



For Immediate Release

Contact: Mary Ann Sabo
Sabo Public Relations, 616.485.1432
maryann@sabo-pr.com

Kristin Lynn
Sabo Public Relations, 248.709.1405
kristin@sabo-pr.com

Hospice of Michigan, Meijer Help Make Birthdays Brighter for Patients

Grand Rapids, Michigan, January 14, 2014 – A special gift from Meijer Inc. is helping Hospice of Michigan make birthdays brighter for patients across the state.

The Grand Rapids-based retailer donated gift cards to support an expansion of HOM's birthday program, which is led by the organization's volunteer services team. The cards can be used to purchase personalized birthday cakes, balloons, flowers or other items at Meijer to help patients and their families create a special birthday celebration.

On any given day, HOM cares for more than 1,400 patients in 56 counties in Michigan's Lower Peninsula, stretching from Holland to Detroit and Alpena to Traverse City.

"Many of our offices have established informal programs to help patients and families gather for what may well be a final birthday celebration," said Lee Ann Clay, vice chair of the Hospice of Michigan Foundation. "Volunteers have baked cakes, arranged flowers and made cards, which are always so well received by the families.

"The generous donation from Meijer will allow us to expand our birthday program and ensure that all of our patients, no matter where they live, can enjoy a special gathering with family and friends. We recognize that when time is limited, a birthday holds even more significance. Meijer is helping to create beautiful and lasting memories through its support of Hospice of Michigan's birthday program."

Volunteers in each of HOM's 16 offices across Michigan work regularly with the nursing staff and other members of a patient's care team and family to help commemorate special milestones. Michigan's first – and largest – non-profit hospice works to provide quality of life at the end of life for all, regardless of age, diagnosis or ability to pay.

In Grand Rapids, for example, an informal group of women who have dubbed themselves the "Flower Ladies" arrange and deliver dozens of bouquets of donated flowers each week to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries or to cheer up nursing home residents who might not have family near them. A team of card-makers led by a volunteer from the law firm Warner Norcross & Judd LLP regularly makes and donates beautiful cards for birthdays, anniversaries, Mother's Day, Father's Day and other special holidays.

"Birthdays are such a momentous occasion no matter what age is being celebrated," said Doug Meijer, co-chairman of the family-owned retailer. "They're a time to celebrate with loved ones, and we're delighted to partner with Hospice of Michigan to help their patients do just that."

About Meijer Philanthropy

Meijer is a family-owned retailer based in Grand Rapids, Mich. with a fundamental philosophy aimed at strengthening the communities it serves. Meijer proudly donates more than 6 percent of its net profit each year to charities throughout the Midwest. With hunger as a corporate philanthropic focus, Meijer partners with hundreds of food banks and pantries through its *Simply Give* and food rescue programs. Meijer also supports education, disaster relief, and health and wellness initiatives. For additional information on Meijer philanthropy, please visit www.meijer.com. Follow Meijer on Twitter @twitter.com/Meijer and @twitter.com/MeijerPR or become a fan at www.facebook.com/meijer.

About Hospice of Michigan

A nationally recognized leader in end-of-life care, Hospice of Michigan is the original – and largest – hospice in the state of Michigan. The non-profit organization cares for more than 1,400 patients each day in 56 counties, raising more than \$4 million each year to cover the cost of care for the uninsured and underinsured. HOM offers innovative programs to enhance the quality of care for people at the end of life, education programs for physicians and healthcare professionals, caregiver education materials, cultural diversity programs for end-of-life care, and research and education programs at the Maggie Allesee Center for Quality of Life. For more information, call Hospice of Michigan's CARE Center 24/7 at 888.247.5701 or go to www.hom.org.

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