

# Cherishing Life

**40**  **YEARS**  
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.

## Forty Years of Cherishing Lives

Monsignor Joseph Semancik can't believe it's been 40 years since Hospice of the Calumet Area cared for its first patient. HCA opened its doors in Oct. of 1981 with the mission of compassionately caring for end-of-life patients and families in Northwest Indiana.

Semancik, of Whiting, remembers gathering donors and community support in 1979, at the request of Gary Diocese Bishop Andrew Grutka.

"Of all the things I have done in life, the thing I feel most blessed about and proud of is that I have been part of Hospice of the Calumet Area from the beginning," Semancik said. "It's really a special place, with special people, dedicated to serving thousands of people with compassion. I never could have imagined that four decades later my wonderful younger sister Janie would spend her last days at the [William J. Riley Memorial Residence]."

Semancik, who now serves as an emeritus board member, credits the hiring of Executive Director and now CEO Adrienne May, and inviting community leader Janice Dobrinich to the board. He touts the two for their "powerful ability" to connect with people and their attention to strategy as a major influence on HCA's success over the years.

"I felt very fortunate to arrive during a very exciting time," May said. "The board was nearly finished with building the William J. Riley Memorial Residence [WJR] and I was able to help open the home. I was impressed with the board's innovation and their commitment to serve patients and families with compassion and honor."

Board member Janice Dobrinich recalls the countless dialogue that went into the decision to open WJR because numerous studies forecasted a revenue loss as a result of building the inpatient facility. However, she points to the board's "unmistakable commitment to community" and focus on hospice education.

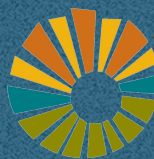


Monsignor Joseph Semancik with Hospice of the Calumet Area RN J.D. Dzurovcik and friend Cinda Rife.

Dobrinich says "HCA is a non-profit in the truest sense," and highlights the Transitions Program created two decades ago, to help patients and families through challenging times and offer them free resources along their journey.

"Our Transitions program has been providing these support services since 2001, long before the current growth of palliative care programs," May said. "We've brought music and massage therapy for our hospice patients and have built a Healing Hearts bereavement program for children, teens and adults. I am proud that we keep evolving and expanding our resources to take care of people with great compassion, regardless of their ability to pay."

HCA continues that mission created four decades ago and has been consistently recognized nationally with Hospice Honors and Hospice Honors Elite for excellence in care.



## Inside this Edition

CEO's Message  
40 Years of Cherishing Life  
Community Corner  
Donations from Jan.-April 2021