

Hospice & Heart NEWSLETTER

Issue 5 — Spring 2025

Info and news about the Aroostook House of Comfort and hospice care in our community.

Welcome Message

As the seasons shift and we welcome the new life and fresh energy of spring, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of you—our dedicated donors, partners, and friends. Your generosity continues to sustain the compassionate care provided at the Aroostook House of Comfort, and your belief in our mission brings comfort and dignity to so many during their most vulnerable moments.

Thanks to your support, we are able to ensure that every individual who walks through our doors receives the end-of-life care they deserve. Your continued dedication is critical to our mission. I warmly invite you to join us in one of the many meaningful opportunities ahead—whether by participating in our Walk for Hospice or Golf Classic, making a monthly gift, spreading the word to family and friends, including us in your estate plans, or dedicating a space through one of our Naming Opportunities. Every act of support helps secure the future of hospice care in our region for generations to come.

Thank you for being part of our hospice family. I hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter and feel proud of the impact your support makes every day.



Abbey Clair,
Executive Director



Moments That Matter: The Cronin Family's Story

"The Aroostook House of Comfort is true to its name, a place of genuine comfort, not just for the patients, but for their families as well. Prior to 2024, I was familiar with the Aroostook House of Comfort but had never experienced its care personally.

Then, in 2024, I found myself there twice, saying goodbye to two loved ones during their final days. Through my first experience, I witnessed firsthand the true meaning of comfort and compassion. I knew without a doubt that my sister and I would eventually take our stepmother, Katie, there when the time came. As a caregiver, it is important to talk about the end of life with your loved ones and have a plan, even if it is basic.

For us, it started with Northern Light Home Care & Hospice and then the Aroostook House of Comfort. From the moment we walked through the doors, a weight was lifted from our shoulders. We were met with kindness, warmth, and an unwavering commitment to making sure both Katie and our family were supported every step of the way. As Katie's daughters and caregivers, while also balancing our own young families and full-time jobs, the Aroostook House of Comfort gave us the greatest gift, the ability to simply be daughters. In those final days, we no longer had to worry about the physical and medical aspects of her care because we knew she was in the most compassionate and capable hands. Being at the Aroostook House of Comfort allowed us to focus on what truly mattered—being there for Katie, surrounding her with love, and giving her the support she deserved. The entire staff at the Aroostook House of Comfort was exceptional, treating Katie with unwavering kindness, compassion, and dignity. Always ensuring that she was comfortable and peaceful. They were at their best when we needed them the most, guiding us through our 7-day journey with care and support. We spent precious time at her bedside around the clock, sharing stories and memories. The living room and kitchen areas provided a comforting space for our young families to gather, allowing us to be together in a home-like setting.

I cannot recommend the Aroostook House of Comfort enough to anyone facing the heart-breaking journey of saying goodbye to a loved one. My family is eternally grateful for the Aroostook House of Comfort, and they will always have our support." - Kristen Clark



Volunteer Spotlight: Heidi Thompson

Why did you choose hospice care as a volunteer experience?

In 2017, my 16-year-old son was in a serious car accident. During his recovery, we met so many kind people, including a nurse named Heidi who cared deeply for both him and us as parents. That compassion stayed with me. Once my son regained his independence, I felt called to give back. After visiting the Aroostook House of Comfort, I knew it was the place where I could truly make a difference.

How long have you volunteered at the Aroostook House of Comfort?

This May marks four years—I call it my "side gig." I've worked at The County Federal Credit Union for thirty-four years and usually volunteer on weekends. I'm grateful my employer supports community involvement.

How does your work help?

Whether it's preparing a favorite meal, celebrating a holiday early, or sitting with someone who has no family, I try to be a source of comfort. When my cousin passed in 2024, I felt peace, thanks to all I had learned at AHOC. I want to give that same peace to others.

What makes AHOC special?

It feels like home, not a hospital. Families can rest while their loved one is cared for with compassion. They get to just be present.

Most rewarding moment?

Fulfilling final wishes means everything. A last meal, a breath of fresh air—these moments matter. When someone hugs me later and says, "I'll never forget you," I know I've made a difference.



Every Name Tells a Story: AHOC Naming Opportunities

The Aroostook House of Comfort is more than just a facility. It is a sanctuary of peace, dignity, and compassion. It is where individuals and their loved ones receive expert, family-centered hospice care in a comforting, home-like setting. As the only inpatient hospice home north of Augusta, it has served more than 1,000 community members since 2018, offering a haven of hope and support during life's most tender moments.



Today, we invite you to become part of this extraordinary mission by participating in the Naming Opportunities Campaign, a meaningful initiative that allows donors to leave a lasting tribute within our hospice home. This campaign is lovingly dedicated to the memory of Michael D. MacPherson, our esteemed board member, vice chairman, and one of the founders of the Aroostook House of Comfort. Michael's leadership and vision helped shape this home from the very beginning, and he spent his final days embraced by the same care and compassion he helped make possible. His dream lives on through each gift made, each family comforted, and every life touched within the Aroostook House of Comfort.

Through the Naming Opportunities Campaign, you have the chance to dedicate one of the remaining spaces within the hospice home in honor of a loved one, a family, a business, or a cause close to your heart. Many areas have already been named, each with a story of love and remembrance. We invite you to help us complete this vision and ensure that every remaining space reflects the generosity and compassion of those who believe in our mission.

From patient suites, where individuals receive expert, comforting care, to the family kitchen and dining room, where shared meals provide connection and healing, every space within the Aroostook House of Comfort plays a vital role. Quiet gardens, cozy sitting areas, and even the essential staff and utility rooms all offer meaningful opportunities to create a personal and lasting impact. These tributes celebrate lives and legacies and help ensure that hospice care remains accessible and deeply personal for years to come.

Each named space symbolizes compassion and a visible reflection of a community that believes in caring for one another. Your support makes a lasting difference for every individual and family who enters our doors during one of life's most tender times.

To learn more, request a catalog, or explore available naming opportunities, please visit our website at aroostookhouseofcomfort.org/NamingOpportunities or contact Abbey Clair at (207) 299-2053 or abbey@aroostookhouseofcomfort.org



Meaningful Ways to Support Hospice Care

Every season brings new opportunities to give back in meaningful ways. Whether it's honoring a loved one, offering your time, or taking part in a community event, each act of kindness makes a lasting difference. Your generosity, in any form, helps us continue making a difference in the lives of others.



Become a Monthly Supporter

Recurring donations provide steady, reliable support that allows us to meet daily needs and plan confidently for the future of the Aroostook House of Comfort. Sign up online once, and your support continues automatically!



Memorial Opportunities

Purchasing an engraved stone or bench in our Remembrance Way or selecting a Naming Opportunity within the Aroostook House of Comfort, creates a lasting tribute. Each dedication helps support compassionate end-of-life care for others in our community.



Event Sponsorship & Participation

Whether you're walking the trails, hitting the course, cheering from the sidelines, or sponsoring one of our major fundraisers like the Walk for Hospice or Golf Classic, your involvement helps build community, strengthen our mission, and highlight your commitment.



Volunteering

Sharing your time, talents, and compassion brings comfort, connection, and care to those who need it most. Whether you're lending a hand at events or offering support at the House, every act of service makes an impact.

"We will always be grateful and consider it a privilege to support the House of Comfort, so other families may experience the quality and kindness of end-of-life care that was provided for us there."

- Judy Atcheson



Legacy Giving

Your support ensures that every individual in our community receives compassionate hospice care when it is needed most. One of the most meaningful ways to make a lasting impact is through legacy giving.

Legacy gifts, such as bequests, beneficiary designations, and other planned contributions, offer a meaningful way to support hospice care and the Aroostook House of Comfort beyond your lifetime. These gifts can also help you meet your personal, financial, and philanthropic goals. To make the process simple and thoughtful, we have partnered with Plancorp, a trusted financial planning and advisory firm. Their experienced team is available to guide you and help explore the giving options that best fit your unique circumstances and values.

Whether you have already included the Aroostook Hospice Foundation in your estate plans or are just beginning to consider it, we would love to connect with you. For more information or a confidential conversation, please contact Abbey Clair at (207) 299-2053 or abbey@aroostookhouseofcomfort.org



Celebrating Dr. Nancy O'Neill

After more than 15 years of dedicated service to hospice care in Aroostook County, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Nancy O'Neill in her retirement. Her compassionate commitment to hospice, primary care, and a lifetime of medical service has touched countless lives and strengthened the fabric of our community. She leaves behind a legacy of kindness, professionalism, and unwavering dedication. Please join us in congratulating Dr. O'Neill on her retirement and in thanking her for the extraordinary care she has provided throughout her career!



Welcome to AHOC

We are excited to introduce Shannon Flewelling, one of the newest members of the NLHC&H team at the Aroostook House of Comfort. A proud Aroostook County native, Shannon brings a wealth of experience and deep local roots to her role. Shannon lives locally with her husband, Gaige, their daughter, and two dogs. Her strong clinical background, compassionate spirit, and heartfelt connection to the region make her an incredible addition to the hospice care team. Please join us in welcoming Shannon!



Get Involved and Fuel Our Mission Through Fundraising

Every step you take, every hour you give, and every dollar you share helps bring comfort, dignity, and support to patients and families in their time of greatest need. Whether you're joining us for an event, honoring a loved one, or supporting our mission in your own way—you are an essential part of the Aroostook House of Comfort community. Explore the upcoming opportunities below and discover how you can make a meaningful difference.

12th Annual Golf Classic

Saturday, June 14th at the Presque Isle Country Club

We are thrilled to announce the 12th Annual Aroostook House of Comfort Golf Classic, to be held on Saturday, June 14, 2025, at the Presque Isle Country Club! Last year, thanks to your incredible support and the generous sponsorship of the Logan P. Graves Foundation, we raised over \$80,000, bringing our event's lifetime total to more than \$520,000! We invite you to join us again this year! Visit our website for additional details on team registrations and sponsorship opportunities.



Remembrance Way: Path of Love & Legacy

Saturday, August 23rd at the Aroostook House of Comfort

Our Remembrance Way Memorial Garden & Pathway is paved with personalized etched stones and benches honoring family and friends. Situated between the gazebo and the hospice house, it is a peaceful haven for comfort and reflection. We invite you to memorialize your loved one with a stone or bench and message of your choice. Your gift helps us provide compassionate care, comfort, dignity, and support to those who journey through hospice. Orders are due by June 1st and a dedication ceremony will take place on Saturday, August 23rd. For more information or for purchasing, please visit our website or contact Executive Director, Abbey Clair, at (207) 299-2053.

3rd Annual Walk for Hospice

Saturday, September 13th at the Caribou High School Track & Trails

Join us at the Caribou High School on Saturday, September 13th for the 3rd Annual Walk for Hospice, proudly presented by Event Sponsor, Greenlaw Electric! Last year, thanks to your incredible support, we raised \$60,000 for the Aroostook House of Comfort. We hope you may consider sponsoring this event or registering to participate! Save the date and stay tuned for more details. Let's make this year even more impactful!



AROOSTOOK
House of Comfort

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