MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

When we began preparing this newsletter, our intention was to focus on pediatric hospice and bereavement needs as well as our upcoming Spring and Summer events. But as we all know now, the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, and just as the whole world has done, Hospice of Washington County (HWC) has had to shift our priorities and our way of caring for patients.

Everyone has been through a lot this past month. No matter what business you work in, we have a new normal each day and new demands at work and home. HWC has had to change procedures and protocols, but we have not changed our mission of embracing individual needs with love, kindness, and compassionate care while creating meaningful end-of-life experiences for our patients and families. For 40 years, HWC has met that mission and will continue to do so for this community, regardless of the external impacts.

Hospice and Palliative Care are essential services now more than ever. As we normally do, we care for those with serious illness, underlying conditions and often the elderly. Trips to the crowded emergency rooms and clinics for these patients increase their risk of infection. By caring for our patients in the home, we are also freeing up hospital beds and respirators for COVID-19 patients.

I would like our community to know that HWC is well prepared and organized to meet the evolving challenges of this global health crisis. We will be here for our patients.

HWC is committed to taking the necessary steps to ensure the safety of our patients and families, staff, volunteers, and community. We coordinate every day with the appropriate entities including the Washington County Health Department, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Washington County Emergency Operations Center.
Message from the CEO Continued...

Before I share our updated service plan, I want to thank the community for their generosity! Due to this pandemic, and like many businesses in the community we have incurred an increase in operational costs including purchasing complete Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), as well as new supportive supplies that were not needed before. We would like to thank the many individuals, businesses, private schools and Washington County Schools who have donated PPE supplies to help keep our patients and staff safe!

We are still in need of some items. If you would like to help, HWC is in need of N95 respirators and surgical masks (especially size small), shoe covers, cloth isolation gowns, cloth long lab coats, hand sanitizer and gloves. To donate supplies please call 301-791-6360 or email kmgiffin@hospiceofwc.org or you can donate on our website at hospiceofwc.org or by filling the form on back of the newsletter and mailing it back to us. HWC is a 501c3 nonprofit.

Thank you for your support now and always. My hope is that you and your family stay safe.

Ernesto Lopez
FRANKLIN HOSPICE NOW OPEN FOR PATIENTS

Franklin Hospice, a nonprofit provider of hospice care and end of life services, has been licensed in Pennsylvania and is now open to serve patients and their families.

“Franklin Hospice was established to help support our neighbors facing a terminal illness as well as to provide support for their families,” stated CEO of Franklin Hospice, Ernesto Lopez. “Our organization also operates Hospice of Washington County which has built a trusted reputation of quality and experience for over forty years. There are so many families that can benefit from hospice care, and we are eager and look forward to becoming a trusted and dependable resource for all of Franklin County”

Mr. Lopez went on to say, “Our compassionate team of nurses, doctors, and counselors provide the highest quality of care. Working closely with local physicians, Franklin Hospice will never turn away any patient, regardless of their ability to pay.”

Franklin Hospice selected 209 Grant St. in Chambersburg as a central coordination location in order to best serve local patients and families. As the organization strives to build relationships and partnerships our goal is to become an essential resource and an active part of the entire community.

The team at Franklin Hospice consists of nurses, social workers, CNAs, chaplains, volunteers and bereavement staff. This team works with the hospice physician and the patient’s primary physician to offer a number of services including managing the patient’s pain and symptoms; assisting the patient with the emotional psychosocial and spiritual aspects of dying; providing needed medications, supplies and equipment, coaching the family/caregiver on how to care for the patient; and providing bereavement care and counseling to surviving family and friends.

Franklin Hospice is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year to provide support. In addition to the regular hospice team, an on-call team is available on nights, weekdays and holidays.

For more information, call 717-504-3465 or visit franklinhospice.org.

COVID-19 RESOURCES FOR EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

The current COVID-19 outbreak has presented individuals with difficult and uncertain times. HWC understands that people need assistance not only with the challenges, but with intense responses related to this pandemic. HWC is here for you. We have compiled a list of resources to assist you with some of these intense responses such as isolation, hopelessness, fear, anxiety, suicidal tendencies, as well as traumatic grief and loss. There are also resources for issues related to mental health, self-harm/abuse, neglect, substance abuse and more. Resources for navigating these times with children in mind are also available. We hope that this will help you during this unprecedented time.

Visit hospiceofwc.org/covid-19-support.
HWC’S JENNIFER FUND SUPPORTING PEDIATRIC PATIENTS

Following his experience with the illness and death of his daughter Jennifer Denise Lourie in 1986 at the age of 14, Dr. Ira Lourie joined the Board of Hospice of Washington County in 2004 and in 2011 began a fund to help children in hospice and with bereavement services.

“While on the Board, it became clear to me that we were not serving many children which led me to do some research into children and hospice care,” stated Dr. Ira Lourie. “When my daughter was ill with a combination of both Hodgkins and non-Hodgkins Lymphomas, we received care from the Pediatric Oncology Program at Walter Reed Army Hospital, which in retrospect was very close to the level of care that we would have gotten through a hospice. Through my research, experiences with my daughter and my growing understanding of the high level of care offered by HWC, it became clear to me that there were many services that children with cancer and their families need that are not generally offered through the hospice benefit. These include things like child care, transportation, travel expenses to tertiary care hospitals, etc. This was especially true in Hagerstown where children with cancer primarily get their care through the large hospital systems in Baltimore, Washington and even Morgantown.”

“Jennifer was the daughter and friend that everyone would dream of having. She was loving, kind, fun, wise, empathetic and intuitive,” says Bonnie Smith, Jennifer’s mother. “Jennifer loved life. She was bright in every way. She was smart and always ready to laugh and enjoy. She cared for others and showed that caring by striving to make others more comfortable. She could easily have been a star aiming for center stage, but that was not what was most important to her. What was important to Jennifer was to be part of the cast in life’s play - as child, sister, friend, student, professional, wife, mother. Hers was a future of possibilities and she dreamed of what her life might enable her to do and to give. Sadly, the world was robbed of that gleaming star when she was diagnosed with cancer at the age of 13 and died sixteen months later.”

Dr. Lourie and his wife Carrol started the Jennifer Fund to be able to support those extra services that the families with children with cancer and other serious diseases needed in order to treat their children at home and to travel for care at far away hospitals. “The response from the community was amazing and in the period of one year, we were able to amass an endowment fund large enough to produce over $2,000 a year to support these services,” stated Dr. Lourie.

Since its inception, the fund has expanded to support a wider range of services to include...
Jennifer’s Fund Continued...

seriously ill children in the community not served by HWC, well children in families in which another individual was being served by HWC, and most recently to support children’s needs within the HWC Grief Program, including supporting Camp Dove Tales. “The fund has been used a number of ways for our pediatric hospice such for medicine, rent expense, formula, needs for siblings and food,” stated Karen Giffin, Director of Development and PR. “We have also helped families of children who have terminal diseases and are undergoing operations and treatment in hospitals not located in our community with lodging and travel expenses. The Jennifer Fund has been vital in assisting families in our community.”

“My wife, Carrol, and I get great satisfaction that the money we have helped raise is being used in so many productive ways,” explained Dr. Lourie. “Having lost Jennifer has been a tragedy for her families, but having her legacy be productive in our community keeps our connection with her alive. Celebrating Jennifer’s love of dance and drama, there are two memorials to her related to the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts: a butterfly statue which we donated to the City of Hagerstown – “Heiskell Musical” that sits across the street from the school – and a chair donated in her name in the school’s Black Box Theater. Celebrating Jennifer’s love of camp, there is also the Jennifer D. Lourie Camp Scholarship Fund, an endowment through the Greater Washington Jewish National Fund, which funds camp scholarships at Capitol Camps in Waynesboro. But her most beloved and I think valuable legacy has been the Jennifer Fund at HWC.”

If you would like to donate to the Jennifer Fund, please call 301-791-6360 or view hospiceofwc.org/ways-give. Also on back of the newsletter is a form to underwrite a child for our Dove Tales Camp.

RADIO-THON WRAP UP

WJEJ Radio 1240AM and Lou Scally hosted the 7th Annual “Have A Heart for Hospice” Radio-Thon at Hospice of Washington County (HWC). The event raised over $26,000, and the proceeds supported the Doey’s House Ventilator Patient Oxygen Support Service Project.

“We would like to thank everyone who called in and donated during our Have a Heart for Hospice Radiothon,” stated Karen Giffin, Senior Director of Development and Public Relations. “We raised over $26,000 for our Doey’s House Ventilator Patient Oxygen Support Service Project. I believe it is because of Lou Scally’s passion for quality end-of-life care for everyone in the community, WJEJ’s commitment and the commitment of their listeners that made this event an outstanding success.”

Giffin went on to say that the individuals who donated their time and talent to help answer phones and to operate the event were invaluable. “The Doey’s House Ventilator Patient Oxygen Support Service Project is estimated at $200,000, and we are now over the halfway mark at $108,000 because of this event.”

Special thanks goes to Lou Scally and WJEJ, and to all of our community partners, Grease Monkey, The Auto Spas, Gordon Grocery Inc, Krumpe’s Do-Nut Shop Inc., Leitersburg Cinemas, The Nook, and Chick-fil-A Hagerstown who donated gift certificates and food for our volunteers. Thank you for helping us help our patients!
1 in 5 children will experience the death of someone close to them by age 18. (Kenneth Doka, Editor of OMEGA, Journal of Death and Dying). In a poll of 1,000 high school juniors and seniors, 90% indicated that they had experienced the death of a loved one. (nahic.ucsf.edu/downloads/Mortality.pdf)

Grief is the emotional, cognitive, behavioral, spiritual, and physical response to loss. It’s important to consider the developmental responses to grief across the lifespan. Teens (ages 13-19) deal with a wide variety of developmental milestones, so their experience in coping with grief and loss is unique.

Questions that teens may (or may not) directly ask or communicate, but are trying to cope with are:

How am I going to live without my loved one? Who am I now? Will my friends and teachers treat me differently? What should I say to them? How do I cope with everyday life? How do I deal with being angry/sad/confused/worried? Why me and my family?

Teens often avoid talking to family members about their feelings or about the person who died. This reaction is common because teens want to actually protect their family members. For example, many teens will say “Whenever I mention my deceased loved one, it makes mom/dad/grandparent cry. I don’t want them to feel worse, so I just don’t talk about him/her.” Therefore, it is developmentally appropriate and normal for teens to seek support from peers. You can let a teenager know that you WANT to know how they are doing. Reassure them that even if you cry, you will be OK and connecting with them is more important to you than avoiding tears.

Rhyan Kifer (age 16) offered insight about her grief experience. Her mother, Ambar Kifer, died on October 30, 2017 at Doey’s House. Rhyan attended HWC’s children’s grief camp in 2018 to connect with other kids and share her story. Recently, Rhyan reflected about her experiences and was asked “what do you wish people would understand about teen grief?” She wants people to know that concentration can be genuinely difficult, particularly in school. Rhyan expressed that people who are grieving don’t want to be “treated differently”, but “may need space to think.” Moreover, she reminds us that having trustworthy people who offer empathy (not sympathy) makes a big difference in coping with grief!

So what can help promote healing and healthy grief work? Encourage teens to consider using creative ways to express themselves through music, writing, or art. Believe in and take care of yourself, and avoid self-destructive behaviors. Connect with other teens who “get it”, by joining an online or in-person support group!

The bereavement counselors at Hospice of Washington County are available to offer individual, family, and group support to teens. Stay tuned for details about a Summer #TeenGrief Support group that will be held in partnership with the Washington County Public Library (Hagerstown branch). Call the bereavement department to learn more about this peer support group opportunity!
LOCAL YOUTH’S APPRECIATION FOR HOSPICE GROWS INTO DOEY’S HOUSE MEMORY GARDEN

Showing his appreciation for an organization that took care of his grandmother, David Kennedy Hawkins Jr. created a Memory Garden at Doey’s House, the only hospice inpatient unit in Washington County. David is a member of Boy Scout Troop 252 and selected this project to earn his Eagle Scout Rank.

“Hospice took care of my grandmother when she was in her last days battling cancer,” stated David Kennedy Hawkins Jr. “They were very kind, compassionate and helpful. I wanted to show my appreciation and thanks for everything they did.”

David Hawkins began the project by creating a proposal for the memory garden and submitting it to Hospice of Washington County to ensure that all requirements were met. Once the approval occurred, dates were selected, team members were confirmed and materials were gathered.

Sunny Meadows, Nitterhouse Masonry and Lowe’s provided donations of materials which was greatly appreciated. “I learned that the hard work and dedication utilized by the team ensured that the execution and implementation of the Memory Garden was completed,” explained David.

The end product was a heart shaped stone Memory Garden with flowers where patients and visitors can reflect on memories of loved ones. The project was dedicated to the Hospice of Washington County’s patients that utilize Doey’s House.

“We want to thank David, his team and donors for the beautiful Memory Garden which now resides at Doey’s House,” stated Karen Giffin, Senior Director of Development and Public Relations. “It is always heartwarming to see young people in the community want to help others and remember loved ones.”

“I want to thank everyone that helped,” stated David. “My father, mother, sister, cousins, friends and team members of Troop 252 helped create the “Memory Garden” with flowers. The team did a great job working together for a wonderful cause.”

HOSPICE OF WASHINGTON COUNTY IS CELEBRATING

- 1990’S HIGHLIGHTS -

1990
HWC introduces its “full service” program as a licensed & Medicare certified hospice

1992
New Executive Director, Shelby Higgins, served until 1995. 105 patients received care this year.

1993
HWC moves office space to Baltimore St. Seven paid staff members. Home Health nursing staff contracted to visit hospice patients

1996
New Executive Director Bob Ranch, served until 1998.

1998
New Executive Director, John Costopoulos. Two HWC nurses, first in county to become Certified Hospice Nurses by National Board for Certification of Hospice Nurses

1999
New Executive Director Sue Taylor, served until 2012 HWC is licensed by the State of Maryland as a General Hospice! Medicare certified!
When you find out you’re pregnant with your first child, you have certain expectations. When you find out the reality is going to be much different from those expectations, it’s a blow,” recalls one mother. And, thus begins a journey for not only the child, but for the whole family who is affected by the day-to-day care of a child who struggles with a life-limiting condition.

One of the most challenging and yet rewarding services of Hospice of Washington County (HWC) is the care and support of families with children who have a serious illness or condition that will limit the child’s life span. Hospice cares for children and adolescents as well as for adults.

Pediatric palliative care is similar but different from the hospice care delivered to adults. Pediatric hospice patients are generally defined as any patient from birth to 21 years of age and often is a relationship that spans a greater length of time than an adult hospice relationship. Pediatric hospice care is family-centric rather than patient-centric. When caring for an infant, child, adolescent, or young adult who has a life-threatening condition, the hospice performs concurrent care providing support and maximization of the quality of life while the child and family is seeking life-prolonging and curative care. The role of hospice is to focus on enhancing quality of life, minimizing suffering, optimizing function and providing opportunities for personal and spiritual growth. The hospice team works with the family of the child and the child’s other physicians to achieve seamless physical, psychosocial and spiritual care.

As an interdisciplinary team, our hospice team helps in many ways, from symptom management for the child, to talk therapy for a parent who is grieving the loss of what the child’s life is missing, to providing emergent needs when a symptom is out of control in the middle of the night. A team member is able to provide support for the immediate needs. All resources focus on improving quality of life.

“Caring for children in hospice is difficult because you have to meet the parents where they are mentally all the while doing what’s right for the child. It can be challenging at times. I do this for the parents, to give them peace of mind and comfort knowing their child is being well cared for, so they can enjoy their time with their child.”

- Heather Ovalle-Dominguez

Hospice of Washington County is part of a Mid-Atlantic organization called The Hospice Alliance that provides expertise and collaboration in the area of hospice care. The organization’s arm for pediatric palliative is called Alliance Kids and its mission is to provide consistency of care throughout the area when children go home from the major children’s hospitals in the area. The organization is represented by numerous hospices in the DC, Virginia, Maryland and Delaware region as well as active physician participation from the children’s hospitals in those areas. The physicians in those children’s hospitals want to make sure that the children remained connected with their care and are receiving excellent care in their home area. These physicians also are available to our team via teleconferencing if we are experiencing a need for more input for a child in crisis. With confidence and connectivity, the physicians are more likely to allow a patient to go home to spend time with family knowing a crisis can be handled if it arises.

Hospice of Washington County is honored to work with children and families who are affected daily with the care of a child who has a limited life span.
DoveTales is designed for children (ages 6 – 13) who are coping with the death of a loved one. DoveTales is an educational and nurturing place for children to share their “Tales” and meet others who “get it.” Campers will have the opportunity to build meaningful connections, as well as learn effective and practical skills for coping with their grief.

There is no cost to attend this annual event. Campers attend one-day camp, and then are invited to participate in future camp reunion events. The full day camp event will begin at 8:30 AM and conclude at 6:30 PM. Group activities will include sharing stories, creating lots of crafts, playing games, and enjoying outdoor and nature activities. All meals are included. Parents/guardians are invited to attend a special family dinner at 5 PM to meet other families, learn about camp activities, and honor their loved ones. The event will conclude with a special camp fire!

Are you interested in being an adult volunteer for DoveTales 2020? You will have the opportunity to assist with camp activities, serve as “Big Buddies” to campers, and have fun! All DoveTales adult volunteers must complete an application and attend a required training session. The DoveTales Volunteer Training will be Friday, September 25, 2020 at 5:30 PM at the Claud E Kitchens Outdoor School at Fairview (WCPS).

For more information or to request a camper or volunteer application, please contact: Hospice of Washington County Bereavement Department at 301-791-6360, email Maria Reed at mdreed@hospiceofwc.org, or visit our website, hospiceofwc.org.

Space is limited; applications are required. Camper and volunteer applications due by Friday September 18, 2020 to Maria Reed.

A reflection from Stephanie Nalley, Dove Tales Camp Volunteer and Parent:

My husband, Blake, and I had the privilege to volunteer at the DoveTales Camp 2019. Our own children, Chase and Briella, also had the opportunity to attend DoveTales Camp 2019. Our family is grieving the stillborn loss of our son, Bentley. DoveTales validated my children’s grief, and it provided a safe space to share their stories and feelings from their perspective.

As a volunteer, this camp was such a humbling experience. Childhood grief is real. It desires to be heard and a platform is needed to help these children heal. DoveTales served as a tremendous healing opportunity in each of those children’s lives that day, and I witnessed it firsthand. Were there sad and difficult parts of the day? Of course! Grief is difficult. It can be tough for children to process their losses, but DoveTales taught my children how to feel those emotions and learn to carry the memories of our loved ones forward. All of the campers were able to participate in crafts and games with their buddies and mentors. It was a wonderful experience to watch individuals in our community spend time validating the emotions surrounding childhood grief.

On our ride home, Chase said, “Mommy, I’m so glad we got to go to that camp. I was nervous to go, but I’m so glad we went. It helps so many people who are sad.” Our daughter, Briella, stood bravely during the sharing circle time and told the story of missing her big brother. Children do not skip the grieving process. They are often labeled as the “forgotten grievers.” DoveTales does not forget children. This day provided the love and gentle support needed to help not only our children but so many from this community. Blake and I plan to continue to support DoveTales. It truly has made a lasting impact on our lives!
PINWHEELS FOR PREGNANCY AND INFANT LOSS

Hope Through Birth, a local pregnancy and infant loss non-profit, was honored to have our Pinwheels for Pregnancy and Infant Loss on display at Hospice of Washington County during October. October is the recognized month for Pregnancy and Infant Loss. It provides awareness for those affected by miscarriage, stillbirth, or neonatal death. On October 1, 2019, Hope Through Birth placed over fifty pinwheels in honor of babies gone too soon here in Washington County. We offered a time to gather as a unified group that understands each other’s pain. We participated in a name reading and words of encouragement, along with a time of fellowship. This opportunity provided validation for so many grieving parents who seek ways to remember their babies. Pregnancy and Infant loss are a taboo topic. No one wants to think about a baby dying, but the reality is that one in four women experience the loss of a baby. In the United States of America, there are an average of 71 mothers a day who give birth to a baby not born alive. Every second a mother gives birth through miscarriage and every minute a mother gives birth through stillbirth. This year, Hope Through Birth wanted to help break the stigma and teach the world that it is okay to talk about our babies who have died. On behalf of our organization, we thank Hospice of Washington County and the community for allowing our babies to be remembered.

Hope Through Birth has a passion for helping bereaved parents know that they are not alone, and their babies are remembered. We connect families with local resources, provide Hope Care Packages, host memorial events, and awareness campaigns. Consider joining us in spreading awareness to pregnancy and infant loss in next year’s Pinwheels for Pregnancy and Infant Loss. You can learn more about our organization by visiting hopethroughbirth.com or e-mail hopethroughbirth@gmail.com.

SAT. JULY 18TH
8AM-12PM

SHRED DOCUMENTS FOR A SUGGESTED DONATION OF $10/BOX & SHOP FOR NEW TREASURES

If you would like to donate items to our yard sale, we will have a storage container at our Northern Ave. office in late June for you to drop off donations. More information about donations will be announced at a later date.

All proceeds will go towards building the HWC Endowment Fund. You may call us at 301-791-6360 for additional information.
CELEBRATES HOMETOWN HEROES: OUR NURSING STAFF

COMPASSION, EXPERTISE & TRUST

THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO!

SAT. JULY 18TH
8AM-12PM
SHRED DOCUMENTS FOR A SUGGESTED DONATION OF $10/BOX & SHOP FOR NEW TREASURES

NURSES WEEK
MAY 6-12 2020

HOSPICE OF WASHINGTON COUNTY

Amy
Kathleen
Kari
Allyson
Mary
Judy
Sally
Patricia
Kathy
Jeffrey
Lauren
Priscilla
Jessica
Shanna
Mary
Charles
Joanne
Karen
Kathy
Stephanie
Lori
Sarah
Karli
Benjamin
Portia
Phyllis
Katie
Mary
Rhonda
Anna
Chloe
Kimberly
Heather
Rebecca
Stephanie
Jeannie
Janet
Lavinia
Catherine
Rose
Karen
Amanda
Rachel
Kristi
Nicole
Cristina
Lois
Pamela
Marcia
Brenda
Karen
Jamie
Yolanda
Dawn
Tiffeny
Kathryn
Helen
Hillary
Tara
Evelyn
Diane
Tracy
Tim
Deidre
Tina
Debra
Tiffany
Caitlin
Teresa
Angela
Amanda
Bri
Carina
Catherine
Tina
Casey
Dylan
Tina
Courtney
Kristin
Tonja
Tammy
Lori
Billie
Barbara
Michelle
Gail
Hospice of Washington County, Inc.
747 Northern Ave.
Hagerstown, MD 21742
(301) 791-6360
www.hospiceofwc.org

Please mail or drop off to:
Hospice of Washington County, 747 Northern Ave., Hagerstown, MD 21742
For questions please call us at 301-791-6360

SPONSOR A DOVETALES CAMPER

Sponsor a DoveTales for $200. Your donation is much appreciated!

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COVID-19 SUPPLY DONATION

Supplies for the current Covid-19 virus fight are in need. Please help us with a supply donation today.

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For questions please call us at 301-791-6360