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Thank you to our
Board of Directors of
Harbor Hospice
and the
Harbor Hospice Foundation.
We appreciate their
leadership and support
of our mission
in West Michigan.



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Testimonials



"My patient had been unresponsive for a few days and was transitioning to the end of her life. I knelt close and told her what a privilege it was to care for her. When I called her name, she opened her eyes and began to speak. Her sons were home and we all gathered around her bed as she carried on a meaningful conversation them. We took photos of that beautiful and completely unanticipated time for the family. She passed two days later. It's not uncommon for patients to rally before they die, and it is a special gift for those who surround them. I witness incredible moments between my patients and their loved ones. It's why I love my work with Harbor Hospice, and I pray every morning that I can be a blessing to those I care for."

-Christine VanOpynen,
Staff



"My husband had been suffering from early-onset Alzheimer's disease for 13 years. It was a long, hard journey. When he reached his end-of-life, I knew I wanted him to go to the Poppen Residence. All the nurses were so amazing and caring. They cared for him like I would have. Before we arrived at the Poppen Residence, I had only been sleeping a few hours a night. One of the nurses said, 'Don't worry about him, just get some rest.' I never had to worry because someone was with him 24/7. I wouldn't have picked any other place."

-Kelly Crocker



"When my husband's cancer came back, he was in so much pain he couldn't live a normal life. We didn't have a timeline, but we knew his condition wasn't going to get better. When we called Harbor Palliative Care, the entire staff reassured us that that we would have everything we needed. Harbor Palliative Care made such a huge difference for my husband and our family—they made life as normal as possible for as long as possible. I truly believe we dodged the bullet of pain and suffering because of Harbor Palliative Care. It wasn't about dying or the quantity of life; it was about the quality of life and making the most out of every moment. I don't wish anyone else's loved one would get cancer, but I wish people knew what angels you all are!"

-Deb Anderson



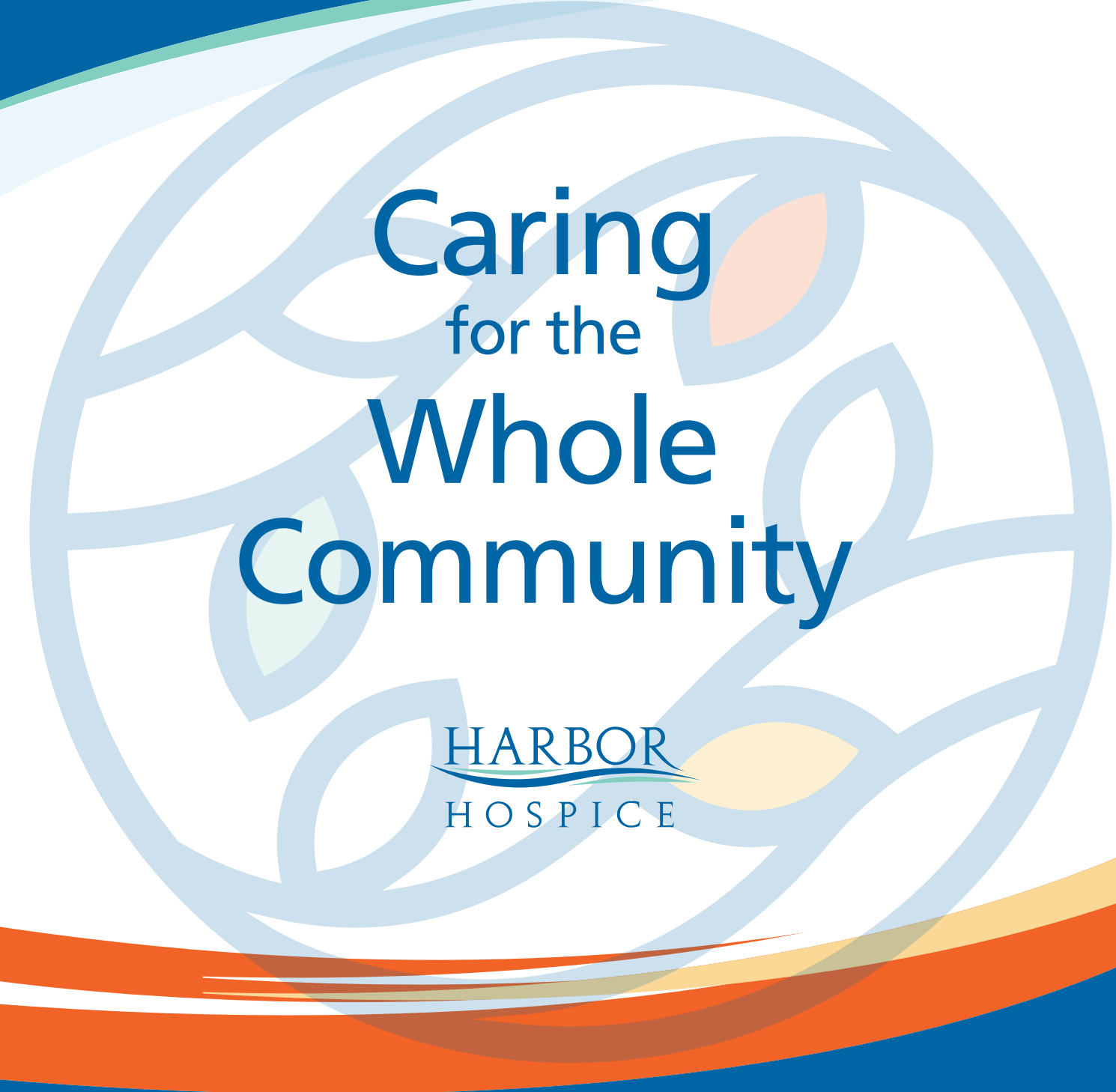
"I thought I knew a little about loss and grief, but when my brother committed suicide, I wasn't equipped to deal with it. I didn't have time to prepare, and each day felt more and more like I was walking through quicksand. When I finally contacted the Bob and Merle Scolnik Healing Center of Harbor Hospice it changed everything. The grief group I attended was unbelievably powerful. I realized that I wasn't the only one with stuff I was trying to navigate or the only one who has experienced loss. We all experience loss and grief. Now I can reflect, look in the mirror, and understand it's OK to want and need help."

-Maury Fredricks

Connect with us



Proud members of





Sue Wierengo



Chef Char



Dolly



Camp Courage



Bob and Merle Scolnik Healing Center.

Sue Wierengo was one of the pioneers who helped bring hospice care to West Michigan residents more than 40 years ago. She founded Hospice of Muskegon County, which grew into the circles of care you know today: Harbor Hospice, Harbor Palliative Care, the Leila & Cyrus Poppen Hospice Residence, and the

Bob and Merle Scolnik Healing Center. Sue passed away in January, which stirred in us, once again, deep gratitude for the solid footing and enormous community support this organization has had from the start.

“My mom believed that when there is a need for something that will benefit the community, there is always a way to get it done,” recalled her son, Frank, of those early days. “It only takes people willing to get involved!”

Sue’s perspective is as true today as it was then.

Milestones

Awareness of palliative care is growing! Doctors and patients are learning how our palliative care team focuses on relieving symptoms and side effects of treatments and serious medical conditions—such as pain and nausea—so we can improve the quality of a patient’s life while they continue to undergo treatment.

We held our first Cooking for One class in 2023, and the reviews were so enthusiastic we’ve scheduled more! This fun series offers in-person roll-up-your-sleeve sessions to help spouses and partners cope with the empty chair at the dinner table after the death of their beloved. You’ll meet Chef Char in this annual report and learn why she takes time off from her regular work to lead this class.

You will also meet Dolly the Wonder Dog, whose calm presence and love of snuggling is some of the best medicine we can offer our hospice patients.

With COVID in our rear view mirror, Camp Courage is being held again in person at Pioneer Trails for children who have lost someone close to them. At the reunion last August, we had the opportunity to hear stories of how this three-day two-night camping experience is changing the lives of children once mired in grief.

Reaching out

We are grateful to advancing technologies that make it possible for us to provide immediate support to patients and families in every corner of our five-county region—even those living in rural and remote areas. And we continue to reach out through many avenues so everyone in our region who can benefit from palliative, hospice, or grief care knows how we can help.

Our Spanish language materials have come in very handy, and we are redesigning our website so it’s easy to find, easy to navigate, and a treasure of answers.

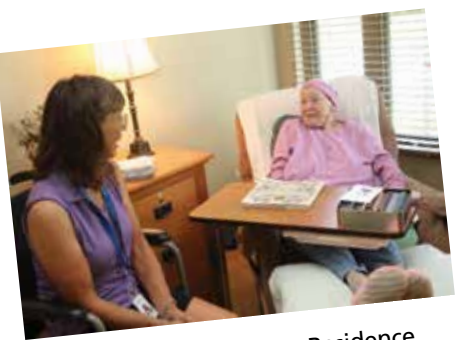
We have been deliberate in creating a culture of compassion and understanding for our patients and their families, and we honor the process each is experiencing, whether they are battling a serious medical condition, moving toward the end of their life, or grieving the death of someone they loved so much. Ours is both a mission and a calling to celebrate each person in our circle of care and to offer the best therapies and programs available so they can have the best life possible for as long as possible.

I hope you enjoy looking through this 2023 report and reading snapshots of some of the people we have come to know. Thank you for being part of our 40-year journey, for getting involved, and for making our work possible.

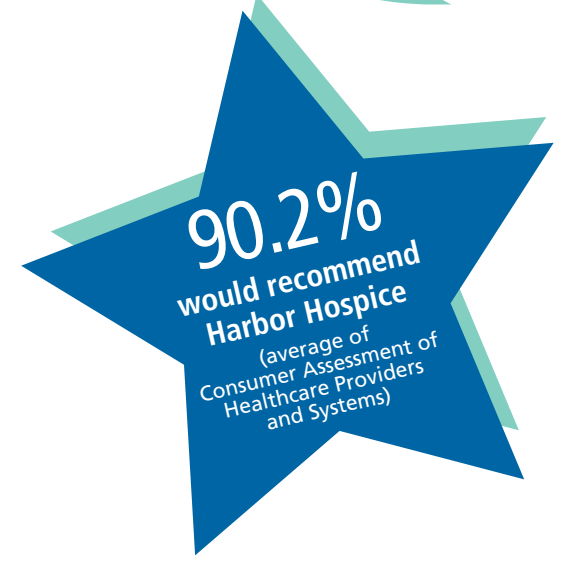
Susan Houseman
Susan Houseman, *President and CEO*



Gerald Harriman, DO, Medical Director



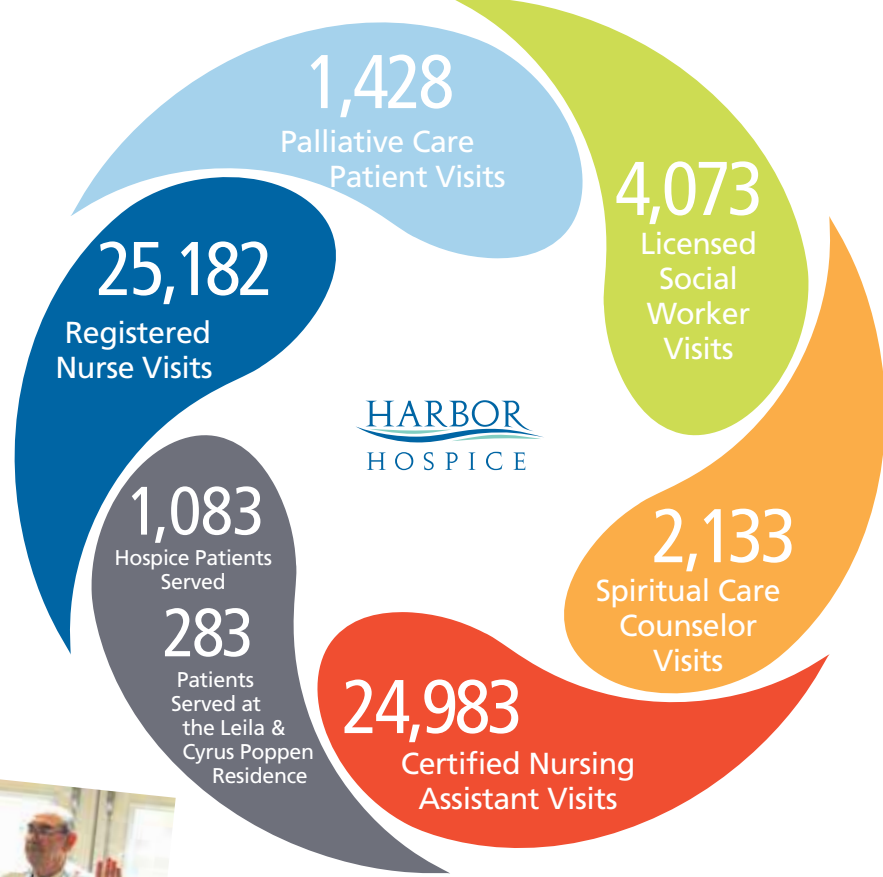
The Leila & Cyrus Poppen Residence



Bob and Merle Scolnik Healing Center



A Veteran Pinning



Thank you to our Legacy Circle Members, Sustaining Circle Members, Corporate Partners, and Compassionate Givers. We appreciate your philanthropic leadership of our mission—to build relationships that foster philanthropy and support the Harbor Hospice mission.



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