

the Monarch



Angela
Hospice®

Anne Hoger and Julie Kreher
remember their father, James P. Costa
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Serving those who served us all

When Anne Hoger accompanied her father to one of his doctor's appointments, she heard something she would always remember. The doctor had asked James Costa what he was most proud of in his life. Anne heard her father say: "I'm most proud of serving my country during World War II and being a Marine."

James served in the Pacific and Japan for three years until after WWII. It was a defining time for him. And while he didn't really talk about his experiences until late in life, his family knew he was proud of his time in the service.

That's why they were so touched when they found out about the We Honor Veterans program at Angela Hospice.

James's six children were very aware of Angela Hospice. They knew Sister Giovanni, and their mother had been a volunteer before using hospice herself when she got cancer. But they hadn't heard of We Honor Veterans – a program specifically devoted to the needs of veterans at the end of life.

"I couldn't believe what a wonderful ministry that was," said Julie Kreher, another of James's daughters.

James always knew that when the time was right he would want Angela Hospice. He was admitted to the Angela Hospice Care Center after a fall that broke several bones in his neck. When he was admitted he was already in the active stage of dying.

But James made it through the night, and the next few days. Family members came in from Washington DC and Dallas to be with him.

"It was like he was waiting for everybody to be there," Anne said.

After spending the day in her father's room, Julie received a call from volunteer John Stern, who along with his wife Lucy spearheads the We Honor Veterans program at Angela Hospice.

"John asked if they could come in and recognize Dad for his service to his county," Julie explained. "I said, 'Well you need to come relatively quickly.'"

An appointment was scheduled for the following morning.

Both Julie and Anne were present, along with their sister Mary, and Anne's son Matthew. James was



James Costa came from a military family: he had one brother in the Army, and one in the Air Corps; there were generals in the family too. During his retirement, James volunteered at the local VA hospital in Battle Creek.



unresponsive, but John and Lucy conducted the ceremony with the utmost respect, thanking James for his service to his country.

"For the four of us, it couldn't have been a more fitting tribute," Julie said. "We were touched by what they did: how they honored him; how they put the blanket over him; how they pinned the little flag pin on his hospital gown; how they saluted him. That was the ultimate for us... And I think that's something my father would have really loved."

Julie and Anne both said how grateful their family was that their dad was able to be under Angela Hospice's care, where he could have his family surrounding him 24/7. He died there peacefully on July 30, 2015.

"Our dad was 92 years old. He lived a wonderful, full life. He served his country. He raised a family. He was a teacher in Detroit Public Schools," Julie said. "He had a wonderful, fitting send-off at St. Kenneth's in Plymouth. It couldn't have been a more positive experience for us."

A chance to give back

How can I show my support?

If you would like to give back to the brave men and women who have served our country in the military, you can donate to the We Honor Veterans program at Angela Hospice. Contributions to this program will provide:

- Compassionate medical care for veterans at the end of life
- Spiritual care and psychosocial support for veteran patients
- Grief support services for the families of veterans
- Special initiatives to honor and recognize service men and women under hospice care



WE HONOR VETERANS

Angela Hospice also accepts donations of military-themed fleece fabric for our blanket gift ministry.

What difference will my gift make?

Your contributions are not only a way of saying "Thank You" to veterans who have given so much for our country, but also a way to make sure they receive all the care, support, and resources they need on their end-of-life journey.



▲ Volunteers Lucy and John Stern, coordinators of the We Honor Veterans program at Angela Hospice.



▲ Walter Mikulski, a 92-year-old Army veteran, was in high spirits for his pinning ceremony by We Honor Veterans volunteers. He was given a certificate, blanket, and flag pin commemorating his service. Also pictured are his son and daughter-in-law Michael and Barb Mikulski, and his daughter Geri Dismondy.

We Honor Veterans at Angela Hospice

Angela Hospice is committed to recognizing and meeting the unique needs of our veterans in order to accompany and guide them toward a more peaceful end of life.

This includes:

- Recognizing and providing assistance for any specific needs related to a patient's military service, combat experience, or other traumatic event
- Coordinating care with veteran service agencies
- Offering spiritual care and emotional support
- Providing veteran-centered education for care staff and volunteers

In addition, our compassionate volunteers seek to honor the Veterans under our care with ceremonies, certificates, and other tokens and events in gratitude for their service to our country.

HOSPICE *Happenings*

Arbor Day Ceremony

Did you dedicate a memorial brick, tree, bench, plaque, or stone on the Angela Hospice grounds in the last year? If so, join us for our annual Arbor Day ceremony on **Friday, April 29**. This event is a special day where family and friends can honor their loved ones, and see their personalized memorial on the Angela Hospice grounds.

"At Angela Hospice, we commemorate Arbor Day each year with a touching dedication ceremony on our beautiful grounds," said Robert Alexander, Angela Hospice's Director of Development. "For many families, it is an opportunity to gather their hearts together once more, cherish their loved ones, and finally see and touch the trees, bricks, and plaques placed on the property in memory of those they hold dear."

To find out more about Arbor Day and how to personalize a memorial for a loved one please call (734) 464-7810 or visit www.angelahospice.org/memorial-opportunities.

► **The family of David Wisniewski with the limestone brick they dedicated in his memory.**



Free Advance Directives Series

Join us for a free, four-part series about advance directives, titled "As You Wish: Personalizing Advance Care Planning." Through expert insight you'll learn what to consider, how to plan ahead and make your wishes known, and come away with a legal document you can share with your family and healthcare providers.

This series will be held on **Wednesday evenings, May 4-25**, from 7-8:30 p.m., at St. Mary Mercy Livonia in the North Auditorium. To register for this free educational series visit www.stmarymercy.org and click on "Classes and Events." You can also call (734) 665-8950 to register.

◀ **Angela Hospice Nurse Practitioner Mark Passow will be among the presenters.**

Golf Outing

Get ready to tee off at Angela Hospice's 28th Annual Golf Outing this spring! The event will take place on **Monday, June 13** this year, and will be a fun day for all involved at Western Golf and Country Club in Redford.

Founded in 1926, Western Golf and Country Club's 18-hole golf course was created by the Dean of Architects, Donald Ross. Ross worked on 400 golf courses and helped lay the foundation for America's golf industry.

The all-day extravaganza will include lunch and dinner, 18 holes of golf, a silent auction, raffles, and more. Proceeds from this event will go towards Angela Hospice's My Nest is Best Pediatric program, and the Good Samaritan program, which provides care to those without insurance.

Even though the event is still a few months away, you can get involved now by becoming a sponsor. If interested, or if you want more information about the golf event, please call (734) 953-6045 or visit AskForAngela.com.



▲ **Golfers Luke Holmes, Mike Monroe, Jim Monroe, and Tim Quinn at last year's Golf Outing.**

Wish granted

Kate Uberti's mom, Helen Oakes, was able to spend her final days where she wanted to be: in her own home

It was about ten minutes after the interview was scheduled to start when volunteer Kate Uberti showed up. She hadn't hit traffic on the way or forgotten when it started, she just lost track of time talking with an Angela Hospice Care Center patient.

"She was on a roll," Kate laughed. "She's dying but she's still there and still wanting to make the most of her afternoon. So she was talking to me and we were laughing."

For Kate, those conversations with patients are about much more than conversing; they're about really listening. She believes everyone's got a story and she wants to hear it.

"I have learned things here that I've not been able to learn anywhere else in my life," Kate said. "To me, that's why this place is so special."

Getting to volunteer in the wing where her mom, Helen, was a patient in 2012 is pretty special too.

When her mom hit her nineties she began having a lot of cardiac problems and had a few hospitalizations. One was worse than the others, leading to Helen being sent to the hospital's intensive care unit and then the hospital's hospice unit. After some time she had to vacate and find her own care due to insurance policies. Enter Angela Hospice, which Kate's husband, an oncologist, was very familiar with.

"I remember them saying when she was admitted they were expecting her to live probably a maximum of two to three days," Kate said. "We were ready for it at that point because she had been through so much."

"You hate the thought of the end but at the same time you know that's where you're heading so you just hope you can get there quickly," she continued.

Kate and her siblings had set up a schedule so someone would be with Helen 24/7, and Kate had the day shift.

After entering the Care Center unconscious and uncommunicative, Helen started to respond to treatment about a month into her care. Kate said she would bring her mom a McDonald's milkshake every day and watch as she started to get better and better.

During her six months in the Care Center, Kate was able to form a very different kind of relationship with her mom, one that she hadn't had before.

"We worked through a lot of bad stuff and a lot of good stuff, and then we really had a lot of fun too," Kate said.

Helen responded so well to treatment that she was discharged to an assisted care facility for five months before moving back into her own home.

"We got an additional year of life with my mom in her own house," Kate said. "She wanted to die at home, so she got her wish."

Helen was also able to attend one more big family wedding.

"She had a very good life after living at Angela Hospice," Kate said.

Helen's time in the Care Center is when Kate started thinking about becoming a volunteer because she was so inspired by watching the people that worked there.

"I thought, there's going to come a time and I'm going to come back and I will volunteer here," Kate said.

Then two years after her mom's death, she did. During her training she was introduced to Angela



▲ **Helen Oakes and Kate Uberti**



▲ **Helen at her 90th birthday party**

Hospice foundress Sister Mary Giovanni, who talked to the class about the Felician core values and gave them a card with those values on it. Kate's card is one she looks at every day at home.

"To me, those things are so inspiring for you to think about when you're here but also when you're out in the world," Kate said. "I think those core values are really something to take to heart...I am very, very grateful to the hospice program for letting me have that opportunity."

Charmayne and Richard Krieger

“Two nuns walk into a pharmacy...” sounds like the beginning of a joke, but for Charmayne and Richard Krieger that’s how their story with Angela Hospice begins.

Over 30 years ago Sister Giovanni walked into Kingsboro Pharmacy, which Charmayne and Richard owned, with a proposition: she was in need of a pharmacy to help take care of her hospice patients and wanted to know if they would help. Richard’s answer? Absolutely.

“She had a vision,” Richard said. “When we first got together one of the questions I asked her was what was her plan? What do you wish to do? And she laid it all out.”

Moving forward over the next three decades, the Kriegers’ relationship with Angela Hospice evolved into much more than just a business connection; it became a personal one.

“We thought it was such a great idea as something the community needed, and we became very much involved with donations,” Charmayne said.

Their first donation to Angela Hospice was actually from someone else. A supplier they did business with gave the pharmacy 50 pounds of un-popped popcorn as a Christmas gift. Richard called the supplier and asked if they could give a donation to a charity as their gift instead of all the un-popped popcorn. The supplier asked which charity, and Richard said Angela Hospice.

Charmayne and Richard then brought the popcorn and check to Sister Giovanni.

“From that point on we would make periodic donations,” Charmayne said. “Anytime anybody would say ‘Who would you like us to donate to,’ we would say Angela Hospice.”

During the last 30 years the Kriegers have gotten to see firsthand where their donations were going, which was one of the reasons they kept donating. They’ve also



▲ Charmayne and Richard Krieger

gotten to see the many changes made not only at Angela Hospice but in the hospice field in general.

“I take great pride in saying that we were part of [Angela Hospice] from the beginning,” Richard said. “She [Sister Giovanni] is a pioneer in [hospice]. It’s come a long way.”

While many things have changed, one thing has stayed the same: the high level of care.

“The basic idea of hospice, even now with all the bells and whistles, has remained the same to me,” Charmayne said. “In other words, it was all about loving care for the dying and their families, and that has remained steady through all these years.”

The Kriegers have continued their relationship with Angela Hospice, inspired by the work of Sister Giovanni. Charmayne said it was Sister’s enthusiasm about hospice that “rolled right over onto everybody else,” including the Kingsboro pharmacy staff and the Kriegers’ family. Their daughter, Kim, raised \$11,000 for Angela Hospice in three years while hosting an annual Christmas party.

When asked if they considered themselves advocates for hospice there was no hesitation before they answered.

“Absolutely,” Charmayne said. “I think it’s very much needed in the community and in our society today.”

Having had front-row seats to watch the growth of Angela Hospice from a one-room office to what it’s become today, what do they hope for the future?

“Never to use your services,” Richard laughed.

“I take great pride in saying that we were part of [Angela Hospice] from the beginning.”



Letters to Hospice

February 2016

My beloved wife, Doris McConnell, went to be with the Lord she loved so much, on July 13, 2014, while under the wonderful care of Angela Hospice’s “Angels of Passion.” The month of February was our “month carved in stone” representing our 60 plus years of a terrific love affair. In February 1952 the Good Lord brought us together, by chance, on a dance floor in our home town. On February 23, 1953, as I was preparing to ship out from Fort Devens, Mass., I slipped an engagement ring on her finger. The greatest one of our special month was February 1954, for on the 27th of that month, I held her hand at the altar and looking her in the eyes I said, “I do, and always will.” As I did last February 27th, I will once again spend my special hour with Doris at her final resting place in Great Lakes National Cemetery.

I hope you don’t mind the way I have bent your ear this day...my only excuse is that this was “our month” and I guess a little venting of what we once had makes me feel a whole lot better inside.

Thank you for your patience and God Bless one and all.

-Carl McConnell

◀ Carl and Doris McConnell on their wedding day, February 27, 1954; and at their 50th anniversary celebration, February 27, 2004.

MISSION IN ACTION

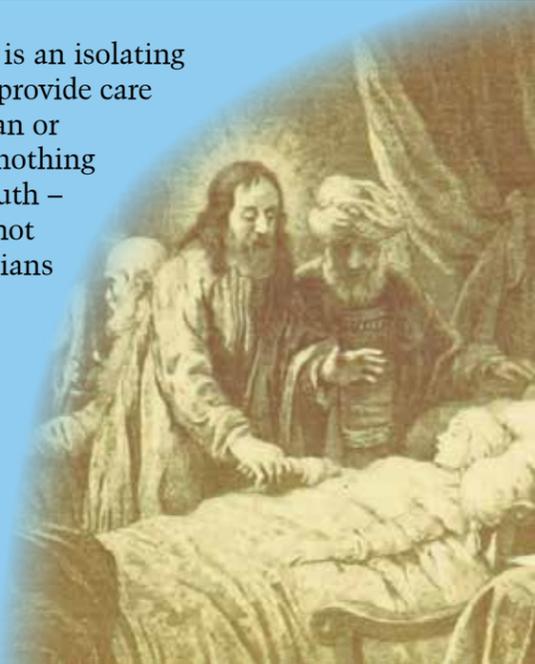
Our Mission: to provide comprehensive, compassionate, and Christ-like care to adults and children in the communities we serve.

Most care delivered by hospice providers is “compassionate.” The “comprehensiveness” of care varies from agency to agency. But it is the unique distinction of Angela Hospice, to aspire to provide care that is “Christ-like.” That is, the kind of care Jesus Christ would provide, especially the kind of care he gave to those who were outcast, marginalized, or rejected by society.

Some have suggested that the faith-based

attribute of Angela Hospice is an isolating factor – that we are here to provide care only to those of the Christian or Roman Catholic faith. But nothing could be farther from the truth – just as Mother Teresa was not only about caring for Christians or Roman Catholics in her mission in Calcutta.

This faith-based perspective is the thing that motivates our work, inspiring a particular level of excellence, and a passion for delivering comfort to patients and families alike.





Respect. Dignity. Peace of mind.

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The Monarch is published by Angela Hospice to keep our friends and supporters informed of our latest news and events as we continue to provide quality care to people in need.

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Angela Hospice Home Care, Inc. is dedicated to provide comprehensive, compassionate, and Christ-like care to adults and children in the communities we serve.

Angela Hospice is a Felician-sponsored ministry



▲ Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation trustees and grantees came together in November 2015.

Angela Hospice receives historic gift

When Angela Hospice foundress Sister Mary Giovanni met Buffalo Bills owner Ralph Wilson, Jr., over a decade ago, he told her he wanted to help Angela Hospice. He said he would remember her cause, and do something to help in the future.

That help came in an unexpected way last year. Sister Giovanni had retired from Angela Hospice and Mr. Wilson had passed away in 2014. Yet, the promise he made to Sister Giovanni had not been forgotten.

In July 2015, Angela Hospice President and CEO Margot Parr received a call from the newly-funded Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation, inviting Angela Hospice to submit a proposal for funding consideration. In November, the foundation announced they would award a grant of \$2.1-million to Angela Hospice for the creation of a brand new telehospice program.

"We are so grateful to the Ralph C.

Wilson Jr. Foundation," Parr said. "This grant will be a significant part of shaping the future of Angela Hospice, enriching the lives of our patients and their families."

This new initiative will enable Angela Hospice to deploy telecommunication devices into patients' homes so nurses can provide immediate face-to-face communication at any time of day or night. This program will not replace traditional hospice home care visits, but rather will enhance the care, allowing real-time interventions that ensure the needs of patients are addressed in the most caring, timely, effective, and efficient manner possible, providing optimal pain and symptom management, and reducing caregiver anxiety.

Staff is currently working on development of the telehospice program, which is expected to launch in October of this year.

Did you know?

Angela Hospice offers free presentations as part of its Speakers Bureau community outreach. Churches, civic groups, businesses, and clubs have experienced these thought-provoking talks on issues such as grief, and spirituality at the end of life.

To book the Speakers Bureau for your group, call (734) 953-6014. You can also learn more about Angela Hospice's community programs at www.angelahospice.org/events/calendar/.

