

Volunteer Voice

Breaking News

Some exciting changes are on the horizon! As our primary communication tool, the Volunteer Voice is published monthly to keep volunteers updated on the many happenings at Angela Hospice. We also know there's a LOT to digest when it's compiled in one large issue. In an effort to make this communication tool more effective and reader friendly, our highly creative and skilled Communications Team will be taking over the design and publication of the newsletter. With this, the format will change from a monthly publication to a bi-weekly publication, dividing the content into two issues in a more visually appealing and digestible format, including additional features. This revision of the Volunteer Voice will be coming in March.

And in even bigger news, some may have heard about Angela Hospice expanding north. We are excited to announce that this spring Angela Hospice will open a new hospice residence at Lourdes Senior Community in Waterford, Michigan. This newly renovated 15-bed unit will provide a welcoming haven for terminally ill people and their families in and around Oakland County. We are grateful that this means more families will experience the peace of mind that comes from knowing their loved one is in good hands, with a trained and caring hospice staff, where they will be safe and comfortable, day and night. But this new expansion means more than that, too. Because it also allows for us to extend our home care services further north, to support even more families throughout Oakland County who need our help in caring for an ailing loved one. It also means we have the opportunity to serve that community through traditional grief support programs, educational outreach, and our Good Samaritan program — offering hospice care free-of-charge for those without insurance or the ability to pay. Several of our volunteers live closer to the Waterford area and may be interested in volunteering at Angela Hospice @ Lourdes. We will keep you posted on the progress of opening this new facility, but we are expected that volunteers will start supporting patients in late spring to early summer. If you are interested in supporting this new care center, please reach out to Teri Schmitchen.

Finally, we're excited to announce our newly formed Spiritual Companion Training Program. This program is for volunteers who are interested in applying their spiritual gifts to support patients with presence, prayer and Eucharistic Ministry both in Home Care and at the Care Centers. Current Spiritual Care volunteers are encouraged to attend as well, however it is not a requirement. Training will be held Monday, March 18th @ 6pm in Dayrooms A and B. To register, please click here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084AA8AC22A4FB6-48238659-angela>

Bereavement News

By Keely Rhiannon, LLMSW, CGP
Grief Care Counselor

"Embracing Love Amidst Grief"

Valentine's Day can be an emotionally charged time, especially when you've experienced the profound loss of someone or something dear to your heart. The truth is, every day may feel challenging, and that's completely okay. Grieving is a human experience, a testament to the depth of love we hold for what is no longer with us. In the realm of grief literature, the phrase "grief is love" resonates profoundly. Grief is a complex tapestry woven with deep sadness, sorrow, pain, anger, resentment, frustration, guilt, confusion, and a myriad of other emotions. It's a natural response to any kind of loss.



Image by Dorothea from Pixabay

When delving into the essence of love within grief, it's crucial to recognize that love extends beyond the conventional images of romance, hearts, and warmth. Love encompasses both joy and beauty, as well as hardship and pain. It manifests in the profound longing for someone or something, compelling emotions to surface. Grieving is the act of love, whether expressed inwardly or outwardly, in a manner that feels authentic and healing to you. It's the spontaneous tears in the grocery store aisle, the act of caring for oneself amidst profound sorrow, and the written letters and poems dedicated to the departed.

Jamie Anderson encapsulates the intersection of grief and love with poignant clarity: "Grief, I've learned, is really just love. It's all the love you want to give, but cannot. All that unspent love gathers up in the corners of your eyes, the lump in your throat, and in that hollow part of your chest. Grief is just love with no place to go." This profound insight encourages gentleness during this new and, perhaps, arduous chapter of life. It urges an embrace of the things, people, memories, and activities that evoke feelings of love. In the midst of intense grief, it's vital to acknowledge its normalcy and the validity of the emotions coursing through you. Even in the darkest moments of sorrow, remember that grief is a manifestation of love finding expression when words fall short.

And in those moments where tears well up, shimmering with the weight of all the love you hold for your departed loved one, recognize that every drop is a testament to the significance of what you've lost. All that love matters—it matters deeply.

OUR FREE GRIEF CARE PROGRAMS:

While feelings of grief are normal, handling them can be difficult and painful. Talking about what you are going through can help. Call 734.779.6690 to schedule an appointment. Or visit www.askforangela.com to check out our grief support calendar with a detailed listing of upcoming support groups.

Care Center News

In with the new, out with the old. Beds that is. This week, new patient beds will be delivered and placed in each of the patient rooms. The beds are much more user friendly with a remote control and are easily maneuverable. The new beds will not have any side rails, making us truly a restraint free facility! In the coming days we will be sending out a brief training video for you to watch, however if you are at the Care Center prior to receiving the link, please ask a staff member for guidance. The are very intuitive and the controls make sense :) If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Denise, Jennifer or Teri.

Community Outreach & Philanthropy

Angela Cares 2024!

Our educational speaker series, Angela Cares, will continue this year with our first presentation, Heart-Centered Mindfulness, on Thursday, Feb. 29 at 1 p.m. via Zoom.

Much like last year, Teri Schmitchen, Angela Hospice Director of Supportive Care, will lead this seminar on mindfulness – appropriately taking place during American Heart Month – and plans to discuss how one can use heart-centered techniques to help ground themselves, and also to lean into strong emotions, even the uncomfortable ones.

Teri, who is also a Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Instructor, will provide practical techniques to release stress and cope with your feelings as well. For those who are interested in attending, registration is now open! <https://angelahospice.org/events/heart-centered-mindfulness/>

Compassionate Corner

By Denise Welsh
Int. Therapies Vol. Coordinator

The word Love itself can bring many thoughts and wonderful feelings to mind – love of our significant other, children, grandchildren, extended family, friends, our pets, inspirational people – so many people to love! What about those who are challenging to love? And the practice of unconditional love? A minister I know refers to the challenging people in our lives as those who are "sandpaper to our soul". And she also suggested that we think of the worst thing you have ever done in your life and what if that was the only thing someone knew about you? How do we do we stretch to practice unconditional love? One of the best ways is to focus on their positive qualities and their good intentions. Another way is to think of the person you like the least and treat them like the person you love most. Most adverse behaviors are not meant to intentionally hurt others. What kind of practices do you use for the challenging people in your lives? What kind of tools do you use to respond to someone who pushes you buttons? And how are you able to respond rather than react? We would love to hear from you so that others can benefit with new tools. Please email dwelsh@angelahospice.us so that we can provide some new ideas to others.

Home Care News

We Need You!

Volunteers are in great need in Home Care to provide respite and/or companionship. If this is something that has been tugging at your heart, please explore this idea with us. We're happy to answer any questions. Our MVI training will help prepare you for this new role and you will be paired with a mentor who will show you the ways in Home Care, helping you feel comfortable and confident in your new role. If you're interested in learning more, please reach out to Lora.

Mission Moment

Sr. Roberta Moser
Felician Sisters Services

We've got some decent appliances in our home and cars in the driveway. We even have a chapel where Jesus abides. We eat healthy meals. Our house is pretty clean. The neighborhood is rather safe. Should anything happen we have a hospital right across the street. We like each other and we get along, but WE DO NOT HAVE A DECENT PEN OR PENCIL IN THE HOUSE! Take a message? Forget it! Pay a bill? Not possible! On the slim chance I find a pencil, the lead is broken or the tip of the pen is all "globby."

I go to the Dollar Store, buy some and put them in all the right places and...well, you know... they tend to disappear. What is one to do? I've thought about hiding one in the vegetable crisper but...well, that would be way out there for sure. It would probably end up as extra roughage in my salad! That's good, but you go missing. There's what happens if they find it. It's time to think about how to make sure that our values never go missing. You know, those five "treasures" that we've all promised to live by...from North to South and East to West, each sister, employee, board member embraces the very same five.

That's incredible! What a powerhouse! We hold the ability to set the world on fire! When it comes to our values, light a match and add some fire to your belly. Our values have deep roots in the gospel. They jump out at us from every page. Jesus, the one who came to set us free, shows us the way. There were so many stories of embracing; the way he blessed with kind words and healing. He showed respect at every turn, embracing those who were at the margins of his society: the poor, the blind, the lame, lepers and prostitutes. And transformation? Just read about how many lives he changed by being real, reaching out, loving. He spoke in parables, stories that the people could understand. He was an advocate as he addressed the needs of the poor. And, my goodness, talk about solidarity! He was born in a stable. And then there's the value of justice and peace. Jesus spoke of peace many times throughout the gospel. He was all about the common good and was a maverick about forging right relationships wherever he went.

Yes, things go missing periodically, but these treasured values of ours, because of our valiant efforts, can always be found and continue to make a difference. Don't ever forget that!

PS: But whatever you do, do not hide them under a bushel basket or in the vegetable crisper! Just saying...

Music Matters

By Heather Dean, MT-BC

Celebrating Motown

If you have worked or lived in the greater Detroit area for some time, no doubt you have known or met people who have been touched by Motown music royalty. Motown, a style of music unique to the Motor City, comprises of upbeat soul rhythms and upscale fashion to match. The stories we hear take us back to a momentous time in history we can be proud of as Michiganders. What an honor to get to know our local history from those who have lived it!

This month as we celebrate Black History Month, it is meaningful to recognize that Motown Records established by our own Barry Gordy was the one of the first black owned record labels in history. Mr. Gordy wanted to be sure that his artists were promoted well and paid a fair wage. Mr. Gordy treated his musicians as family. Legend has it that in Mr. Gordy's home there is a private entrance under ground that leads to his private pool so that guests such as Aretha Franklin could enter undetected by passerby's. He also discovered "Little Stevie", aka Stevie Wonder when he was just 11 years old and looked after him like a father.

We can also thank Barry Gordy for discovering and promoting many other artists we still hear on the radio today including The Four Tops, Martha and the Vandellas, The Temptations, Marvin Gaye, Jackson 5 of course and many more! Did you ever wonder how these artists were promoted when we did not have internet or platforms such as Spotify? Well, it started in our very own backyards. Barry sought out youngsters to go ahead and learn some of the great hits we hear today and cover them at events such as school dances and parties and see what the reception would be. If the audience went wild, Barry would consider the song radio ready. So thanks to our local Detroiters for putting Motown on the map!

If your patients love Motown, this could be a great conversation starter! Ask what their favorite songs are and if they have any special memories related to listening to these timeless hits.



Credit: Salixgraphica

Spiritual Care News

Please join us for our upcoming Spiritual Companion Volunteering Training program on Monday, March 18th at 6pm. For current spiritual care volunteers, our hope is that you're able to attend to give testimony to your experience as a spiritual companion. More and more we are seeing a stronger need, a pull from spiritual support at end of life. The most powerful gift we can provide as volunteers is that gift of presence. There is something quite stirring and powerful about sitting in presence of those on a spiritual journey. When you get the opportunity to companion with them and bear witness to their experience, it's truly a gift. Training will be conducted by our Spiritual Care Counselor Jeanie O'Connor who has had the opportunity to work with many volunteers in her role. To register, please click here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084AA8AC22A4FB6-48238659-angela>

We Honor Veterans

Did You Know?

(Interesting Facts about Military Veterans courtesy of recruitmilitary.com)

- The United States Army was in charge of exploring and mapping America. The Lewis and Clark Expedition was an all-Army affair. Army officers were the first Americans to see such landmarks as the Grand Canyon.
- Military families relocate 10 times more often than civilian families. On after they are sent to a new duty station every 2 to 3 years.
- The U.S. government is the largest employer of veterans. Women veterans are most likely of all to work for the U.S. government.
- Thirty of the United States presidents served in the U.S. Army. Only one earned the Medal of Honor (T. Roosevelt).
- Nearly 800 thousand people currently serve in the Reserves, the Air National Guard and the Army National Guard.

KEY VOLUNTEER CONTACTS

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