



# CONNECTIONS

NEWS AND EVENTS FROM THE NORTHSTAR CARE COMMUNITY

## THE SIMULATION LAB: A NEW LEVEL OF EXCELLENCE IN HOSPICE CARE TRAINING

The NorthStar Institute — one of the few dedicated end-of-life education and training programs in the country — exists to ensure that all Hospice of Michigan and Arbor Hospice clinicians are fully prepared to provide the very best care at the bedside.

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**LEARN HOW YOUR GIFT TO THE SIMULATION LAB CAN BE DOUBLED!** SEE PAGE 3

northstar Care Community



Jo Elyn Nyman  
Programs  
for Children

## A MESSAGE FROM BOB

### A Wildly Important Goal

As we move into a post-pandemic world, one thing is clear: the need to adapt and change is far from over. Now more than ever, we will need to rely on our strength, resilience, and flexibility.

The pandemic put tremendous pressure on workforce retention in all industries, but the healthcare industry has been especially hit hard. At the same time, the expectations for responsive, quality care from our caregivers and referral sources have increased. In many ways, referrals have become a footrace and whoever responds first wins.

While these opposing forces prove challenging, they also provide a great opportunity to take a closer look at how we do the work.

As we examined our process for a referred patient to gain access to care, we uncovered steps along the way that were causing delays in admitting patients and, in some cases, caused us to lose the referral.

Making the decision to call hospice is not an easy one. While many caregivers start off saying they are “just calling for information,” we know they are calling in search of relief and solutions.

All of this has led us to our **Wildly Important Goal** of being able to offer every person referred to our care a same day visit during the first call.

To meet the needs of the communities we serve, we are approaching every call with a renewed sense of urgency.

We are taking steps to streamline the scheduling process, reducing the burden on the caller to make it simpler to schedule a visit, removing hand-offs during the scheduling process, and investing in technology and training to improve flexibility in the field.

Undoubtedly, there will be more changes necessary to achieve this Wildly Important Goal. As we look to the future, we remain committed to improving the hospice experience with the urgency, purpose and compassionate accountability that our patients and their families deserve. **Every Person, Every Time.**



Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bob".

Bob Cahill  
President and CEO

Donors like you are our best advocates and a trusted referral source within the community. Remember anyone can pick up the phone and make a hospice referral. We'll be there to help.

# A MAGICAL SUMMER NIGHT!

Magic was in the air on June 7th at Alice and Jim Forrest's beautiful home in Bloomfield Hills, as magician Jasen Magic set the tone for a special evening of surprise and awe.

A 10-year volunteer and passionate advocate for Hospice of Michigan, Alice, along with her husband Jim, welcomed nearly 100 guests for an al fresco cocktail party to learn more about three of the unique and innovative programs that set Hospice of Michigan apart – NorthStar LINC, **Alice and Jim Forrest Music and Massage Therapies**, and Jo Elyn Nyman Anchors Programs for Children. Inspired by demonstrations and stories illustrating the impact of each program, guests joined Alice and Jim to raise more than \$70,000 to ensure patients and families have access to unparalleled support at the end of life.

Thank you Alice and Jim for your kind and generous support.





## NORTHSTAR SIMULATION LAB: OPEN FALL 2022

Building on more than four decades of leadership and innovation – and with the support of the donor community – the addition of the NorthStar Institute Simulation Lab (SIM Lab) under construction at the Ann Arbor home office, represents a transformation in the education and training of hospice clinicians, further ensuring they have the skills required to meet the complex physical, emotional and spiritual needs of patients and families at end-of-life.

Simulation-based education – a standard practice in clinical training – provides opportunities to hone clinical and decision-making skills through real-life situations without compromising patient dignity. While nursing schools across Michigan – and the country – utilize simulation labs to teach and train general skills, this approach has only just begun to gain traction in the hospice care arena.



Most of our clinical staff come to us never having worked with dying patients. How do you teach them to have those crucial conversations? The cutting-edge, centralized Simulation Lab, coupled with regional Advanced Skills Labs, will help us teach these skills to make sure our staff are fully prepared to get it right every time.”

– Rachel Derry, RN, Director of the NorthStar Institute, 20-year hospice nurse.

## THE BEST-PREPARED CLINICIANS FOR A BETTER PATIENT/CAREGIVER EXPERIENCE

The NorthStar Institute Simulation Lab is one of only a handful of hospice simulation labs in the U.S. – and the first in the Midwest – offering cutting-edge, hands-on tools and resources to provide hospice clinicians advanced, real-world training and education focused on the mastery of both technical skills and effective communications.

## COMING SOON: REGIONAL ADVANCED SKILLS LABS

Thanks to continued donor support, the next level of simulation-based education and training – regional Advanced Skills Labs – will be launched in early 2023 in Gaylord, Traverse City, Big Rapids, Grand Rapids, Cadillac and Southfield.

## THE SIMULATION LAB TRAINING EXPERIENCE

A day in the life of a hospice clinician in training



1. NorthStar Institute Nurse Educator provides a medical record to review. Trainee asked to ‘visit’ the patient.
2. As the simulated patient encounter plays out, the educator provides the voice of the patient or family member/caregiver from the debriefing room via microphone.
3. The patient encounter is videotaped. Fellow trainees observe from the debriefing room in real-time.
4. Following the simulation, the trainee returns to the debriefing room, where the group views, discusses, and evaluates the encounter.
5. In the Advanced Skills Lab, trainees review and practice clinical skills with nurse educators to ensure skill mastery prior to actual patient visits.

*Each Advanced Skills Lab will be equipped with infusion pumps, port access, and subcutaneous tissue to practice insertion, medical drains, tube and oxygen management, advanced staged wounds, pediatric supplies, and more.*

## YOUR DONATION TO THE SIM LAB WILL BE DOUBLED!

A generous anonymous donor will match all donations made by December 1, 2022 to the Simulation Lab, dollar-for-dollar, up to a grand total of \$250,000. For more information on how to help us meet this match by making a gift, please contact Peggy Cole at [mcole@arborhospice.org](mailto:mcole@arborhospice.org) or 734-794-5147.

# These Arbor Hospice

# volunteers have a Heart!

For nearly three decades, a group of dedicated and talented volunteers have met regularly in what might be called a sewing circle, but it is truly so much more. Each year, this close-knit group of women, known as The Hearts Ladies, design and produce hundreds of hand-embroidered Hearts of Remembrance to raise funds for the charitable programs at Arbor Hospice.

Often gifted to friends and family members who have lost loved ones, these hand-crafted hearts have become cherished, sought-after keepsakes and offer meaningful support for many of Arbor Hospice's signature patient and family programs. In fact, since the program's inception, this unique fundraiser has raised over \$1 million.

Kay Rayment, a 27-year Hearts project volunteer and chairperson from 1999-2021, explains what makes the group so special, "Everyone works so well together. We all feel that we're doing a great service and enjoy making them." She adds, "We appreciate that people purchase Hearts because they are made with so much love and they help keep memories of loved ones alive. Knowing that the proceeds support unreimbursed care at Arbor Hospice really keeps us going."

\$30,000 raised from *Hearts of Remembrance* in 2021 supported

- Patient Care
- Jo Elyn Nyman Anchors Programs for Children
- Grief Journey Program
- Complementary Therapies

Hearts Ladies donated 200+ hearts to *The Residence of Arbor Hospice* to be gifted to residents' families.

2022 Hearts of Remembrance are available for sale now for a minimum donation of \$25 for the first heart and \$20 for each additional heart. Veterans Hearts, which honor those who have served our country, are available for \$20 each.

Orders can be placed online at [arborhospice.org/donate/hearts-of-remembrance](https://arborhospice.org/donate/hearts-of-remembrance) or by contacting **Peggy Cole**, Arbor Hospice's Director of Philanthropy at [mcole@arborhospice.org](mailto:mcole@arborhospice.org) or **734-794-5147**. Hearts will be mailed directly to the recipient(s) indicated by the donor.

Thank you, Hearts project volunteers, for your careful and beautiful work made possible through this one-of-a-kind legacy project!



## New in 2022!

Vintage *Hearts of Remembrance* are now available for purchase!

**Designs from 2008-2021**



This summer, Arbor Hospice and Hospice of Michigan returned to in-person *Camp Good Grief*, hosting two sessions of this free, daylong camp experience designed for youth ages 8-17 grieving the death of a significant person in their lives.

Facilitated by caring and qualified Arbor Hospice and Hospice of Michigan grief professionals, board-certified music therapists, and trained volunteers, *Camp Good Grief* is a transformational day that combines adventurous outdoor activities and arts & crafts with grief education and emotional support.

On August 5th, 11 campers arrived early in the morning at Camp Ohiyesa, located on the shores of Fish Lake amid 300 acres of rolling woodland in western Oakland County. Campers enjoyed an active day filled with many traditional outdoor activities — zip-lining

# FUN • SUN • SUPPORT

## Camp Good Grief

through the woods, scaling a challenging rock wall climbing tower and canoeing, as well as visiting with several specially-trained pets.

12 weeks later, children from west Michigan had their chance to participate at Camp Newaygo, a 200-acre property of hilly, pristine wooded land overlooking Pickerel Lake. Nature trails, a low-ropes course, and several water sports — swimming, kayaking, fishing, and paddle boating — provided laughter and fun for all participants.

In addition to the typical outdoor activities, both camps offered creative

outlets to help campers understand and cope with their grief. Guided by the expertise of music therapists, campers learned new ways to express their feelings, writing lyrics and playing a variety of instruments. They also created personalized memory boxes to honor their loved ones.

“The best part of being here was realizing that there are other kids who feel like me. I’m not the only one who lost someone. I’m not alone,” said one camper. The opportunity to meet other kids who face similar circumstances, to honor and memorialize their loved ones, and process grief in healthy ways — all while having fun — is what Camp Good Grief is all about.

Arbor Hospice and Hospice of Michigan are grateful for the donor support that makes this extraordinary gift of comfort and fun possible.





# June B. Hamersma & Arbor Hospice Planned Giving Societies



In loving memory of  
June B. Hamersma

April 5, 1929 – February 16, 2020

The June B. Hamersma Planned Giving Society and the Arbor Hospice Planned Giving Society recognize individuals who have named Hospice of Michigan or Arbor Hospice as a beneficiary in their estate plans, trusts or wills. These individuals understand the importance of leaving a legacy for the future of Hospice of Michigan or Arbor Hospice.

For more information about remembering Hospice of Michigan or Arbor Hospice in your estate planning or how to become a member of this Society, please call Stephanie Le at (248) 346-4253 or Peggy Cole at (734) 794-5147.

**Arbor Hospice Planned Giving Society members are italicized.**

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\*In Memory Of

# KENNETH PITUCH, M.D. RETIRES



Heartfelt congratulations to distinguished clinician, educator, and research scholar, Kenneth Pituch, M.D. on his June 30, 2022 retirement from the University of Michigan and from his role as Medical Director – Southeast for *Jo Elyn Nyman Anchors Programs for Children* at Hospice of Michigan and Arbor Hospice.

Spending most of his career in pediatrics at Michigan Medicine, Dr. Pituch is board-certified in hospice and palliative medicine and is the current Board President of the Michigan Pediatric Palliative Care Coalition, where he will continue to advocate for children long into his retirement.

As medical director for *Jo Elyn Nyman Anchors Programs for Children* – Southeast, Dr. Pituch’s gentle nature and devotion to patients and their families set a standard for care that his colleagues admire and will continue to emulate.

More recently, Dr. Pituch’s commitment to enhancing the support and resources for seriously ill children led him to become the founding medical director of Michigan Medicine’s *Pediatric Palliative Care Program* and later *Partners for Children*, a ground-breaking pediatric chronic care program which has changed the landscape of care for thousands of children across Michigan.

Patricia Keefer, M.D. FAAHPM, FAAP will succeed Dr. Pituch as Medical Director – Southeast. Joining *Jo Elyn Nyman Anchors Programs for Children* in early 2021, Dr. Keefer is an associate clinical professor at Michigan Medicine, specializing in pediatric palliative care at C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital

Thank you Dr. Pituch for your enormous contributions to the field of pediatric palliative and hospice care and best wishes for a wonderful, well-deserved retirement.





# Live! FROM THE BIG HOUSE 3

## SAVOR THE JOURNEY

On May 19th, more than 250 people gathered at the Jack Roth Stadium Club high atop Michigan Stadium to attend Arbor Hospice's signature fundraising event *Savor the Journey – LIVE! At the Big House 3*.

Effortlessly guiding the evening's activities, retired Michigan Football Play-by-Play announcer, Jim Brandstatter set the stage for a memorable – and successful evening of discovery, storytelling, fun on the field, and of course, fundraising.

Special guest speaker, Mitch Albom, moved the audience to tears with a poignant and powerful presentation detailing his unexpected path through parenthood when his family sought support from *Jo Elyn Nyman Anchors Programs for Children* to help navigate the last stage of daughter Chika's illness.

Special thanks to The Jones Family Foundation and its Executive Director, Tammi Carr, for establishing a \$20,000 challenge match, and to all the generous donors who helped Arbor Hospice exceed the event's fundraising goal. By the end of the night, more than \$126,000 was raised to support Arbor Hospice's Open Access Program, ensuring that hospice care in our community is not a privilege for the few, but available to all.







# A PERFECT SUMMER DAY FOR A ROUND OF GOLF

Clear skies and robust breezes welcomed Hospice of Michigan supporters for a fun-filled golf outing on June 16th at Boyne Mountain Resort. The Alpine Course provided its signature breathtaking views, and despite a few challenging holes, golfers enjoyed the relaxed scramble format.

Hosting a golf outing in the Charlevoix area was a nod to Hospice of Michigan's newest office, opened in downtown Charlevoix in the midst the pandemic. The new Charlevoix-based team allows Hospice of Michigan to better serve patients throughout Charlevoix, Emmet, and Antrim counties. Bringing fundraising events – like this golf outing – to the community plays an important role in building brand awareness and cultivating new donor relationships.

“It was truly great to see so many members of the surrounding communities come out and support the important care that so many patients and families need at the end of life.” Says Melissa McDonald, Philanthropy Manager.

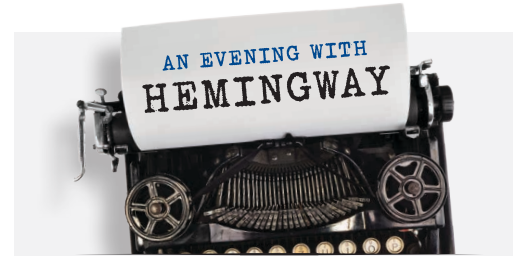
All funds raised at the Heroes for Hospice of Michigan Golf Outing will remain in the community to support Open Access, providing critical resources to anyone who needs end of life care regardless of their age, diagnosis or financial circumstances.

Thank you to all the sponsors, golfers, volunteers and staff at Boyne Mountain Resort for creating a memorable day for everyone.



## A FLURRY OF FALL FUNDRAISING EVENTS

In-person fundraising returned with gusto this year. With several events occurring after Connections goes to press, keep your eyes out for a full report in the Spring 2023 edition.



**WEDNESDAY  
SEPT. 7, 2022**

The Listening Room, Grand Rapids

**THURSDAY  
SEPT. 8, 2022**

The Whiskey Factory, Detroit



**TUESDAY  
SEPT. 13, 2022**

Eagle Crest Golf Club, Ypsilanti



**FRIDAY  
OCT. 7, 2022**

Turtle Creek Casino, Traverse City

**SATURDAY  
OCT. 8, 2022**

Art in the Loft, Alpena



# THE MICHIGAN DEBUT

WATER WORKS THEATRE COMPANY

PRESENTS

THE MICHIGAN PREMIERE!

tuesdays with **Morrie**

THE ACCLAIMED PLAY BY  
MITCH ALBOM  
& JEFFREY HATCHER  
As Originally Presented by Theater J

Special Opening Night Performance  
includes talkback with Mitch Albom

TO BENEFIT  
Hospice of Michigan

Celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2022, Mitch Albom's #1 New York Times Best Selling book, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, has inspired generations of readers with its beautiful and touching portrayal of human connection at one of life's most sacred times.

*Tuesdays with Morrie* is the powerful and moving story of Mitch Albom, a hard-driving sportswriter, and Morrie Schwartz, his former college professor. This tender yet profound play, originally presented by Theater J, recounts the two men reuniting as Morrie faces his own mortality as an ALS patient. What starts as a simple visit turns into a weekly pilgrimage and a beautiful lesson in humanity, compassion, and friendship.

Albom said, "I am grateful that this terrific cast is bringing the show to Michigan, my home state, allowing the story that was so dear to me to be shared with my Michigan neighbors who are so dear to me as well. Morrie said, "Giving is living." I hope the show gives you, the audience, the same inspiration I was lucky to receive at Morrie's side."

While the stage version of the book has been performed across the country for 20 years, until now, it has never been performed in Michigan. The six-week, six city tour included a stop in Grand Rapids at the Wealthy Theatre August 31- September 4.

The August 31st premiere included a VIP reception and a talk back with Mitch Albom and the cast following the performance. Proceeds from the premiere event and the five additional Grand Rapids performances benefitted Hospice of Michigan's Open Access program.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE



On June 15, 2022, Michael J. Paletta MD FAAHPM, Senior Vice President, Chief Medical Officer announced he will be retiring at the end of the year following 25 years of service and leadership.

A distinguished Fellow of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine and a 30-year veteran of the U.S. Air Force, Dr. Paletta's dedication to service, quality, and not-for-profit end-of-life care has helped shape the organization and elevate its reputation throughout Michigan and on a national scale.

The impact of Dr. Paletta's dedication to the consistent delivery of quality care has manifested itself in countless ways throughout his tenure including:

- **GUIDING** the expansion of the NorthStar Care Community's medical affairs team to meet the changing needs of patients and families.
- **SERVING** on the NorthStar Quality Board with a group of community volunteers to monitor quality and process improvement (QAPI) and patient care policies.
- **NURTURING** the development and growth of what is now called the NorthStar Institute – one of the nation's first education and research centers focused on improving end of life care.

And perhaps most notably, his passionate advocacy for fellow veterans facing end-of-life fueled Dr. Paletta's commitment to the **We Honor Veterans** program – ensuring clinical staff received the proper training and education necessary to provide the specialized care our nation's heroes need and deserve.

As Dr. Paletta looks forward to the benefits of retirement, he plans to continue his legacy of service and remain an ambassador for the organization.

Thank you Dr. Paletta for being an excellent colleague, leader, and friend...and thank you for 25 years of commitment to the not-for-profit hospice mission.

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- Big Rapids
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- Dearborn
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- Muskegon
- Southfield
- Traverse City

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- Ann Arbor
- Saline

**northstar**

Care Community

2366 Oak Valley Dr., Ann Arbor, MI 48103

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\*In Memory Of



Hospice of Michigan's  
**ALPENA OFFICE**  
has moved to:

199 Long Rapids Rd.  
Alpena, MI 49707



Hospice of Michigan's  
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has moved **UPSTAIRS** to:

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