

SPRING 2023

MONARCH

Inside:

- Volunteering with Angela
- Music therapy in hospice
- Coping with the loss of a parent



NURSE LINDSEY WIGGINS HOLDS ARTWORK CREATED BY
HER PATIENT - AND FRIEND - SOPHIA. (STORY ON PAGE 5)

THE GIFT OF *music*



BRAD TATA

Brad Tata was in the Angela Hospice Care Center when he randomly picked a spiritual hymn to play for a patient and her family. Once he started playing the notes, he knew he had done something – not sure if it had been good or bad – given the family's reactions and looks they shared.

It turned out that hymn he played had been her favorite hymn, one the family constantly heard her singing in the morning while she was making breakfast.

"It was just like this serendipitous moment," said Brad, Angela Hospice Music Therapist. "Maybe the patient was with me, guiding what I was doing, or sheer luck. But we were able to have that space and open conversation with a family."

The power of music, played by Brad and fellow music therapist Heather Dean in the Angela Hospice Care Center and home care, has the ability to affect not only the family, but the patient as well, providing a gift to them both.

And it's not just a form of entertainment; music therapy is much more than meets the ears.

"It's more than just comfort, measures of relaxation," Heather said. "There's a scientific part too, especially for pain management and anxiety... there's real evidence for music therapists helping with symptom management with pain and anxiety."

Brad and Heather have both seen it happen too, watching as a patient becomes less agitated when they play. With each patient they personalize their approach, whether that be the artist they're playing, or the volume at which they play and sing. While some patients do better with just humming, others prefer full singing and guitar.



**HEATHER DEAN LEADING A CHILDREN'S GRIEF
MUSIC THERAPY SESSION**

Music has the ability to ignite deep embedded memories as well, bringing patients back to a moment in time from their life through music.

Sometimes, patients who seem unable to speak suddenly begin to sing full segments of songs with Brad or Heather, much to the surprise of their loved ones.

"Suddenly, something as innocuous as me playing a guitar, they're able to sing and engage and be there with you. It's really gratifying," Brad said.

Heather and Brad even find themselves learning songs in a variety of languages when a song is important to the family. Singing and learning a song can be something Heather and Brad do together with their patients, giving everyone a learning experience, even at the end of life.

**YOUR SUPPORT OF ANGELA HOSPICE'S THERAPY
PROGRAMS CAN BRING HEALING - AND JOY - TO
HOSPICE PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES. MAKE A
GIFT AT [ANGELAHOSPICE.ORG/DONATE](https://angelahospice.org/donate)**

"I've been at the bedside when people have passed... and it's a very powerful experience, and a great honor, that you were the last person to not only speak to this person, but to offer music as the last sounds that they heard, that's incredible," Heather said.

34TH ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

Monday, June 12, 2023
Fox Hills, Golden Fox – Plymouth, MI

Show your support for Angela Hospice's caring programs at our 34th annual Golf Outing.

Spend an afternoon on the links supporting caring outreach for hospice patients and their families.

For Corporate and Sponsorship Opportunities, contact:
Helen Balmforth, Community Outreach & Event Specialist
734.953.6045, hbalmforth@angelahospice.us



VISIT [ANGELAHOSPICE.ORG/EVENTS](https://angelahospice.org/events) FOR MORE DETAILS



this is why I give...

My mom Nancy
on her 95th birthday



Dear Administrators and Health Care Staff:

My mother Nancy Ferda was a patient at Angela Hospice from October 23, 2022 until she died on October 28, 2022. I was at my mother's bedside during most of this time. There are no words that can adequately express my appreciation to everyone involved in my mother's care. I am a nurse and everyday the nursing staff answered my questions and attended to my mom's needs. They were truly "angels." Mom not only benefited from nursing care but on two occasions a musician came to her room and played for her. She was able to receive the sacrament Anointing of the Sick and have frequent visits by clergy.

The facilities for family members were excellent. As a former nun, I found great comfort sitting in the chapel and praying that my mother would pass peacefully. Mom loved going to rosary at her senior independent living facility when she lived there. I found rosaries in the chapel that I borrowed and said the rosary for her at her bedside. As a family member, I greatly appreciated the opportunity to order meals. The food was delicious and much appreciated. A conference room with coffee and a place to eat was always available. Family members were able to spend the night which is comforting to a family. Volunteers frequently came to mom's room asking if we needed anything.

My husband and I wanted to donate to Angela Hospice patient care so that other families could benefit from such a wonderful place for their family members. Thank you so much for providing such exceptional care at the end of my mother's life. I will remember my mother's last days forever as a time of peace and comfort where she died on a warm, sunny fall day.

With warmest regards,

Mary Lynn Brown



GETTING TO THE *next*

Sophia* didn't really have any family, but her church was like family. She had always gone to Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral, and when Lindsey Wiggins visited there for the first time, Sophia was the first person to introduce herself.



LINDSEY WIGGINS

Lindsey is a nurse with Angela Hospice, so when Sophia came to church one day looking very jaundiced, Lindsey was concerned. She pulled Sophia aside to suggest she see a doctor.

"She just changed the subject immediately," Lindsey recalled.

Father Paul Albert was also concerned about Sophia, so he asked Lindsey to check in on her while he was out of town.

The lights were off when Lindsey arrived – Sophia didn't want anyone to see how ill she looked. She also didn't want to discuss her health.

"She basically, politely, several times in a row told me to leave," Lindsey recalled. But Lindsey could see Sophia was very sick, so she made a deal with her – she would leave, but she would be back the next day to check on her.

In the meantime, Lindsey spoke with the team at Angela Hospice looking for options to help Sophia. She knew Sophia didn't have family and she didn't have any money. So Lindsey reached out to the executive team at Angela Hospice, who agreed to offer free care to Sophia through the Good Samaritan Fund, so she could be cared for safely and comfortably in the Angela Hospice Care Center. But Lindsey knew she would still have to convince Sophia to accept her help.

Lindsey prayed on her way to Sophia's house, and looking back, she said, "Everything happened so miracle-like, it was amazing."

When she arrived, Sophia was on the floor. She had fallen, and despite Lindsey's best efforts, she couldn't lift her.

"I sat on the floor with her... I was basically propping her up with my body," Lindsey said. She explained to Sophia that she would have to call 911.

"I said it as simply and as gently as I could... 'You can't stay here. I can't leave you here, it's not safe. I would get in trouble. So when I call 911 to get you picked up... The first option is to take you to the hospital and get you treated, get you hooked up to IVs and whatever they need to do. Or... I know of a place you can go where they'll take care of you and provide for all the things that you need... And it's free.'"

Lindsey told her, "I think you know that you're not going to get better, right? And she just said, 'Yeah.'"

Sophia agreed to come to the Care Center and Lindsey was relieved to know she would get the care she needed, so she wouldn't die alone or in pain. Lindsey followed the ambulance to the Care Center.

"We got her settled in and as I was leaving... she looked at me and she said, 'Thank you,'" Lindsey recalled.

After Sophia passed away, less than a day later, Lindsey went to read the Psalms over Sophia. When the representative from the funeral home arrived, he told Lindsey his building shares an alleyway with her church, and he has known Father Paul for years. It was further reassurance for Lindsey to know this was all in God's plan.



SOPHIA WAS AN ARTIST.
AFTER HER PASSING, FRIENDS
AND CHURCH MEMBERS KEPT
SOME OF HER DRAWINGS.

**Name changed to protect privacy.*





lace

"Through the chaos of the set of events that I was thrown into, basically... I didn't know what the outcome was going to be," Lindsey reflected. "But I could see God's hand through it all. And it was just such a blessing to be able to do that for her."

Lindsey came to Angela Hospice in 2019, after working in a hospital intensive care unit. But Lindsey always knew she wanted to work in hospice, since spending a day with a hospice nurse while she was in nursing school.

"I remember her saying... 'The reason why I love my job is because I feel like it's such an honor to be with these people the moments before they meet God,'" Lindsey recalled. "So I was like, wow, that's an interesting way of seeing it."

At Angela Hospice, Lindsey has truly found her calling.

As Father Paul wrote, "We were blessed to have among our parish team a dedicated hospice nurse, who lovingly intervened, and coordinated with Angela Hospice a place for Sophia to spend her final days with dignity, good care, and in peace... We are forever grateful to our dear friends at Angela Hospice for their generosity and hospitality, which was extended to Sophia at the time of her passing."

Angela Hospice's Good Samaritan Fund ensures patients like Sophia, who are without financial resources, are able to receive the care they need at the end of their life. This fund is only possible through the generosity of donors and community friends.

TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO THIS IMPORTANT
WORK, VISIT [ANGELAHOSPICE.ORG/DONATE](https://angelahospice.org/donate)
TO HELP SOMEONE TODAY.



MAKE YOUR WISHES KNOWN

The benefit of planning for the care you'd like to receive at the end of life is two-fold:

1. You help ensure you receive care that aligns with your values and goals
2. You save your family the stress and burden of having to make complicated decisions on your behalf, without knowing what you would want

Planning the care you want is a gift to yourself, and a way to prevent your loved ones from struggling with potential worry, regret, and conflict during a difficult time. But often, people don't know where or how to begin – or, they simply put off talking about their wishes until it is too late.

National Healthcare Decisions Day is April 16, a day that reminds us to make a plan – and Angela Hospice offers resources that can help.

On March 15, Angela Hospice featured The Gift of Certainty, a presentation highlighting how to use the Five Wishes document to create a living will and select a Health Care Agent. A recording of this presentation is available online at angelahospice.org/angelaanswers/

The Angela Hospice Speakers Bureau is also available to present on this topic to community groups. Visit our website to learn more, or call 734.953.6009.

92% of Americans say it's important to discuss their wishes for end-of-life care

But... just

32% have had such a conversation

95% say they'd be willing to talk about their wishes

And...

53% say they'd actually be relieved to discuss their wishes

(The Conversation Project National Survey, 2018, <https://theconversationproject.org/about/>).





ADULT ORPHANS

From the time we're young, most of us realize there will come a day when our parents will no longer be with us. But knowing that time will come doesn't make it any easier.



Debbie Vallandingham, Angela Hospice Director of Grief Care Services, said many of the individuals she counsels are grieving this difficult loss.

"I think this is the loss that surprises people the most," she said. "I think most people are caught off guard by the amount of grief that they have."

Debbie explained that we grieve our attachments. And for most people, our first and longest attachments are with our parents.

"A lot of times we think, 'Well, since it's the natural way of things, we had a great relationship, I know it's the end of life, I should be fine.' No, you're still going to grieve," Debbie asserted. "Most people will say, 'I feel like an adult orphan,' because it's the most significant

bond for most people of their entire life."

Debbie said even adults who are estranged or have contentious relationships with their parents will grieve; they'll grieve the relationship they wish they'd had, and any hope they held to repair it.

What makes grief more difficult to process is the fact that so many people are unwilling to talk about it. So, when someone experiences a loss, they often feel alone in what they're going through.

"Grief is the big secret. When we ask someone, *how are you doing?* What do we say? 'We're fine.' Well, we're *not* fine. We're not honest with each other in these conversations. So the grief that you feel, you feel that you shouldn't be feeling it, it's too much, or *what's wrong with me...*" Debbie explained. That's why so much of her work involves affirming what her clients are feeling.

"It's letting them know that, yeah, you're going to grieve," she said, "and you're going to grieve significantly because of the type of loss it is."

LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS TOPIC AND HOW WE CAN BEST SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER
AS DEBBIE PRESENTS: THE LOSS OF A PARENT. SEE BELOW FOR MORE DETAILS.

UPCOMING SPEAKER SERIES

THE LOSS OF A PARENT

Losing a parent is a unique loss. We become "adult orphans." We lose part of our history. Join us as Debbie Vallandingham shares insight into this impactful loss, its compounding factors, and how we can begin to heal our grieving hearts.

April 19, 2023 • 1 p.m. via Zoom

SUDDENLY A CAREGIVER

Chances are you haven't exactly prepared for the role of caregiver, yet many adults find themselves taking care of a parent or another loved one who is debilitated by age or illness. How can a caregiver navigate the resources available to them? Join us as Angelica Simmons shares insight on what options are available and how you can best care for your loved one – without neglecting yourself.

May 17, 2023 • 1 p.m. via Zoom

HOW SOCIAL FACTORS IMPACT OUR HEALTH

We all want healthier bodies and better care when an illness arises. But could factors like race, education, employment, transportation, or location really affect our health outcomes? Join us as Rev. Diane Smith sheds light on this important topic, including how social factors affect the care people receive at the end of life.

June 21, 2023 • 1 p.m. via Zoom



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volunteering

IN HOSPICE

The volunteers at Angela Hospice are the heart and soul of the organization, volunteering in every department from the on-site Care Center to spiritual support and clerical work. A few current volunteers spoke about what it means to them to be an Angela Hospice volunteer, and what they've learned during their time supporting hospice.



"Being present in the Care Center has given me lessons for living, like living in the present moment; and lessons for dying, like death does not need to be frightening... Volunteering at the Angela Hospice Care Center is good for my soul."

ROSANNE STARK, VOLUNTEER SINCE 2011
CARE CENTER, PATIENT CARE; GRIEF CARE



"Volunteering gives me the opportunity to fulfill two of my most important goals/objectives in life. First, it gives me the chance to contribute some of my 'gifts' to those in need, even though my efforts are indirect in nature. Second, volunteering

gives me a great sense of joy which is how I want to live out my life based upon the teachings of my Catholic faith."

HARVEY FOX, VOLUNTEER SINCE 2014
ADMINISTRATION, DATABASE AND SOFTWARE SUPPORT



"I've learned more patience and gratitude for life. I can be at home thinking, 'Well, maybe I won't go today.' Then I get here... there's some healing force here. Your aches and pains go away because you're just so grateful for what you've got."

SHARON LE, VOLUNTEER SINCE 2017
CARE CENTER, PATIENT SUPPORT; JACK OF ALL TRADES



"The training itself was unbelievable. I would recommend it to anyone, even if they weren't volunteering... it makes you so aware of things, even for yourself. It's just amazing. Volunteering means that I can do something. It's a win-win because I love to play the

piano and sing, and I feel appreciated."

NORMA SANDER, VOLUNTEER SINCE 2016
ANGELA HOSPICE CHOIR, PLAYS PIANO AT CARE CENTER



"I may spend two, three minutes standing at the patient's bedside praying... They have the least of what is most valuable, and that's time. I'm there to be their voice, to say the prayers that they maybe don't know how to say, or can't say if they're asleep."

TONY HANGARTNER, VOLUNTEER SINCE 2014
SPIRITUAL CARE, EUCHARISTIC MINISTRY

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BECOMING A VOLUNTEER AT ANGELA HOSPICE?
PLEASE VISIT ANGELAHOSPICE.ORG/VOLUNTEER FOR MORE INFORMATION.



A ROOM TO *remember*

When Dennis Murphy brought his dad, William "Bill" Murphy, to the Angela Hospice Care Center last fall, they were met with open arms and familiar faces.

Even the room Bill would be staying in was familiar to them both; it was where Bill's wife, and Dennis's mom, Wilma, had stayed in 2018. They were struck by serendipity.

Knowing that Bill was going to be in the same room as Wilma was a huge comfort to his family during a difficult time, a comfort that grew throughout Bill's six days in the Care Center.

"He knew that the anniversary of the date that my mom passed was coming up, and he said to us, and to everybody else, that that was the day he was going," Dennis said.



**BILL WAS COMFORTED TO STAY IN THE
SAME ROOM THAT HIS WIFE PASSED IN AT
THE ANGELA HOSPICE CARE CENTER.**

Bill did in fact end up passing on the same day Wilma had, November 26 – only four years later.

"He was super," Dennis said. "I couldn't have asked for a better parent."

Even though Bill had grown up with an incredibly tough childhood, that didn't stop him from being an amazing father, breaking the mold for what he had grown accustomed to as a child.

He was also the kind of man who clearly left an impression on others. When Bill and Dennis first arrived at the Care Center there were members of the Angela Hospice staff who had remembered him from when he would visit with Wilma, and his room was soon filled with items of remembrance for the life the couple had built together over nearly 70 years.

"They treated my wife so great four years ago," Bill said. "So, she kind of showed me the way."

During the last 20 years they were together, Bill and Wilma traveled all over the world, travels that were well documented in photo albums in Bill's room, with trips to beautiful places like Easter Island, Hawaii, Bora Bora, Paris, and even Antarctica gracing the pages.

Their love of travel grew out of Bill's interest in... well, everything, wanting to learn as much as he could, and share it with one of most important people in his life.

The couple made it to five continents during their travels, only missing Africa and Australia, although Bill did make it to nearby New Zealand.

It only seemed fitting that the last place they would both travel to was the Angela Hospice Care Center, even if it was years apart.

"It was kind of like my mom saying it's time to come home," Dennis said.

Those with loved ones in the Care Center are able to have beautiful moments together, much like Bill and Dennis, thanks to the generosity of Angela Hospice donors.



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**TO MAKE YOUR GIFT IN SUPPORT OF FAMILIES AT THE
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