

Cherishing Life



Hospice
of the
Calumet
Area

A tri-annual publication celebrating the inspiring patients, families, staff, donors, volunteers, stories, events and initiatives of Hospice of the Calumet Area.

A Heart for Hospice

Sylvia Komyatte's time for Hospice of the Calumet Area may be far less these days, but her devotion and impact are just as immeasurable as ever.

Komyatte's journey with HCA began nearly four decades ago as she helped open the doors as one of our first volunteer staff members, serving initially as a nurse and patient companion in the early 80s.

"Sylvia's faith and unwavering giving spirit is inspiring because she's just a wonderful lady," said Cynthia Camp, HCA volunteer coordinator. "She knew how to be present for others and her kindness and compassion for people touched so many throughout the years. Sylvia has this thing for serving others that is etched in her being and she has served in just about every role here at Hospice of the Calumet Area. She was instrumental in laying the foundation for our organization."

Sylvia's always had a beautiful heart for the hospice mission. She impacted lives directly by her giving spirit and her compassion for her patients. In 1985, when HCA was focusing on building a spiritual program to acquire Medicare certification, it was Sylvia Komyatte, having attained her master's degree from Loyola in pastoral counseling, who competently stepped forward to become HCA's first Volunteer Chaplain.

Sylvia Komyatte always resonated with Santa Clara University Professor of Counseling and Psychology Dr. Dale Larson's reflection about end-of-life: "Because care of the body means nothing without first easing the soul. Hospice workers are not hired, they are called."



Pictured front and center, Sylvia Komyatte on a family vacation. Sylvia was an instrumental part of opening the doors to Hospice of the Calumet Area in 1981.

Although Sylvia is currently battling some of her own health issues, that hasn't stopped her from creating an endowment through the Legacy Foundation to ensure patients and families at HCA will continue to be supported.

Sylvia and her husband, Rich, will celebrate their 57th wedding anniversary this month. She is the mother of three children and eight grandchildren. She has always challenged and inspired them to use their time, talent, and treasure to help others at all costs. Her philanthropic heart will "continue to serve as an inspirational beacon of light" for countless others.



www.HospiceCalumet.org



Inside this Edition

CEO's Message
Commitment to Education
Community Corner
Donations from Jan.-April 2020

Friends of Hospice honor Dr. Robert and Lydia Dershewitz

Although it wasn't the gathering we planned for, this year's Seeds of Hope was definitely one to remember. Adhering to the shelter in place order due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we postponed our annual Seeds of Hope dinner. However, the support and generosity from our Friends of Hospice membership, sponsors, and contributors shined bright.

Instead of purchasing tickets to the event, our supporters kept the spirit of Seeds of Hope alive by celebrating our honorees Dr. Robert and Lydia Dershewitz, and converted their ticket purchase into an outright donation in support of our hospice mission. The couple have been supporters of HCA for the past 20 years. Lydia is a member of the Friends of Hospice, as well as a hospice Patient Companion and Bereavement Volunteer and a member of the Cookie Walk Committee. Her collaborative efforts also helped to form the Closely Knitters and The Hospice Artisans.

In addition to providing his unwavering support to his wife's remarkable determination and the Friends' fundraising efforts, Dr. Bob also provides good counsel to HCA clinical staff when called upon. So it shouldn't be a surprise that on April 23, what would have been their special day of recognition, these two extraordinary volunteers chose to cater in lunch for the hospice staff honoring the hard work and the compassionate care they provide to hospice patients and families.

One of the couple's favorite African proverbs sums it up, "If you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk together."

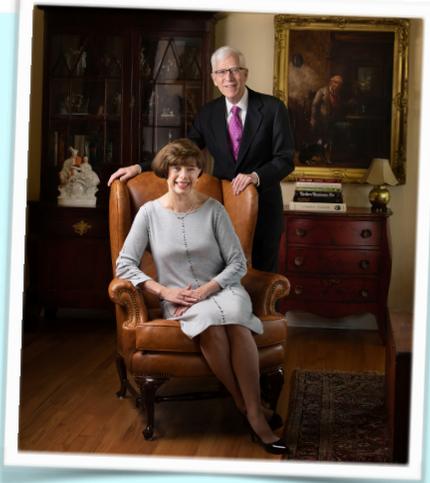


Photo by Ann Latinovich
Dr. Robert and Lydia Dershewitz

Special Thanks...

Seeds of Hope Sponsors

- Cathy and Cal Bellamy
- Robert & Lydia Dershewitz
- Community Healthcare System
- Hillside Funeral Home
- Largus Graphix Solutions
- Lithographic Communications
- Ann Latinovich
- Candice & Austin Logue
- Joanne & Jim Markiewicz
- Courtney & Dan Markovich
- Adrienne & Chris May
- Ernest Mirich
- Peoples Bank
- Nick's Liquors
- John & Lorraine Stephens
- Pamela Sussman
- Lillian & James Thomas
- Chris & Liz Valavanis
- Frank & Gladys Van Til



Staying Strong with Community Support

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Hospice of the Calumet Area experienced an outpouring of support from the community. More than 35 businesses and individuals stepped up to assist us with in-kind donations of personal protective equipment and supplies that were a tremendous help in maintaining the safety of our staff, volunteers, patients and family members. Donations received were essential items such as N95, KN95 and disposable masks, sanitizer, gloves, bleach, face shields, gowns, paper products and more than 700 handcrafted masks made by our Hospice Artisans and community volunteers. We are truly humbled by those who stepped up so quickly and without hesitation to help us hit the ground running during the initial break of the virus and the months following. Our work has not stopped and in fact has increased; we credit our wonderful supporters, in providing the strength and determination to help us keep moving forward.



Message from CEO Adrienne May

The Hospice of the Calumet Area (HCA) team was excited to start a new year of connecting with individuals and families throughout the Region.

However, 2020 has brought many challenges for all Americans and the world. The coronavirus, global pandemic is something we could not have imagined. The amount of illness and loss of life we have seen locally is staggering, as well as the struggles many of our friends and neighbors are experiencing due to company closings and unemployment.

Please know that HCA remains open and is providing the same high quality, compassionate care you expect from us. We are visiting our patients and clients wherever they call home, as well as providing care in our William J. Riley Memorial Residence (WJR). Protocols have been adapted to maintain the highest level of safety and care for our patients, clients, families, staff and volunteers, while allowing limited visitors at WJR. When patients reside in a facility restricting face to face visits, we have increased the use of virtual support and phone contact. Additionally, we will

soon be launching several virtual memorial services and grief support groups.

Despite the challenges, we are humbled and grateful for the outreach and support of the community we serve. The Staying Strong with Community Support article in this newsletter highlights some of the ways local organizations and individuals have helped us with supplies and personal protective equipment. These donations were crucial to our success, especially during the early phase of the pandemic. We couldn't have done it without you!

And of course I cannot say enough about our amazing staff and volunteers who continue to provide selfless support to those in need of our care. Whether they are on the frontline providing hands on care or supporting a family member who just lost a loved one they were unable to visit or are working every day to support the team, they are all our Healthcare Heroes. Please follow us on Facebook where you can learn more about our team of extraordinary individuals.

HCA is blessed to be part of a community who is kind, generous and committed to Cherishing Life.



Commitment to Education

According to a recent national survey in the Journal of Palliative Medicine, nearly three quarters of Americans (18 years or older), shared they had never heard of palliative care.

That figure is just unacceptable.

Hospice of the Calumet Area remains dedicated to raising awareness and providing accurate information highlighting the benefits of palliative care.

Nearly two decades ago, Transitions™, a community support program sponsored by Hospice of the Calumet Area, was created to improve the quality of life through compassionate care for individuals and families facing a life-limiting illness, who were not yet hospice ready. Discussing end-of-life issues, is not easy, but imperative.



For years, HCA has used several media platforms to share insights and inspire by guiding people through their journey. One of those channels include radio. Our "Cherishing Life" show airs on WJOB 1230 AM/104.7 FM every fourth Tuesday of the month. Starting next month, we will expand our reach by taking our show to Michigan City, La Porte and Valparaiso via WIMS 1420 AM/95.1 FM /106.7 FM from 9:10-9:40 a.m. the last Monday of every month. We will livestream each show on FB.





www.HospiceCalumet.org

600 Superior Ave.
Munster, IN 46321
219.922.2732
708.895.8332

Non Profit
Organization
US POSTAGE
PAID
Scherverville, IN
Permit No. 93

Save the Dates

16th Annual Hospice Hustle

Explore Your Community

Friday, Sept. 4 through Sunday, Sept. 13, 2020

Safety first! Join us for our socially distanced cycling event. You choose location and length of course and ride any time between the dates of Friday, Sept. 4 and Sunday, Sept. 13. Utilize Challenge Hound to track your progress on a 15, 25, 50, 75 or 100 mile ride goal. Each registered cyclist will have the chance to win one of several fantastic door prizes. Registration is only \$35; all proceeds benefit hospice patients and their families. To learn more and sign up, visit BikeForHospice.org.



17th Annual Mum's the Word

Don't Come Event

Thursday, Oct. 15, 2020

Join the Friends of Hospice in honoring our Hospice Healthcare Heroes! Although this year's luncheon is postponed, the Friends of Hospice are recognizing Hospice of the Calumet Area staff by highlighting their extraordinary care and service to our community during COVID-19. Consider a donation at a level most comfortable for you or participate in a 50/50 raffle. For more information or an invitation call 219.922.2732.



Friends of Hospice Congratulate and Recognize HCA Heroes as this year's Seeds of Hope Honorees.