



**For Immediate Release**

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**“Maire’s Journey” to Screen at State Theater**

*Original film follows the extraordinary journey of women’s dying wish*

**Traverse City, Michigan, April 21, 2016** – A new film, produced by Emmy-winning producers and directors Keith Famie and John Feist, is set to screen at the State Theatre on May 1, free of charge.

“Maire’s Journey” follows the story of U.S. Army Pfc. Maire Kent, a native of Southeast Michigan, who was diagnosed with cardiac sarcoma, a rare cancer of the heart. A Hospice of Michigan patient, Kent’s dying wish stemmed from the children’s book, “Paddle to the Sea,” which she read as a young girl. Her hope was that her ashes would be placed into a wooden sailboat to then be sent to the Atlantic Ocean.

The film, which took three years to produce, follows Kent’s story from her diagnosis to her death at age 24 and then her final journey from Lake Michigan to the Eastern seaboard. The vessel carrying Kent’s ashes during her journey was handcrafted by blind carpenter George Wurtzel and handpainted by Northern Michigan Odawa artist Tom Teuthorn.

The vessel launched in July 2014 during a special ceremony at Cross Village Beach to the sound of drumming by three American Indian women from the Odawa community. During her five-week journey to the ocean, the vessel carrying Kent’s ashes would cross paths with many people including Girl Scouts, a women’s rowing team, young sailing students and Vietnam veterans, among others.

The film originally premiered in February in Detroit.

“Maire’s story was originally going to be a part of our larger ‘Aging and Dying’ series,” Famie said. “When I met this extraordinary young woman, I realized that her story was so intriguing that it had to be told separately.

“We are grateful for the support of Hospice of Michigan and look forward to sharing Maire’s heart-wrenching, inspirational final story with the community.”

The film will be shown at 6 p.m. at the State Theatre in downtown Traverse City, 233 E. Front St. It is free of charge; however, reservations are recommended. Tickets can be reserved at [www.stateandbijou.org](http://www.stateandbijou.org), at the theatre box office or by calling 231.947.3446.

Hospice of Michigan, which was entrusted with Kent’s end-of-life care, is sponsoring the premiere.

“We were incredibly humbled and honored to provide hospice care for Maire,” said Dottie Deremo, executive emeritus of Hospice of Michigan. “Her story is truly an inspiration as to how one’s life and legacy continue on even after death.”

Immediately following the film there will be a Q&A session with Famie, Wurtzel and Rosemary Hagan, spiritual care advisor for Hospice of Michigan.

More information on the film and a trailer are available at [www.mairesjourney.com](http://www.mairesjourney.com).

### **About Hospice of Michigan**

A nationally recognized leader in end-of-life care, Hospice of Michigan is the original – and largest – hospice in the state. The nonprofit cares for nearly 1,800 patients each day, raising more than \$5 million each year to cover the cost of care for the uninsured and underinsured. HOM offers a broad range of services to enhance the quality of life at the end of life, including community-based palliative care and pediatric care programs. HOM provides grief support and counseling, caregiver education and support, and education programs for physicians and health care professionals through its research, training and education arm, the Hospice of Michigan Institute. In January 2016, HOM joined forces with Arbor Hospice and Palliative Care, strengthening the mission of nonprofit hospice in Michigan to ensure patients and their caregivers receive the highest quality of care. For more information, call 888.247.5701 or visit [www.hom.org](http://www.hom.org).

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