

# COMMUNITY of CARE

In the heart of Dundas, there exists a place where compassionate care knows no bounds, and the journey of life is honoured with dignity, respect and unwavering support. At St. Joseph's Villa and Margaret's Place Hospice, we are privileged to witness the profound impact of our care on individuals and families facing life's most challenging moments...

## This is Danny's Story



"You can't affect the outcome but you can GREATLY AFFECT the journey."

My name is Danny Albers, and just a year ago, my life was vibrant and full of purpose. I was a competitive powerlifter, a successful YouTuber, and a software project manager. I lived for outdoor adventures with my wife, Lisa, and my two stepchildren. Whether we were camping under the stars or traveling through Europe, our days were filled with joy, love, and endless possibilities.

Then, on October 13, 2023, everything changed. I was diagnosed with brain cancer. In an instant, our world was turned upside down. It felt like a storm had swept through our lives, uprooting the stability we had worked so hard to build. One day, I was the strong, dependable husband and father planning

our next adventure; the next, I was grappling with debilitating seizures, memory loss, and the mental fog brought on by treatment.

We were thrust into a world of uncertainty, fear, and the harsh realities of illness. I went from leading my family to depending on them for everything. The weight of my diagnosis was overwhelming, and I couldn't help but wonder what the future held—for me and, more importantly, for my family.

The toll on my wife Lisa was profound. She became my full-time caregiver, juggling an endless list of responsibilities: managing my medications, cooking, cleaning, yard work, and watching over me at night in case of a seizure. The exhaustion on her face broke my heart.

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She never complained, but I saw how deeply it was wearing on her. The strong, loving woman who once shared every moment of joy with me was being stretched to her limit.



professionals who immediately made us feel at ease. Vanessa, one of the nurses, greeted us with such warmth that, for the first time in months, Lisa felt like she could breathe again. The weight she had carried for so long began to lift.

Margaret's Place isn't just a hospice—it's a haven of peace and comfort. My room opens onto a private patio, where I can sit outside, feel the breeze, and watch the leaves change. These quiet moments in nature have become a refuge for me. Seeing the deer wander by and hearing the rustle of the wind remind me that even in the hardest times, there is beauty to be found.

A sign at Margaret's Place reads: "You can't affect the outcome, but you can greatly affect the journey."

Those words deeply resonated with me. They helped shift my mindset from fighting this disease to embracing the journey with humour, hope and humanity. Naming my tumor "Skippy" was my way of coping, and I began sharing my experience through my second YouTube channel, "Big Northern Bear's Brain Cancer Journey." The outpouring of support from the community has been incredible.

But what Margaret's Place has given my family is even more profound. It has brought peace of mind to Lisa and the kids. For the

first time in months, Lisa could step away from the relentless demands of caregiving and just be herself again. Recently, she and the kids took a trip to Wasaga Beach—a simple joy that wouldn't have been possible without Margaret's Place. Knowing I was in a safe, caring environment allowed them to relax and enjoy time together without the constant worry.

Margaret's Place has also given me the ability to continue working remotely, maintaining a sense of normalcy and purpose while still providing for my family. It has lifted a weight, giving us space to breathe, moments of joy, and the strength to face this journey together.



"Margaret's place has lifted a weight giving us space to breath again."

We then discovered Margaret's Place Hospice at St. Joseph's Villa, and it changed everything.

Margaret's Place became our sanctuary. From the moment we arrived, we were embraced by a team of compassionate, caring



## Ways to Support

Compassionate care is at the heart of what we do. Your gift to the St. Joseph's Villa Foundation will support the most urgent needs of St. Joseph's Villa and Margaret's Place Hospice, directly impacting the quality of life for our residents today and in the future. Tax Receipts are provided for all gifts.

## General donations:

Your generous contribution will directly enhance the quality of care and services we provide on our Campus of Care and offer dignity, respect and compassion to every individual who walks through our doors.



As the holidays approach, I ask you to consider supporting Margaret's Place Hospice at St. Joseph's Villa. Your generosity provides families like mine with comfort, hope, and strength during life's most challenging moments. Please

"The impact of Margaret's Place has been profound for my family."

make a gift today to help others in our community find the same compassion and support.



## Foundation Message



Lisa and Danny's story exemplifies the transformative power of compassionate care for families facing life's toughest moments. It's a journey of resilience, love, and humour—a reminder of the strength found in connection and support.

This season, join us in sharing hope and generosity. Margaret's Place Hospice, part of St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care, provides families like Danny's with comfort, relief, and peace—all at no cost.

Your gift ensures families facing unimaginable challenges receive the support they deserve, allowing caregivers like Lisa to recharge and residents like Danny to find peace.

As you celebrate, please consider giving to our Campus of Care. For 140 years, St. Joseph's Villa and Margaret's Place Hospice have provided compassionate care, and with your help, we'll continue for the next 140.

Warmest wishes for a joyful holiday season!

- Don Davidsonson, President & CEO

### Monthly giving:

Join our Monthly Giving Program and become a pillar of ongoing support. Your monthly contributions ensure we can provide compassionate care and essential services throughout the year.

### In Honour:

Donate to honour someone special who is celebrating an occasion, achievement, birthday, anniversary or retirement. This gesture not only celebrates their milestone but also supports our mission of care.

### In Memory:

A memorial tribute gift is a meaningful way to honour the memory of a loved one's life. Your donation ensures their legacy lives on through the compassionate care we provide.

## Legacy Rooted in Love and Gratitude

George and Ursula Schwamm's story is one of love, resilience, and generosity. Immigrants from Germany, they built a life together in Hamilton after arriving in 1954. George, a hardworking tool and die maker at Stelco, and Ursula, a gentle and kind-hearted woman, created a home filled with friendship and joy.

In 2011, when Ursula's health declined and required round-the-clock care, George turned to St. Joseph's Villa, knowing it was the best place for her. His unwavering devotion led him to move to the nearby St. Joseph's Estates on the St. Joseph's Villa Campus just steps from Ursula's new home, so he could visit her every day. The Villa became more than a care facility; it became their second home, a place where they were embraced

like family.

After Ursula passed away in 2013, George continued to find solace and connection at the Villa. He attended Men's Night, enjoyed coffee in the café, and remained a cherished member of the Villa family. George and Ursula's gratitude for the Villa and its compassionate care inspired then to leave a legacy. George wanted others to experience the same kindness and support that had meant so much to them.

In 2021, George passed away, but their legacy endures.

Through a planned gift of over \$750,000, George and Ursula's generosity will touch the lives of Villa residents for generations to come. We are deeply honoured to have been part of their journey and grateful for the lasting impact of their love and kindness.

A  
transformative  
gift of  
\$750,000!

## A Gift That Lasts: Leaving a Legacy of Care

This holiday season, take a moment to reflect on the values that matter most to you. By including St. Joseph's Villa Foundation in your Will, you can create a meaningful legacy that supports future generations while ensuring your loved ones are provided for.

A legacy gift allows you to maintain full control of your assets during your lifetime while making a greater impact than you may have thought possible. It's also one of the most efficient ways to give, reducing the tax burden on your estate while helping to deliver vital healthcare and support through St. Joseph's Villa and Margaret's Place Hospice.

No matter how big or small, every gift makes a difference in ensuring that future generations receive the care they need.

Discover how you can leave a legacy of love and care. Contact us at [foundation@sjv.on.ca](mailto:foundation@sjv.on.ca) to explore your options. Together, we can ensure that the services our community depends on will continue to thrive for generations to come.

## Exciting Progress on our Reactivation Care Centre at St. Joseph's Villa

Construction is now in full swing for the new Reactivation Care Centre on our Campus of Care at St. Joseph's Villa, marking an exciting step forward in expanding the compassionate care in our community. Scheduled to open in 2026, this project, funded by the Ministry of Health, is a collaborative effort with St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton and Hamilton Health Sciences to deliver innovative, community-based solutions.





Reactivation care is an innovative model of care that offers individuals a home-like environment to continue their recovery when they no longer need hospital care but require additional time and/or therapeutic intervention before transitioning home to long-term care or other community settings. The program focus is on supporting patients in resuming their routines, restoring their functional abilities and independence, preventing deconditioning and facilitating return home or to a different supportive care setting.

This important milestone underscores St. Joseph's Villa ongoing commitment to community collaboration and in delivering robust, compassionate care.



SCAN TO OFFER YOUR GIFT.  
THANK YOU!

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