

Angel of care

Group thrives despite loss of co-founder

By Rebecca Haynes
staff writer

Helen Zuckerman keeps her husband's memory alive every day. Although Paul Zuckerman died nearly four years ago, his widow has continued to give her time, energy and money to the causes he supported so enthusiastically. One of those causes, the Michigan Cancer Foundation, will host an event this weekend started five years ago by the Zuckermans. "I think he started back in 1983 or so with the Cancer Foundation," Zuckerman, a Farmington Hills resident, said. "He was on the board of directors. We went to a (MCF) Circle of Fellows party one evening in 1985 and after that Paul decided that there should be a higher echelon of giving — that there were a lot of people who'd be willing to give substantially more than the average donation. Cancer is such a terrible thing and he really felt an urgency to raise more money for re-

search — to find a cure."

So shortly after, the Zuckermans started planning a "fall party for a group they recruited and dubbed 'Angels.' Membership in the Angels meant making a \$2,000 donation to MCF.

"WE STARTED planning for the party little knowing that just before it we'd find out that Paul had cancer," she said. "It was very virulent and he died the following January."

Aside from her continuing support of the Angels, Zuckerman also started the Paul Zuckerman Memorial Fund for cancer research, specifically the problem of metastasis, or the spread of the disease. The fund now has more than \$1 million.

"There seems to be a misconception about the Angels. People think it's a fundraiser for Paul's fund and it's not," she said. "All of the money raised goes to the Michigan Cancer Foundation."

The foundation then puts half of

the Angels' donations into the memorial fund, but Zuckerman stressed that this was the foundation's idea, a way to honor the man instrumental in starting the group.

"All of the Angel money goes toward research," she said. "This dinner is really just a way to thank them for being loyal Angels. We have a lot of people who've been with us since the beginning."

There are 200 members of the Angels. There were 80 or 90 the first year, said Zuckerman, who praised MCF and the work it's doing.

"I THINK the cancer foundation is probably as well-rounded a facility as you could find," she said. "They do quite a bit of research but they also do home care and offer hotlines and support. They address the whole spectrum of the human side of cancer as well."

Zuckerman said the foundation keeps her updated on the progress of its research.

"Sometimes you have to be a scientist to understand it," she said, laughing. "But cancer research isn't just important to cancer because they often find things that help with other terrible diseases."

Sitting in her home's library and surrounded by photographs of she and her husband with some of the world's most influential leaders, such as Golda Meir and Moshe Dayan, Zuckerman spoke of her husband of 48 years.

"He was a leader, a good person, just one of a kind," she said. "He was very active with the United Jewish Appeal and he used to go to Israel and meet all of the prime ministers."

"HE WAS also involved with the universities in Israel and with Sinai Hospital in Detroit," she said. "He was very active in the United Fund and also in Mercy College and the DIA and DSO."

"He started Velvet (Food Products) and a liquor and wine importing business," she said. "He was actively involved in his business, but he was one of those people who could do it all. You know, ask the busiest person and they'll get the job done for you."

"I do this for him," she said. "When he was alive I was his support and he did all of the work. That way when he came home I didn't have to tell him what an aggravating day I had."

"I'm not active in all of the organizations, but I give to a lot," she said. "It's what he would have wanted me to do."

Food wanted

Antioch Lutheran Church at 33360 13 Mile is collecting food to fill Thanksgiving baskets to be distributed by Headstart of Farmington.

Items needed are canned fruits and vegetables, instant rice and potatoes, sugar, flour, box macaroni and cheese, Stove Top stuffing, pumpkin pie filling, pie crust mix, cranberry sauce, Dream Whip (boxed), canned sweet potatoes, flavored gelatin, pickles and olives.

All food will be packaged by GIFT, the Antioch Youth Group, at 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 19. For more information, call the church office at 626-7905.



STEPHEN CANTRELL/Staff photographer


Helen Zuckerman has continued to support the causes so important to her husband. The couple founded the Michigan Cancer Foundation Angels five years ago, just months before Paul Zuckerman's death.

Receptionists needed

Volunteer positions as a front desk receptionist are available at The Community Center Farmington-Farmington Hills. An independent, non-profit organization, The Community Center is at 24705 Farmington Road.

Information to visitors at the center as well as over the telephone, handling class registration and overseeing regular receptionist duties.

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