

Circles of Care

Spring/Summer 2020 Newsletter Vol.27 No.1

HARBOR
HOSPICE

HARBOR
PALLIATIVE CARE



Marge Stidham is a lot like the Energizer Bunny.™ She keeps going and going and going!

If you want to catch up with her, look for her at the North Muskegon Library discussing favorite books or serving communion to patients at Mercy Hospital. She might also be assisting the city maintenance crew with landscape projects or lobbying a local restaurant owner to install automatic doors so patrons don't have to struggle with the heavy manual one.

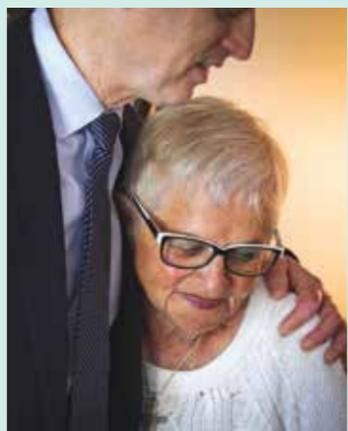
On this sunny winter morning, she is sitting in her lovely living room telling a story — her story — how she grew up on the family farm and began working in celery fields at the age of 14. She describes the charming way she met her husband, raising two boys, and enjoying satisfying careers. Her eyes sparkle, and she has the enthusiasm of a girl about to blow out birthday candles. You might recognize her as the warm, engaging woman smiling at you from Harbor Palliative Care billboards around West Michigan.

Palliative care helps a busy lady get back on her feet

by Susan Newhof

"Several years ago, my doctor discovered a mass in my abdomen," Marge explains. "It wasn't big. It wasn't growing. There seemed no cause for alarm, so we left it alone. I was not worried."

Time passed and Marge believed all was fine until suddenly her legs began to swell, and she knew something was terribly wrong. She assumed the worst but didn't dwell on it. She also thought about her close friend who died after choosing not to pursue treatment for cancer. One thing Marge knew was that she wasn't done living.



Gerald Harriman, DO,
Medical director and
palliative care physician

Her doctor referred her to Gerald Harriman, DO, our much-loved medical director and palliative care physician. Marge made an appointment so she could hear what he had to say. She also called her sons Dennis and Don and asked them to be present.

"Dr. Harriman met us at my house," she recalls. "He was gentle and easy to talk with, and he said he didn't think the tumor was cancer, especially because it had sat there unchanged for almost ten years."

Dr. Harriman recommended a surgeon in Grand Rapids and set up an appointment for Marge. With that piece of the puzzle in place, Marge's next two months were characteristically packed full.

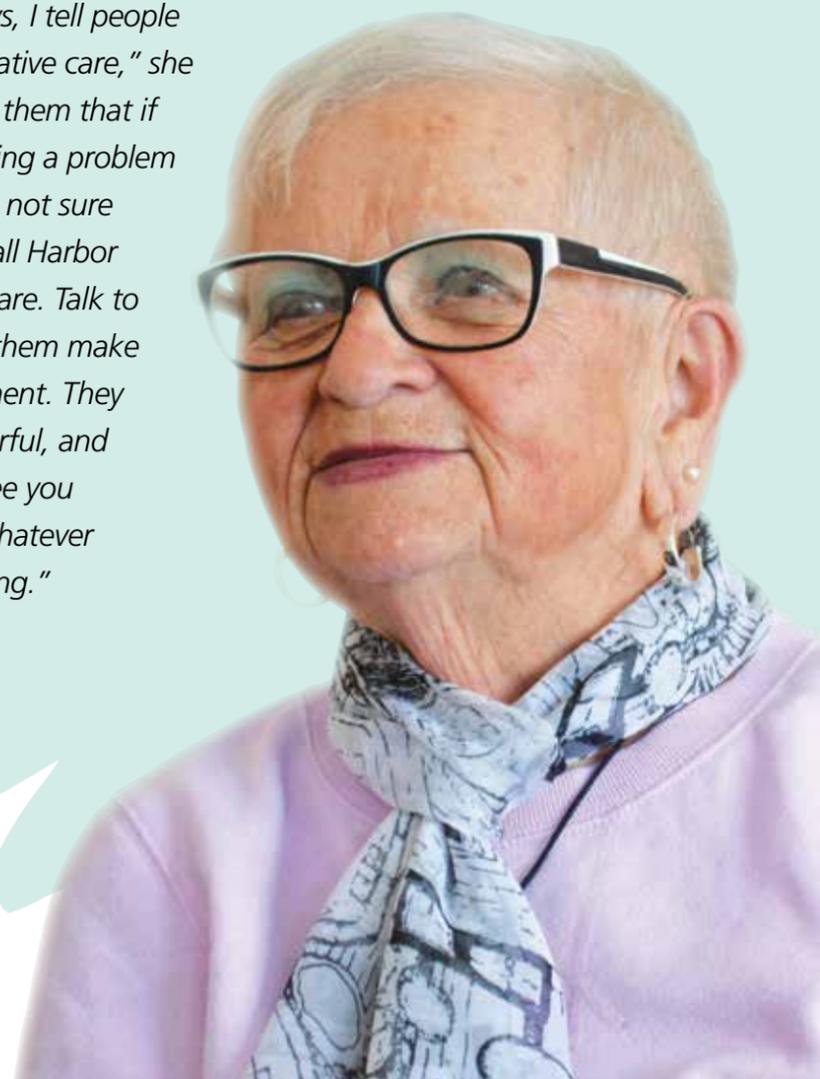
"I sold my house, had an estate sale, had two surgeries, went to rehab, and moved into this apartment," she says laughing.

The tumor was not cancer, but it was big. Marge makes a circle with her hands to show just how big. It was removed, and over time, several pounds of accumulated fluid went away as well. Harbor Palliative Care staff provided support at every step of the process so Marge's recovery would go smoothly.

Marge feels great now and is as busy as ever. She loves her role as a Eucharistic minister at Prince of Peace Parish and is chairperson of Saturday evening greeters. She joins in book discussions and has lately been filling plastic eggs with candy for the library's Easter egg hunt. She meets with other retirees from Muskegon Community College, a group they call OWLS — Older, Wiser, Lovelier, Sexier. When warm weather settles in, she will buy flowers and fill the planters around her apartment building.

And she has a new mission.

"These days, I tell people about palliative care," she says. "I tell them that if you're having a problem and you're not sure about it, call Harbor Palliative Care. Talk to them. Let them make an assessment. They are wonderful, and they will see you through whatever you're facing."





Embrace the time you have with the care you need



We recently sat down with Gerald Harriman, DO, medical director for Harbor Hospice and Harbor Palliative Care, and asked him to explain the different kinds of support we offer patients.



Meet Jennifer Chupailo!

Jennifer Chupailo is our warm, engaging Harbor Palliative Care program coordinator. She has been with the organization for eight years, and it's easy to see why patients feel so comfortable with her, even when their first meeting is by phone.

"I want callers to feel they are being heard," she says with a smile. "I ask questions and I listen. I want them to know I will work quickly to get them answers."

"People are often in distress and afraid when they call me," she explains.

"I love it when we meet with them and, within a short time, I can hear the relief in their voice."

We get their pain and other issues under control so they feel better and can enjoy life again. Often our care keeps them from having to return to the hospital. We also help them understand how their medical condition is likely to progress. When they know what to expect, they are less afraid or confused."

"Sometimes patients apologize when they call," Jennifer adds. "I tell them, 'That's what we're here for!'"

Jennifer has a bachelor's degree in healthcare administration. She and her husband live in Muskegon and have two adorable children.



Q What is palliative care?

A Think of it as comfort care. We provide palliative care for people dealing with the symptoms of serious medical conditions or the side effects of their treatments such as pain, nausea, difficulty breathing or constipation.

While the patient continues treatments, we partner with their doctor to determine how we can make the patient comfortable so they can resume the things they want to do like visit with friends, work in their garden, or attend a family wedding. We get to know the patient and talk with them about their goals and what is important to them. And we walk alongside them to help them understand what to expect as their condition evolves.

A patient can receive palliative care for as long as needed. Sometimes the patient's condition improves so much they can move ahead without it, as with Marge, the star of our cover story!

specialized to support each patient's unique physical, emotional and spiritual needs by making them comfortable and providing assistance ranging from personal and nursing care to visits from our chaplain.

We also have a wonderful team of hospice volunteers who love to visit with patients and enjoy doing all kinds of activities with them such as playing cards, sharing stories, and working on hobbies.

We meet with patients wherever they call home — including nursing homes and assisted living residences. Both hospice and palliative care are focused on life until the end.

Q Are hospice and palliative care covered by insurance?

A Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurance typically cover all or part of hospice and palliative care. The amount of coverage depends on the patient's specific plan.

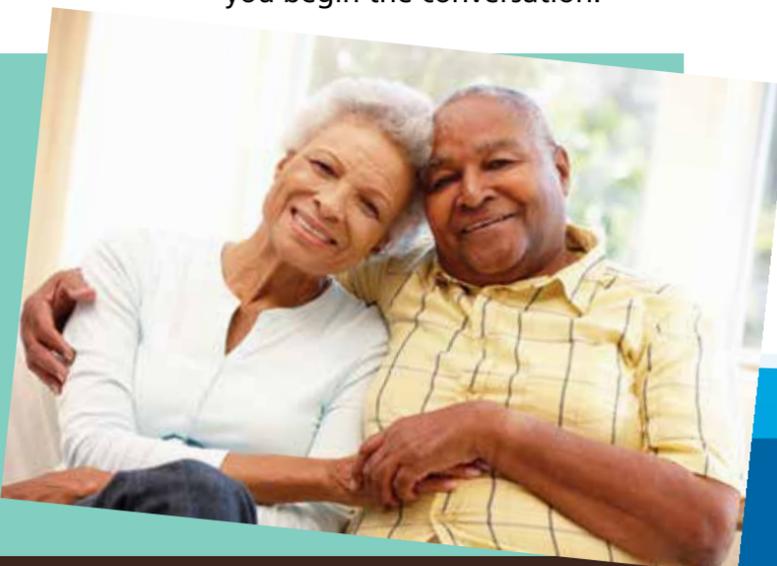
Q How do I know if I'm ready for hospice care or palliative care?

A Start by having a talk with your primary care physician — your medical anchor. You can also get more information by going to EmbraceTheTime.org. Or call us at 231.722.0382. We can help you begin the conversation.

Q How is Hospice care different from palliative care?

A Hospice care is for patients who want to stop medical treatments, and whose medical condition has shortened their life expectancy to less than six months. Our staff has been

Our Palliative Care specialists help patients who are dealing with challenging pain and symptoms of serious medical conditions or side-effects of treatment. We partner with each patient's doctor and meet with the patient to determine how to help them be comfortable so they can resume the activities they love.



For more information call 231-722-0382 or go to EmbraceTheTime.org.

Camp Courage — helping children cope with grief

Dozens of West Michigan children who are struggling with the death of someone close are looking forward to attending Camp Courage along the shore of beautiful Big Blue Lake this summer. For three days and two nights, the children ages six to 19 will laugh and play and make new friends while they develop healthy ways to cope with their grief and remember the person they loved so much.

Since we opened Camp Courage in 1994, we have watched how this special experience supports children, and because we want any grieving child in our region to be able to attend, each family pays only \$10 per child, which we waive when needed.

Will you help?

Our cost for camp this year is about \$700 per child, which is why we ask for your support. Your donation in any amount helps us continue to reach out to children like Rian, Robert, Bella, Kayley, Caleb and so many more. Thank you!

*Pictures taken by
Melanie Dekkers, Photographer*

Meet some of our camper families:

Nicole's story. My sons Rian, 8, and Robert, 12, were staying at their grandfather's house for spring break last March and looking forward to all the fun they would have. The boys were very close to their grandfather and affectionately called him Gpa. But just days into their much-anticipated vacation together, Gpa died in his sleep.

His death was peaceful but it was also a terrible shock to all of us. When I learned about Camp Courage, I was delighted that my sons could attend.

When they came home from camp, they put their pillows in the pillow cases they made with Gpa's image on them, and they told me about everything they did at camp. Having them go to Camp Courage helped me, too. I had been so concerned about how they were doing.

Caleb's story. I was just a teenager when my mother died. The Harbor Hospice team invited me to be a counselor at Camp Courage, and I loved it! This will be my fifth summer there as a counselor. Working with the children at camp changed my life and gave me direction — I am excited to be studying elementary education and look forward to being a teacher.



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Julie's story. When my father died, I lost the wonderful man who raised me after my mother died, and my daughters Bella, 8, and Kayley, 16, lost the loving grandfather they called Papa, who lived with us and helped raise them.

Bella's school counselor told me about Camp Courage. Bella attended as a camper, and Kayley became a junior counselor.

When Bella came home from camp, she could talk about Papa more easily and had better coping skills than I could have given her. She still sleeps with the pillow case she made that has her grandfather's picture on it.

Camp gave Kayley the opportunity to focus on herself. She didn't have to take care of me, too. She loved working with the children and bonded with the camp staff. I'm grateful she got that time for her own healing. She is excited to be returning this summer as camp photographer!



Note: As this newsletter goes to press, we have learned that the threat of Coronavirus (COVID-19) may cause cancellation of Camp Courage this summer. Be assured donations received to underwrite the camp will be used to fund other methods of grief counseling for children in the counties we serve, because grief doesn't just go away. When they struggle with the death of people they love, our counselors will be available to them.

Thank you Corporate Partners

The Harbor Hospice Foundation is deeply grateful to the following West Michigan businesses and organizations that support our hospice and palliative care services through their membership in the Corporate Partner Program. Let us share how you, too, can make a difference in people's lives and, at the same time, garner measurable visibility for your company or organization on air, in print, and on our website throughout the lakeshore and beyond.

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Thank you Compassionate Givers

Compassionate Givers was created by people who want to harness the power of giving as one of many and have a significant impact on a specific Harbor Hospice or Harbor Palliative Care program. The group meets quarterly and votes annually to determine how their combined funds will be used. Last December, they enthusiastically chose to purchase a nurses' call system for The Leila & Cyrus Poppen Hospice Residence

Our profound thanks to each member.

Ammy Seymour
Amy Geldersma
Blaire Adamczak
Bonnie Kay Adamczak-Brown
Connie Learman
Darlene Collet
Dee Kwiecien
Heather Brolick
Irene Pierson
Janice McDonald
Juwana Jackson
Kathy Moore
Kim Suarez
Kristi Nagengast
Kristen Brown
Lori Goudie
Marilyn Rottschafer Andriese
Mary Anne Gorman
Merica Dobry
Mhairi Blacklock
Michelle Morgenstern
Pam Babbitt
Pamela Bogie
Pamela Wingard
Peggy Jacobs
Shari Simon
Susan Crain
Susan Houseman
Thomas Serio

For more information about these groups, call Ammy Seymour, Director of Development, at 231-728-3442.

"One reason I love this group is because all our donations go toward a specific initiative of Harbor Hospice or Harbor Palliative Care, such as counseling and grieving services, comfort care at the Poppen, or Camp Courage," says Compassionate Givers co-chair Susan Crain.

Coming soon, A Harbor Hospice Podcast.

Our staff hear it daily... *You know, I could not do your job. You are angels and have been called to work in hospice care. Thank you.*

Hear the 'why' directly from our hospice, palliative care, grief support team, co-hosted by Amy Geldersma, Social Work & Counseling Services Manager and Cheri Montambo, Clinical Outreach Specialist.

Launching April, the new podcast by Harbor Hospice & Harbor Palliative Care, *I Couldn't Do Your Job*, is a monthly podcast with guests from our team and community partners. Subscribe and listen on your favorite podcast platform.



Produced by our friends at Black Circle Radio.

Join us at the 7th Annual Community Remembrance

Monday, September 21, 6:00 pm

"This is a precious event to help bring closure to the memory of our loved ones. Thank you." — 2019 Attendee

The Bob & Merle Scolnik Healing Center of Harbor Hospice is hosting the 7th Annual Community Remembrance at Heritage Memorial Garden in downtown Muskegon.

A program encompassing beautiful music, readings and bulb planting to help individuals and families in our community to both mourn the death and honor the life of a loved one. This program is open to anyone who has had a loss and need not have had hospice care. The annual Community Remembrance is held at the Heritage Memorial Garden located at 545 West Western Avenue and welcomes 80-100 attendees each year. Local community supporter, Pam Babbitt, developed the beautiful garden in honor of her late husband. It is a

haven located in downtown Muskegon and an incredible representation of the love that remains even after a person dies.

In our culture, mourning is becoming increasingly taboo. *Grief* is a natural and normal response to loss, and mourning is how one heals. It is our privilege to offer this opportunity to mourn and heal in an environment of acceptance and understanding.

If you would like to participate in this meaningful event, **please RSVP by Monday, September 14, 2020 by calling 231.728.3442, or email us at RSVP@HarborHospiceMI.org**

For more information on grief support programs, including individual and group, please visit HarborHospiceMI.org/resources/grief-support.



Harbor Hospice receives prestigious national award

HOSPICE
HONORS
2020 Award Recipient

Harbor Hospice has been named a 2020 Hospice Honors recipient by **HEALTHCAREfirst**, the leading provider of web-based home health and hospice software, billing and coding services, CAHPS surveys and advanced analytics.

Hospice Honors is a prestigious award that recognizes hospices providing the highest level of quality as measured from the caregiver's point of view.

The Senior Leadership, Dr. Harriman, Medical Director; Sue Houseman, Director of Clinical Services; and Ammy Seymour, Director of Development, credits Harbor Hospice's excellence in the areas of communication, getting timely care, treating patient/family with respect and dignity, and providing emotional/religious support for being honored as a 2020 award recipient. 90.1% of our families would recommend Harbor Hospice and we exceed national averages in 21 out of 24 outcome areas from caregiver surveys.

For more information about Harbor Hospice and Harbor Palliative Care please call 231.728.3442 or visit HarborHospiceMI.org.

For more information about HEALTHCAREfirst, please call 800.841.6095 or visit healthcarefirst.com.

Fall 2020 Volunteer Trainings

Basic Orientation Training

Oct 5
Monday
9:00 am
to
4:00 pm

Patient Care Training (2nd Step)

Oct 19
Monday
9:00 am
to
3:00 pm



Join us. You can be an essential part of our team. Training is offered every fall and spring.

There are several steps prior to basic orientation so please contact us for more information at 231.728.3442 or 1.800.497.9559, email info@HarborHospiceMI.org or visit our website at HarborHospiceMI.org



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Calendar of Events 2020

For more information on special events, please visit HarborHospiceMI.org.

Questions about future events, or other educational opportunities? Please call us at 231.728.3442 or 1.800.497.9559 or email us at info@HarborHospiceMI.org to discuss.

6th Annual Purse Auction



It is with a heavy heart that we will be cancelling the 6th annual Purse Party fundraiser on Sunday, May 3 in Whitehall.

It is very important that we keep our senior population, community, and staff healthy and safe. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended canceling or postponing in-person events that consist of 50 people or more. Because of the changing environment surrounding the pandemic, we're unable to reschedule to a later date.

The Purse Party fundraiser benefits Camp Courage for children ages 6–19 who have experienced a death. Over the past five years this event has raised over \$7,000.

Any purse or handbag donated will be held until the next year.

Thank you for your understanding and we look forward to seeing you at our future events!

14th Annual Ride (and RUN) To Remember Saturday, May 23



Proceeds to benefit the Leila and Cyrus Poppen Hospice Residence



Old Fashioned Days 5K RUN

Join our staff and sponsors for a beautiful run and/or 15-mile bike ride in Fruitport.

NEW for 2020. The 39th Annual Fruitport Old Fashioned Days 5K will be held in conjunction with the 14th Annual Ride to Remember, with proceeds benefiting the Leila & Cyrus Poppen Hospice Residence, a program of Harbor Hospice.

Runners and walkers welcome for the 5K race that begins at 8:30 am. This is an out and back course that will take you through the rolling hills of Fruitport. Refreshments and awards ceremony to follow.

After running, join the bike ride that begins at 11 am, or bring the family along for the leisurely ride around Spring Lake. Riders aged 16 and under must be accompanied by a parent or guardian; safety comes first — we encourage everyone to wear a helmet.

PLEASE NOTE: As we go to press we are still planning to hold our run or ride event in late May, however, we may need to postpone, cancel or move virtual should state and government restrictions still be in place because of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Thank you for your support and understanding.



Harbor Hospice Regatta and Awards Wednesday, July 29



Celebrating its 13th year, West Michigan sailors love this race, and in the past 12 years have helped raise over \$386,000 to support local hospice care. The regatta race is open to sailors and held at the Muskegon Yacht Club. All proceeds support the compassionate and life-changing Harbor Palliative Care program.



Beanies, Brunch & Brews A Celebration for the Harbor Hospice Foundation Saturday, October 17



The Muskegon Lakeshore will rock on Saturday, October 17 when Harbor Hospice Foundation presents *Beanies, Brunch & Brews* at Pigeon Hill Brewing Company's new production facility in Muskegon.

This memorable event runs from 11 am to 3 pm and will feature great food, outdoor games, bonfires, and tastings of Pigeon Hill's notable craft beers, all against a backdrop of lively music.

Your participation will support life-changing palliative care for adults and children in West Michigan. VIP and general admission tickets will be available soon. Please watch Facebook or our website for details.

