



Newsletter

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Serving Southeastern North Carolina

Moving Closer to Home



Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCareCenter staff, board members, campaign committee members, donors, supporters, health leaders, city, county, state and federal officials attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the Brunswick County Hospice Care Center.

We held our groundbreaking ceremony for the Brunswick County Hospice Care Center on a beautiful, sunny morning in October. Closer to Home Capital Campaign Chairs WJ and Sibyl McLamb, with Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCareCenter staff and board members, welcomed the 150 people in attendance at the building site at Old Ocean Highway in Bolivia. Representative Mike McIntyre presented the keynote address. Louie Lewis, who generously donated the 7.35 acres for the facility, led the ceremonial groundbreaking. Volunteer Bill McCormack presented a check for nearly \$200,000 from the residents of St. James for the capital campaign (details on page 3).

"We are excited to take another step in bringing enhanced inpatient hospice care services to the communities of Brunswick County," says Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCareCenter President and CEO Laurie Bystrom. "We plan to begin construction in early 2011 and hope to start serving patients in the new care center spring of 2012," she says.

The facility will be the third hospice care center the agency has built. The twelve-bed Hospice Care Center in Wilmington and the six-bed Angel House in Whiteville are often filled to capacity with waiting lists. While the agency was raising funds for Angel House, many Brunswick County residents indicated they wanted (and needed) a care center closer to home. Eventually the state agreed and gave permission to proceed.

The 12,000 square foot project includes seven private patient and family suites, living room, kitchen, library and laundry areas designed to meet the needs of patients and their visiting loved ones, as well as gardens and administrative space.

To date, the capital campaign has raised \$1.5 million of its \$3.4 million goal. Tripp Sloane and Dianne Tripp are serving as campaign chairs with the McLamb, assisted by campaign manager Cindy Cheatham and numerous volunteers throughout Brunswick County. "We're grateful for all the support that has generated such a great beginning," Cindy says. "We know the Brunswick County community will help us bring the next level of hospice care closer to home." For more information or to support the campaign, call Cindy at 910.523.2770 or visit www.BrunswickCloserToHome.org.



Brunswick County Hospice Care Center Rendering

Faces of Hospice – Shirley Dowd



Volunteer Shirley Dowd offers agency brochures and information on volunteering at special events including the Brunswick Intercultural Festival at Brunswick Community.

When Shirley Dowd and her husband, Bill, moved to Ocean Isle Beach from Ohio 12 years ago, they wanted to become part of the Brunswick County community and to get to know the people. Shirley, a retired social worker with experience setting up grief groups, had

a good friend who was a hospice volunteer, so it was a natural fit for her and Bill to investigate the possibilities of volunteering with Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCareCenter. After attending training together, Shirley and Bill started volunteering together. Bill supported their first patient while Shirley supported the patient's wife.

Bill was a strong hospice advocate who developed a special closeness to his patients. They said, "He gets what it's all about." Two years ago, Bill was hospitalized with a life-limiting illness. When he arrived home from the hospital the hospice staff was waiting for him. Bill still had his sense of humor – he told them it was payback time for all the hours he had spent volunteering!

After Bill died in 2009, Shirley attended a Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCareCenter support group to help her work through her grief. During the sessions, the participants created such strong bonds, they continue to get together.

Shirley took a brief hiatus, and today, she is back at work volunteering. She understands that with a volunteer, patients are free to be genuine and say whatever they want without any family dynamics. Shirley encourages others to volunteer. She says the rewards of volunteering with hospice patients are many – it changes your life. You understand that dying is a natural part of life. As a volunteer you accept patients for who they are, provide what's important to them, and help them on their journey. Shirley says through her volunteer work, she has received far more than she has given.

Shirley is assigned three patients currently, two of whom are in a nursing home. She visits regularly, and provides emotional support to the patients and their caregivers. Shirley also assists at health fairs and festivals, talking with passersby about how hospice can help them and how to become a volunteer.

Shirley says when you accept hospice, you realize you can't fix the situation – you're letting go. You are acknowledging that you can't do it all, and you don't have to worry about being a burden.

Shirley's advice is to call hospice sooner rather than later. She says hospice staff members are special people, and everyone facing a life-limiting illness can use the support they provide.

Expanding in Many Ways

It's hard to describe the excitement over our progress to date on the Brunswick County Hospice Care Center. The outpouring of generosity from the community has been amazing! The donation of land from Louie Lewis, the gift from the residents of St. James, the tireless efforts of our capital campaign committee members, and the many campaign gifts we've received so far have all made us believe in our dream that we can create another care center to ensure the best end-of-life care possible for our community.

And in the midst of all our campaign achievements, Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCareCenter has had another successful year. We have served more hospice patients than ever before and exceeded our own high-reaching expectations. Our Begin The Conversation public education initiative to encourage people to learn about, discuss, and document health care choices has reached an amazing number of individuals. Our bereavement counselors have supported thousands on their grief journey. And our volunteers have reached out daily to assist our patients, families, and staff members.

Your support throughout the last thirty years has helped us become the fourth largest hospice in North Carolina (based on patient days). We are privileged and honored to have been able to accompany so many patients and families at the end-of-life. Thank you.

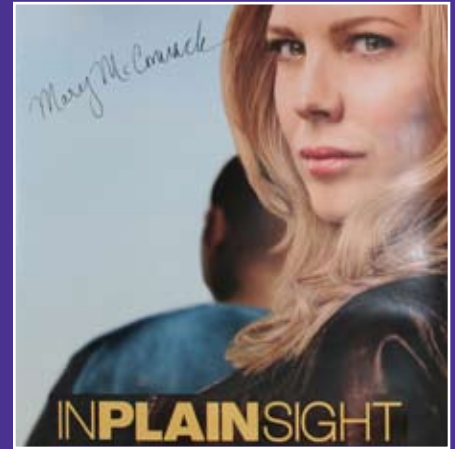


President & CEO Laurie Bystrom
Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCareCenter

We Appreciate Brunswick County Community Support



Bill McCormack and St. James residents presented President & CEO Laurie Bystrom, center, a check for \$190,000 for the Closer to Home campaign representing funds raised at the St. James Golf Outing and Celebration at Brunswick Forest. Campaign Manager Cindy Cheatham, left, says that since the groundbreaking ceremony, the total has increased to \$234,000. At the live auction, a bidding war for featured extra roles with Bill's daughter Mary, who currently stars on USA's *In Plain Sight* helped raised \$20,000 of that total. Many thanks to everyone at St. James, for their enduring and generous support.



Mary McCormack is also raising money for the capital campaign at crowdise.com.



Hospice staff Gale Smith, Nancy Luger, and Billie McDonough manned the booth at the Festival by the Sea in Holden Beach.



Knights of Columbus Grand Knight Norm Melanson presented a donation to Outreach Coordinator Becky Long.



Tori Colvin's senior project included sharing hospice information at the Brunswick County NAACP Health Fair.



Volunteer Susan Eason represented our agency at the Calabash Presbyterian Church Alternative Gifts Bazaar.



At Hopping 4 Hospice, Baxter Alexander and Brooks Schomp completed 25 skydives apiece to raise funds for our agency.



Shallotte United Methodist Women's Vivian Pfau and Becky Long with two of the ten manna bags the group donated.

Grief Support

Having difficulty dealing with the loss of a loved one? Our Bereavement Services staff members can help. They provide grief counseling to patients, their families, and the community. Sunrise Kids program addresses the special needs of grieving children and adolescents.

For more information, call 754.5356 or visit hospiceandlifecarecenter.org.



Participants at the latest Brunswick County volunteer orientation completed 18 hours of training. Sessions for new volunteers are offered throughout the year in our service area.



Lower Cape Fear Hospice Inc. is licensed by the N.C. Div. of Health Service Regulation to provide hospice care to the residents of southeastern N.C. Governed by a volunteer board of directors of citizens from New Hanover, Pender, Brunswick, Bladen and Columbus counties, the agency is an affiliate of NHRMC, a member of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, the Carolinas Center for Hospice and End of Life Care, and the Hospice Provider Network, is approved by the Accreditation Commission for Health Care, Inc. and is certified by Medicare and Medicaid.



Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCareCenter, a nonprofit health care agency, is proud to receive support from the Cape Fear Area and the Bladen County United Ways.



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www.hospiceandlifecarecenter.org



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BEGIN THE CONVERSATION • ORG

BeginTheConversation.org is a public education initiative sponsored by Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCareCenter to encourage people to identify and communicate their healthcare choices.

Hospice and Palliative Care News

We want to share some of the information on hospice and palliative care that has appeared in the media recently. Links are available on the [What's New](#) page under [News and Events](#) at hospiceandlifecarecenter.org.

Conversations about health care choices encouraged

- **Begin The Conversation** is a Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCareCenter initiative to encourage people to identify and communicate their healthcare choices. Similar projects include Engage with Grace and Consider the Conversation.
- New York State's **Palliative Care Information Act** requires doctors and nurse practitioners to offer terminally ill patients information on hospice, palliative care and appropriate end-of-life options.
- **Letting Go**, a much-discussed article in *The New Yorker*, talked about:
 - Terminal patients often don't have discussions with their physicians about their goals for end-of-life care
 - La Cross, Wisconsin's campaign to get physicians and patients to discuss end-of-life wishes
 - Oncologist's dilemma when patient wants more treatment
 - Young mother's desire to spend her last days with her young child
- Dartmouth Atlas **Report on Cancer Care at End of Life** Identifies Gap between Patient Wishes and Care Received

Studies show hospice benefits patients and caregivers

- **Hospice lung cancer patients lived longer:** Almost two months longer than similar patients without hospice.
- **Access to hospices improved end-of-life care:** A Yale study found hospice saves money, improves care and achieves better outcomes for cancer patients.
- **Cancer patients who die at home do so more peacefully:** Their caregivers end up doing better emotionally.
- **Cancer patient who leave hospice are hospitalized more:** They die in hospitals more and their care costs more.
- **Earlier hospice care could benefit terminal prostate patients:** Symptoms could be managed better.

A trend toward concurrent care

- The **Affordable Care Act** requires state Medicaid programs to allow children with a life-limiting illness to receive both hospice care and curative treatments. It also established a three-year "concurrent care" demonstration program at 15 sites nationwide, in which Medicare would cover both kinds of treatment simultaneously.

Statistics indicate continued growth

- **Number of people in hospice continues to rise:** Nationally 41.6 percent of all people who died in the U.S. last year were under the care of a hospice program.
- **More heart failure patients served by hospice:** The use of hospice care during the last six months of life doubled among heart failure patients to 38 percent in 2007 – two studies from the US and Canada.

Live well. Every moment matters.

When you or someone you know is facing a life-limiting illness, time is precious. With assistance, guidance, care, and support from Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCareCenter, you can make the most out of every minute and spend time doing the things that matter most to you.