



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Good Shepherd Hospice announces significant gift from Sebring businessman Erwin “Bud” Somers Donation is earmarked for Highlands County Hospice House

SEBRING, FLA. – Good Shepherd Hospice is pleased to announce that Erwin “Bud” Somers of Sebring has made a major institutional gift in memory of his late wife, Donna. Mrs. Somers received end-of-life care from Good Shepherd Hospice prior to her death in September. The announcement was made at the January 7 groundbreaking of the new Highlands County Hospice House.

Mr. Somers’ gift is the largest cash donation in the history of the organization and is earmarked for the construction of the Highlands County Hospice House. In recognition of this incredibly generous gift, Good Shepherd Hospice will name the facility the Bud and Donna Somers Hospice House and Community Resource Center.

“Good Shepherd Hospice is extremely grateful to Mr. Somers for his generosity and support of our mission,” said Kathy L. Fernandez, HPC Healthcare president and CEO. “His donation will be a direct link to the quality care Good Shepherd Hospice will provide patients at this facility.” HPC Healthcare is the not-for-profit parent company of Good Shepherd Hospice.

Mr. Somers asked that the total gift amount not be disclosed.

When it opens in approximately one year, the Bud and Donna Somers Hospice House and Community Resource Center will be a freestanding, acute care, inpatient facility that is specifically designed to address the requirements and requests of patients facing the end of life. Healthcare professionals will provide pain management, symptom control and medical procedures in a safe, home-like setting where families and friends are encouraged to visit.

“The state of Florida does not oblige Good Shepherd Hospice to make hospice house-type care available as a requirement for our license,” added Fernandez. “Good Shepherd Hospice operates the George Forsythe Hospice House in Auburndale. There, we have seen the remarkable benefits a hospice house setting can provide for our patients’ quality of life. Mr. Somers’ gift will help us to make certain this community has this type of care available and nearby.”

The finished building will also house a community resource center, which is “home-base” for the interdisciplinary teams that provide care for patients across Highlands, Hardee and Polk counties. The center will also have additional space for staff meetings, volunteer training and bereavement support groups.

Good Shepherd Hospice anticipates that the building will be completed in approximately one year.

About Good Shepherd Hospice

Good Shepherd Hospice is a community-based, not-for-profit organization that supports and serves more than 750 patients each day in Polk, Highlands and Hardee County as they face the challenges of life-limiting illnesses. Healthcare professionals and trained volunteers embrace the Good Shepherd Hospice mission to make the most of life by relieving the suffering of patients and their families affected by end-of-life issues. The organization has been a part of the community since 1979 and is a 2008 recipient of a Circle of Life Citation of Honor Award. Good Shepherd Hospice is the only local agency offering hospice programs accredited by the Joint Commission, the nation’s premier healthcare accrediting body. The United Way of Central Florida partially funds the community programs offered by Good Shepherd Hospice. For more information, please visit the website at www.goodshepherdhospice.org

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Bud Somers, center, joins family members in front an artist's rendering of the Bud and Donna Somers Hospice House and Community Resource Center. Mr. Somers made a significant donation in memory of his late wife, Donna, who received end-of-life care from Good Shepherd Hospice prior to her death in September. Good Shepherd Hospice held a January 7 ground-breaking ceremony for the new facility, which the organization announced that the facility will be named in honor of the Mr., and Mrs. Somers.



Retired Sebring businessman Bud Somers, Good Shepherd Hospice Board Chair Kathy Fernandez and Sebring attorney Jim McCollum after the ground-breaking ceremony for the new Bud and Donna Somers Hospice House and Community Resource Center.



Good Shepherd Hospice Board Chair Kathy Fernandez addresses the guests at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Bud and Donna Somers Hospice House and Community Resource Center.



The future site of the Bud and Donna Somers Hospice House and Community Resource Center.