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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BOARD, COMMUNITY EFFORT MAKE PEPPER HOSPICE HOME A REALITY

*Overcoming Financial, Other Challenges Allows
Home to Cut Ribbon June 27th*

When Freddie Pederson first approached Roxy Pepper about the hospice she and her fellow founders were in the process of launching on a shoestring 26 years ago, she was more than generous. Not only did the Peppers step up then to help finance the growing organization — which is today Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern Illinois, one of the largest community-based, nonprofit hospice in northeastern Illinois — but they also became sustaining supporters.

They have come through once again, in a big way, as lead donors and builders of the soon-to-be-opened Pepper Family Hospice Home and Center for Care in Barrington, a project of Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern Illinois. Their generosity goes a long way towards making the vision of the organization's founders a reality.

Says Roxy Pepper of her support of hospice, "I'd heard about it while visiting England. When the father of my friend Ruth Silver was dying, he was in hospice, and that sparked a big interest." She became more actively involved when Freddie Pederson phoned and asked for a donation for a "good cause."

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BUSINESS OF HOSPICE/Add One

Then, friend Ruth Silver mentioned that the group was running out of space at Good Shepherd and why not rent them offices? "So we did," says Roxy. "Pepper Construction rented them the space where they still are, for a rent they could afford. It's been a good relationship."

Which is an understatement. "Roxy and her husband Richard have been amazing," says Pederson. "We really have angels in them as far as I'm concerned!"

Pederson, who is Honorary Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation of Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern Illinois, recalls the challenges and enthusiasm of those early days. So do Carol and Dave Nelson, whose home was the meeting place for the earliest discussions.

Many of these early visionaries, like Pederson, are still involved as Board members of the Hospice or the Foundation. Roxy Pepper is a founding member of the Foundation Board, serving for many years along with supporters like Sam Oliver and George Yapp, plus a new generation of hospice supporters including Roxy's daughter, Lynda Bollman. Lynda is involved with fundraising and as a caregiver. "I guess it runs in the family," Pepper smiles.

As the organization grew, one thing the founders kept dreaming about was their desire to have their own "home" — a place where people could go to if they couldn't be cared for in their own home during their final days. "There are so many circumstances when a person can't take care of their loved one in their home, or be there throughout the day," Pepper explains. "Having a freestanding hospice home was always a goal."

Once the organization, then known as Hospice of Northeastern Illinois (HNI), merged with the Hospice of McHenry County in Woodstock in 1984, others joined in the dream.

According to Hospice Foundation Vice President Hal Stinespring, his grandmother Mae, a founder of the Woodstock hospice, often spoke of her wish that, someday, there would be a home.

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BUSINESS OF HOSPICE/Add Two

Yet it was such a substantial endeavor that the time never seemed quite right, and there were so many other priorities to attend to.

In 2007, HNI made a giant step towards fulfilling the dream of providing in-patient care to those who could no longer be cared for at home, or the place they considered home. They partnered with Centegra Health Systems in Woodstock to design and build a first-rate ten-bed inpatient unit at the South Street campus.

Still. It wasn't "a free standing home."

From the time the Woodstock unit opened, the Board continued to look for land on which a larger, more homelike facility could be constructed. They chose the Barrington area, which provided access geographically to a greater number of communities.

Once again, the Peppers came through for the organization. In 2006, they offered HNI the opportunity to purchase land owned by Pepper Construction, nestled between Barrington Area Library and the Pepper Construction offices at beautiful Citizens Park. The \$1.7 million price tag was well below market.

6.7 acres of land became available for purchase from Pepper Construction. The property is adjacent to Citizen's Park and the 600 acres of Cuba Marsh, part of the Lake County Forest Preserve.

The supporters of the project worked on identifying architects and firming up their vision of the facility with staff and volunteers. The next step required going to the community to do a feasibility study, which took a number of months, crucial to gauging demand for the facility and whether the community at large would financially support it.

This process was completed in spring of 2007 and at the gala that June — held on the site where the hospice home would be built — the \$18.5MM Building a Legacy of Care campaign was launched.

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BUSINESS OF HOSPICE/Add Three

One of the first, very generous donors was Freddie Pederson herself, who contributed \$1 million. The Pepper Family Foundation donated \$3 million as a lead gift, and between August and February, HNI raised \$6.7 million from Board members alone. “The Board really got behind this, and the leadership of the steering committee in making this a reality was really remarkable,” says Pederson.

“After the doldrums of winter,” says Beth Raseman, vice president of development for Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern Illinois, “we kicked off a very successful leadership and major donor campaign,” with a substantial gift from Vince and Patricia Foglia for the two patient wings. Support from foundation sources also began to flow, and Raseman estimated that by the next gala, the campaign had surpassed the halfway mark of the \$18.5 goal.

The next phase, which continues to this day, consisted of volunteers going to the public to support the construction of this community resource. “We have an incredibly dedicated group of volunteers,” says Raseman. “They are tireless.”

Then the thunderbolt struck in the form of the stock market meltdown of Fall ‘08. According to Raseman, “We were hitting our stride and then the market crashed.” To her relief, donations continued to come in throughout that difficult period. “Our volunteers kept at it,” she says. “They kept calling, and the community continued to respond.”

“We’ve lived in this community for 37 years. We know it’s generous and caring,” Dave Nelson affirms. “But this has been the most unbelievable example of community generosity, to raise \$18.5 million.” He continues, “It’s a very special effort in this economy; I’d call it unprecedented. I think it’s a tribute to how people have come to regard this organization.”

Ground was broken in 2009 for the construction of the home. Surrounded by greenery, the 42,048 sf structure itself has been built to qualify for certification as a healthy, energy-efficient "green" building.

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BUSINESS OF HOSPICE/Add Four

The facility will be certified LEED Silver and will contain 16 private patient rooms, each with its own private patio. It will offer patients and their families the amenities of home, including a family room, children's play area, dining room, and meditation area. It will also serve as headquarters for the organization and its staff, and house clinical team space, staff and volunteer training rooms, administrative offices, as well as a community center.

Healing gardens with tables, chairs and benches surround the site. Patients look through French doors onto mature trees and native plant species and bushes from inside their spacious rooms. Each external patio faces the healing gardens or is within a walled garden. Indoors, great attention has been paid to air quality; only low-VOC materials are used. Natural light floods the entire two-floor space, which is attractively decorated in earth tones, providing a sense of calm and serenity throughout.

The healing nature of the environment is especially conducive to the group and individual therapies that will be offered onsite, Rasemen asserts, including the Center for Care bereavement support services, palliative care clinic with nutrition counseling and symptom management classes, and enhanced integrative therapies featuring a range of alternative offerings such as aromatherapy and acupuncture.

The Center will also serve as a meeting place to facilitate education and discussions regarding end of life options. "We want our new home to become a real community resource," says Cindy Musikatow, CEO and President of Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern Illinois. "We will have an open-door policy and invite people to come relax in our meditation area, enjoy our light-filled living rooms, and use our meeting rooms." She believes such interaction will help de-stigmatize hospice, and provide a good kick-off for the community education phase of the project.

Pepper Construction, the builder on the project, provided further support by keeping its costs below what it normally charges. "Roxy and Richard come by to keep a personal eye on it," Raseman says of the owners of Pepper Construction. "The construction workers feel like they're working on a legacy project for the community — and they are."

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BUSINESS OF HOSPICE/Add Five

She points out that as a nonprofit, it's vital that the entire building be financed by contributions so that the Foundation's reserves can be used to support unfunded programs such as pediatric palliative services, and not turn anyone away who needs care. "We're proud that for 28 years, we've never turned anyone away for inability to pay," she says. "We're seeing so many people who are uninsured or underinsured these days."

Last fall, the campaign got a big boost from a donor whose wife had been taken care of by HNI: his gift is going toward financing The Wooded Retreat that rings the entire north side of the building, providing privacy for the patient rooms. By the end of the year, 7,440 donors contributed approximately \$4.6 million to help meet the rising cost of quality hospice care and to support the capital campaign.

Now, they are less than \$300,000 shy of their goal, according to Raseman. This year, the theme of the Gala is to thank donors for making possible the realization of the founders' dream of a hospice home. With the event taking place onsite at the nearly completed and welcoming Pepper Family Home, she is fully confident of meeting the goal by the time the ribbon is cut on June 27th.

"We're delighted that we're so close to our goal, and gratified to have been able to raise as much money as we have, especially in this economy," says hospice head Musikantow. "It could never have happened without such strong community support."

Pederson, whose husband received hospice care at home before passing away four years ago, is thrilled with the results. "It's a gift to the area. We'll be surprised by how much it's needed already," she enthuses, adding, "I can't wait to volunteer there." Pepper agrees, declaring, "The coming into being of the home after all these years — seeing the dream come to fruition — it's a beautiful thing."

Carol Nelson is another of the board members who can't wait for the hospice home to open. She wishes it had been there for her father, who passed away from bladder cancer a few years ago, and who could not stay at home for pain management reasons.

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BUSINESS OF HOSPICE/Add Six

She says of the new home, "It's beautiful and comforting and not scary. It's full of loving people who understand the process of death with dignity and will make that happen for you."

The ribbon cutting to officially open the Pepper Family Home Hospice and Center for Care will take place on Sunday, June 27th at 12:30 p.m., at the new premises situated at 405 Lake Zurich Road in Barrington.

About Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern Illinois

Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern Illinois is a not-for-profit organization serving families throughout McHenry, Lake, Northwest Cook, Kane, Boone and DuPage counties. Founded in 1982, the agency provides comprehensive end-of-life care to over 1,400 patient families each year. The organization's palliative care program offers services for those who struggle with serious illnesses as well as pain and symptom management. Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern Illinois is Medicare certified and accredited by the Joint Commission. For further information, please visit www.HospiceAnswers.org and www.PepperFamilyHospiceHome.org.

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