

the HOSPICE family & Palliative Care

CHARLOTTE REGION

Paying it Forward for Fred *by Cynthia M. Scully*

My amazing husband, Fred, was a 29-year old lifelong non-smoker. Yet in November 2011, he was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer. By the time we received the diagnosis, the cancer had spread to his brain, liver, lymph nodes, and bones. Fred and I were incredibly in love, with a beautiful young daughter to raise, so we were devastated by the news. Devastated, and I'll admit it – bitter. Seemingly overnight, the world had become a very dark place.

But as Charles Austin Beard wrote, *"When it's dark enough, you can see the stars."*

During the days after Fred's initial diagnosis, our dark world was illuminated by incredible acts of kindness. Our family, friends, colleagues, neighbors – and even strangers – showed us that the world is a joyful place, full of compassionate people. Our home was filled with cards, flowers, and holiday cookies. Neighbors delivered home-cooked meals and hung Christmas decorations to brighten our holiday season. Fred's colleagues gave him an iPad to distract him during chemotherapy treatments. I kept track of the countless acts of kindness, and documented them in a scrapbook for Fred. On particularly grim days during his cancer treatment, we used the book to remind ourselves that we had much to be thankful for. We spent time planning ways to thank our numerous supporters and dreamed of "paying it forward" to help others.



Cynthia Scully with her daughter

Unfortunately, Fred passed away before he got his chance. He died at Levine & Dickson Hospice House (LDHH) on May 19, 2012, just one month shy of his 30th birthday. After the funeral, my attention immediately turned to this upcoming milestone. How could I possibly face his birthday without him? I knew I needed a plan, a strategy

for facing the day. Immediately, I thought of Levine & Dickson Hospice House. Fred and I spent his final four weeks at LDHH and it had become home to us; the staff and volunteers were like family.

In honor of Fred's birthday, I knew that I wanted to give back to LDHH. So I decided to begin the big day by delivering coffee and donuts for dayshift staff, volunteers, and families. Not wanting to neglect the incredible nightshift team, I planned to deliver birthday

cupcakes in the evening. So

it was settled – I would start and end the day at LDHH. With this plan in place, I started to feel a bit better. And to my surprise, I actually started to get excited about Fred's birthday. I knew that it would be a sad day, but by giving to others, I was looking forward to making it a meaningful day as well.

And once I started looking for ways to help others, the opportunities seemed endless. A neighbor's small child was undergoing cancer treatment and was scheduled to have

(See Paying It Forward, page 2)

Another Home Away From Home



**A message from
Peter A. Brunnick, CPA
President & CEO**

Since Levine & Dickson Hospice House opened its doors in Huntersville in 2008, we have cared for over 2,200 patients and their families, offering our unique blend of compassion and medical expertise. In fact, in this issue you will read the story of Cynthia Scully, who spent four weeks at LDHH as her husband, Fred, lost his battle to cancer just one month before his 30th birthday. LDHH was the right choice because Fred's pain and symptoms could not be controlled at home and spending his last days in a hospital ICU was not an acceptable option for the couple. Fred and Cynthia, residents of Davidson, NC, were understandably relieved to have the answer to their prayers just miles from their home.

We realize that Levine & Dickson Hospice House is not always a viable choice for our patients, especially those in the southern-most region of our service area. Fortunately, we will soon have another option. **I am proud to announce that in December, we will open our second inpatient hospice unit, Levine & Dickson Hospice House at Southminster.**

Thanks once again to the generosity of The Leon Levine Foundation and The Dickson Foundation, we are turning 20 rooms at Southminster, a continuing care retirement community located in south Charlotte, into ten two-room suites. The suites will be able to accommodate the patient as well as family members who would prefer to spend the night with their loved one.

There are many reasons for this project. First and foremost, we want to continue our mission of offering quality end-of-life care to *anyone* in our community who needs it. But we also recognize that the demand for our services continues to grow, along with the population and age of our communities' residents. Levine & Dickson Hospice House at Southminster will allow us yet another venue to meet the need for expert hospice care in our service area.

As Cynthia Scully can attest, a hospice house becomes a "home away from home" for families living through the final stage of a terminal illness. We are extremely pleased and grateful that we can soon offer an additional location and another much-needed resource to the communities we serve.

(Paying It Forward, continued from page 1).....

a series of important tests on Fred's birthday. I thought a care package might help the family get through a long day at the hospital. As I set about creating the list of items to include in the package, I thought of Fred and our plans to "pay it forward." I was proud to be paying it forward on his behalf, but I started to wonder – would others help me pay it forward as well? Could we have a bigger impact? I thought of asking family and friends to help, but I was nervous. What if no one participated?

But after a great conversation with my HPCCR grief counselor, Amy Thomas, I decided to go for it. Using CaringBridge and Facebook, I asked others to help me "pay it forward for Fred" on his birthday by performing a random act of kindness. I was relieved and excited when friends and family members responded with their commitments to help. They even spread the word so that others could participate.

On Fred's 30th birthday, June 21, we "paid it forward for Fred" in incredible ways. We gave blood, registered as bone marrow donors, and purchased meals for total strangers. We generously donated to hospice, brought homemade treats to volunteer firefighters, and left Starbucks gift cards on windshields of cars parked at hospitals. We collected nonperishables for the food bank and gathered school supplies for children in need. The list goes on and on.

We helped countless people, but we also helped ourselves. The general consensus is that after giving to others, we began to notice kindness all around us. This has led many of us to continue to pay it forward, long after Fred's birthday. To this day, I continue to receive emails about good deeds performed in Fred's honor. And as for me? I just submitted my application to be a staff support volunteer for Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region.

Carol Anne Lawler – Serving our Communities of Faith



Carol Anne Lawler, MDiv

For her first six years with our organization, Carol Anne Lawler was a chaplain and grief counselor for Hospice & Palliative Care Lincoln County. Over the last few months, however, she has transitioned to a new role. Carol Anne is our new **Communities of Faith Liaison**, responsible for all eight counties we serve.

Relying on her experiences during her previous position, Carol Anne reaches out to diverse faith communities to *intentionally* build relationships and to fulfill our mission of providing community education.

The Communities of Faith Liaison position was created to strengthen relationships with faith communities. If we can understand their challenges, support their efforts to encourage hospice care for their congregations, and become a valuable resource for them, we can successfully promote

end-of-life care within our communities. By getting to know Carol Anne, faith community members will become better informed about who we are and what we can offer.

Carol Anne looks forward to meeting individuals connected with a particular temple, mosque, synagogue, meeting house, or church. If you would like to assist Carol Anne by providing her with a contact name and number, reach her directly by calling **704.562.2598** or by emailing lawlerc@hpccr.org.

We Honor Vets

On Veterans Day, and every day, we honor the many men and women who made great sacrifices to preserve our freedom. Whether they served in World War II, the Korean War, during the Cold War, in Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, or somewhere else, each veteran has a distinct life story and a unique set of needs.

That's why Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region has made a commitment to the brave individuals who have given us so much. Last year, we joined the "We Honor Veterans" program, a joint initiative of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and the Department of Veteran Affairs. We completed the first level – providing veteran-centric education to staff and volunteers – and are actively working toward completion of level two – building organizational capacity to provide quality care for veterans.

For the veterans we serve through hospice, we offer a small pin that can be worn to honor and commemorate their heroic efforts. Our veteran palliative patients receive personalized, hand-written thank you notes from members of their care teams. And all veterans we serve receive specialized care tailored to their specific needs. It's the very least we can do when they have already done so much for us.



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Save The Date for Soup!

Wells Fargo presents the 13th Annual

Soup on Sunday!

Mark your calendar now:
Sunday, January 27
11am-2pm

Dining Out for Hospice

November is National Hospice Month! And to acknowledge and celebrate this important month, area restaurants have partnered with HPCCR to host a "Dining Out for Hospice" day. Visit some of Charlotte's finest eateries, such as Dressler's (Metropolitan and Birkdale locations), Bonfish Grill-Matthews, and Trio, enjoy a great meal, and know that a portion of your bill will be donated back to HPCCR.

Visit hpccr.org for a list of participating restaurants and the day they have chosen as their "dining out" day to support HPCCR.

Bon appétit!

Visit our calendar of events.



Let Us Celebrate Life

We invite you to join us for our annual "Light Up A Life," a holiday tradition that provides a number of meaningful ways to remember loved ones.

Light Up A Life Interfaith Memorial Services

Our interfaith candlelight memorial services honor and remember the individuals and families we've served, through thoughtful readings, music, and the lighting of candles. These services offer an opportunity for reflection, a time for healing, and a true celebration of life:

Charlotte
First Baptist Church - West
1801 Oaklawn Avenue
5pm, Sat., Dec. 1

Temple Beth-El
5101 Providence Road
7pm, Tues., Dec. 4

St. Martin's Episcopal Church
1510 East Seventh Street
5pm, Sat., Dec. 8

Gaston County
Holy Comforter Lutheran Church
216 N. Main Street
Belmont
7pm, Thur., Dec. 6

Huntersville
Levine & Dickson Hospice House
11900 Vanstory Drive
3:30pm, Sun., Dec. 2

Lake Norman
Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
19600 Zion Avenue
Cornelius
6:30pm, Tues., Dec. 11

Lincoln County
Emanuel Reformed Church
329 East Main Street
Lincolnton
2:30pm, Sun., Dec. 9

Union County
First Presbyterian Church
200 Indian Trail Road,
South
Indian Trail
2pm, Sat., Dec. 1

Commemorative Bells

Each year HPCCR releases a hand-painted porcelain bell that becomes a keepsake holiday ornament. The 2012 Light Up A Life bell is a beautiful purple with soft gold accents highlighting green, blue, and lilac stripes. Bells can be hand-inscribed inside with a name and year to honor a special person in your life or the memory of a loved one. They can also be purchased as a very special gift for a friend, a teacher, a neighbor, or for your own collection. Bells can be mailed to you or directly to your chosen recipient(s) with an enclosed card.



Remembrance Trees and Tree Lights

Beautiful Remembrance Trees shine throughout our community from the first tree lighting in December through

January 2, 2013. You may sponsor one or more lights to shine "in honor of" or "in memory of" your loved ones on all Remembrance Trees. A tribute card will be sent to those being honored, or to the families of the loved ones being remembered.

Remembrance Tree Locations
Hospice & Palliative Care
Charlotte Region – Uptown
1420 East Seventh Street
Charlotte

Matthews Town Hall
232 Matthews Station
Matthews

Levine & Dickson Hospice House
11900 Vanstory Drive
Huntersville

Birkdale Village
8712 Lindholm Drive
Huntersville

Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
19600 Zion Avenue, Cornelius

Davidson Village Green
Main Street (in front of the Public Library), Davidson

Lincoln Cultural Center
403 East Main Street
Lincolnton

Proceeds from the Commemorative Bells and Remembrance Tree Lights will help us continue to make a difference in the lives of the many adults and children receiving our hospice care.

To purchase bells or sponsor trees online, visit hpccr.org or scan here:



ORDER FORM

We are delighted to provide you meaningful ways to honor, remember, and celebrate your loved ones. Please place your orders using this form, download this brochure from our website, or order online at hpccr.org. Follow the numbered sections and print clearly to ensure that we correctly acknowledge your gift. Your purchases help fund our services throughout the year for our patients and their families.

1 Commemorative Bells

Your bell inscription will begin with the dedication followed by the name, and it will end with the current year.

Example: In memory of Nana – 2012 or
In honor of Art Barnett – 2012

QUANTITY _____ BELL(S)

IN HONOR OF _____

IN MEMORY OF _____

PLEASE SHIP TO:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

QUANTITY _____ BELL(S)

IN HONOR OF _____

IN MEMORY OF _____

PLEASE SHIP TO:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

QUANTITY _____ BELL(S)

IN HONOR OF _____

IN MEMORY OF _____

PLEASE SHIP TO:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

2 Remembrance Tree Lights

You will receive a gift acknowledgment for your tree light sponsorship. We will also send a tribute card to those you honor or to the families of the loved ones you are remembering.

QUANTITY _____ LIGHT(S)

IN HONOR OF _____

IN MEMORY OF _____

PLEASE SEND TRIBUTE CARD TO:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

QUANTITY _____ LIGHT(S)

IN HONOR OF _____

IN MEMORY OF _____

PLEASE SEND TRIBUTE CARD TO:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

QUANTITY _____ LIGHT(S)

IN HONOR OF _____

IN MEMORY OF _____

PLEASE SEND TRIBUTE CARD TO:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

3 My Order Summary

	QUANTITY	AMOUNT
Bell(s)	_____	\$25 each = _____
Bell Stand(s)	_____	\$ 5 each = _____
Tree Light(s)	_____	\$15 each = _____
Shipping and Handling*		\$ 7 each = _____

**Shipping and handling applies to bell and stand orders only.
Please add a shipping fee for each (different) mailing address.*

Additional Donation: _____ = _____

GRAND TOTAL _____ = _____

MY NAME _____

MY ADDRESS _____

MY CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

MY PHONE _____

MY EMAIL _____

4 I'd like to pay with

Check payable to Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region, or

My credit card:

Visa MasterCard AMEX Discover

CARD # _____

EXPIRATION DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

Spotlight on Two Award-Winning Staff Members

Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region is very proud to announce that we have two staff members who were recently honored as recipients of the *Charlotte Business Journal Excellence in Health Care Awards*. Martha Gilbert, RN, was recognized as Nurse of the Year and Dr. Philip Hess was recognized as Physician of the Year.

Martha Gilbert was chosen because she *consistently* meets her hospice patients and families where they are in the final journey of their lives. She is a true patient advocate who is also a steadfast role model and a mentor to many at Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region.

Dr. Philip Hess was selected for both his impact in the Charlotte community and his kindness to his patients and fellow staff members. Dr. Hess works tirelessly to alleviate pain and symptoms for his patients. He handles complex situations with calm assurance, and is an expert at guiding his patients and families through the process of making challenging decisions.

Congratulations to both Martha Gilbert and Philip Hess for this well-deserved recognition. And thank you both for your dedication to HPCCR!



Martha Gilbert and Dr. Philip Hess with Pete Brunnick, HPCCR President & CEO

Lincoln County's Furriest Volunteer



Titan, with Jeri Edwards' son

Our volunteers come in all shapes and sizes. And, apparently, breeds.

Lincoln County resident, Jeri Edwards, began bringing her dog with her to visit residents of Cardinal Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center last December, and he has been brightening the faces of hospice patients ever since. Aptly named Titan, the three-year old Anatolian Shepherd, is 130 pounds of gentle affection.

Titan is a certified therapy dog, having completed a rigorous training course last year. Dogs are evaluated on demeanor, how they respond to commands and noises, and how they act around medical equipment, specifically wheelchairs and crutches. *"Titan was a natural,"* claims owner, Jeri. *"He likes being around people so much; he's just so happy doing that. You can just see it in his face and his expressions."*

The impact on the Hospice & Palliative Care Lincoln County patients that Titan visits is nothing short of amazing. They eagerly await his visits, their faces lighting up at their first glimpse of the furry companion. And Titan gives it right back. He greets every resident and basks in their affections. He lets them hug his enormous body and rub his soft head.

Jeri lives on a farm and she originally chose Titan because his breed is a well-known protector of livestock and animals. But, it seems, his true calling is to protect the joy of hospice patients. And it's a job he never fails.

Palliative Care: Offering More Time on Your Side

This year, Palliative Medicine Consultants celebrates ten years of providing pain and symptom management to the greater Charlotte region. Since the beginning of the program, nearly 16,000 patients with advanced illness have enjoyed a better quality of life, and their families have benefited from the emotional support that palliative medicine offers. The following story is just one example of the significant impact Palliative Medicine Consultants has made within our community.

Wes Hofferbert thought he knew what palliative medicine was all about. A physician himself (over 15 years in internal medicine), Wes has spent plenty of time in the hospital setting and has seen circumstances when a palliative consultation is essential. So in 2010, he contacted Palliative Medicine Consultants for pain and symptom management for his mother, Beth, whose health had been declining and who had recently moved into an assisted living community.

Wes assumed that the palliative practitioners could help his mother feel better, perhaps by prescribing better pain medications and adjusting some of her other prescriptions. But he expected that would be the extent of their services.

After their first visit with Palliative Medicine Consultants of Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region, Wes quickly realized that he and his mother were getting much more assistance than they had bargained for.

Having been a physician for so many years, Wes is fully aware of the normal patient/physician model. With many appointments on the schedule, the doctor can only spend about 10 to 15 minutes with any one patient, conducting an examination and answering questions. After writing the necessary prescriptions, he is forced to move on, a long list of patients yet to see.

But that's not the experience that Wes and his mother had with Palliative Medicine Consultants. They met with Ellen, a registered nurse, who asked Beth what her goals were; what she wanted to accomplish with palliative medicine. After a long conversation where Ellen learned more about Beth's condition (she'd had a stroke 20 years before and had been experiencing complications ever since), Ellen did finally end up getting the appropriate pain medication prescribed for Beth. But that wasn't all. *"Ellen spent a lot of time with my mom and let her do the talking. Then Ellen created a plan of care for her,"* Wes recalls. *"Then she told my Mom to call her directly when she needed anything or had any questions."*

A direct phone number – a true gift in the medical world. It meant that, going forward, they only had to make one phone call for help. No more transferring calls or waiting on hold. When Beth needed something, she called Ellen. And Ellen always took care of it. When it became more challenging for Beth to come to the doctor's office, Ellen even arranged for palliative medicine staff to visit Beth at her assisted living community.

Beth's condition continued to decline and, following several hospitalizations, it became necessary to move her to a skilled nursing facility. Ellen was no longer the point of contact for Beth, but a new care team stepped in and seamlessly transitioned her care. That's when Wes and Beth met Dana, a Palliative Medicine Consultants nurse practitioner.

Dana became a rock of support for Wes and his mother. *"She stepped up her efforts according to Mom's escalating needs,"* Wes remembers. As Beth's health deteriorated, Dana fine-tuned her pain medications on practically a daily basis.



Beth Hofferbert

(See Palliative Care, continued on page 8)

How we care for you ...

HOSPICE CARE
PALLIATIVE MEDICINE CONSULTANTS
PEDIATRIC CARE - KIDS PATH®
GRIEF CARE
INPATIENT & RESIDENTIAL HOSPICE CARE
PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Our regional locations ...

HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE CHARLOTTE REGION – UPTOWN
HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE CHARLOTTE REGION – SOUTH
HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE LAKE NORMAN
HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE LINCOLN COUNTY
LEVINE & DICKSON HOSPICE HOUSE – HUNTERSVILLE
LEVINE & DICKSON HOSPICE HOUSE AT SOUTHMINSTER
(OPENING DECEMBER 2012)

Our eight-county service area ...

CABARRUS	IREDELL
CATAWBA	LINCOLN
CLEVELAND	MECKLENBURG
GASTON	UNION

hpccr.org



704.375.0100

(Palliative Care, continued from page 7)

"If I encountered barriers reaching the medical director of the skilled nursing facility," Wes recalls, "I contacted Dana instead and got answers immediately." Dana counseled them on Beth's varied medications and helped Beth eliminate ones that were no longer beneficial to her. In this way, and in so many others, Dana was absolutely invaluable.

The other members of the care team were extraordinarily helpful as well. A no-nonsense nursing assistant was able to coerce Wes's mom into her bath which, despite what Beth expected, always made her feel better. Another nurse practitioner, Meg, helped Beth complete the Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment (MOST) form, a medical order that describes a patient's end-of-life care plan that any physician in any setting can follow. Under palliative care, Beth also completed her Living Will and Health Care Power of Attorney.

Perhaps more importantly, Dana and the rest of the team helped Wes and his mother decide when the time was right for hospice care. After a seamless transition from Palliative Medicine Consultants to Hospice & Palliative Care Lake Norman, Beth spent her last two months enjoying the full benefit of services offered by hospice care – nurse, social worker, and chaplain visits; superior pain and symptom management; and quality time with her family.

In the final hours of March 31, 2012, Beth Hofferbert passed away. Wes was by her side.

Looking back on his experience, Wes is amazed at how much the care team members of Palliative Medicine Consultants were able to offer his mother. First and foremost, they eased the anxiety that he and his mother both felt. *"I'm a doctor and my mom was a retired nurse, so together we could be pretty high maintenance,"* Wes admits. *"But our needs were always met and all it ever took was one phone call."*

The communication, Wes felt, was also beyond compare. *"Everything was impeccably documented. The transitions were seamless,"* Wes explains. *"From assisted living to hospital, from hospital to skilled nursing facility, and from palliative medicine to hospice care, not a step was missed."*

Wes and his family took one last step in his mother's care earlier this year, in September. Per her wishes, Beth's ashes were scattered in the surf at Nags Head, NC. And on that day, Wes was thankful for the team that comforted his mother during the last years of her life.

Today, Wes Hofferbert can honestly say he *does* know what palliative medicine is all about. He's witnessed it and lived it. And he is a better physician himself because of it.

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