



hospice[™]
of washington county

CELEBRATING **40** YEARS OF SERVICE

MOMENTS MATTER

2020 WINTER UPDATE

MARVIN LAWS: A PATIENT STORY

Written By: Charlene Rippeon and Shelby Ledger



Marvin Laws

Marvin Laws spent his childhood on the farm in Walnut, North Carolina within the shadows of the Appalachian Mountains. His parents were Joseph and Jessie Franklin Laws. A lifelong student and teacher, Marvin first attended Tusculum College before graduating with a Master's in Education from Appalachian State

University where he met Bonnie Bunn who became his wife. He first taught in North Carolina before moving to Maryland where he continued to teach and serve as a librarian for 30 years at Emmitsburg School and Walkersville High. Also, Marvin served as part-time reference librarian at Saint Joseph College and Mount Saint Mary's College. Marvin cherished the friendship of so many teachers and students who became lifelong friends. He and

Bonnie were known for their holiday open houses on Emmitsburg's Main Street and spending time with dear friends they considered family, including his daughter, Charlene Rippeon (Richard and children) and nephew, Kent Haskett (Nancy and Meridith).

Marvin had a love of travel which grew during his service in the United States Army. He treasured his deployments in Europe, memories with Bonnie from several world cruises, and many trips with family and friends that allowed him to experience history and connect with people of diverse cultures. These travels encompassed his love for reading, history, travel, tennis, and theater.

He was known as Pop Pop to so many in the community, especially to his grandchildren, Ryan (Chelsi and Kai), Shelby, and Allison. Marvin was exceptionally proud of his family and their accomplishments. Pop Pop also spent countless hours alongside his daughter, Charlene, volunteering at Emmitsburg Elementary where

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Patient Story Continued...

his smile, friendliness, and generosity touched students and staff alike.

Marvin Edward Laws, 88, passed away peacefully with his walking shoes on Thursday, October 1st at Doey's House in Hagerstown, Maryland. Marvin's family is so thankful to the caregivers who provided end of life care to Marvin—the Hospice staff at Frederick Health Hospital and the unsung heroes of Doey's House operated by Hospice of Washington County who open their hearts to comfort each family and honor the life of every patient.

Marvin was transferred to Doey's House from the hospital where he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer three days prior. The diagnosis explained many questions about Marvin's sudden decline in health. While the family struggled to make sense of it all, a network of Hospice staff gathered round to offer support. Not only did Hospice assist with making arrangements for Doey's House, answering questions, and providing a multitude of human resources to support family members, Hospice also delivered exceptional care to Marvin in his final days. The nurses, caregivers, social worker, and chaplain at the beautiful Doey's House facility took the time to know Marvin and his family and, through those connections, created exceptionally meaningful days as Marvin's life came to an end. After Marvin's death, the staff at Doey's House continued to provide warmth, support, and grief counseling opportunities to the family. While the family misses Marvin daily, they find comfort in beautiful memories and in the knowledge that he spent his final days receiving amazing care and being surrounded by those he loved.

BEREAVEMENT

GRIEF DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Although many people consider the holidays, "the most wonderful time of the year," it can actually be one of the toughest for those who are struggling with grief and loss. People often begin to experience immense sorrow, feelings of anger, depression, loneliness and sadness right around Thanksgiving and continuing into the new year.

While others may be enjoying the sights and sounds of the holidays; the music, lights, holiday parties and festive decorations that are meant to bring us joy, all of those things may also serve as painful reminders of our loss. Our loved one is not with us physically, so it can be difficult to feel connected to those around us and to the purpose of the holiday season.

If you're wondering how to get through the holidays this year without your loved one, here are some things to think about that might be helpful:

1. Remember that grief is a part of the healing process. Some people may be resistant to actually sitting with the feelings they're feeling, and experiencing the full range of emotions that accompany grief and loss. But giving yourself permission to feel the loss is part of the healing. Oftentimes people will try to escape, avoid or medicate feelings by over-indulging in food, drinking too much alcohol, or by just being too busy, instead of giving themselves the freedom to acknowledge and sit with their experience. Attempting to pretend the holidays don't exist or numbing the pain of loss simply prolongs the anguish. Allowing yourself to experience your feelings is a healthy step toward healing from loss.

2. Be patient with yourself. Realize that it's not going to be easy and do only those things that are special, meaningful or important to you. It's okay to set healthy boundaries and not feel like you have to agree to every request; be willing to say no if that's

what you need. Eliminate the unnecessary and set appropriate limits on what you do and what you spend. Do not over commit yourself.

3. Make a plan. Realize that this is going to be a new holiday - very different than holidays of the past. Think about changing some traditions or starting new ones.

4. Build in times to relax over the holidays; take time to just breathe, remember and reflect.

5. Take the initiative and make your own plans if you do not want to be alone over the holidays. Invite a neighbor to join you, throw your own party, or sit quietly with someone you feel safe and vulnerable with during those difficult days. Do something you truly enjoy—don't do things just out of obligation or to please someone else.

6. Some of the worst holiday stress arrives post-season. Plan something pleasant in January and February to help diminish the letdown.

7. If stress, anxiety, depression, or loneliness become overwhelming, it may be helpful to consult a mental health professional. It's okay to ask for help.

8. Think ahead about a response you might give to someone who says "Merry Christmas" or "Happy New Year."

9. Be patient with those who are unaware of the death. Think of a way to let them know in advance.

10. Find a way to honor your memories. Consider creating a special way to remember and memorialize the person you've lost. Whether you decide to place a special ornament on your tree, light a candle every night, or fix your loved one's favorite food, honoring your loved one is a tangible reminder that although the person we love is gone, the love never dies.

“Be patient with yourself. Realize that it's not going to be easy. Do the things that are meaningful to you.”

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

MELINDA MORGAN, SOCIAL WORK MANAGER



Melinda Morgan
Social Work Manager

In Spring 2020, **Hospice of Washington County** (HWC) appointed Melinda “Mindy” Morgan as the Social Work Manager. Ms. Morgan started with our organization during the COVID-19 pandemic and has strived to keep our social work team strong through this unprecedented time.

“I appreciate being able to support people at a significant time in their lives when they are in the thick of grief and loss,” stated Mindy Morgan. “A caring and skilled team that is dedicated to making life as comfortable and peaceful for the patient and family is one of the greatest gifts you can give at such a challenging time. I feel honored to have the opportunity to be part of such a team—the staff here are amazing beyond measure.”

Ms. Morgan has a Bachelor’s in Social Work from Shepherd University and a Master’s in Social Work

from the University of Maryland Baltimore, while also being licensed in Clinical Social Work in the State of Maryland.

Previously, Mindy worked as a Clinical Director for Change Health Systems in Hagerstown and was a Chief Clinical Officer for Centers for Behavioral Health in Gaithersburg prior to that, as well as serving as the Director of Turning Point in Hagerstown for six years.

“I have had a reverence for hospice since my youth when my mom worked with hospice patients as a nurse,” stated Ms. Morgan. “When I found HWC was hiring a Social Work Manager, I was immediately taken by the idea.”

Our social workers have been continuing to provide quality emotional, mental, and spiritual support for patients and families during COVID-19. The social work staff has been making phone calls to patients and families when home or facility visits are not possible.

CHILDREN’S GRIEF AWARENESS DAY

Children’s Grief Awareness is recognized every year on the third Thursday of November. Hospice of Washington County would like to honor all grieving children on November 19, 2020. This time of year is a particularly appropriate time to support grieving children because the holiday season is often an especially difficult time after a death. Children’s Grief Awareness Day provides an opportunity for children to be supported in their grief. The death of a loved one can be painful, but raising awareness allows children to receive the support that they need.

One out of every 20 children will have a parent die before they graduate high school—and that number doesn’t include those who experience the death of a brother or sister, a close grandparent, an aunt or uncle, or a friend. Children who have experienced the death of someone that they love often feel like their struggles are invisible to those around them. Children need advocates, letting all know that the death of someone close is the

beginning of many weeks, months, and years of finding ways to go on without that special person in their lives, leaving a person-shaped hole in their hearts. Children who have had someone die—especially a close family member—can feel the loss forever.

As a community organization, **Hospice of Washington County** wants to show their support for grieving children and show their awareness of what grieving children might be going through by participating in Children’s Grief Awareness Day. Hospice of Washington County invites you to connect with our Bereavement Team to learn more about supporting children in grief. We raise awareness so that people will understand that a grieving child can’t just “get over it”—not in any set time period, not by any act of their own will—and that there’s no reason that they should just “get over it.” We raise awareness in order to help people learn ways they might help a grieving child they happen to know, either now or in the future.



CEO CORNER

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO, ERNESTO LOPEZ

As I write to you in the last quarter of a year where we have all been challenged and forced to adjust to the realities of a pandemic, I want to remind you of one thing that continues to be a constant – hope. Because hope is prominent at **Hospice of Washington County**, we can look ahead to face our challenges, find solutions to problems, creatively find ways to deliver services to our patients and continue our mission of quality end of life care for our community.

Hospice of Washington County is continuing to have hope and to make strides during the pandemic. We have a staff that is fully committed and understands the importance of dying with dignity, in comfort, and surrounded by loved ones.

Remember our staff is specifically trained to provide complete care while keeping patients and families safe and preventing the transmission of infectious diseases. We continue to maintain CDC guidelines, wear appropriate PPE, and assess staff daily for any symptoms. Our care and pain management are provided most often in the home, minimizing patients’ exposure to large groups of people. We are utilizing Telehealth which is a key and valuable tool that helps us stay even more connected with our patients and their families. Many of our services

and programs have introduced online options, such as our virtual bereavement group and individual counseling. We continue to innovate and adjust to these external circumstances so that our patients can benefit from our valuable services and support without interruption or concern.

Even during a pandemic, we are expanding benefits to our patients and their families. For example we are partnering with MemoryWell, a service for sharing life stories of older adults with health care providers, to help share our patients’ stories and keep their memories for loved ones to share for years to come.

Through the journey of serious illness, hope adapts and changes over time. Hospice will be with you by helping, supporting, and providing resources to help make these hopes a reality. Hospice care creates a healing and supportive environment that is indispensable and critical to the end of life experience. We give the highest quality of supportive care so that our families can cherish the most important moments and focus on just being there for their loved ones. Hospice of Washington County is here to help with this hope in these challenging times, regardless of everything else taking place in this world.

HOSPICE OF WASHINGTON COUNTY IS CELEBRATING

40
YEARS

- JOIN US FOR A LOOK
- THROUGH THE YEARS

1980

- 1979** First meeting about hospice.
- 1980** Bylaws were developed, first financial status was reported, incorporation application approved! 12 patients in first year.
- 1981** First 21 volunteers trained.
- 1981** First patients admitted.
- 1983** First Executive Director hired, Judy Wolf.
- 1984** Dr. Kass appointed as Medical Director.
- 1987** MD Legislature passed a law to license hospices formally as programs for terminally ill.
- 1989** HWC is licensed by the State of Maryland as a General Hospice! Medicare certified!



1990

- 1992** New Executive Director hired, Shelby Higgins.
- 1993** HWC moves office space to Baltimore St. with 7 paid staff members.
- 1993** New Executive Director hired, Bob Ranch.
- 1998** New Executive Director hired, 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 hired, Sue Taylor.



2000

- 2000** Accreditation by the Joint Commission.
- 2004** HWC offices moved to 3rd floor of Western Maryland Hospital; first Chaplain hired.
- 2006** HWC purchased building at 747 Northern Avenue.
- 2008** First 'in-house' Medical Director is hired, Dr. Anne Egbert.
- 2008** New Medical Director, Dr. Cynthia Kutter-Sands is hired (served until 2011).
- 2010** Seven staff members, known as Team 7, travel to Mombasa, Kenya to visit Coast Hospice through FHSSA.



2010

- 2012** New Chief Medical Officer is hired, Dr. Alva Baker.
- 2012** New CEO is hired, Eric Klimes.
- 2015** LifeCare of Washington County, palliative care, opens on Trilogy Building on Imerial Drive.
- 2016** Doey's House ground breaking.
- 2017** New CEO is hired, Ernesto Lopez.
- 2017** Doey's House grand opening.
- 2018** LifeCare moves to Main St., Boonsboro.
- 2018** HWC rebrands with new logo.
- 2020** Establishes Franklin Hospice in Chambersburg, PA.





DEVELOPMENT

MEMORY WELL

Hospice of Washington County is dedicated to supporting and honoring our patients. That's why we are working with MemoryWell, a network of specially trained writers, to craft brief, intimate life stories that capture each person's legacy and contributions. The stories are being offered for free to our families to create lasting keepsakes and promote better care.

The life stories will be based on a telephone or Zoom interview with a Hospice of Washington County volunteer or staff member. The writers from MemoryWell will turn the recorded interviews into beautiful narratives. The stories will be shared on a digital platform, where families can build on them through an interactive digital timeline where they can add memories, photos, and music from different eras. Families can also choose to turn the stories and timelines into printed books, as well as obituaries.

These life stories help our care teams understand what matters most to our patients, as well as the experiences and people that have shaped them.

"Hospice of Washington County's mission is to provide our patients and families with the highest quality of end of life care," stated CEO Ernesto Lopez. "Working with MemoryWell will allow us to provide a way that patients and their families can work together to provide and preserve lasting memories for them and future generations."

MemoryWell was started by Jay Newton-Small, a TIME Magazine correspondent, who wrote a story for her father when he entered long-term care, and it had a profound impact on his care. Two of his caregivers were Ethiopian and they had no idea that he had lived in Ethiopia for four years early on in his career with the United Nations. They became his champions, sitting for hours asking him about what it was like to work with Emperor Haile Selassie, and what the empress had been like. Other families, seeing his story, asked for their own loved ones' stories. From that, MemoryWell was born.

Hospice of Washington County patients can work with their caregivers to sign up for this service.

BENEVOLENCE FUND

LIGHTS FOR LOVE & MEMORIAL DRIVE

Hospice of Washington County (HWC) is holding the Third Annual Doey's House Lights For Love event with a memorial drive on Sunday, December 6, 2020. Individuals can honor and remember loved ones through luminaries placed around Doey's House and participate in a memorial drive in their loved ones' honor. The funds raised through this event will support Hospice of Washington County's Benevolence Program.

Each luminary can be purchased for a donation of \$10 and will include being a part of the memory drive. Participants will receive car signs in which they can write their loved ones' names from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. at our staging area. The map of the route will be given out, and the memorial drive will head towards Doey's House and will end at 747 Northern Ave.

"Due to COVID-19, we had to change the event this year, but we did not change the meaning," stated Melissa Fountain, Co-Chair of the Annual Gifts Committee. "We are very honored that we will be able to continue this tradition in a unique way that meets CDC guidelines and keeps participants safe."

"The Benevolence Fund provides basic emergency needs to our patients and families at a time when they need it the most," stated Associate Vice President of Mission Advancement Karen Giffin. "When our staff visits our new patients, they often find that the patients have insufficient food, inadequate heating or cooling needs, or gas to go to the doctor's. The Benevolence Fund is a stopgap measure while our social workers work with the many community organizations to provide on-going support. This fund will insure that immediate support is given to our patients and their families."

The Benevolence Fund provides basic emergency needs when they need it the most.

Individuals can also leave a legacy by having the name of a loved one permanently placed at Doey's House, Washington County's only hospice house. There are many opportunities including personalized stone pavers and other naming rights. Pavers require a \$250 donation and there are a number of naming opportunities at a variety of levels at Doey's House.

The event is sponsored by First Energy Foundation and Middletown Valley Bank. More information on these programs designed to honor and remember your loved ones can be obtained by calling 301-791-6360 or emailing HWC-DevelopmentTeam@hospiceofwc.org.



CELEBRITY CHALLENGE

Hospice of Washington County (HWC) put the “fun” in fundraiser two years in a row with a unique event entitled Celebrations, and it was so successful that we decided to make it an annual event. However, COVID-19 happened, and the fundraiser has taken on a new twist and is now called Celebrity Challenge. The feature of the event is a Celebrity Challenge and Auction. Celebrity Challenge is made up of unique events, fundraisers and online promotions to raise funds for the Doey’s House Oxygen Ventilator Project, all while abiding by CDC guidelines and social distancing protocols.

The **Celebrations Event** is being held from now until November 18. “The unique part of this event is the Celebrities who compete by trying to outdo each other and out fundraise each other,” stated Cynthia Perini, Co-Chair Celebrations Event. “And when we say celebrities, we are referring to our community celebrities who want to assist Hospice of Washington County.”

As the exclusive licensed provider of hospice care in Washington County, Maryland, HWC’s goal is to surround the patient and their family with a personal team of professionals who know how to manage even the most difficult situations. **Hospice of Washington County, Inc.** was established in 1980 for the sole purpose of lending support to those facing a terminal illness and their families. HWC was created in 1980 and was a small, all-volunteer organization. HWC has grown into an organization serving over 200 patients a day. HWC

is celebrating its 40th year of caring for patients.

Ms. Perini went on to state that our celebrities have unique fundraisers planned. “Our celebrities will be able to hold online promotions, events which put into place social distancing, and asking individuals to join memberships to giving societies and take naming opportunities.”

This year’s celebrities are Kandace Carpenter partnered with Tiffany Gardner, Kelli Deiterich, Julie Donat and partners Carolyn Carder & Jeremy Flinchbaugh, Tina Fraley and partner Tammy Shindle, Shellie Ralston, Ryan Smetzer, and Mary Ellen Waltemire with Tom Riford. Their energy, excitement, and creativity are boundless.

Along with the celebrities, there will be a silent auction, which will be held from Saturday, November 14th thru Wednesday, November 18th. “We also have a number of unique sponsorship opportunities for our business and organizations,” stated Christy Turner, Co-Chair of the Event. “At certain levels, businesses will become part of our corporate giving society, The Redwood Society. This is a great way for businesses to be part of the event and simultaneously help Hospice of Washington County.”

If you would like more information on the event, please call 301-791-6360 or visit http://weblink.donorperfect.com/Celebrations_Challenge20.

EVENTS

UPCOMING BEREAVEMENT EVENTS

Anticipated Bereavement Events - stay tuned for details via social media and our website!

- **Overdose Loss Support Group**
November - December 2020

This group is designed specifically for adults who are grieving the death of loved one as a result of an overdose. The group will be facilitated by Melanie Green, bereavement counselor, and it will be a 6-week virtual group. Please contact Melanie via email: mngreen@hospiceofwc.org or call Hospice of Washington County at 301-791-6360 to learn more information.

- **International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day**
Saturday November 21, 2020

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention will be hosting a Maryland statewide virtual event on Saturday November 21st. Hospice of Washington County will not be hosting an on-site/in-person event this year, but invites anyone impacted by suicide loss to join this virtual event for support and connection. You can learn more and register for the virtual event at: isosld.afsp.org/maryland-and-delaware-state.

- **Honoring our loved ones during the holiday season**
November - December 2020

The Hospice of Washington County Bereavement and Development teams will be offering a variety of options to creatively honor your loved one during this holiday season.

o A Virtual Service of Remembrance will be filmed and produced in early December 2020.

o A Virtual Memorial Wreath will be available for community and Hospice families to submit their loved one’s name.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Hearts of Hope Via Zoom

HWC is continuing to serve the community with Bereavement Services. Hearts of Hope is available via Zoom (an online video chat platform). Hearts of Hope is an ongoing, open support group available to any adult who has experienced a death of a loved one. Individuals can use Zoom on their computer, tablet, or phone. Participants can utilize the video and audio, or simply the audio feature. If you would like to participate or have questions, please contact Maria Reed at mdreed@hospiceofwc.org by 10am the day of.

UNTIL
18
NOV

Celebrity Challenge

The feature of the event is a Celebrity Challenge and Auction. Celebrity Challenge is made up of unique events, fundraisers and online promotions to raise funds for the Doey’s House Oxygen Ventilator Project, all while abiding by CDC guidelines and social distancing protocols.

06
DEC

Lights of Love

Doey’s House
11370 Caring Pathway Lane
Hagerstown, MD 21742

Individuals can honor and remember loved ones through luminaries placed around Doey’s House and participate in a memorial drive in their loved ones’ honor.



Hospice of Washington County, Inc.
747 Northern Ave.
Hagerstown, MD 21742
(301) 791-6360
www.hospiceofwc.org

LIGHTS TO HONOR & REMEMBER LOVED ONES

LIGHTS FOR LOVE & MEMORIAL DRIVE - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2020

Doey's House, 11370 Caring Pathway Lane, Hagerstown, MD

Funds raised from these events will support Hospice of Washington County's Benevolence Fund

\$10.00 per light. One name per sheet please. Order as many as you like. Please print.

IN MEMORY OF (DECEASED)

IN HONOR OF (LIVING)

NAME TO BE READ

DONATED BY

ADDRESS

PHONE

EMAIL

Billing address (if different from above)

ADDRESS

NAME ON CARD

CREDIT CARD #

SIGNATURE OF DONOR(S)

EXPIRATION DATE

SECURITY CODE

All orders must be received by November 26th to be included in the reading of the names.

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