



AROOSTOOK
House of Comfort

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

To say that the year 2020 had challenges is an understatement, but it had blessings as well. In normal times, people's strength and resolve go unnoticed or taken for granted. This year was by no means normal, and the House of Comfort staff and volunteers stepped up to the task. The challenges came in many forms: working in a risky environment, PPE hindrances, constant Covid visitation policy changes, to name just a few. Despite these obstacles, we have taken things in stride and delivered unbelievable care to the House of Comfort patients and their families.

The House of Comfort's mission of providing excellent care has never wavered, and the Aroostook Hospice Foundation has never been more committed to this mission. Without the Foundation, the Aroostook House of Comfort would not be available to patients seeking hospice care.

Our ability to fundraise this year through our Golf Classic, speaking engagements, trade shows, and meeting personally with potential donors has been greatly hindered. However, because of the county's generosity, we still have raised funds to support our work through word of mouth and family experiences. Our golf tournament was canceled, but we still received unsolicited donations from many dedicated supporters. We also continually receive memorial donations, which speaks to the need and the support of our community. To quote one recent supporter, "We want to support our community and families by keeping our monetary gift here to take care of our own."

The Aroostook Hospice Foundation accomplished many things in 2020. Our board of volunteers is comprised of qualified individuals from every part of Aroostook County, who with their collective wisdom and expertise guide us closer to our goals and objectives. In thirteen years, the foundation has had no paid staff or administrative costs as it brought this mission to fruition. The total funds we raise are used to ensure this extraordinary level of care is here for your loved ones for decades to come.

Our commitment remains strong. We choose to think the future will be better and life will get back to normal. Normal may look different, but our dedication is the same. We will continue to remind the public that hospice is a lifestyle, not an ending. To quote someone whose loved one was cared for, "It's living every day like it is the best day there ever was."

Raising money for the endowment fund will ensure that no one gets turned away because of financial need. We are also responsible for raising funds to secure the Aroostook House of Comfort's long-term existence and operation. Donations, whether in-kind or monetary, continue to impact the lives of hospice patients and their families. We have enhanced our facility in many ways, all of which will be to the betterment of those we serve. To make a patient's stay with us as comfortable as possible, we continue to upgrade medical equipment in order to provide the most modern and comforting technology available.

I want to offer my most humble and heartfelt thank you to all who have supported us and are considering investing in our mission. Your donations have made an impact and will continue to affect the lives of all our loved ones here in "The County" for years to come. Our community's support is essential to the Aroostook House of Comfort's operation. With your help, we can remain focused on providing compassionate end-of-life care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Duncan".

Rick Duncan, Chairman
Aroostook Hospice Foundation



What is AHOC?

The Aroostook House of Comfort is an in-patient hospice and respite care facility staffed by an experienced local Medicare-certified hospice care agency. Together we care for terminally ill patients whose acute symptoms can no longer be managed through hospice at home and for those who do not wish to spend their final days in a hospital or a nursing home. For more info about us and our story, please visit:

www.arostookhouseofcomfort.org/aboutus/

What is our mission?

The Aroostook House of Comfort is committed to helping individuals and families on their journey through hospice and end-of-life care.

What is our philosophy?

- Focus on the quality of patient care.
- Deliver comfort, treat symptoms, and alleviate pain.
- Provide support to the patient and family.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The Aroostook Hospice Foundation Board members are volunteers charged with oversight of the Aroostook House of Comfort. Their primary responsibilities include property management, volunteer and medical staff support, grant writing, and organizing local fundraisers. Over the last year, the Foundation has elected five new members from as far north as Fort Kent to as far south as Houlton, representing all areas of our county. The new members bring their collective experiences and areas of expertise in hopes that their knowledge will help the patient and their family on their journey through hospice and end-of-life care.



Erika Arguello is an International Medical School Graduate from the American University UAM in Managua, Nicaragua. She currently serves as the Project Director of The Rural Recovery Network and the Better Breathing, Better Living grant, HRSA funded grants, at Cary Medical Center. Before joining Cary Medical Center, she was a Clinical Research Coordinator in the Neuro-Oncology department at The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center.



Norman Fournier was born and raised in Wallagrass and is a graduate of the University of Maine in Fort Kent with a B.S. in Education. He attended Graduate School at the University of Maine in Orono with 45 hours in Doctoral Program in U.S. History before being drafted serving two years in U.S. Army. Norman has participated on several boards throughout Aroostook County. His 40-year career in health and social services include positions as the Director of Children Services and the Executive Director at Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP), later as the Associate Administrator at Northern Maine Medical Center, and as Chief Executive Officer of Fish River Rural Health Eagle Lake before retiring in 2012.



Terri Ouellette has been with MMG since 1998 and serves as Accounting Manager. Terri holds an MSB from Husson University and a dual B.A. in Accounting and Business Management from the University of Maine at Presque Isle. She earned her Certificate in General Insurance, Associate in Insurance Services (AIS), Associate in Reinsurance (ARe) and Associate in Insurance Accounting and Finance (AIAF). She has the distinction of being named Virginia Allan Young careerist in 2006 by the Caribou Business & Professional Women. Terri serves on the Accounting and Business Administration Advisory Board of Northern Maine Community College and the Caribou Ecumenical Food Pantry Board.



David D. Jones MD, FAAFP, was born and grew up in Boston in a medical family, went to Swarthmore College, and then the University of Vermont Medical School. Dr. Jones practiced Family Medicine and Emergency Medicine in Aroostook County and helped establish the Aroostook Family Practice in Presque Isle. He later became the Hospice Physician for Visiting Nurses of Aroostook/EMHS (Northern Lighthouse Home Care and Hospice) in 2005 and also served on the Board of Medicine for eight years. Now, as he retires from Emergency Medicine and his other work obligations, Dr. Jones will continue to practice as the Hospice Physician for Northern Maine and the Medical Director for the Aroostook House of Comfort.



Nancy York Putnam, MSN, FNP, grew up in Aroostook County, was educated in Maine, and works as a family nurse practitioner in her hometown of Houlton. She has a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Husson College, a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Maine and completed a fellowship at the Andrew Weil School of Integrative medicine focusing on melding eastern and western medicine. Nancy is employed at Houlton Family Practice, where she cares for persons throughout the lifespan. During her 25 years of family practice, she has used a holistic and preventive healthcare approach.



“Our lives are woven together for a reason, each a vital thread in the Aroostook House of Comfort tapestry. Hopefully, our collective experiences will make someone else’s journey easier.”

-Nancy Duncan, Co-Founder



hospice care volunteer who has dedicated countless volunteer hours. We are blessed to have volunteers that make a positive difference in our community. In 2020, AHOC started the "Volunteer Spotlight," a social media campaign designed to highlight volunteers and their stories. Chris Stranderfer, Peggy Woodman, Phyllis Robichaud, Art Mayo, and Suzanne Hews were featured in 2020. Our volunteers donate their time and help families during an exceedingly difficult time and help make hospice care possible in Aroostook County.

HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS



\$38,580

saved annually
2,572 hours x \$15 per hour



2,572

volunteer hours



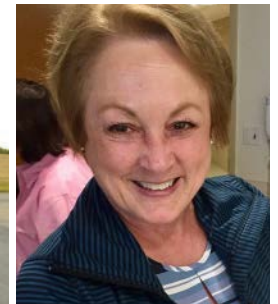
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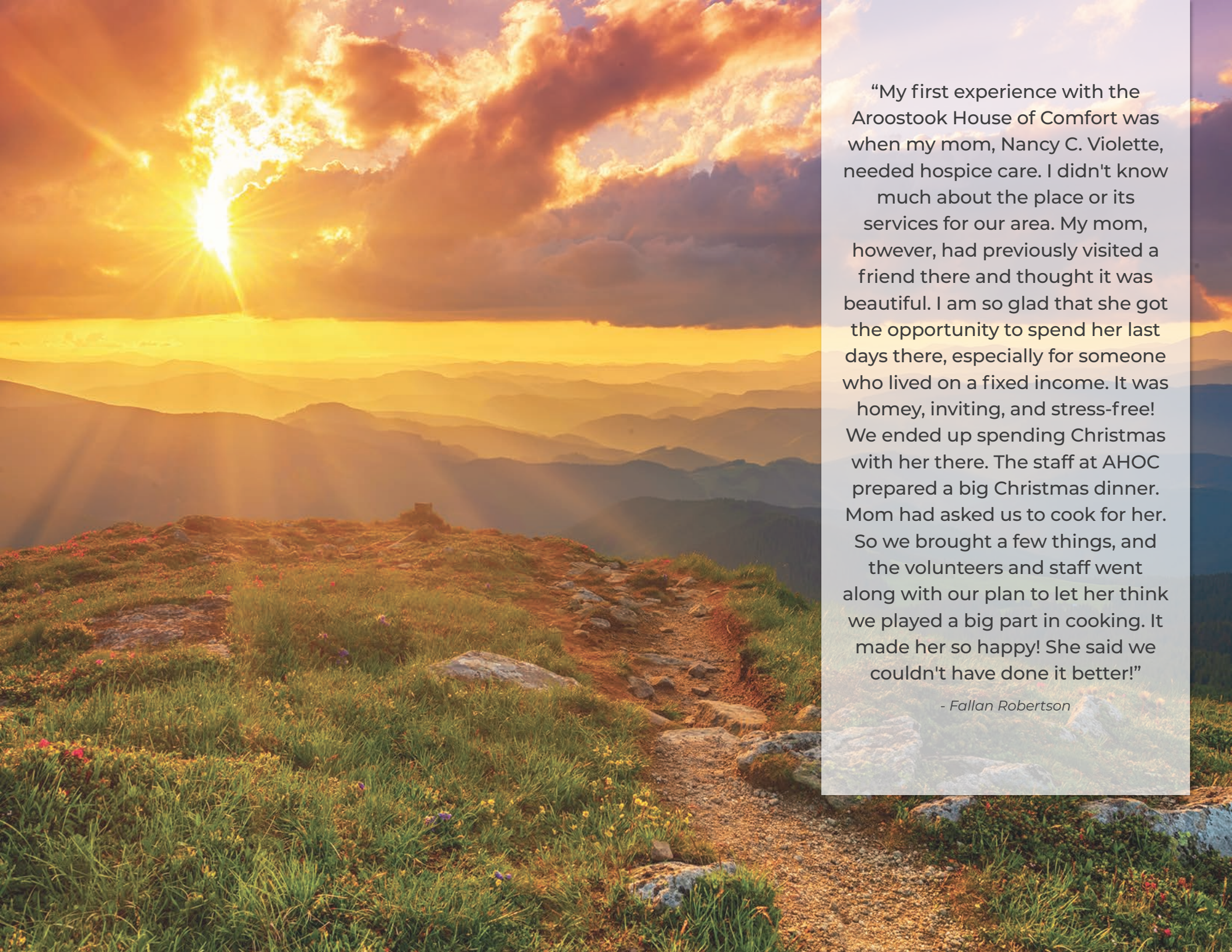
AHOC volunteers

Many of the Aroostook House of Comfort volunteers have been touched personally by hospice care. They were moved by the compassionate care their loved ones received and want to give back through volunteering. Their perspective makes our volunteers so valuable to our patients and their family. Hospice volunteers also play a vital part in the "Circle of Care" at the Aroostook House of Comfort by preparing meals for patients, running errands, and baking goodies for family members.

In 2020 volunteers also took on extra duties due to Covid-19, disinfecting high touch areas and helping family members with the Covid-19 screening process. The pandemic also affected volunteer training sessions offered by Northern Light Home Care & Hospice, which unfortunately had to be canceled. However, despite all the challenges that 2020 brought, our volunteers continued to offer deep personal connection, thoughtful words, and supportive actions helping each patient and family through their hospice journey.

The Foundation would like to acknowledge and give a special thank you to Keith Hayward for his dedication to lawn care and maintenance. We would also like to recognize Phyllis Robichaud, who won the Home Care Alliance of Maine Hospice Volunteer of the Year Award. This annual award is given to a distinguished Maine





“My first experience with the Aroostook House of Comfort was when my mom, Nancy C. Violette, needed hospice care. I didn't know much about the place or its services for our area. My mom, however, had previously visited a friend there and thought it was beautiful. I am so glad that she got the opportunity to spend her last days there, especially for someone who lived on a fixed income. It was homey, inviting, and stress-free! We ended up spending Christmas with her there. The staff at AHOC prepared a big Christmas dinner. Mom had asked us to cook for her. So we brought a few things, and the volunteers and staff went along with our plan to let her think we played a big part in cooking. It made her so happy! She said we couldn't have done it better!”

- Fallan Robertson



THE HOSPICE CIRCLE OF CARE

The Aroostook House of Comfort provides the facility or “house” for patients to receive hospice care services. It was designed with both patients and families in mind providing an atmosphere of peace, comfort, and tranquility in a home-like setting.

The medical care is administered by a local Medicare-certified hospice care agency team, which includes a medical director, nurses, social workers, healthcare aides, spiritual care coordinator, bereavement support counselor, and trained volunteers, as well as a primary care physician or specialist. They surround the patient and family with a “circle of care” focused on delivering spiritual, social, emotional, and medical support. This approach ensures the decision-making process includes the patient and family, allowing greater control over their care. Our hospice care team allows family and friends to spend time with their loved one without worrying about providing medical care.



175

patients in 2020



4,439

patient visits in 2020

“While my mother, Iva West, was a patient at the House of Comfort, my wife and I often walked along the pathway and now wish to support the ongoing mission of the House of Comfort. My mother was fortunate to have such a facility in our area during her illness. We extend our most sincere gratitude to Drs. O’Neill, Jones, and Shaw and all of the employees at the House of Comfort for the outstanding quality, compassion, and yes, even love that was given to my mother during her stay. From her medical doctors, nurses, nursing assistants, cleaning lady, and the volunteers, all of her needs were quickly met, and every one of her family members who visited were struck by the dedication. We are very grateful for the care that was extended to us as well.” - *Darren West*

“We are so appreciative of the loving attention Dana and the family received from every staff member throughout our stay. One night our son Jon said, ‘Every person here must leave all their personal troubles on the steps as they enter this place. Everyone is so nice.’ It is evident the House of Comfort’s Team cares for families, patients, and each other. The House of Comfort is a loving home for both patients and their families. Our sincere thanks for all you do.” - *Nancy Wright*



“Although our dad’s and mom’s, Paul and Anne Stoddard, stays at the House of Comfort were brief, it didn’t take family members long to see how much of a gem this place is in the “Crown of Maine.” The staff are phenomenal, treating both of our parents as if they were their own and with the utmost compassion, respect, and dignity. Thank you for the wonderful work you all do.”

- Pam Taylor and Brett Stoddard

FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

Our fundraising efforts include private donations, naming opportunities, grants, local fundraising events such as the Annual Golf Classic, and the Remembrance Way Garden. This fundraising plays a huge role in offering a much-needed resource to a community that is spread over 6,828 square miles, making travel sometimes lengthy and expensive. Our success is due to the support of volunteers, donors, and our local communities. We seek to continue our impact by allocating resources to an endowment fund and have partnered with Plancorp, LLC to ensure investments and fiduciary management of assets is handled by experienced professionals. Supporting the Aroostook Hospice Foundation and the Aroostook House of Comfort are ways to honor a loved one or to invest in our mission.



AHOC Golf Classic

Every Father's Day weekend, the Aroostook House of Comfort Golf Classic is held at the Presque Isle Country Club. This tournament has become the cornerstone of fundraising efforts, raising nearly \$241,550 in eight years. Unfortunately, the tournament was canceled in 2020. However, many sponsors followed through with donations to AHOC. Updates and registration information for the 2021 AHOC Golf Classic can be found on our website: www.arostookhouseofcomfort.org/golfclassic/



12

business & individual sponsorships



\$6,550

raised in 2020



\$241,550

raised since 2012



Remembrance Way Memorial Garden & Pathway

The Aroostook House of Comfort's Remembrance Way is a peaceful haven for comfort and reflection as well as a fundraiser for the endowment fund. The pathway is paved with personalized etched stones honoring family, friends, and loved ones. The stones are placed in the memorial garden pathway situated between the gazebo and the hospice house, with a dedication ceremony held every summer. More information is available on our website at: www.arostookhouseofcomfort.org/remembranceway/



\$16,500

raised in 2020



28

stones & garden dedications



“You really take a place for granted until you come and experience this. What could be such a sad experience was lifted tremendously by this place. The staff and volunteers are it, not the walls they are in. We are all grateful for having this place to celebrate the one we loved.”

- *Jessica Desmond, The Long Family*



GENEROUS DONORS

The Aroostook Hospice Foundation would like to thank each generous donor. Our success is due to the support of volunteers, donors, and our local communities. For a complete list of all donors, please visit our website at: www.arostookhouseofcomfort.org/donorlist

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Albert & Mary Fitzpatrick
Anonymous
Bangor Truck & Trailer Sales, Inc.
Barbara McCrum
Barrett & Erica Peabody
Breen & Joanne Bell
Brian & Barbara McGuire
Bryan & Marie Bell
Carmen Lauritsen Keegan
Crown Farms
Dan & Jenn Edgecomb
Darren & Carol West
David & Penny Lamoreau
David Herrick
Dolores Beals
Dr. Janet Allen - Paula Carson
Edmund & Sarah Dinsmore
Ellen Helstrom
Emera Maine
Evan & Linda Grass
Family of Charles Mahoney - Carol Mahoney

Family of Joseph & Emily Habeeb
Family of Phyllis Deschene Family
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The Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation
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Where hospice care and heart come together.

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