

CARELINES

A Quarterly Newsletter Published for the Friends & Families of Caldwell Hospice and Palliative Care, Inc.

Spring 2010

Introducing Caldwell Hospice's New Logo



Maybe you've seen it on flyers or possibly on a brochure—and you're sure to see it throughout this issue of *Carelines*: a purple oval with the Colonial-style rooftop and white columns inside. It's the new Caldwell Hospice and Palliative Care logo, and it reflects a new look, as we enter a new phase of our history.

From the beginning, we have represented our organization with images of Kirkwood, our antebellum home in Lenoir. The logo has evolved over the years, but Kirkwood has remained the centerpiece. We even designed our new facilities in Hudson with a façade similar to Kirkwood's. Now, in the midst of our growth and change, we are ready for a new logo with a new look.

In the past, each of our programs—Caldwell Partnership for Palliative Care, Transitions, and Ashewood Grief and Counseling Services—had its own logo, and none of them was noticeably connected to the Caldwell Hospice logo. Now, all the individual logos have a similar look, so you'll know these programs are part of our organization.

The primary logo is purple with a teal border and includes our new tag line, *Companions for the Journey*. It reflects all of the services offered by our organization—our work with hospice patients and families, Transitions clients, other health care providers, individuals, civic groups, churches—as companions, we are working alongside, not ahead of, not behind them.

Paragon Design Group of Granite Falls, NC, chose us and designed our logo, for Createathon, a 24-hour design blitz that provides free creative and marketing services to nonprofits. Paragon created a primary logo with our tag line beneath it. Each program is represented by a different border, window color, and its name below the logo—illustrating that each program has an individual purpose and that all three programs are integral components of Caldwell Hospice and Palliative Care. The logos show that all our programs serve together as *Companions for the Journey*.



From the Director's Chair: The Amazing Journey Is Almost Completed

We are "that close" to opening the doors to our additional patient care unit on Pine Mountain Road in Hudson.

This journey began in 2007, as we prepared our Certificate of Need to convince the State of the need for these 12 additional beds. It continued with the search for property and the purchase of 64 acres in Hudson. In November 2008, we began clearing the space, and by April 2009, the framework for the Professional Center was up!

From the beginning, our Board has supported this project 100%, giving time, energy, and financial support. While we knew we could count on them, we had no way of knowing that construction would be so rapid nor did we believe that extended good weather would allow us to complete the exteriors so soon.

In the patient care unit, workers are laying carpet, tile, and hardwood. In patient rooms, ceiling fans and wall sconces have been installed, and terraces are being finished. The living room, family kitchen, and children's playroom are nearing completion. Work is moving forward on the courtyard, now that the snows seem to have ended for this year. (Note: See "Board Member Spotlight" with Janet Wilson, page 13, for landscaping details.)

As we consider the practicalities of this remarkable journey—because construction will be finished ahead

of schedule—we are working hard to finish the financing on time. We have gathered *most* of the \$9 million construction budget, through the generosity of foundation grants, the Robbins estate, local businesses' contributions at almost \$55,000, and individuals' support at more than \$1.5 million.

Even so, we remain \$1.5 million short of our budget. As careful stewards of money entrusted to us over the years, that \$1.5 million shortfall makes clear that we have work still to be done. We are continuing to apply for grants; we have begun our staff campaign, and come April, we will be mailing requests to the community, as well. To meet our goal will require support from all of us, at whatever contribution level we feel comfortable.

To thank everyone throughout Caldwell and the surrounding counties *and* to introduce ourselves officially to our neighbors in Hudson, we will hold several open house events in late spring. Be looking for announcements, so you can stop in to "meet the new neighbors" in Hudson, just before we begin admitting hospice patients.



Courtyard behind patient care unit



Complete ensuite bathroom in each patient room



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A Moment with Dr. Robert Belk: Please Meet Lori Dixon, Nurse Practitioner

"Change" and "growth" must be the two most-often spoken words at Caldwell Hospice and Palliative Care. One of our longed-for changes at Caldwell Hospice and Palliative Care is a direct result of our growth: we have just welcomed a nurse practitioner to our staff. I am happy to introduce you to Lori Dixon in my column today.

Let us begin with Lori's educational background and professional preparation. She earned an associate's degree in nursing from Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute in 1991. Lori worked as a registered nurse in a Statesville hospital for two years and for an oncologist for 15 years after that. In 2002, she earned her BSN at Winston-Salem State University; in 2007, she completed her MSN at UNC-Greensboro, in the Adult and Gerontological Nurse Practitioner program, a double specialty.



Lori "fell in love with oncology because of the possibilities"—cancer can attack any part of the body, so she could work in any field and make a difference. Her thirst for knowledge, familiarity with older patients (80% of the oncology patients were older), and desire to "meet the needs of patients who don't have the resources" directed Lori's education as a nurse practitioner and her move to Caldwell Hospice.

Now, let us get to the part about how Lori already has become part of our "hospice way of life." She is happy to be at Caldwell Hospice. What we do, she says, "is a fantastic way to bring great minds together to help the patient by creating a plan of care."

How we take hospice and palliative care services to our patients, Lori says, allows us to "see people in their own environment. We can gain a true picture of what's going on in their lives; help them identify their needs better and more fully than is possible in

a physician's office." Very often, she says, there is not enough time in a physician's office to address more than one or two of the patient's needs.

Being able to teach the patients for whom Lori provides care, to be welcomed into a home and a family, so she can care for the whole person, all these elements are the very ones that Caldwell Hospice offers to its patients. Lori will report to Dr. Ray and me; she will work with both the palliative care and hospice programs.

"I'm in the right place, for sure!" Lori says.

At Caldwell Hospice, we know the signs of someone who has been "hooked" by hospice, and we see them when we talk with Lori—the look, the words, the tone. "If I can get somebody comfortable," she says. "If I can make a patient smile...."

The hardest thing to do in this life, Lori says, is to "walk a loved one to the door and let them go; if someone can be there to help them do it, they should be."

Lori comes from a very close family. Her brother lives in Pennsylvania with his family; her parents are retired, and they traveled back and forth, between North Carolina and Pennsylvania, until recently.

Lori describes herself as a "real" Florida native. She had the good fortune to grow up visiting Disney-world for free because her father worked there! The family would come to Boone for skiing. They moved there around 1982.

Lori and her husband of 23 years met in Boone, while he was a student at Appalachian State University. He was in the Army National Guard for 24 years, before retiring as a major in 2006. He works as an electronics technician. They live in Statesville and have a daughter who is on a "mighty mites" gymnastic team.

Lori loves to camp and enjoys an eclectic mix of music, particularly classical.

"It's a pleasure to serve the people of Caldwell County and the surrounding counties," Lori says. We expect that the community will feel a connection to Lori, as she is introduced to the patients and families served by Caldwell Hospice.



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We want to thank your entire staff for all of the kindness, prayers, constant care, and words of encouragement during the time our precious husband, father, and grandfather was ill. When he left this world to be with his Savior, he was at peace and rest... Your generous attention to detail ... made everything so much easier to bear...—a Caldwell Hospice family member

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...It is my hope that you realize the emotions that your employees give to the families under Hospice care. They come to love us just as we love them! The days continue to be hard for us as we miss our loved one so deeply; however, we continue to receive support from our new-found friends....—a Caldwell Hospice family member

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I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the loving and professional care that was extended to my wife....Your staff did much more than care for her physical needs but also helped with her emotional and spiritual needs....how secure this makes me feel, knowing that when needed, Hospice will be there. —a Caldwell Hospice family member

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Caldwell Hospice and Palliative Care, Inc., gratefully acknowledges memorials and contributions received between 01 November 2009 and 31 January 2010. Please notify us if we have omitted a donation from this listing. Contributions received after 01 November 2009 will be listed in our Summer 2010 issue.

Newsletter mailing list policy. Carelines is published four times a year. Each person who makes a contribution to our hospice during the six months prior to a mailing will receive the next two issues. Individuals may ask to be placed on our "do not remove" mailing list; in that case, they will continue to receive the newsletter every quarter.

John Plymale's *Walk through the Valley*

John and Lynne Plymale, southern Caldwell County residents, know cancer in a very personal way. Using his memories and Lynne's journal entries, John wrote a book, *A Walk through the Valley*, to record his experiences and to "extend the right hand of fellowship" to other cancer patients.

Visiting with John today, it's almost impossible to think that he was supposed to die.

John remembers feeling really tired, experiencing difficulty in movements that he attributed to aging and weight-gain, when these symptoms occurred in 2000. When he received the diagnosis in January 2001, John was told that his fast-growing, malignant abdominal ascites would probably kill him before Easter. Additional tests led to a corrected diagnosis of stage IV Mantel Cell Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma.

Before going Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem for treatment, John says, he and Lynne crawled to the center of the floor in their den to pray. John asked for three things: no nausea, no pain, and the strength to show the faith he professed. Lynne asked for hope.

John's prayer was "give me strength" rather than "don't let me die." He needed both mental and physical strength to endure the chemotherapy; he needed more strength to get through the infections that always followed chemotherapy. John knew that eating was necessary to keep him going, even when he didn't want the food or felt almost too weak to eat. Knowing that his wife trusted him to eat and to take his medicine, even when she couldn't be at the hospital with him, he didn't want to let her down.

A recurring theme in John's stories is the encouragement he gained from Lynne, his son, his two daughters, his brother, his friends, his church—their support surrounded him throughout the terrible months, and so did faith. John's faith gave him "a wall with a door for me to go through" rather than a wall that would signal THE END.

Lynne encouraged John to "get up and go with me" many times, even though he felt tired. "I was not allowed to sit here," he remembers. John knows that "depression is part of cancer, regardless of what anyone might say"; Lynne's enforced activities were part of what kept him going, what kept him alive.

Their daughter Adriane was a high school senior when John received the diagnosis. She prayed, until she felt "the warm arm of God hugging her and knew everything would be all right."

Lynne recalls feeling a warm sensation that entered at the top of her head and traveled down her body, leaving through her feet. She felt calm, knowing "that was nothing but the Lord. I can deal with it."

After John completed his chemotherapy, but before

time to begin the bone marrow transplant, as recommended by his doctor, he was at home, where he could enjoy the Spring flowers and fresh air. He decided against the bone marrow transplant, choosing to "take my blessings and go home." When he and Lynne met with his doctor, John explained his decision, and the doctor agreed with him.

John received Rituxan, a follow-up treatment to chemotherapy, by IV every three months for a year. He now goes back every six months to be checked; although his doctor said once a year is enough, John asked for and got an outcome that made him more comfortable.

Today, John Plymale looks the picture of health. He and Lynne remember his cancer experience very well, and they want to share the lessons their experience taught them.

The patient needs to verbalize pain, discomfort, subtle changes in his or her body—otherwise, this important information will remain a mystery. By letting the patient know that it is okay to talk about what is happening to him or her, the caregiver sets the atmosphere for how the patient will respond. Most importantly, John says, every patient needs *an advocate*, not to take away the patient's decision-making, but to be, in Lynne's words, "another pair of ears."

"Don't be intimidated by physicians; they're human, too," Lynne says. Her professional background as a nurse, combined with her role as wife and advocate for John, allowed Lynne to observe and report. Even in the hospital, she did John's basic care, so she recognized even minor changes that might prove significant.

Lynne's main advice to caregivers/advocates: "Document, document, document. Keep a journal from day one."

"It's important to go with the patient to the doctor," Lynne continued, "to ask questions, to be involved in conversations with doctors. Write it down; keep a journal and a ledger for medications—be on top of things, including insurance."

Care and survival issues for patients with serious conditions include nutrition, infection, psychiatric, and spiritual concerns, plus the traditional medical concerns. The advocate should know as much about the patient's condition as possible. Sometimes



(continued on page 12)

Dry Ponds Baptist Church BBQ + CHPC = Tasty Support

Before Katheryn Seagle's father, a Caldwell Hospice patient, died in June 1992, she recalls that people "just signed up to sit with him—close to 24 hours a day," at home, with regular visits by Caldwell Hospice team members.

After his death, Katheryn and her husband Archie held a cook-out at their house in the fall of 1992—just hamburgers and hot dogs—to thank everyone who had helped. For the next two years, they changed to barbecue, but stayed on their property and invited more people. Fairly soon, people had to eat in shifts.

By the third year, the Seagles decided to move their barbecue event to Dry Ponds Baptist Church. Katheryn, her husband, her brothers, sisters, and their spouses, with the support of their church, transformed a small thank-you event into an annual fundraiser for Caldwell Hospice. "So many in the church have been cared for by Caldwell Hospice," Katheryn and Archie say, "each year's barbecue is in memory of everybody who received hospice care."

On Saturday morning, Archie and Steve Duncan begin cooking about 5 a.m. and continue for eight to nine hours. About 15 men (the "choppers") begin around 2 p.m. Church women cook about 23 crock pots of "cowboy beans" and a variety of desserts. Walter Moore makes 18 gallons of slaw.

They serve dinner rolls, not hushpuppies (too much work when they will be feeding approximately 400 people).

About a month before the event, people donate money to buy hams—and the Seagles collect enough money to pay for the meat, bread, slaw, etc. The Pepsi plant donates soft drinks, the church donates paper products and utensils, and Captain's Galley donates iced tea.

The Seagles "felt led" to make this a fundraiser for Caldwell Hospice. Their kindness—and the barbecue—has been a special gift of support that makes it possible for Caldwell Hospice to continue serving people throughout the community.

"We have a good time!" Katheryn says. "It's fellowship and food, a good social outlet for the elderly people, and people usually give more than the cost of the meal." Archie adds, "We donate money to Caldwell Hospice and use the barbecue event as an outreach program for the church, too." Caldwell Hospice is "one of the most worthy charities," Archie says, "and I might need it tomorrow."

The volunteers for the 2010 Dry Ponds Baptist Church Barbecue began serving at 5 p.m. on April 17th and stopped when they ran out of food! What friends they are to Caldwell Hospice.



2010 Wish List

Snack foods (ind.-size cakes, cookies, etc.) for patients' families
 Ind.-size cereals & soups
 Applesauce
 Dishwashing cloths
 Paper towels
 Napkins
 Aluminum foil
 Storage bags (quart & gallon sizes)
 Coffee (cans, regular & decaf)

Styrofoam coffee cups (8-oz.)
 Solo cups (16-oz. for soft drinks, tea, etc.)
 Paper plates and bowls
 Plastic spoons and forks
 Large boxes tissues
 Baby wipes, unscented (refill packs)
 Lotion (personal size)
 Deodorant (personal size)
 Toothpaste (travel size)
 Mouthwash

Nail clippers
 Disposable cameras
 Hair brushes
 Bath towels (white only)
 Batteries: AA & AAA
 Amazon.com gift cards for teen/ children grief books, music, & resources
 Music CDs (instrumental, gospel, inspirational, meditation, etc.)

Mary Hollar, School Counselor, Prepares for Grief Camp

Good Mourning Children's Grief Camp. It's not all sadness, and that surprises more than one person who attends for the first time. Mary Hollar, Happy Valley Elementary School counselor, is one of those people.

After referring children to Grief Camp from her school for several years, Mary answered Caldwell Hospice's call for extra workers last year and signed up to serve as a "special volunteer." The personal contact. The first-hand experience. *Life-changing* is the best way to describe what it meant to Mary (pictured at right at 2009 Grief Camp).

Caldwell Hospice staff members and volunteers asked children questions about death, grief, and sadness, without demanding "right answers." As children decorated their memory stones, some talked about loved ones. Even if it took silence and time to tell their stories, the adults waited patiently.

Caldwell Hospice VolunTEENS helped to get the children "off on the right foot," making them feel welcomed and important, as they left their caregivers at the beginning of the day. Throughout the activities, the Caldwell Hospice VolunTEENS shared time with the children, listened to them, giggled with them, hugged them.

Varied activities—story time, journals, puppets, a treasure hunt—offered different ways for children to express themselves and their emotions. The best of all, Mary says, was the balloon release: "No

human being should ever miss out on this. It sets you free!"

As a school counselor, Mary has learned that it can be hard for children to cry in front of

others or risk the embarrassment of talking about the death of a family member or a pet.

With Grief Camp experience "under her belt," Mary knows how it helps children, between the ages of six and 12, to express their losses and to spend time with other children who feel a sadness similar to theirs.

Mary will be encouraging other Caldwell County school counselors to recognize the children who might need to attend this year's camp.

Do you know a child who might want to attend Caldwell Hospice's Grief Camp on April 24, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., at United Presbyterian Church in Lenoir? Please contact our bereavement staff at 754.0101 for information or to pre-register.



John Plymale's Walk through the Valley with Cancer (continued from page 10)

people are too humble or too afraid to ask questions, discuss their circumstances, or ask to have information explained more clearly. An advocate can go with them into meetings with their doctor, carry a list of questions, take notes, and remember the important details that could affect their treatment.

John says "little things," such as not eating properly or not taking other medications correctly can undo expensive cancer treatments, such as surgery and chemotherapy, unless the patient has an advocate who will speak up.

Cancer seems to be growing in numbers of cases and in kinds and complexity, based on people's lived experiences. However, Dr. Stephen R. Connor, psychotherapist and researcher, writes that cancer is becoming a disease that people *live with* rather than *die from*—in fact, he says that rate of death by cancer in the United States is decreasing.

People who have received a cancer diagnosis will often say that the rest of us don't, and probably can't, understand the range of emotions they experience, much less the kinds of pain they feel—from the treatments intended to cure the disease or ease its effects on them, as well as from the disease itself. Cancer patients can benefit from talking with others who share some of their experiences, people who know what their lives are like. This is the gift that John and Lynne Plymale have offered to us.

Note: Each spring, Caldwell Hospice brings professionals and laypeople together in West Caldwell High School's theater for discussions with national health-care experts (live via satellite) and local panelists on end-of-life issues. "Cancer and End-of-Life Care" was the 2010 Hospice Foundation of America bereavement teleconference focus. To begin the conversation about cancer, John and Lynne Plymale agreed to share their stories about his diagnosis and their "walk through the valley." John also participated in the local panel discussion.

Board Member Spotlight: Janet Wilson



The depth of Janet Wilson's passion for gardening and Caldwell Hospice helps to define this 20-year Caldwell Hospice Board member. At the Pine Mountain Road construction, she talks to every worker she meets, getting a progress report and sharing conversations that show real knowledge about and respect for each other. She introduced me to everyone whose path we crossed, saying about one of the workers, with some embarrassment, "He calls me 'Miss Janet.'"

Janet knows workers' assignments; she voices her appreciation for hard work and expresses concern for the planting progress being delayed by this winter's snow, sleet, and rain—wondering aloud just when the ground might be ready to accept plants.

Janet is determined to have this project be "right" in every detail. It is her very personal contribution to Caldwell Hospice's expansion project because she wants the patients and families who will spend time at the Pine Mountain Road facility to feel "at home," when walking around the grounds, resting on a bench or beneath a gazebo, or just admiring the unbelievably wide variety of plants. The landscaping encourages comfort outside the facility, as well as inside. Janet says of Caldwell County people, "we're not inside folks."

She pores over the "blueprint," pointing out a profusion of plants, imagining the rainbow of colors, showing small, intimate seating areas near the front of the patient care unit, as well as expansively wide-open areas at the back, and noting that patients can be wheeled out to those areas. She ticks off the list of plantings: 200 daffodil bulbs and 30-50 day lilies already—the parking medians and much of the ground surrounding the Professional Center have been planted.

There will be more varieties of oaks and maples than Janet knew existed. Add to them crape myrtles, red buds, lavender, witch hazel, peonies, salvia, camellias, hellebores, butterfly bushes, magnolias, and other varieties. Janet points out that many of the trees have been donated by nurseries in Caldwell County.

Early into the Pine Mountain Road project, Building and Grounds Committee member Janet knew "we were going to need professional help" to make the

landscaping look right and be right. At her suggestion, Caldwell Hospice enlisted Susan Andrews from Winston-Salem, who had designed the gardens and grounds for United Presbyterian Church in Lenoir. She is talented and artistic in her choices of plants that bloom at different times, colors that "fit" each other, and an overall design that will embody peace and harmony.

Janet's love for plants and gardening originated with her father, who worked in finance during the day and came home in the evenings to work in the yard. Her family kept a victory garden during WWII, also. In her teenage years, Janet enjoyed plants but was not interested in gardening. After she married the late T. Henry Wilson, Jr., who was "such an outdoorsman," and had her own home, Janet's connection to the outdoors and gardening increased. She loves North Carolina's four seasons and not-too-severe climate—despite weather we're experiencing this winter!

Her passion for Caldwell Hospice began more than 20 years ago, when Janet and her husband were approached by Rev. George Sinclair, a Caldwell Hospice board member who was also their minister. Caldwell Hospice was struggling financially, and he asked for a contribution. Not long afterward, John Forlines encouraged Janet to join the Board: "Once John Forlines asks, you can't get off the board!"

"Could you find anywhere else that has more people volunteering?" Janet asks. "That says what people think about Caldwell Hospice." She recognizes a genuine "feeling" about patients and the community at Caldwell Hospice. She admires the staff members for being so good at what they do and says she feels honored to be part of the Board, to be part of Caldwell Hospice.

Janet, a retired educator, has three grown children and "six wonderful grandchildren." She received the Satie Broyhill Lifetime Achievement Award in 2006, but she prefers to talk about Caldwell Hospice, and we are honored to count on Janet Wilson's commitment and impassioned involvement. —Pam Hildebran

(Photos, L to R: Janet with blueprints; Janet and fellow Board member Marc Carpenter at Caldwell Hospice 25th anniversary; Janet at 2009 ACC Basketball Luncheon.)



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In This Issue

A New Logo for Caldwell Hospice.....1
 From the Director's Chair:
 Cathy Swanson—The Amazing Journey.....2
 A Moment with Dr. Belk:
 Introducing Lori Dixon.....3
 Contributions.....4-9
 John Plymale's *Walk through the Valley*.....10
 How the Dry Ponds Baptist Church BBQ Began..... 11
 Wish List.....11
 School Counselor Believes in Children's Grief Camp.....12
 Board Member Spotlight:
 Janet Wilson.....13

If you received multiple copies of Carelines or received it in error; if you do not wish to remain on our mailing list or if your address changes, please let us know. Call 828.754.0101, write (address at top of page), or e-mail us at cch@caldwellhospice.org.



Volunteer Training

June 14 & 15

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Professional Center at
 Pine Mountain Road

With our new facility, our need for volunteers is growing!

To register for training, contact Volunteer Coordinator Dawn Cannon at (828) 754-0101 or by email at volunteercoordinator@caldwellhospice.org