

FALL 2021

# MONARCH

HAVING THAT  
*hospice  
heart*



**LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTERS:**  
This family of caring professionals is impacting  
lives as part of the Angela Hospice team.

  
**Angela**  
Hospice.  
We'll take you under our wing.®





JOHN & LUCY STERN, 2016

## A LIFETIME OF DEVOTION & CARE

It shouldn't be surprising that John Stern came to volunteer at Angela Hospice. After all, his wife, Lucy, a nurse who worked in hospice and palliative care at the VA hospital in Ann Arbor, raved about her work for decades.

"Her passion was taking care of older people," John explained. "That's all she talked about was her vets..." he said. "Talk about getting up in the morning and being motivated to go to work. I mean, I always thought she skipped out the door to go to work. She absolutely loved it."

After retiring from the VA, Lucy came to work in the home care department at Angela Hospice. Then, in 2013, she and John became volunteers. It was shortly thereafter that Lucy saw an ad for the We Honor Veterans program in a magazine.

We Honor Veterans is a partnership between the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) and the Department of Veteran Affairs, designed to provide care and support for veterans at the end of life. When the Sterns shared the information with Angela's volunteer department, they loved the idea, but knew they didn't have the staff to run the program. They asked Lucy and John if they

would consider spearheading the program at Angela Hospice.

John recalled, "Lucy looked at me and said, 'Why not? Of course we can do it. He's a veteran. And I've taken care of veterans for 25 years.' So we started the program."

Right from the beginning, the program was a labor of love for John and Lucy, and the committee of volunteers who helped with the project.

Having a chance to honor and support veterans meant so much to John and Lucy, and they were able

to see the impact that made on the patients and their families as well. But even as the program started taking off, Lucy began slowing down.

"She'd misplace her glasses or her keys, you know, and we all do that. But then I realized that something was wrong," John said, "Because she was forgetting things that she shouldn't forget." John suggested they see a neurologist, and Lucy was given a series of tests.

"She knew that she was having issues, but I don't think she was quite ready to accept Alzheimer's," John continued. "I accepted it because I could see the change in her, and she did finally accept it."

John and Lucy first met while John was stationed at Goodfellow Air Force Base in San Angelo, Texas. He agreed to go on a double date with an Air

Force buddy, and ended up meeting his future bride.

"I know the old saying 'love at first sight,' but I fell madly in love with her the very first time I laid eyes on her..." John recalled. "I mean, she was just beautiful. She had such a great personality, a good outlook on life."

John was 20 years old, and Lucy was still in high school when they married over Thanksgiving weekend. Lucy went on to finish her senior year and the couple began their lives together, in the little home they called "the doll house." It was once they moved to Michigan that Lucy became a nurse.

She worked in various departments at the VA hospital in Ann Arbor, finally accepting a position in palliative care and hospice. Lucy also taught hospice and palliative care at Madonna University. She was even instrumental in helping Sister Giovanni complete the paperwork to start Angela Hospice in the 1980s.

Lucy loved being a nurse, and she loved serving veterans. Even after she got sick, for as long as she was able, she would go with John as his assistant as he did pinning ceremonies to honor veterans in Angela Hospice care. But as her Alzheimer's progressed, she had to cut back.

John took care of Lucy for about four years as she struggled with Alzheimer's. Then in 2020, the day before their 56th wedding anniversary, Lucy was admitted as a patient in Angela's home hospice program.

John appreciated the hospice team's help in caring for Lucy. And later, when she was admitted to the Care Center, John was grateful to be able to spend her last night on this Earth by her side.



Earlier that day, hospice staff held a ceremony to honor Lucy. They read the Florence Nightingale prayer and said a few words of reflection.

"It was just very, very rewarding for me, and put some finality to Lucy's pending death," John recalled. "It was Friday, and then she passed that night. So yeah, it turned out to be a real special day for both of us."

John slept on the couch in Lucy's room that evening.

"She was breathing really loud and heavy," John said, so he knew she was close to the end. "And about 3:30 a.m., I woke up and I didn't hear the breathing. And I said, 'Oh, I bet she's in heaven.'"

John misses Lucy, especially in the evening when the house is quiet. He wears his wedding ring on a chain these days "close to my heart," he said. But John still stays positive and active, going to meetings at the Post, enjoying dinner with his grandson, or grabbing a beer at the pub with friends.

He held a memorial service for Lucy in August, with about 100 people in attendance. He said it was hard to believe almost seven months had gone by since Lucy passed. But the memorial was an opportunity to celebrate her life.

"It just was a wonderful, wonderful day to remember her," John said. "So I call that kind of the final chapter in Lucy's life. And then the final, final chapter is when I see her in heaven."

"You know, I know she's up there doing something right now," he continued. "I'm sure she's not just sitting there eating bon bons. She was always busy and I can only imagine what heaven would be like..."



LUCY & JOHN'S WEDDING:  
NOVEMBER 25, 1964

## WHY YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS



DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES  
CHAIR, WE HONOR VETERANS PROGRAM

Teri Schmitchen explained why the donor-supported We Honor Veterans program at Angela Hospice is so impactful.

"It's not uncommon to hear veterans share that the WHV ceremony was the first time they had been thanked for their service. Perhaps the most potent element of the program is connecting veteran to veteran so that at this crucial time in their life, they can talk with someone who understands their unique circumstance, culture, and experience – which have a way of resurfacing at end of life," Teri said.

"The reach of this program also extends to veterans who live in our community. As part of the program, there is a safety net that is built of community partners who provide a multitude of services from financial assistance, to home modifications, to legal assistance and more. It's amazing when our community comes together to serve those who served our country."



WATCH A VIDEO ABOUT JOHN STERN'S WORK WITH WE HONOR VETERANS AT  
ANGELAHOSPICE.ORG/BLOG/NHPCO-AWARD/





# HAVING THAT hospice heart

## LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTERS

When Susan Ferrier started as a nurse aide at Angela Hospice nearly 12 years ago, her daughters Samantha Ferrier and Christina Slaviero wanted to know why she would want to go into a field like hospice.

"I always had that connotation that hospice was really sad or depressing, but watching how rewarding it was for her and seeing her hospice heart, kind of inspired me to have that same concept," said Christina, who is better known by her nickname, Morrow.

"She would be like, 'No, I absolutely love my job and am finding meaning,'" Samantha added.

Susan gave them the foundation of what hospice is actually like, and showed them that the rewards of the job – like knowing you've helped make someone's last moments a little more comfortable – outshine the sadness. Susan eventually inspired both Morrow and Samantha to work at Angela as well.

Morrow started as an aide, and then realized how much she liked the medical field and patient care. She soon went to nursing school and the whole time kept thinking she wanted to go back to Angela. So, she did, and has been an admissions nurse the last two years.

For Samantha, having both her mom and sister work at Angela Hospice played a pivotal role in her decision.

"My mom was like, 'Angela Hospice has social workers,'" Samantha said. "I volunteered here, and I loved it. So I went into getting my masters thinking I wanted to do hospice, and then it just so happened that I was able to end up being here."

What's it like for Susan to work with her daughters?

"I think that's really great that we all work together," Susan said. "I never thought that was going to happen..."

Morrow and Susan even worked together during Morrow's first year as a home care aide. Approaching new situations with her mom by her side eased Morrow's anxiety as she was able to watch Susan lead by example. She taught her how to take care of her patients better.

"You go into people's houses, you don't even know them, but you feel comfortable right away, as soon as you go in there," Susan said. "And they're very welcoming."



L TO R: MORROW SLAVIERO, SUSAN FERRIER,  
& SAMANTHA FERRIER

"I think that speaks to who you are," Morrow said to Susan. "You go in and you feel at home because you're such a comforting, warm presence – very motherly. You're in the right line of work."

## BEING COMFORTABLE WITH DEATH

"I feel like it makes me less scared of dying, to know there are places like this or organizations like this... there are people who will care for you and keep you comfortable," Samantha said.

"Yeah, dying doesn't have to be scary. It can be comforting. I've always said, I'll probably be here until I'm a patient here," Morrow said. "I'd put myself here."

Samantha and Morrow both think they'll always be connected to Angela Hospice in some capacity, and Susan plans to retire from Angela Hospice some day.

"I don't have plans to go elsewhere," Samantha said. "Especially with hospice, it's *this* hospice."

"I think we're deeply rooted here and our hearts are connected," Morrow said.

In fact, Morrow recently had a daughter, and while she would never push her into the field, she thinks it would be very special if she did work here one day, or even volunteered.

"I kind of thought, because she was with me in my belly for all of my working, that I'm instilling the compassion in her..." Morrow said. "I was trying to give her that hospice heart."

# A journey OF FAITH

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but to Kathleen Kubik, the pictures of her mom, Doris Lemble, with Father Elijah Washington, Angela Hospice Spiritual Care Coordinator, are worth much more than that.

"It was such a joy to see the joy in my mother's face, see the joy in his," Kathleen said. "I think for my mom, who doubted herself...I think she was getting gratification that other people think, I'm a good person."

The day these pictures were taken Kathleen had called Father Elijah – who both she and her mother had developed a close bond with – and asked him to come because they sensed the end was near.

Doris died less than a week after the photos were taken.

Doris was a quiet woman when it came to religion. She wasn't very open with priests and wasn't the type to say she would pray for you.

At first, Kathleen wasn't sure her mom would want to talk to a priest, but when Doris did reach out, an amazing rapport developed between Doris and Father Elijah. Kathleen said it was beautiful to watch her mother's relationship with Father Elijah grow during her time in Angela Hospice's care.

"I think it's just, she could joke with him, his humor is so wonderful," Kathleen said. "And it was his kindness. It's just unbelievable, his patience and his ability to get to know somebody. And he made my mom laugh and everything...he sees the good in things. And he explains things so easily."

"He just touched my heart. He really did," Kathleen continued. "He touched my mother's heart too."

Father Elijah was also able to bring Doris peace and healing before her death in regard to events that had



happened in the past. He helped Doris with her anxiety about death as well.

He said sometimes when he meets with someone who is feeling anxious, they seek his advice about what is troubling them. Other times, just being there and listening as someone unburdens their heart can make all the difference.

"I simply told her, I love you and I'm always here for you, no matter what's going on," he said.

"We got together and he reminded her on her deathbed...He goes, 'Doris, you lived a full life and you got to see your daughters and that brought such a joy to you,'" Kathleen recalled.

Kathleen said one of the many reasons she would recommend Angela Hospice to others would be to help them on their journey of faith. But Father Elijah wasn't

the only one from Angela Hospice to leave an impact on Kathleen and her family – everyone from the social workers to the nurses did as well.

"That's the thing about your whole care," Kathleen said. "They helped me... they're supposed to help my mom, but they helped me too, so I can't say enough."

She continued, "I hope other people love it as much as I do."



YOU CAN SUPPORT THE WORK OF ANGELA HOSPICE,  
INCLUDING OUR SPIRITUAL CARE PROGRAM,  
AT [ANGELAHOSPICE.ORG/DONATE](https://angelahospice.org/donate)





# A tribute OF love

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

One of the things you might notice just beyond the evergreen trees as you drive up to Angela Hospice is a tall statue of the Holy Family, surrounded by a babbling fountain, waving grasses, and a paved brick pathway.

This beautiful, welcoming display was donated in 2001 by Pat Suman, as a tribute to his late wife, Patricia. She was a volunteer in the Angela Hospice bereavement department in the 1990s, before her life was cut short by breast cancer, just a week before her 60th birthday.

"She was in a hospital bed for several weeks, and finally she said, 'That's enough.' She made all the arrangements. She's the one that called hospice," Pat said.

After Patricia died in the care of Angela Hospice, Pat decided he wanted to give back.

"I guess the old adage that it's better to give than receive. And I wanted to do some sort of a tribute for the excellent care, compassion that everybody here has," Pat explained.

Sadly, after Pat remarried in 2004, his second wife, Linda, would also be diagnosed with breast cancer. Once again, Angela Hospice was called on to help.

"I mean, it's probably the hardest thing anybody ever goes through, whether it's the person who's going through it, or, you know, their loved ones," Pat said. "You've just got to make the best of every day."

"Once you get the terminal diagnosis, this is the most caring place to come to...they just make you peaceful, so you're not suffering," he continued.

After Linda passed in 2007, Pat donated a beautiful nativity scene for the Angela Hospice chapel in Linda's name. He's continued to support Angela Hospice in the years that followed.



PAT SUMAN HAS A LARGE FAMILY, SO THE IDEA OF THE HOLY FAMILY STOOD OUT TO HIM AS A FITTING TRIBUTE TO HIS LATE WIFE.

"I mean, Angela's is fantastic, you know, without a doubt," Pat said.

Despite the wonderful impact Pat's contributions have made to Angela Hospice's work over the years – including creating a peaceful place for prayer and reflection that families use on a regular basis – when it comes to giving, Pat prefers to fly under the radar.

Giving is personal for him, and he doesn't do it for the accolades.

"If I want to contribute something, donate something, I'll do it on my own when I want to," he explained. "And Angela is probably my number one on the list."

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT COMMEMORATIVE GIVING, OR TO PURCHASE A PERSONALIZED MEMORIAL, VISIT [ANGELAHOSPICE.ORG/DONATE](https://angelahospice.org/donate)



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

In a year full of challenges as we all navigate the "new normal" of life during a pandemic, here at Angela Hospice we've stayed vigilant to the concerns of the present, and hopeful as we never lose sight of the future. We've continued to grow our mission by exploring new ways of serving the community. Our programs have expanded, and our reach continues to touch thousands of individuals throughout the community. We are so proud – in fact, we *stand in awe* of our amazing and dedicated team members, who continue to bring such comfort and love as they care for families at a challenging, yet precious juncture in their lives.

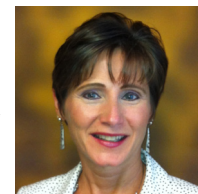
It is truly a privilege to be able to carry out this important work each day. We know that for all of this to take place, it was YOU who blessed us with the sacrifice of your generous support. We remain ever grateful for your belief in the work we do, and for your willingness to continue to support the patients and families of Angela Hospice now and into the future.

In gratitude and solidarity,



MARTI COPLAI  
PRESIDENT & CEO

*Marti Coplai*



PEGGY CUMMINS  
BOARD CHAIR

*Peggy Cummins*

## Steadfast in our Mission

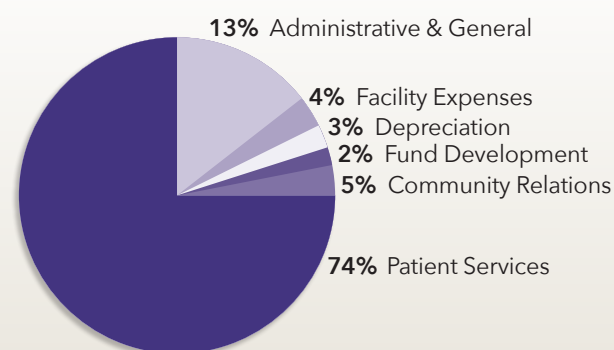
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS IN HOSPICE CARE.....	1,976
HOSPICE HOME CARE*.....	1,555
ANGELA HOSPICE CARE CENTER*.....	640
MY NEST IS BEST PEDIATRICS.....	29

\*Patients who transferred between programs were counted in the totals for both programs.

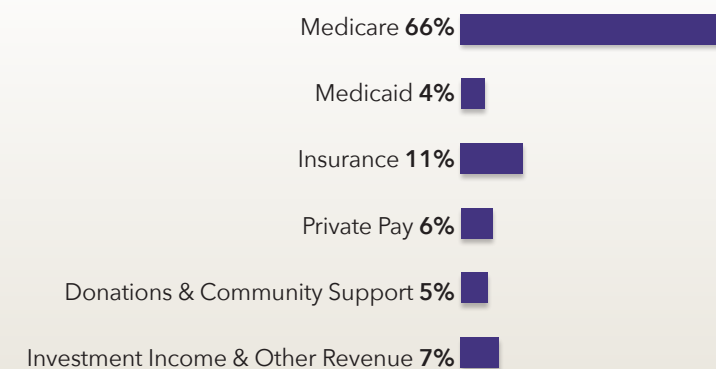
TOTAL DAYS OF CARE 2021.....	101,055
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VETERANS SERVED	361
ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS	343
TOTAL MILES DRIVEN BY VOLUNTEERS	15,037
TOTAL VOLUNTEER SERVICE HOURS	5,831
TOTAL MINUTES ON AVA CALLS	116,924
EDUCATION HOURS PROVIDED TO STUDENTS	1,154
GOOD SAMARITAN CARE PROVIDED	\$86,971
ONE-ON-ONE GRIEF SUPPORT SESSIONS	2,244
GRIEF CARE SERVICES PROVIDED	\$305,851

## 2021 EXPENSES



## 2021 REVENUE



## Team Member Achievements

**Kolby Reed**  
Bachelor of Science  
in Nursing

**Nancy Carrara**  
Certified Grief  
Counseling  
Specialist

**Jamie LaLonde**  
Integrative  
Behavioral Health &  
Primary Care

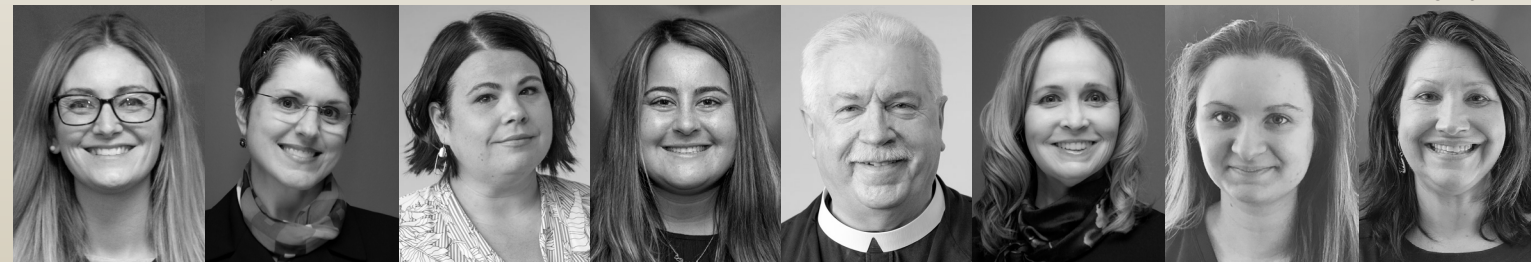
**Nikki Scott**  
Doctorate in  
Social Work

**Brother James O'Brien**  
Certification in  
Hospice & Palliative  
Nursing

**Debbie Vallandingham**  
Certified Grief  
Counseling  
Specialist

**Amanda Zikherman**  
Certification in  
Hospice & Palliative  
Nursing

**Vilija Idzelis-Wlosinski**  
Esteemed Women of  
Michigan Award from  
The Gary Burnstein  
Community Health  
Clinic





# tree OF life

One of Angela Hospice's most meaningful and longest-standing yearly traditions, the Tree of Life, will kick off the holiday season with an opening ceremony on Saturday, November 20.

Much like last year, this year's Tree of Life display will be on the grounds of the Angela Hospice Care Center, where guests can place an angel in honor of a loved one while walking through the beautifully lighted tree display. Few things are quite as breathtaking to see during the holiday season.

The Tree of Life will take place throughout November and December, and supports Angela Hospice's charitable programs. It's also a lovely way to remember and honor your loved ones at this special time of year.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS YEAR'S TREE OF LIFE, PLEASE VISIT [ASKFORANGELA.COM](http://ASKFORANGELA.COM).



## ANGELA EXECUTIVE TEAM

Marti Coplai, President & CEO  
Mark Hibbard, CFO  
James Boal, MD, Chief Medical Officer  
Stephany Gaston, Chief Clinical Officer  
Diane Smith, Director of Ministry Engagement

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## WALK OF REMEMBRANCE

Thank you to everyone who supported our Walk of Remembrance on September 18. While the format of the walk changed as a precaution in light of the Delta variant, we were blessed with the support of 23 fundraising teams and over 500 walkers.

This event was also supported by community sponsors, including a grant from the Ford Motor Company Fund through their Volunteer Corps program.

We look forward to continuing to engage with our community in the coming months through the Tree of Life, as well as Grief Care workshops and support groups.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [ASKFORANGELA.COM](http://ASKFORANGELA.COM).



FORD MOTOR COMPANY FUND