



## HOSPICE HOPE RUN

*Saturday April 29, 2017*

For the fourth consecutive year, Sonya Barnes is going to organize “Team Mildred” for the annual Hospice Hope Run. “I do this, admittedly with bias, because my mother was absolutely a wonderful woman. She did so much with so little and she made a tremendous impact on our family,” shared Sonya.

“Mom had endometrial cancer and died in July of 2013. Thankfully, her doctor recommended hospice care so that mom could remain at home. At first she was uncomfortable with the idea of people coming in. She was extremely independent, but the nurse was so patient and respectful that mom quickly came to appreciate the visits,” continued Sonya.

Sonya said that her family didn’t ever think they would need hospice care, yet she said it was the best possible care for her mother. “When I heard about the Hospice Hope Run – I thought this was a great way to get our family together and honor Mom. We are looking forward to being together and celebrating her, and getting some good exercise,” she said.

This year marks the 22nd year of the Hospice Hope Run. It’s always a special occasion flooded with memories, hugs, laughter, food, music, and a little exercise – or as much exercise as you want. Walk or run the 5K or the 10K or simply register as Proud in the Crowd. Your support of this signature fund-raising event will go a long way to help other patients and families experience compassionate care. [Register online at www.Support4Hospice.org](http://www.Support4Hospice.org)



## LIFE, AND LOVE, AFTER LOSS



*Each year on Valentine’s Day, Bruce Ayres does two things: visits his wife, Carol’s, grave and makes a donation to Hospice & Palliative CareCenter.*

By Bruce Ayers

I remember the day we received Carol’s diagnosis. I tried to shake those words from my head: pancreatic cancer.

The weeks that followed included doctor visits, debilitating treatments, and uncomfortable hospitals stays. We exhausted every possibility, but a cure was beyond us by then. When we called in Hospice & Palliative CareCenter, Carol lived another ten months. After 35 years of marriage, and two wonderful children, it was a lovely gift of time for our family.

(continued on page 4)



*From Linda Darden, CEO/President*

## **THANK YOU FOR TURNING THE PAGE!**

Like many of you, I receive a number of brochures and newsletters in the mail. I love to read about efforts and events in my community, but sometimes there is so much information being shared that I don't get to it all. But if you are reading these words, that means you have opened our newsletter and I am grateful that we can share a few minutes.

As we are writing this, we have also turned the page on a new year and are reflecting on our successes from the prior year. We cared for over 2,300 individuals with our hospice program and provided even more individual counseling sessions in our grief counseling program. We have supported individuals in their efforts to document their health preferences with advance directives and have created opportunities for veterans of all ages to connect, share stories, and learn about support services available to them.

We also look back with gratitude for the support we receive, and feel, every day from the individuals in our community. Those who volunteer with us, in any capacity, give the gift of their time, their talent, their smiles and hugs, cakes and music to our patients and our staff. We simply would not be the same organization without you. We also wouldn't be the same without the donors who contribute to and sponsor our events – the broad array of support services we provide couldn't be offered without the community's support, and we are grateful every day.

We understand that patients and families have choices regarding their care, and our volunteers and supporters help us rise above the rest. We also understand that many people don't know that there are different hospice organizations and that selecting the right one is important. We believe people turn to us for a variety of reasons.

- For some, it is the support, the empathy, the compassionate care that we can provide at a challenging time.
- For others, it is the knowledge that our care is provided by experts in end-of-life care – physicians, nurses, counselors, and other staff who are specially trained to address the medical, emotional, spiritual, and social concerns associated with advanced illness.
- For some, we are chosen because of the broad scope of support services we offer to those in need, from palliative care experts working alongside a family physician, to home-based care, to expert inpatient end-of-life care, to grief counseling available to anyone in the community.
- And for some, it is the knowledge that we were the first hospice provider in the state of North Carolina, and have been there – steadfastly serving generations of families – throughout our community for 38 years.

As we turn the page to our next chapter, we firmly embrace the spirit of our founding ideals. Knowing that we face an ever-changing landscape in healthcare, we are grounded by our deep roots and commitment to improve the quality of life for patients and families living with advanced illness.

## *Our Mission*

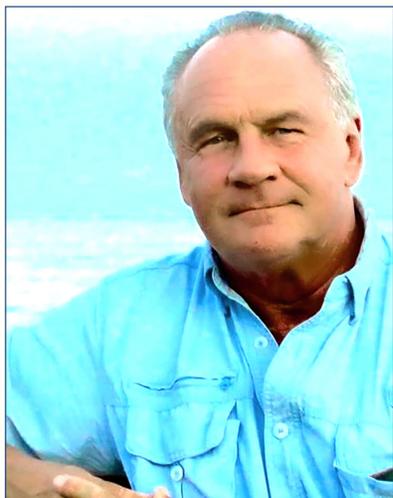
*Hospice & Palliative CareCenter/Rowan Hospice & Palliative Care provides compassionate care for those individuals living with a life-limiting illness and their families, through quality medical, emotional, spiritual, and social support.*



*Hospice & Palliative*  
CARECENTER

## A VETERAN'S STORY

By Larry Laxton



The stories are as diverse as the individuals, so being a veteran is not always easily understood by those who are not. It's not about what, where, when, or why we did what we did, but it's a respectful understanding of the sacrifices made by all those, and the families that supported them, in service to our country. We deeply love this country and are proud and grateful for all the past, present, and future members of the military and their willingness to put on the uniform and stand the post for the freedoms we share and often take for granted.

Kind words were slow coming for the Vietnam Veterans. For over 20 years it was not commonly known nor did I speak openly about my service there. I even moved away from home so I was not so readily identified with that chapter of my life, even though I was very proud of what I did. I moved back home to be with my dad, a WWII Veteran, during the last years of his life. His last four days were at Hospice & Palliative CareCenter where he was cared for, respected, and honored, not only for the man

he was, but also as a veteran. A pastor, also a veteran, dropped in unexpectedly the afternoon before my dad passed away. After a couple of hours with me, we sat bedside with my dad, held his hands, and honored him as only veterans can truly understand. There was a moment when I sensed through his hand that he was ready to join those "around the watch fires of a hundred circling camps." This was unplanned perfection for his passing.

I so cherish those last days with my dad, and my appreciation for those at Hospice & Palliative CareCenter cannot be appropriately expressed. The following days and weeks made me aware of how limited my perceptions were of the Hospice mission. Counseling was available, and I will never forget a housekeeper calling about a month later just to see how I was doing. I began attending their Memorial Day and Veteran's Day ceremonies, and the genuine respect and honor I received from this Hospice team helped soothe scars I secretly held for decades. I proudly wear the commemorative pins presented to me at these events by people that genuinely care.



A couple of years ago, they began sponsoring Veterans Coffees and have expanded to communities around the region. These gatherings have become much more important to me than telling war stories over coffee and donuts. In addition to the energy and emotion that's only possible with such camaraderie, it has become my preferred source for information regarding veteran affairs.

Hospice & Palliative CareCenter also sponsors one of the most meaningful events I've had the privilege to attend in my entire life, and one that will soon become impossible to continue. Last October "The Spirit of 45 Celebration" welcomed and honored over 150 male and six female WWII veterans and their families from around the country. One of the greatest honors, and emotional challenges of my life, was to greet them individually after they passed under an "Arch of Honor" proudly presented by young ROTC Cadets. Most were somewhat infirm, and many of the veterans were in wheelchairs or on walkers. As I took their often frail hands to present each a commemorative coin in honor of their service, I was incomprehensibly grateful, not only for what these folks did for us in time of war, but for Hospice & Palliative CareCenter and their quiet and compassionate mission of honoring veterans, both in life and death. As Taps was played to close the evening, I could not think of a more appropriate way to salute these men and women who had sacrificed so much, demonstrated amazing courage and commitment, and would soon be making their final march back to "Base Camp."

(continued on page 4)

## **LIFE, AND LOVE, AFTER LOSS** (continued from page 1)

Thanks to the people at Hospice & Palliative CareCenter, Carol spent her days with dignity, free of pain, at peace. For us, the ongoing compassion and quality care made such a difference. Most importantly, she was at home in a circle of love, with family and friends around her.

After Carol's passing, I was referred to their grief counseling services. The counselors helped me cope with my loss, and it has made all the difference for me by helping me return to life and living.

The support group I joined included the wife of a dear friend who had passed away shortly before Carol. I was comforted to see a familiar face and to know that I was not alone in this. Over time, Patsy and I became best friends and companions. With the blessings of both our families, we spend our time traveling together and visiting relatives. Hospice & Palliative CareCenter gave us both the tools we needed to consolidate precious memories in order to move forward and find happiness again.

As a way of saying thank you, we support Hospice & Palliative CareCenter in a variety of ways, like participating in the annual Hospice Hope Run each year. I suffer from a nerve disorder that affects the way I walk and forces me to use a cane, but I proudly crossed the finish line with Patsy by my side! We've also made contributions in our spouses' memory and visit the plaques that were placed on the Memorial Walkway in the garden area of the Kate B. Reynolds Hospice Home.

We've used special occasions to honor relatives, neighbors, friends – as well as making memorial gifts. We love what Hospice does to calm the end of life and care for the complete family. That's why I support this special organization, and it's why I want others to know about its special kind of care.

We both remember and honor the days we married the special people we lost. When you're saying your wedding vows and come to the end where you pledge "until death do us part," you really don't think it will ever come true. But it does. Loved ones pass, and suddenly you don't know what to do.

That's when grief counseling matters most. If you believe in Hospice & Palliative CareCenter as much as I do, I encourage you to give – to help other families like ours weather one of life's most difficult storms. And, in some way, find life and maybe even love after a loss.

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## **LARRY LAXTON** (continued from page 3)

I will never be able to fully demonstrate my appreciation to the Hospice Team for their contributions to my life, their respect for things that are profoundly important to me, and their unique place in our community. I only hope that by being a Hospice volunteer, I can contribute in some small way to their remarkable mission, especially as it relates to veterans. If you are a veteran or have a veteran in your family, please learn more about this amazing organization and know the people that make it work are there for us in more ways than you can imagine. As I salute each and every veteran for what you do, have done, or will do in service to our country, I also salute the Hospice Team for what they do for us. It's been said that a nation that forgets its veterans will cease to be a great nation. The phrase "Welcome home!" is a simple salute commonly shared among Vietnam Veterans. There are few organizations that remember, understand, or sincerely manifest these sentiments as well as Hospice & Palliative CareCenter. Thanks so much for what you do!

## GRIEF CAN BE OVERWHELMING

### We Can Help



Often a person’s first introduction to hospice care is after the death of their loved one. That’s because our grief counseling team is available to anyone in the community who has experienced the death of a loved one, regardless of their connection to our organization. We have our generous donors to thank for supporting these services.

Grief is a deeply personal experience involving a host of emotions, from numbness and disbelief to anger, guilt, loneliness, and even bitterness. It’s natural for grief, when left unchecked, to quickly turn into depression and profound sadness.

While each person’s journey with grief is unique, many people who reach out for support say that they were able to find hope, new beginnings, and their ‘new normal.’

Grief counseling is an effective way to learn to cope with loss and to manage the symptoms with techniques such as relaxation or meditation. It’s not a “one size fits all” approach – it is very individualized. For some, individual counseling works best. For others, group counseling or workshops are most helpful. In a group setting, people often find comfort and support in the sharing of thoughts and feelings with others who can relate.

In addition to individual and group counseling, we offer writing workshops, Camp Carousel, and other experiences that are designed to help people find their ‘new normal.’ Visit our website to learn more.

## IT’S GOOD TO KNOW YOU’RE IN GOOD HANDS

### *It’s as Simple as 1, 2, 3.*

We plan for college, marriage, a baby, and retirement. But we don’t prepare for the unexpected. Our organization is committed to changing this trend. And it’s as simple as 1, 2, 3.

- 1 Decide what kind of healthcare you would want & who you would want to speak for you if you cannot.
- 2 Discuss your wishes with your loved ones & healthcare providers.
- 3 Document your wishes in the form of advance directives.



gotplans123.org



April 16 is National Healthcare Decisions Day. With the goal of reaching healthcare consumers before a healthcare crisis, several regional healthcare leaders have united to create awareness, provide education, and encourage conversations about healthcare wishes. This coalition is called the Community Partnership for Compassionate Care.

Our coalition launched a campaign called “Got Plans?” to encourage all adults to think about who they would want to speak for them if they lost the ability to communicate healthcare wishes for themselves. Make your plans! Visit [www.GotPlans123.org](http://www.GotPlans123.org) to register for a free workshop. Workshops are held throughout the region all year long – and many special events are planned for April as a national spotlight shines on the importance of making your wishes known.

## A REFUGE FOR YOUR FAMILY

*By Jan Deter*

I guess it's normal to feel nostalgic at this time in life – my lovely daughter is marrying the man of her dreams this summer and I am looking forward to the joyous occasion. She has graduated college and is pursuing her passion for teaching literature at a North Carolina high school for the second year. She is still a lover of books, mountain climbing, and horseback riding whenever possible. She was a great kid, and it feels good to say she has become a very fine adult. It's been twelve years since she lost her father when she was 12, and I was forced to say goodbye to my high school sweetheart and husband of 32 years.



Recognizing your mortality is really hard – even after all the medical experience and familiarity with hospitals, deciding on next steps after all medical interventions have been exhausted is excruciating. In 2005, as my husband and I reached that place of reckoning, we had the blessing of a friend who strongly recommended we make an appointment with Hospice to learn about what they could offer us as we began to think about the unthinkable. Some of the kindest and most empathic human beings I have ever encountered took us in. From our initial meeting with the medical director to the weekly visits from the nurse and social worker, we were never left to feel isolated with our stress and grief. When my husband experienced a bout of runaway pain, they checked him into the Hospice facility and monitored him 24/7 until he was able to return home, this time without a wheelchair.



I worried constantly about our only child and what impact her dad's impending death would have on her ability to cope with turbulent teenage years. Again, Hospice observed our distress and suggested counseling with the staff counselor who specialized in pediatric grief and trauma. My daughter was offered a safe place to talk, make art, and ask impossible questions that were never rebuffed. My husband died and we grieved with all our heart, but we didn't break apart. We grew even closer together, told each other family stories, and remembered all the reasons we loved him so much. We started a new chapter of our lives with the energy to continue our healing as my daughter took on the challenges of a new school and a new neighborhood, and I accepted a new job teaching at Wake Forest University. A lot of personal change occurred, but Hospice

kept in touch. I signed up for grief counseling and occasionally ran into many of the folks that had helped us through some of the most difficult days of our lives. We suffered, but we were not broken by our pain. Such is the power of the rope that the Hospice community offered us. They tied a strong knot of love and support around us, and it still holds fast. I am so grateful that it exists in our community.



## WHO ARE WE AND HOW DO YOU FIND US?

If you're reading this newsletter, you probably know a thing or two about hospice. We would like to think that you also know a good deal about Hospice & Palliative CareCenter specifically. For example, we hope you know some of the ways that we are different from most hospices. We hope you know that we are the hospice with the beautiful Kate B. Reynolds Hospice Home, the extensive grief counseling services available to everyone in the community, the wonderful volunteers, and the list goes on.

The reality is, however, that many people think that all hospices are the same. In our efforts to educate both the medical community and the community-at-large, we've learned there is a good deal of confusion about who we are and how we are different from other hospices.

That's why we are on a mission to examine beliefs, perceptions, and behaviors related to hospice, and especially our Hospice & Palliative CareCenter "brand." One of the key learnings from our research is that past hospice users have very different perceptions from people who have not used hospice. For example:

- 87% of non-hospice users either believe that hospice is provided by the city or county where they live or they don't know. (In reality – you can select the hospice you want as long as they serve your location.)
- 66% of non-hospice users either believe that all hospices provide the same array of services or they don't know. (In reality – the level of care and services differ from one hospice to the next.)
- 85% of non-hospice users either believe they need a doctor to initiate hospice care or they don't know. (In reality – anyone can make a referral to hospice, including family and friends.)

Naturally, hospice care is a service that you don't fully understand or appreciate until you've experienced it firsthand. And the word hospice is not always embraced by those who could benefit from it the most. In fact, our research showed that while 50% of past hospice users liked the word hospice, only 29% of non-hospice users like it. We will continue to examine our research findings so that as our organization looks to the future, we will understand what our future patients and families value most, and relate to most when considering care. After all, our primary goal is to reach and support as many people as possible – ultimately making a positive difference in how people live with advanced illness.

**Though our name and our brand imagery may change, our dedicated team and our mission to provide expert, compassionate care will remain the same.**

## ➤ SAVE THE DATES ➤

Saturday, April 29



Hospice  
**HOOPERUN**  
5k Walk/Run • 10k Run

Presenting Sponsor: **BB&T**

Saturday, May 6



KENTUCKY  
DERBY PARTY

Barn at Reynolda Village

Presenting Sponsor:  
**Allegacy**

Tues-Wed, July 25-26



2017  
Hospice  
Classic  
**HOBOYER**

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Tuesday, October 3



Living  
your best  
**LIFE**  
ANNUAL  
SPEAKER  
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Presented By  
**Dewey's**  
STORYWORK

Keynote Speaker:  
**Daniel H. Pink**



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