

The Best of Southwest

For many people, the decision to enroll themselves or a family member in a hospice program is the most difficult one they will ever make. At Southwest General, Hospice Services staff members are experienced in helping people through this difficult time and are available to answer questions and provide counseling. To contact Hospice Services, call 440-816-5040 or visit www.swgeneral.com/hospice for more information.

Southwest General always has been dedicated to providing patients with the best possible clinical care in a warm, compassionate environment. Often, physicians, nurses and other Health Center staff members receive letters of thanks from patients or family members who are grateful for the care they or their loved one has received. The following letter from the daughter of a former patient was written to our Hospice Services staff at The Thomas P. Perciak Family Residential Hospice in Strongsville.

Dear Teri and Hospice Staff,

We met at one of the most difficult times of my life. I found myself having to decide whether to send my mother, Theresa C. Walker, to hospice care in the absence of following her wishes that had been expressed in her Living Will, which had disappeared. Thank goodness that my aunt and cousin were able to assist me in making that final decision.

The Thomas P. Perciak Family Residential Hospice provided my mother with a tranquil and beautiful atmosphere in which to spend her last hours on this earth. She was tended to by caring nurses and others who treated her professionally, with dignity and tender loving care.

Mom had rallied while in Intensive Care at Southwest General. That evening, she was transported to the hospice facility. I was so pleased that my brother, aunt, cousin and I were there to see this gift/miracle as she spoke as though she no longer had Alzheimer's. She was invigorated and seemed happy as she shared her thoughts or asked questions. Later, she had become exhausted, and I found myself asking if she wanted to sleep. She said yes, but asked if I would return. I told her, "Of course I will—first thing in the morning." She replied, "Promise?" I responded, "Promise."

Receiving a call from mom's nurse at 6 a.m. the following day, she reported that her condition had reversed itself and that the family might want to come to her side. As her labored breathing changed in stages, I asked if I should call my brother to return and was told yes. I



**Above, Kathy Walker with her mother, Theresa.
Inset: Theresa C. Walker**



leaned over and said in her ear, "Fly away mom. God has planned an amazing adventure for you." At 1:21 p.m., on Sept. 17, 2010, mom took her last breath.

On behalf of the Walker family, Robert, Kathy, Bob, Alice and extended family members, thank you to those with kind hearts who have chosen to care for those preparing to "fly away."

*With sincere appreciation,
Kathy Walker and Family*

Share Your Story!

Do you have a story you'd like to share? Each and every person who enters our doors is important to us, and we would love to hear about your experience at Southwest General.

To share your story, visit our website, www.swgeneral.com, and complete the "Share Your Story" form located under the "For Patients and Visitors" tab. We look forward to hearing from you!