones, traveling almost 64,000 miles in the process. These remarkable individuals truly deserved a night dedicated to celebrating their efforts. It was our privilege to recognize their invaluable contributions.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our community partners, Security 1st Title in Wichita and Carson-Wall in Parsons, for providing the beautiful event spaces.



30 year Volunteer, Richard Conley & Fr. Tom Welk



Southeast Kansas Volunteers



Harry Hynes Volunteer Department



Wichita Volunteers



Special Olympics Summer Games

Richard Conley, our volunteer for 30 years, sang the National Anthem at the Opening Ceremonies of the Special Olympics Summer Games at Maize High School. The 2025 Games were held June 6-8 in Wichita, with athletes competing in Track & Field, Bocce, Soccer, and Tennis. These events showcased the athleticism, determination, and sportsmanship of individuals with intellectual disabilities. Richard did a wonderful job helping kick off this amazing event!

Community Liaisons Kick Off Summer with Community Connections

Our community liaisons in the Wichita area have been busy spreading joy and making connections as summer begins. Marie shared her musical talents at Catholic Care Center, singing and playing guitar for residents and staff, creating a warm and uplifting atmosphere. David brought some summer fun to Villa Maria in Mulvane by setting up a popcorn bar, offering sweet and savory treats that sparked smiles and conversation. Marie and Jayde also represented Harry Hynes at the PBS Kansas Senior Expo at the K-State Extension Office, where they connected with seniors and shared the mission of hospice care with warmth and compassion. It's been a meaningful start to the season, and we're proud of the many ways our team continues to serve with heart throughout the community.



Aging with Attitude in SEK

Staff in Southeast Kansas are members of the Aging with Attitude committee that is held each year, and it is always a wonderful and well attended event. It's easy to think of work and community life as two separate worlds, but when staff from an organization volunteer to serve on a community committee they bridge that gap! It is not just about helping out; it's about being actively involved in shaping the communities that we live and work in.

Our agency has been involved with the Aging with Attitude Expo for over 5 years and we continue to see growth and development each year and are always grateful for the opportunity to hear from families of past patients, or from individuals that want to donate their time by learning how to become volunteers.

This year was special, because our very own Chaplain Randy Beeman was the emcee for the event and he did a fantastic job! It was a great time, and we look forward to continuing our partnership with other organizations and the aging community for years to come!



Julie Smith, KState Extension Office & HHMH Volunteer, Jessica Atherton, Volunteer Coordinator SEK, LMSW



Bre Wren, Community Liaison, Jessica Atherton, Volunteer Coordinator SEK, LMSW, & Katee Camus, Community Development Coordinator



Chaplain Randy Beeman – Emcee

Lanterns of Life

The Lanterns of Life hosted its inaugural event on Memorial Day, May 26, at the Memory Garden located in the Collective of East Wichita. The heartfelt gathering welcomed 200 guests, each releasing a lantern onto the serene ponds in remembrance of a loved one. Every lantern was thoughtfully decorated and personalized, serving as a tribute to lives cherished and never forgotten.

The event offered a meaningful and uplifting way for families to honor those who have passed. Attendees enjoyed a variety of activities, including food trucks, local vendors, live music, interactive art and activity stations, balloon artistry, and special appearances by Mayor Lily Wu and Alan Howarter, the 51st Admiral Windwagon Smith. The evening culminated in a powerful and moving lantern launch, uniting the community in reflection and celebration.

Many guests expressed deep appreciation for the opportunity to commemorate their loved ones in such a beautiful and dignified setting.

We extend our sincere gratitude to our event sponsors, Lumineo Signs, Heritage Funeral Home, Baxter & Associates, and Security 1st Title, for their generous support in making this event possible.





Growth in Southeast Kansas

In Southeast Kansas we have seen a lot of growth! This growth is not only in our census, but also in our team. We are incredibly fortunate to have welcomed such outstanding individuals, and we know they will help us continue our mission. We see this growth happening because we truly believe in our mission, our partnerships and our team. We are gaining meaningful ground in areas and communities that once presented significant challenges, and that momentum is setting us up for even greater success. Our sustained growth in census over the last few months is not just a number, but a direct reflection of the exceptional care, dedication, and professionalism that our agency brings. As we look ahead, we will continue to stay focused on the personalized, patient centered care that sets us apart. Together, we're not just growing our numbers, we are growing our ability to serve and make a difference in our communities.



RIVER'S EDGE

Senior Living

Now Open in Oswego, KS!

At River's Edge Senior Living, large rooms are designed to provide a home-like atmosphere, allowing residents space for personal belongings and a feeling of independence. Each suite has exterior windows with natural lighting along with private bathrooms.

With a maximum of 12 residents, the community offers a personalized and intimate living experience. At River's Edge the residents receive just the right amount of daily assistance, with access to support services available 24 hours a day. The staff prioritize the preservation of residents' dignity and independence while providing the necessary support. Collaboration with home health and hospice services reassure residents that their healthcare needs will be met at any stage.

Residents can enjoy a vibrant social life with planned activities throughout the day, including exercise, games, and worship services. The community provides streaming services, internet, and telephone services along with maintenance-free living. Weekly housekeeping and laundry services, along with three wholesome home-cooked meals a day, contribute to a comfortable and convenient lifestyle.





“At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer, we remember them.”
- Sylvan Kamens & Rabbi Jack Reimer

Understanding Children and Grief

Death is a real part of a child’s life. Even a very young child has seen a dead animal or insect. They may have watched Mufasa fall to his death in the movie The Lion King or watched the movie Frozen and learned that Anna and Elsa’s parent’s have died. All children grieve but there are important distinctions between the grief of a child versus the grief of an adult.

Immature cognitive development

Children’s immature cognitive development limits their understanding of death. Generally, a child needs to be about ten or eleven before the abstract nature of death can be fully understood. For example, death should not be referred to as a person sleeping because a young child might believe they would wake up in the morning.

Ability to tolerate sadness

Children have a limited ability to tolerate emotional pain. They may express sadness one minute and then the next minute are ready to play. Play is a way to escape the pain of all the confusing feelings they are experiencing. Adults sometimes misinterpret this behavior as not feeling the loss as deeply as they are.

Ability to verbalize feelings

The ability to talk about how they feel is limited and talking about feelings may be avoided. Grief

may be expressed more by changes in behavior. Reactions may include depression, low energy level, anger, fear, disorganization, low self-esteem, hyperactivity, aggression, and regression. Parents and other significant adults can help children learn to identify their feelings. Children need to be given a honest explanation of the death in words they can understand.

Sensitive about being different from other children

The peer group is very important to a school aged child. Children who have experienced the death of a close family member may not want to be seen as being different. Friends may be uncomfortable talking to a peer who is grieving.

The biggest hurdle for adults in talking with children is their own uncomfortableness or uncertainty about death. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross says, “You cannot be a phony-baloney” with children. Children may interpret adult uncomfortableness as meaning that talking and feeling is not okay. They may fill in the gaps in their understanding of what has occurred with their own interpretation.

How children learn to deal with death will impact their ability to deal with loss for the rest of their lives. If you are concerned about your children or grandchildren, ask your grief counselor or other medical professional.

Are You Grieving or Depressed?

Sometimes when you are grieving it may be difficult to determine if you are grieving only, or experiencing depression as well.

John M. Schneider Ph.D. (author of *Finding My Way* and *Transforming Loss*) has identified key differences between grief and depression.

You Are Grieving When You are Experiencing the following:

- Sometimes find yourself obsessed with thinking about the person who died, but at other times are able to think of other things
- Experience vivid, clear dreams, which can be very comforting
- May have gained or lost weight
- Exercise often or not at all
- Find getting to sleep difficult
- Feel tired frequently
- Have a connection to something greater than yourself
- Are able to have pleasurable experiences as long as it isn't something that only came from the person who died
- Like to have close friends or someone who will listen to your story
- Miss being loved or the ability to love others

You may be Depressed When:

- Are often obsessed with yourself and how the death is unfair or see it as a punishment
- Experience flashbacks, nightmares, or the same disturbing dreams over and over
- Have had extreme weight change
- Experience difficulty waking up and then awoken with disturbing dreams
- Find yourself always restless or sleepy
- Are unable to find meaning and have an ongoing focus on "why me" and the unfairness of the death
- Tend to discard previously held beliefs
- Cry all the time or not at all or are angry all the time or not at all
- Rarely feel good
- Can't stand being with people or can't be without them
- Feel abandoned and unloved when alone
- Have had an extreme reaction to "eat, drink and be merry" or have experienced no pleasure at all
- Feel unloved and incapable of loving
- Distance yourself from others

If you have any questions or concerns about what you are experiencing, please contact your grief counselor or other medical professional.



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Donations were made from March 1 to June 18.

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Arlen E. Freund
Beryl Silkey
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