



**“The Hospice House was so restful.  
It had a secluded garden and you could  
see the red birds. It felt like home.”**

*Dave Lang*

October 11, 2024

**Dear Friends of Big Bend Hospice,**

Our first experience with Big Bend Hospice was with a friend of ours, Lynn Munroe. She had been a fourth-grade teacher with my wife Mary Alma. I was with Lynn's husband Don when Lynn died in 2018.

Coincidentally, Mary Alma was being cared for in the very same room at Hospice House when she died last fall.

The best way to describe Mary Alma Lang, my wife of 65 years, is that she could outdo the Energizer Bunny. Once she got into something, she didn't let go. She would wind up leading the thing.

**She was a welcomer, a big-time welcomer.**

When our church got started, she co-founded the Mary & Martha Guild for the ladies. And she came up with the idea of serving coffee in the front yard between services. She'd see new people and go up and greet them. She had a gift for hospitality.

Mary Alma designed and maintained a flower bed at the church entrance. And one of her most recent adventures was acquiring 100 camellias for St. Peter's garden.

**She was the perfect gracious southern hostess.**

That Sunday evening in mid-September, Mary Alma had been to the annual parish meeting. She was in good spirits. While eating something later that night, she had horrible choking episode, and I called the ambulance. She had suffered a massive stroke and became unresponsive.



We were at the neurological ICU until Wednesday, which was difficult with family members and friends coming by to visit. We started talking about how nice it would be if we could be in a Hospice setting. Our daughter Susan had worked for Hospice in Tampa, and we knew several people from church who were affiliated with Big Bend Hospice. But we weren't sure if we would even be qualified.

Around Noon that day, we had a family conference with one of the admission nurses from Big Bend Hospice. They did a really good job of ministering to us as caretakers and helping us understand the process. Mary Alma was moved to the Dozier House by 5 o'clock that afternoon. She passed away Friday morning, September 15, 2023.

**Mary Alma was proud of her roots: a sixth-generation member of the pioneer Bradford, Moore, Roberts, and Theus families of Leon County.** Her parents were Martha Bradford Roberts and Charles Courtney Roberts, and she was a direct descendant of Governor William Bradford of the Plymouth Colony—Bradfordville and Roberts Road are named for her ancestors.

We built a home on her family's property in 1985, which became central to much of Mary Alma's gift of hospitality. For years, we hosted her Leon High School graduating class. We had Springtime Tallahassee parties out there, the Garden Circle, Camellia Club, men's cookouts. If not weekly, biweekly. We have a huge storage building out back for tables and chairs.

My wife's memory lives on through her art. Her paintings are found throughout our home and an entire wall is covered in hand-painted porcelain plates. On another wall are portraits she painted—many of family members.

**But there's one piece of art that stands out: *the red cardinal*.**

She loved to share the tradition of its symbolism as a type of spiritual messenger. A sign that a departed loved one is with us in spirit. And in Mary Alma's memory, we had an enlarged print made of a cardinal she painted and donated it to Hospice. We wanted to show our gratitude for the care they gave not only to Mary Alma in those final days, but to our entire family and the many friends who visited. The care was short, but extremely meaningful.

After being on the receiving end of "care for the caregivers" in the last week of Mary Alma's life, I believe that Big Bend Hospice is a nonprofit worth supporting.

**Please join the Lang family in helping to preserve this precious gift in our community.**

*Dave Lang*

Dave Lang

**P.S. I wrote this letter to honor the memory of my wife, Mary Alma Lang. I hope you will consider a gift of \$250—or any amount—to honor the memory of someone you love as well.**

