Inside:

Hospice doc goes international

Angela Hospice’s Medical Director and Ethics Coordinator head to Kenya
They’re not going on a safari, but Medical Director James Boal, and Ethics Coordinator Patrick Smith, will head to Kenya in September. The two will present at a conference put on by the Kenyan Hospice and Palliative Care Association, being called the largest hospice conference ever to take place in Kenya.

“Sister Giovanni had asked me if I would like to present at a conference in Kenya, and I said ‘YES!’” explained Dr. Boal, who jumped at the chance. “This conference is a great opportunity, and I’m definitely looking forward to it. It will be my first time in Africa, and I’m hoping to visit doctors working in hospices there, to see how palliative care works in a different country and different culture.”

Patrick Smith was also excited to be asked to join the conference. He has visited Africa in the past, teaching about theology and ethics in Johannesburg and Zambia, and said he is very happy to be going back.

“I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to Sister Giovanni for allowing us to go over and participate,” said Smith. “I am very excited to be back on the continent in this capacity, specifically representing Angela Hospice. Hospice and palliative care can really contribute to difficult circumstances people deal with all over the world.”

At the conference, Smith and Boal will present the topic “Fear of Opiates in Patients and Physicians,” discussing major misconceptions regarding the use of morphine and other opiates.

“We realized there was a cultural underpinning that morphine hastens death,” said Dr. Boal. “It is a popular myth that is false.” He explained that because of this fear, families are often hesitant to administer morphine when it is prescribed.

“It affects quality of life during the dying process,” Boal explained.

“For the last 12 years I’ve been prescribing this medication, going to conferences, and reading the latest data,” said Boal, “keeping up to date on its benefits, risks, and how it should be used.” This is information he hopes to share at the Kenyan conference.

While in Nairobi, Smith also plans to connect with faculty in the philosophy and religious studies department at the University of Nairobi. Smith says they will be discussing the need for more academics to talk about palliative care, and the role of religious traditions in “dying well.”

While in Kenya, Smith and Boal will be staying at a hotel which symbolizes the disparate community of Nairobi – as it is located directly between the shiny, new, burgeoning area of Nairobi, and the world’s largest slum.

The tourism industry in Kenya may still be up-and-coming, but the hospice movement has a firm foundation. Based after the U.K. model of hospice, Nairobi Hospice opened in 1990 as the first in Kenya. Now 27 Kenyan organizations offer hospice or palliative care.

Hospice doc goes international

Kimberly Palczynski is a strong proponent of hospice.

“I cannot stress enough the difference it makes,” says the 47-year-old operations manager at Ford Motor Company’s Technical Services Hotline.

Kimberly’s mother died several years ago in hospice in Chicago. Her father, Robert [Bob] Lovasik, died in Angela Hospice’s care about a year ago.

It took a while for Kimberly’s father, Bob, to warm up to the idea of hospice and in fact, the 76-year-old never truly accepted that he was dying. But for Kimberly, the rapport her father built with his nurse and the family’s constant updates from the staff of Angela made all the difference.

“They are there, not only for the patient, but for the family,” she says.

Kimberly’s father was initially diagnosed with kidney cancer in Chicago. After Kimberly and her brother, Steven Lovasik, managed to move him to Michigan, they placed him at Oakwood Commons Skilled Nursing Facility in Dearborn, and quickly signed on with Angela, on the recommendation of a staff member and friend at the assisted living facility.

“It was a pretty easy transition for us,” Kimberly recalls.

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Tackling Dad’s illness

Kimberly Palczynski with her father, Bob Lovasik, and brother, Steven Lovasik.

Then they met Joe Sturgill, their father’s Angela Hospice nurse. Sturgill was very blunt about what was happening from the start. “He’s a no-holds-barred kind of guy,” Kimberly says. The tough love approach was exactly what she – and her Dad – needed. “Joe called it like it was.”

Her father respected that about his nurse, and he also enjoyed the conversations he would have with Joe about football.

“He hit it off with him extremely well,” Kimberly says.

She remembers her father as a brilliant man who had served in the army in Germany and then received a football scholarship to attend Wayne State University. He went on to establish a career as the general manager at various parts depots for Ford for 43 years. Towards the end, when the cancer metastasized, out of habit he would do inventory and sequences with things in his room. One night, he was constantly counting pillows.

Bob was not in hospice long. He enrolled around September 9 and died September 27. “I was trying to get him [into hospice] sooner,” Kimberly says. Kimberly liked how the hospice staff was continuously communicating with her family.

“Joe was in constant contact with me,” she remembers. “I loved everything about how he handled my family and my Dad.”

Although losing her father was difficult, the experience was as good as it could be because of the staff at Oakwood Commons, and the caring personalities of everyone at Angela Hospice, Kimberly says.

“I am so thankful that you exist.”
Music for the spirit

Part of the caring services Angela Hospice provides, made possible 100% through donations, are our memorial services held in the Care Center Day Room. Memorials are held each month in honor of patients who have passed away. Families are invited to attend and have an opportunity to share a remembrance of their loved one as their name is read, and a candle lit in their memory.

At the June memorial, guests were treated to a performance by members of the Livonia Youth Symphony, providing a peaceful time of reflection and contemplation. In attendance were director Karen Danke (center), along with her sons Jacob and Zachary.

Going the extra mile...

Seeing a dog walk through the doors of the Angela Hospice Care Center isn’t all that rare of an occurrence. Pets frequently come to visit with the rest of the family. But one recent visit was definitely out of the ordinary.

An older dog had come to see his owner, but when he walked into the lobby, the dog had a seizure. The family said this had been happening lately and the dog was on medication for the condition. But with the dog temporarily immobilized, how could they get him back to the patient wing to see his owner? Someone suggested maybe a wheelchair would work. But this dog was quite big, and how could he be convinced to sit in a wheelchair? Then the light bulb struck.... Within a few minutes, a large flat bed cart was brought to the lobby. The dog was lifted onto it and wheeled back to his owner’s room. Once there, the dog got up and began circling around his master’s bed. Rejuvenated by the visit, the dog was able to walk out later on his own four feet!

Order your Angela Hospice cookbook

Perfect for holiday gift giving!

Featuring over 250 recipes submitted by Angela Hospice volunteers and staff, this brand new cookbook will make a great gift this holiday season. Delicious recipes such as Curried Sweet Potato Soup, Reuben Casserole, Herbed Spaghetti Squash, and Peach Cranberry Cobbler will have you running to the kitchen to try them out! To order, call the Development Office at (734) 464-7810, or complete the form at right and mail to: Angela Hospice, Attn: Development, 14100 Newburgh Rd, Livonia, MI 48154. Proceeds benefit Angela Hospice.

Cheer on Angela Hospice at the Light Up a Life Benefit

Promising another slam dunk performance, the Rick Lieder Band will return for this year’s Light Up a Life Benefit on Friday, October 26, at Laurel Manor in Livonia. They wowed the crowd at last year’s event, and were immediately booked again for this year.

“This is a wonderful and heartwarming event, which brings so many to support hospice care,” said Events Coordinator Barb Iovan. “Each year, we are so impressed to see how many come back to show their support. We are very grateful to be able to host this benefit each year and raise such important funds.”

The event, which benefits Angela Hospice’s programs of care, including the My Nest is Best Pediatric Program. The Light Up a Life Benefit also features an open bar, gourmet dinner, an enticing silent auction, fishbowl raffle and more. The theme is sports, and guests are encouraged to come representing their favorite team.

For more on this fun event, or to request an invitation, call Barb Iovan at (734) 953-6045. Tickets $100 each.

Letters to Hospice

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To Whom It May Concern:

My mom was in hospice care through Angela for about two months. The care we received from Angela Hospice was amazing. Each nurse that came out was so compassionate and caring and totally called to this “vocation” because calling it a profession is an understatement. They were truly the hands and feet of Christ.

We were very pleased with the delivery of all prescriptions and equipment and the response we got no matter what time of the day or night we called. There is no way we could have possibly kept Mom at home without the assistance of Angela Hospice.

So, to say “thank you” seems very small. We thank God that we found Angela Hospice and for all the devoted people on staff there serving a definite need in our community.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Papandrea
Marilyn Papandrea and the family of Iva Carroll
Some Angela Hospice volunteers are the “jack-of-all-trades” sort. Others have carved out the perfect niche for their special talents. But the variety of tasks volunteers do to help Angela Hospice seems to have no end – and honestly, some of those tasks are downright bizarre. Here is a smattering of some of the out-of-the-ordinary jobs our dedicated volunteers have performed – all in the name of compassionate care:

- Picking candle wax out of votive holders for our memorial services.
- Shaking 800 paint pens in preparation for rock painting at the Walk of Remembrance.
- Filling dozens of plastic baggies with kitty litter, for nurses to use to mix and dispose of old medicines.
- Baking 100 shamrock cookies.
- Sorting buckets of plastic crystals by size and color.
- Modeling scarves at a fashion show.
- Filling bird feeders [and chasing away squirrels!].

Sometimes a volunteer doesn’t know what the day will bring, but the best of the best learn to “roll with the punches.”

One volunteer helped a home care patient to clean out the cages of their beloved pet birds. Other volunteers have undertaken a virtual scavenger hunt, driving across town to pick up records, drop off medications, deliver envelopes, and more. During the blackout of 2003, one volunteer found himself lugging bucket after bucket of water up the stairs so that patients would have water for washing and for flushing the toilets.

Many volunteers have found ways of using their unique talents and kindness to help others.

Elaine Boyke and Mary Kay LeFevre are registered nurses who volunteer to administer annual TB shots for all 400 volunteers – an enormous help to our infection control staff!

Maryann Getschmann has added baby-sitting to her list of duties, looking after children while their mother meets with a bereavement social worker.

Steve Sawchuk volunteers for Angela Hospice’s pediatric program, My Nest is Best, in a way most people would never think of: playing video games. It may not seem like “work,” but for the young patients who enjoy his company and encouragement, it certainly makes an impact!

Susan Bizon bakes and delivers cookies to patients in our Care Center. Terry Gahan provides soothing massages for patients, families, and employees. Phil Ernzen sings and plays his guitar each week for Care Center patients and visitors. Steve Miloser is the grill master at Care Center barbeques. Joanne Galloway draws beautiful portraits in colored pencil for the grieving. Gene Gorczyca tends to all of the rose bushes on the Angela Hospice grounds. Keith Kolodisk helps Angela Hospice to reach out to the world – taking left over medicines from the Care Center that cannot be returned to the pharmacy, and delivering them downtown to World Medical Relief so that they may be distributed to needy people throughout the world.

As SueAnn Reynolds, a member of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization board of directors, has said, “There is no question that volunteers are essential to the care we provide and the work of our organizations. Without the pioneering efforts of volunteers almost forty years ago, it’s unlikely that hospice as we know it would exist.”

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### By the numbers:

- **136** number of extension cords needed by volunteers to put up Christmas lights around the Care Center
- **700** pounds of mail prepared by volunteers this summer
- **800** number of paint pens that need to be shaken in preparation for rock painting at the Walk of Remembrance
- **33,264** number of hours contributed by Angela Hospice volunteers last year

### Make the holidays easier

Feelings of grief can be magnified over the holidays, so Angela Hospice offers programs to help, available for all ages.

At the “Getting Through the Holidays” Workshop for adults, bereavement social workers will present useful tips and suggestions to help make the holidays easier for those coping with a loss. For instance, don’t force yourself to do too much – do what you can handle comfortably, and let yourself relax. Don’t feel obligated to keep up all the traditions of holidays past. Let friends and family know how you are feeling.

For children and teens, the workshops feature a holiday wreath project. Participants can personalize a wreath in memory of their loved one, using photos and trinkets brought from home, or decorations provided by Angela Hospice.

Children and teens workshops require advance registration; call Sally Loughrin at (734) 464-2683. All programs are provided free-of-charge, and are held at the Angela Hospice Care Center.

**Getting Through the Holidays Workshop**
- **Sunday, November 4, 2012, 2:30-4 p.m.**
- **Sunday, November 18, 2012, 2-4 p.m.**

**Teen Holiday Workshop (ages 13-18)**
- **Sunday, December 9, 2012, 2-4 p.m.**

**Children’s Holiday Workshop (ages 5-12)**
- **Sunday, December 9, 2012, 2-4 p.m.**
Walk for someone you love

Over 700 people are expected to come out for Angela Hospice’s 5th Annual Walk of Remembrance on Saturday, September 22. The beautiful grounds of the Felician Sisters will provide a picturesque backdrop as walkers reflect and celebrate the lives of those they’ve lost.

“Many of our participants are returning for the fifth year because the walk has become a meaningful fall tradition for their family,” said Events Coordinator Barb Iovan.

Supporter Sheri McCrohan plans to attend for the third year in a row, remembering her mother, father-in-law, and mother-in-law, who all received hospice care.

“Angela Hospice gave us such peace,” said Sheri. “It feels like this is our way of giving back.”

Along with her sisters and several other family members, Sheri will walk the 2.3-mile route, which begins at 9 a.m. with an opening ceremony at Madonna University, and finishes at Angela Hospice. Musical performances along the route will add to the peaceful ambiance, and individuals will have the chance to share their stories with volunteer videographers.

“When you are doing the walk, it’s not a time of grieving, but celebrating,” said Sheri. “Because you’re with other people who are going through the same thing and you feel the same way.”

Following the walk, participants are invited to take part in a meaningful rock painting activity, enjoyed by all ages. Refreshments will also be provided.

Registration fees are $25 for adults and $5 for children 6-12. Ages 5 and under are free. To register in advance, call Barb Iovan at (734) 953-6045, or download a form at www.AskForAngela.com. Day of event registration will be open from 8-9 a.m.

All proceeds from the Walk of Remembrance will support Angela Hospice’s grief support groups and individual grief counseling services, all offered free-of-charge to anyone in the community. For more information, contact Angela Hospice at (734) 464-7810.