



Life Matters

Finding Joy at End of Life

A Valued Resource in South Charlotte

A minister, a Bruce Springsteen fan, a grandmother, and a pilot. It sounds like the first line of a joke, doesn't it? In fact, these are four beloved individuals who spent their last days at our newest inpatient hospice unit – Levine & Dickson Hospice House at Southminster. They are four patients who received outstanding care and support from a team of dedicated clinicians (pictured above). And, as a result, there are four families who have been forever changed by their hospice experience.

Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region (HPCCR) was very pleased in 2012 to announce a partnership with Southminster, a continuing care retirement community located in south Charlotte. HPCCR successfully converted 20 existing rooms into 10 two-room suites which offer comfort, convenience, and privacy to patients and their families. The project was a natural fit. HPCCR needed another inpatient unit – Levine & Dickson Hospice House - Huntersville was often full – and a location in south Charlotte would allow us to better serve the ever-growing southern half of Mecklenburg County. Plus, a partnership with Southminster – a fellow not-for-profit organization that shares common goals of supporting our community – was an exciting opportunity. By December 2012, Levine & Dickson Hospice House at Southminster was complete and ready to accept its first patient.

Even though LDHH at Southminster has only been open a few short months, we have served almost 100 patients and their families. And while we are honored to care for each and every one, we want to share just a few of the stories:

Jason was one of our first patients. A popular minister of a local church in Charlotte, he had many friends and family members who wanted to visit, including his young grandchildren. Previous hospital policies had proved challenging and limiting. But Levine & Dickson Hospice House at Southminster was different. In fact, Jason holds the record for having the most visitors in a single day – 84 friends and family! More importantly, Jason was kept comfortable. He experienced relief from his symptoms and his family felt supported.

Kevin was a hospice patient who had been able to live at home for many months. But in December of last year, he was admitted to Levine & Dickson Hospice House at Southminster for symptoms that needed to be controlled. Kevin's care team would often wheel him out to the nurse's station and talk to him to keep him company. When they found out that Kevin was a Bruce Springsteen fan and had been to about 50 of The Boss' concerts, they used an iPad to play some Springsteen music for him. The joy on his face told them how much he appreciated the gesture!

Freda came to LDHH at Southminster with pancreatic cancer. She had a daughter and two small grandchildren who came to visit her almost daily. During visits, her grandchildren engaged in a unique form of grief therapy with the social worker – they created and decorated artwork that combined Freda's palm prints along with their own. Cynthia, Freda's daughter, now has the prints framed to help them remember the woman who was so important in their lives.

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Reducing Costs, Enhancing Quality of Life

An important study about hospice care was recently highlighted in the March 2013 issue of *Health Affairs*, a leading journal of health policy thought and research. Researchers at Mount Sinai Icahn School of Medicine found that enrollment in hospice care not only saves money for Medicare, but it also enhances the quality of care for its beneficiaries. They tested multiple enrollment periods ranging from one to 150 days of care, and the outcome was the same across the board – significant savings for Medicare. Perhaps more importantly, the team found that savings appeared to grow as the length of stay increased.

While it is gratifying to see a study of this kind published in a major journal, the findings did not surprise us at Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region. We observe the benefits of hospice care every day. We watch with satisfaction as the number of hospital admissions decrease for our patients, and the perceived quality of life increases. We witness the joy on patients' faces, particularly those who have longer lengths of stay, as they begin to enjoy lives with symptoms managed.

That's why we continue to expand our reach, offering quality end-of-life care from six locations. And that's why we opened Levine & Dickson Hospice House at Southminster in south Charlotte. Although only operating since December, our newest inpatient unit has made a difference to almost 100 patients and their families.

Even as we watch the focus shift to hospice care as a result of this new study, our mission remains unchanged. We will offer our unique brand of end-of-life care to the communities we serve. You can count on us – where you need us, when you need us. That is our promise.



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

(A Valued Resource, continued from page 1)

Bruce was the first patient we cared for who had been a resident of the Southminster continuing care retirement community. He had led a full, interesting life — many years in the US Air Force and National Guard, followed by a 37-year career as a commercial airline pilot. After a short hospital stay, he came to LDHH at Southminster. His wife and two daughters were with him when he passed away and were so grateful for the convenient location; many of Bruce's friends (staff and residents of the retirement community) were able to visit him during his final days.

The ability to ease suffering and offer comfort to patients who need us, like the four mentioned here, is a true privilege. Levine & Dickson Hospice House at Southminster not only allows us to further our mission, but also offers a valued community resource that will serve south Charlotte for years to come.

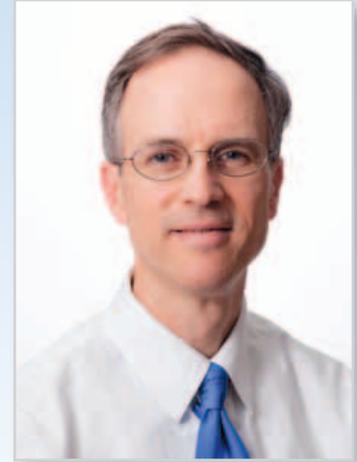
New Roles at HPCCR



Sheri Lowe is the new Vice President of Business Development & Marketing. Sheri comes to HPCCR with over eight years of experience in hospice marketing and sales. She is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and will be responsible for developing community referrals and implementing marketing strategies.



Mike Bolewitz, formerly HPCCR pharmacist, now holds the role of Vice President & Chief Operating Officer for the organization. Mike is also a member of the Senior Leadership Team and has both a Doctor of Pharmacy and an MBA. He will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of HPCCR.



Jeff Lynds replaces Mike Bolewitz as our Director of Pharmacy Services. With 23 years in a hospital setting and two years focusing on cost containment and controlled substance monitoring, Jeff will oversee pharmacy services for the organization and serve as a resource to our clinical staff.

New HPCCR Board Members

The Board of Directors of Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region elected four new board members at its annual meeting on March 20: Jeffrey (Jeff) G. Gore, Managing Director, Wells Fargo Securities LLC; Gregory (Greg) R. Kilpatrick, Partner, McGuireWoods LLP; George MacBain, IV, Senior Vice President, City

Executive, BB&T; and Michael (Mike) E. McGarry, Senior Vice President, Healthcare, Jones Lang LaSalle.

Deep appreciation is offered to our four retiring board members: Suzanne G. Bledsoe, Ralph R. McMillan, Dennis D. Kokenes, MD, and Robert E. Tull.



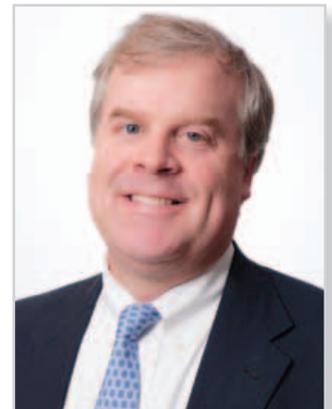
Jeff Gore



Greg Kilpatrick



George MacBain



Mike McGarry

Join Us for These Upcoming Events!

Save the date for the following HPCCR events and visit hpccr.org for details. Please contact Nancy Cole at colen@hpccr.org or 704.335.4312 for registration information.

The Regatta Party

Saturday, May 4, 6:30 - 11pm

The Peninsula Club
11901 Peninsula Club Drive, Cornelius
A popular cocktail evening! Open to all, reservations required.



Annual Spring Memorial Service

Saturday, May 18, 5pm

Levine & Dickson Hospice House -
Huntersville

11900 Vanstory Drive, Huntersville
We invite you to bring a picture or memento of your loved one to this service.

Lake Norman Hospice Regatta

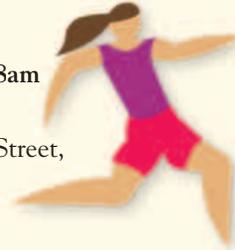
Friday - Sunday, May 31 - June 2

Boats sail from Lake Norman Yacht Club
297 Yacht Road, Mooresville
For competitive and non-competitive sailors!

Run the Rail 5K

Saturday, June 15, 8am

Betty Ross Park
800 South Madison Street,
Lincolnton



Strikes for Susan

Saturday, July 13, 11am

Carolina Lanes, Matthews
Bowling is open to all, put your team together now!

Pedal The Park

Monday, September 2, 9am

30- and 60-mile rides will begin and end at
Levine & Dickson Hospice House -
Huntersville. 5-mile fun ride too!

Hit The Brixx 10K/5K Run & Memorial Walk

Saturday, September 14, 7:45am

Brixx Wood Fired Pizza - Uptown
225 East Sixth Street, Charlotte

Taste of Birkdale

Saturday, September 21, 3 - 7pm

Birkdale Village Shopping Center,
Huntersville
Food, wine, and a fun fashion show!

Shoot for Joy!

Saturday, September 28, 8am - 5pm

The Mecklenburg Bull Shooters will host their 3rd Shoot for Joy sporting clay fundraiser at Kidd Farm in Huntersville. This event, held in memory of CMPD Police Sgt. Joy McGraw, will benefit HPCCR. All skill levels of shooters welcomed. Restrictions apply.

14th Annual Chameleon's Journey™

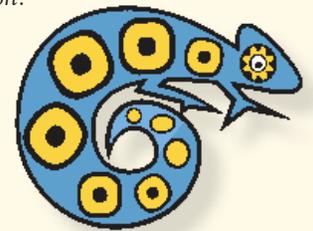
Saturday & Sunday, October 12 & 13

Camp Thunderbird, Lake Wylie, SC

Overnight camp for grieving youth.

Contact 704.335.4334

for more information.



Soup on Sunday was a "souper" event! And it simply gets better and better each year; that's because of our wonderful sponsors, great restaurant participation, amazing volunteers, and the guests (soup-lovers) attending the event. This year, Soup on Sunday raised over \$45,000 for HPCCR services.



Mike Blair: Hospice Friend, Advocate, and Supporter

Hospice care was not widespread in Charlotte, NC in the late 1970s. But Mike Blair wishes it had been. In 1979, his mother spent her last six weeks of life in the hospital. And while it was not a bad experience, Mike certainly knows (because of his strong affiliation with HPCCR) that it could have been better.

But Mike was just 23 years old at the time and hospice care wasn't offered to his family as an option. Twenty years later he met (then) HPCCR CEO Janet Fortner through Leadership Charlotte. By this time, Mike had learned about the benefits of hospice, and in 2001, Janet recruited him as a Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region board member. He served eight years, including a term as Chairman of the Board. During his tenure, Mike was intimately involved with each step that brought Levine & Dickson Hospice House - Huntersville to reality – conceptualization, capital campaign, and the opening in 2008. He continues his involvement today.

Mike has had a life-long focus on service to his community, and his years on the board of HPCCR afforded him a front row seat to the impact the organization has made in Mecklenburg and surrounding counties. That's why he chose to include HPCCR in his estate plans. *"At this point in my life, I only want to be involved with organizations that make a true difference,"* Mike remarks. *"And HPCCR does just that."*

Because of his knowledge and passion, Mike has been able to educate others about hospice care, resulting in many decisions by friends to secure hospice care for loved ones. *"I always hear, 'I wish I'd known about hospice sooner,'"* he explains. *"This is my way of making that happen."*



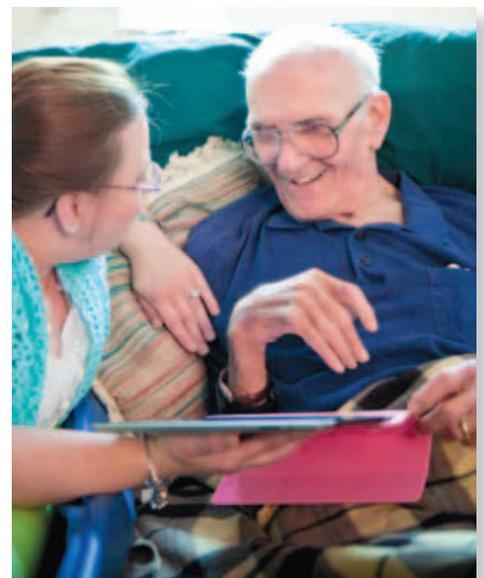
If you would like more information about including HPCCR in your estate plans, contact Rachel Smith at smithra@hpccr.org or 704.335.4325.

Reaching the Person Within

Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region recently launched a specialized care program for our patients with dementia. *Enhanced Care For The Person Living With Dementia* is a patient and family-centered program created by Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region to meet the needs of a person living with this illness. Our social workers employ a multi-sensory approach to communicate with our patients.

Within this program, we have had particular success and rewarding results with the use of iPad technology. Even our most unresponsive patients have interacted with a social worker using an iPad. In addition to providing staff the opportunity to develop a relationship with patients, this technology has also allowed families to reconnect with a loved one who may have previously been unresponsive. A diagnosis of dementia can be frightening for a family, but this new program offers a glimpse of the loved one they know is still there.

In order to offer even better care to our patients living with dementia, HPCCR has a goal of purchasing iPads for all of our social workers to use as part of this program. If you would like to make a gift to fund this meaningful project, visit hpccr.org or call Rachel Smith at 704.335.4325.



See an impactful video of a social worker connecting with a patient through iPad technology at our website: hpccr.org.



Spotlight on Lincoln County

Our Hospice Heroes program is just one way we are recognizing volunteers of Hospice & Palliative Care Lincoln County. Local businesses and organizations have the opportunity to be recognized as a **Hospice Hero** by promoting our volunteer opportunities to their employees and encouraging at least 1% of their total workforce to serve as a Hospice & Palliative



Care Lincoln County volunteer for at least one year. Along with the satisfaction of supporting patients in their community, our Hospice Heroes are recognized with t-shirts, blog posts, our volunteer newsletter, and a photography exhibit at CMC-Lincoln. Contact Shelly Johnston at **704.602.0905** to learn more about how you can become a Hospice Hero!

Life with Chemo: 0 Life with Hospice: 10

Following is an email written by Lori Williamson, wife of Michael, and sent soon after they chose hospice care over curative treatment.

We give life with a chemotherapy schedule (days 1-7 were chemo with side effects, followed by days 8-14 in isolation because of low blood cell count) a score of ZERO.

We give life without chemo (which included five holes of golf, a ride in a Cobra sports car, and a huge family party that included five sons, some wives, and some grandkids, even watching football and baseball games at a crowded sports bar as a family) a score of TEN.

I just want everyone to know that hospice care doesn't mean I am sitting beside Michael's bed all day long,

holding his hand. He is up and moving, walking stairs, going on outings, and enjoying life with his family every day. It just means that we can call and have hospice professionals available 24/7 to help us with everything we

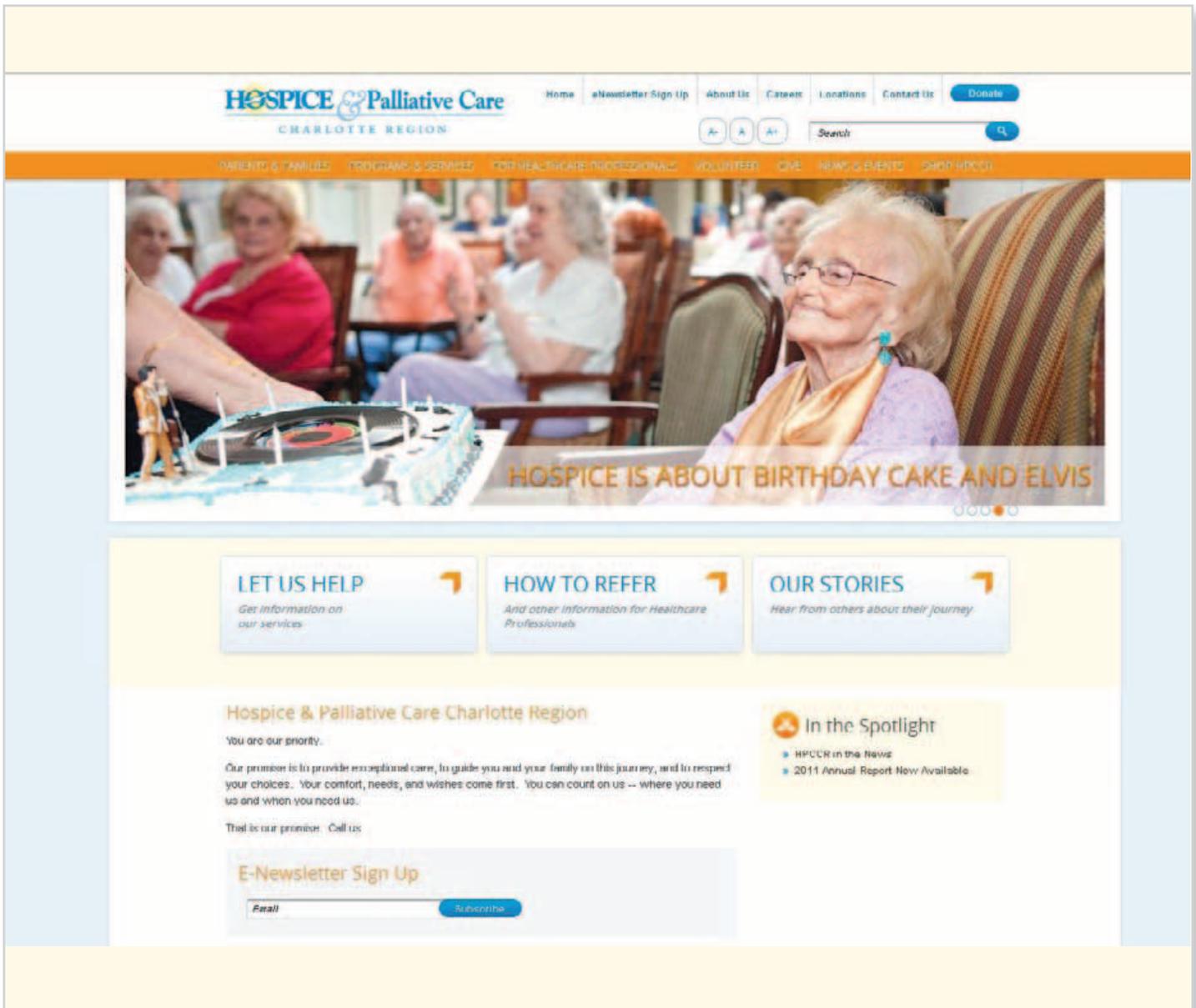
need. The nurses and social workers from Hospice & Palliative Care Lake Norman come to check on us, prescription drugs arrive in the mail, and someone is constantly refining the game plan to improve pain management. I am so grateful we had so many friends who understood about the benefits of hospice and encouraged us to begin immediately. What a gift it has been!



After being at home for several months, Michael passed away at Levine & Dickson Hospice House – Huntersville in November 2012. Lori maintains that the two months that her family had with hospice care were an amazing gift for which she is extremely grateful.

Did You Know? You can donate cars, trucks, RVs, motorcycles, and boats to HPCCR! Interested? Contact Pam Gray, Development Officer, at **704.335.4324** for more information!





HPCCR Unveils New Website

This spring, Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region will roll out a brand new website. The new site is designed to be clean, simple, and informative. Among its pages, you will learn about hospice care, palliative medicine, events going on, volunteering with HPCCR, and much more. We are especially proud that the images within the site are of our very own patients, family members, staff members, and volunteers. Be on the lookout in your mailbox for information about when you can visit this new site!

OUR SERVICES

HOSPICE CARE
 PALLIATIVE MEDICINE CONSULTANTS
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 HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE LINCOLN COUNTY
 LEVINE & DICKSON HOSPICE HOUSE - HUNTERSVILLE
 LEVINE & DICKSON HOSPICE HOUSE AT SOUTHMINSTER

OUR EIGHT-COUNTY SERVICE AREA

CABARRUS, CATAWBA, CLEVELAND, GASTON, IREDELL,
 LINCOLN, MECKLENBURG, AND UNION COUNTIES

hpccr.org

704.375.0100

A Day to Give You Peace of Mind

Let's be honest—death is not a fun topic. We avoid thinking about it, especially when we have loved ones who depend on us. But maybe we can think about it for just one day each year.

April 16 was National Healthcare Decisions Day. Hospice & Palliative Care Charlotte Region was one of many organizations nation-wide that highlighted the importance of advance healthcare decision-making. We posed important questions such as: Who would you want making important decisions about your health if you couldn't speak for yourself? What decisions would you want that person to make? Do those closest to you know how you feel about life-sustaining procedures?

Did you know that there are organizations and individuals whose sole purpose is to help you fill out the forms such as a Healthcare Power of Attorney and a Living Will? And there are plenty of websites (including hpccr.org) that

not only answer your questions, but also provide contact information for people who can help you.



Less than one-third of adults have advance directives. Which means that more than two-thirds of our population are leaving their loved ones unaware of their wishes should something unplanned and catastrophic happen to them. Advance directives give family and friends peace of mind in the event that the hypothetical becomes reality. Making the hard decisions **now** will ultimately be a gift to those who love us.

No, it's not fun to think about. But it's only one day each year. And it will give you peace of mind for the other 364.

Please contact any of our six regional locations for free information about advance care planning and advance directive forms.

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