



## Navigating uncharted waters with Anchors Programs for Children

While most people are familiar with hospice care, they may not be familiar with Jo Elyn Nyman Anchors Programs for Children, Hospice of Michigan's range of specialized pediatric services. Anchors Programs for Children offers three programs that focus on maximizing the quality of life for children suffering from a potentially life-limiting illness.

John Fischer's and Kara Eagle-Fischer's journey with two of the three Anchors programs began as they were expecting a new addition to their family. Here's their story...

Pregnancy is usually a joyous occasion – a celebration of life and the excitement of memories and moments yet to be. And no one ever expects to be told that their unborn child will likely die moments after birth.

At just 20 weeks, in what one would consider a “normal” pregnancy, John and Kara heard words that would change the course of their lives forever. Their unborn son, Bram, tested positive for Jeune Syndrome, a rare genetic condition that affects one in 130,000 babies in the United States.

“We were told he would most likely die within five minutes to two hours after his birth,” said Kara. “All we could think about was what did we need to get done in those five

*Photo: “Superhero” Bram Fischer at his 1st birthday party.*

minutes of consciousness? What did we want to say to him? How were we going to tell his big brother that the sibling he was waiting for was going to die?”

Faced with uncertainty, grief and unanswered questions, John and Kara were connected with the Anchors Perinatal Program which provides support to expectant parents of an unborn child diagnosed with either a terminal or potentially life-limiting illness. It was important for them to come away from this experience having done what needed to be done, to be the best parents they could be for Bram. And despite their grief, they wanted to make sure their loss would benefit someone else. Part of their birth plan included contacting Gift of Life to coordinate organ donations. “It was important that our son be an organ donor. We always say that although our son may not be able to go to college, perhaps his liver will,” said Kara.

With the help of the Anchors Perinatal team, everything was prepared, written down and worked out in advance of the delivery. By planning ahead, it helped spare John and Kara additional anxiety so those anticipated minutes could be spent focusing on their child.

*(Cont. on page 2)*

## A Message from Bob: A new year, a new home



Bob Cahill, President and CEO

It has been one year since Hospice of Michigan and Arbor Hospice & Palliative Care – two of Michigan’s legacy hospice programs – formed an affiliation to create the state’s largest provider of non-profit hospice care. Guided by a shared mission that puts patient care above all else, this affiliation offers benefits of scale and shared resources that will help strengthen, protect and expand the non-profit hospice mission

to bring care and comfort to patients and families during exceedingly difficult times.

Since both organizations owned and operated headquarters buildings, selling one of these buildings offered the opportunity to both reduce administrative costs and most importantly, focus our resources where they’re needed most – the delivery of care at the bedside. We have chosen Arbor’s Oak Valley building located at 2366 Oak Valley Dr. in Ann Arbor as the location for our consolidated administrative headquarters as it provides a more easily accessible location for staff orientation, education and general operation. Thus, we have sold the Detroit building and following renovation, we will be moving into the Oak Valley offices later this year.

One of the most important parts of this relocation is maintenance of all current

Arbor Hospice memorials and the merging of all of the memorial bricks, plantings and statues from Detroit’s courtyards to Arbor’s beautiful eight-acre campus. These memorial tributes remind us all of the compassionate care Hospice of Michigan and Arbor Hospice has provided to loved ones and to so many others for over 30 years.

Please know we will take great care to thoughtfully create our expanded memorial space, lush gardens, walking paths and ponds that surround Arbor’s building and where they will be lovingly tended to by volunteers on the grounds in Ann Arbor that respects the legacy that our donors hold dear.

Warm regards,

### *Anchors Programs for Children (cont. from page 1)*

When Bram entered the world, Kara and John nervously watched the minutes tick by. Five minutes passed. Then an hour. Then two. After spending nine days in the neonatal intensive care unit, this sweet boy surpassed everyone’s



Jo Elyn Nyman

**Programs for Children**

expectations and went home to be with his family.

The Anchors social worker provided support and guidance throughout Bram’s hospital stay and afterward, making sure the needs of the family were met.

“The Anchors team has been an extraordinarily valuable resource; our son went from having no future to having a very uncertain one. Each month is a milestone and though we’ve had stumbling blocks along the way, the Anchors team helps us get through it and celebrate the moments we do have together,” said Kara.

The caring staff also understood the tremendous impact Bram’s birth would have on his older brother and made sure the whole family was taken care of. Arrangements were even made so Kara and John could spend some one-on-one time with their older son on special outings.

In celebration of Bram’s first year, the Anchors team arranged to have a photographer for a superhero birthday party. Having captured images, moments and milestones, the family continues to look back on this unexpected journey in disbelief.

Now two years later, the family continues to be served by the Anchors program, having transitioned to Compass Support Services. This social work-based program provides the family with important social and decision-making support, and connects them with specialized community resources to help them navigate the challenges of caring for a child with a potentially life-limiting illness.

John and Kara are thankful for the continued support of Anchors Programs for Children, especially during those times a dire diagnosis is given and an uncertain future remains.

Jo Elyn Nyman Anchors Programs for Children is funded entirely through philanthropic dollars. If you would like to contribute, please visit our website [www.arborhospice.org](http://www.arborhospice.org) or call (888) 247-5704.





Left to right: Michael Paletta, MD, Hospice of Michigan medical director; Fr. John Geaney, CSP; Ruth Sanborn, MA, clinical ethicist at Spectrum Health; Bryan Pilkington, PhD, assistant professor of philosophy at Aquinas College; and MarKay Riippa, RN, nurse manager at Mercy Health

## Just because we can—should we? *Medical ethics at end of life*

Medical research continues to increase knowledge of—and produce valuable new protocols to treat (and in some cases, cure)—many illnesses. These advancements can also pose unintended ethical dilemmas for individuals who are facing end of life and for their loved ones who are journeying with them. Are we required to try every available option? Just because we can, should we?

In early September 2016, Arbor Hospice offered a two-evening panel event called, “Just Because We Can Should We? Medical Ethics at End of Life.” The discussion touched on medical ethics at the end-of-life for both adults and children.

Panelists included ethicists as well as a physician, nurse and social worker who have expertise in the areas of end-of-life care and medical ethics. A case study, relevant to the focus of the evening, was discussed by the panel and followed by questions from the audience. The discussions offered clarity around various medical protocols, medical terms, ethics and the important understanding that Arbor Hospice remain available to them for further information and support.

## Debunking the common myths about planned giving

Planned giving is a way to make a gift through thoughtful estate planning. However, there are several myths that surround planned giving. Could one of these myths be impacting your own decision to make such a gift to Arbor Hospice Foundation?

**Myth:** *I need to have a large estate to make an impactful gift.*

**Truth:** By including Arbor Hospice Foundation, in any amount, you are making a difference in end-of-life care. Your gift helps us to continue our mission of providing hospice care to ALL, regardless of their ability to pay!

**Myth:** *Planned gifts are confusing and complicated.*

**Truth:** There are many types of planned gifts, most of which are simple and affordable, such as a gift in your will, retirement funds, life insurance or living trust.

**Myth:** *I'm too young to think about an estate plan.*

**Truth:** Planning your estate is important at any stage of your life. Without an estate plan, the fates of your assets and your loved ones may be decided by attorneys or the government. Even if you have a modest estate, it's still a good idea to think about how you want to leave your legacy.

If you are interested in learning more about how to make a planned gift to Arbor Hospice Foundation, please contact Judy Vindici, director of philanthropy, at (734) 794-5542.

## Every gift has an impact

It's a common misperception that you have to be wealthy to make a real difference in someone's life. But even the smallest gifts can have an impact. Here are some everyday examples:

- \$25** Provides one day of medication for one patient
- \$100** Provides four visits by an aide, giving families and caregivers a much needed rest
- \$150** Provides one day of comfort care, medication and bedside visits to one patient
- \$250** Provides grief support to one bereaved individual coping with the death of a loved one

Every dollar counts in fulfilling our nonprofit mission!

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Arbor Hospice Foundation  
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#### **OUR NONPROFIT MISSION**

The mission of Arbor Hospice is to give comfort, assurance and care to families and patients who have life-limiting illnesses and to educate and nurture others in this care.

#### **OUR VALUES:**

Compassion | Human Dignity | Comfort | Service | Trust | Respect | Stewardship

## A year of great events!

Plans are underway for Hospice of Michigan's upcoming 2017 signature events. From a scenic walk on the Lake Huron shoreline, to a BBQ and music fest, to gala dinner celebrations, the Hospice of Michigan Foundation has an event for you.

Last year, these events helped raise more than \$400,000 for Hospice of Michigan.

Mark your calendars! Spread the word! We look forward to seeing you there.

If you wish to remove  
your name from future  
fundraising solicitations,  
contact the Donation  
Processing Center,  
800-669-9335 or  
email: [inquiries@  
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