

2016 Iss.01

### LOOK HOMEWARD A publication for the supporters of Visiting Nurse Health System

# ANDREW AND EULA CARLOS HOSPICE ATLANTA CENTER





# **YEARS**

SERVING ATLANTA'S RESIDENTS

#### Visiting Nurse Health System

#### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

The year 2016 marks an important milestone for Visiting Nurse Health System, our patients, their families, and the Atlanta community: the 20th anniversary of the opening of Hospice Atlanta Center.

What began as a dream of four forward-thinking Atlanta families became a physical reality thanks to the dedication and passion put forth by them and many others. We would like to thank all who have contributed to creating the first-and finest-inpatient hospice facility in Georgia.

As the business of healthcare continues to evolve on the national stage, with your support we can make sure the Center remains the model of hospice care in our home town. Strong leadership will also remain a necessary component to maintaining the highest standards of care in every program administered by Visiting Nurse.

With that said, it is with great enthusiasm that I announce the appointment of Norene Mostkoff as CEO of Visiting Nurse Health System. Having served as President and CEO of Iowa's largest home care and hospice provider, Norene has continually been recognized as a proven leader in the field and we are extremely excited to have her join our organization.

I would also like to acknowledge that during my time as Interim CEO I have been amazed by the unwavering support and dedication of so many. From devoted board members and staff, to committed donors and tireless volunteers, I have remained inspired by your ongoing commitment to continuing our mission of improving the lives of those we serve.

With sincere gratitude and warmth,

Mary arme

Mary Arthur President & CEO (Interim)



### Welcome our new CEO, Norene Mostkoff

After an extensive nationwide search, Visiting Nurse is thrilled to announce the appointment of Norene Mostkoff as our new CEO! With more than 25 years of experience in nonprofit management, marked by award-winning practices in home health and hospice care, Norene is well-positioned to lead the organization forward with her passion and energy.

Since 2009, Norene served as President and CEO of HCI-VNS Care Services of Des Moines, Iowa, which currently serves over 65,000 patients annually.

"The entire Visiting Nurse Health System family is excited to welcome Norene with her wealth of experience and commitment to mission she brings," said Bill Henagan, Visiting Nurses's Board Chair. "She will allow us to continue to serve a larger, more pivotal role in Atlanta's home health and end-of-life care."

Learn more about Norene's experience and achievements at vnhs.org.

Welcome to the Visiting Nurse family, Norene!

## Hospice Atlanta Center 1996-2016 It's Been 20 Years...What's Changed (And What Hasn't)?

Tt's 1996 in Atlanta. In a residential I neighborhood in Buckhead, construction of the new Hospice Atlanta Center is winding down and final preparations are taking place to launch Georgia's first and largest facility designed and built for patients needing end-of-life care.

Born from the vision of Dr. Arthur Booth, who recognized the need for a "place" where patients facing the end of life could receive comfort and care, the 36-bed Hospice Atlanta Center was opened thanks to the support of many. Significant contributions were made by Eula Carlos, Mary Gellerstedt and Warren Jobe who brought together corporate, board and community partners to make the Center a reality.

In the two decades since the doors first opened, the Andrew and Eula Carlos Hospice Atlanta Center has remained a cornerstone of the community. The hospice program, which reaches beyond the Center into patients' homes and partner hospitals, has remained a source of unwavering person-centered care through an evolving landscape of changes. Thanks to our community, we're able to sustain our efforts to improve the lives of those we serve.

### What's Changed?

The hospice patients we serve now are much sicker than those early residents, who were typically referred by doctors' offices. Today, we see acute conditions, as patients are discharged from the hospital much sooner and with highly complex issues that have raised the cost of care exponentially.

The complexity of care we administer has moved forward at warp speed. In the past, pain management was limited to the administration of morphine. Today, we still use morphine but we have many more options: we see IVs in the home, pain pumps have replaced liquid morphine and nurses are likely to use computers to chart, video conference and communicate with peers.

In the early days of the program, patients were required to have a caregiver in place. Now, when no caregivers are present, Visiting Nurse provides multiple alternatives for patients to receive care-all of them related to what's right for the individual. Wherever patients choose to receive our hospice services—in home, hospital or at the Centerperson-centered care is vital to how we perpetuate a positive quality of life.

Families still arrive in crisis struggling with end-of-life issuesgetting proper care for their loved

#### FEATURE

one, letting go, making peace, dealing with grief-but there is so much more awareness of hospice care today. Greater resources are available online and in the community, giving loved ones the information they need to make smart decisions about appropriate care. Those impacted by loss also have greater access to grief and bereavement support in-person and online.

#### What Hasn't Changed?

Since 1996, within the walls of Hospice Atlanta Center and beyond, we've faced many challenges, but the ongoing support from our dedicated staff, passionate volunteers and generous donors has never faltered. This sustains us, strengthening our resolve to improve the lives of patients we serve and affirming our commitment to being a safety net for those patients in need, but unable to afford the high cost of care.



Hospice Atlanta Center's cornerstone

#### FEATURE

## The Business of Hospice Care An Industry Transformed

Tn 1996, there were only nine **I** hospice programs in the state of Georgia. Today there are more than 200 programs statewide. Of these, 99% are for-profit.

So, what's changed in the hospice industry during the past 20 years? The way the cost of care is reimbursed.

Acute care is the most expensive level of care, so as the need for

hospices grew, and as more and more hospices opened, the financial strain of maintaining this level of care was met with greater restrictions on reimbursements by insurers, including Medicare. As costs of care continue to skyrocket, companies have had to meet the overwhelming demand for care through private payment.

Hospice Atlanta Center was built so that members of the community could have a place to live out their final

days. Since the Center opened, we've learned more effective ways to manage pain and symptoms. Understanding that patients often prefer to remain in their homes, we've become adept at serving patients where they live, which is less expensive and keeps them closer to family. As a not-forprofit organization, our programs for the under-insured are made possible by the generosity of individuals, foundations and corporations in the Atlanta community.

### Hospice Atlanta Center Celebrates its 20th Anniversary Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' Legacy Links Two Special Events



June 9th began with a special presentation by Ken Ross, who gave a riveting multimedia

The morning of

presentation about the amazing life of his mother, end-of-life care pioneer Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. More than 100 attendees heard Ken speak about his mother's diverse life experiences and lessons she learned—and passed on—to everyone she encountered or cared for. Her philosophy to give up your fears, live life to the fullest, and find your individual voice was central to her life's work. She helped change the public perception of dying, encouraging everyone to listen to and embrace dying patients, not avoid them.

The evening reception at Hospice Atlanta Center reunited friends and supporters-old and new-to celebrate the impact the Center has made on thousands of Atlanta's families. Speakers, including Ken Ross and Elisabeth Kübler-Ross Foundation President, Dianne Gray, as well as Visiting Nurse's Interim CEO Mary Arthur, spoke about the evolution of Hospice Atlanta and those that



Ken Ross presents Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, Her Life and Legacy

made it a reality in our community. New CEO Norene Mostkoff made her "public debut" by looking forward to the future of the Center and Visiting Nurse. The night concluded with a ribbon cutting to formally open the Elisabeth Kübler-Ross Library at the Center.



Visiting Nurse CEO Norene Mostkoff and former Atlanta mayor Sam Massell open the Elisabeth Kübler-Ross Library

# Elisabeth Kübler-Ross Library Opens Hospice Atlanta Center to House Special Collection

**T**isiting Nurse is honored that Hospice Atlanta Center has been chosen as the site for the second Elisabeth Kübler-Ross Library in the U.S. A hospice and palliative care pioneer, Elizabeth Kübler-Ross was a Swiss-American psychiatrist who revolutionized the study of death, dying and grieving. Her first book, On Death



and Dying, published in 1969, became a guiding resource for those working with the terminally ill. Prior to Kübler-Ross' efforts, the topic of death was often avoided in healthcare settings, leaving patients feeling alone and isolated.

The new Elisabeth Kübler-Ross reading room houses publications

> from her personal collections, international awards received in recognition of her work and personal mementos. Additional resources related to grief and bereavement will be available in a special section of our website, giving family and loved ones greater access to topics related to end-oflife issues.

### Over the Years

1996

Volunteers Have Been Instrumental in Building the World-Class Hospice Atlanta Center

Volunteers play soothing piano music in the library for patients, family and friends. Volunteers, some with backgrounds in therapeutic music, also play instruments in patients' rooms (Native American flute, fiddle, violin, trombone, guitar, dulcimer and harp)





Rose Garden Club adopts our Chapel Garden and changes plantings seasonally to keep it well-maintained.



FEATURE

"I say to people who care for people who are dying, if you really love that person and want to help them, be with them when their end comes close. Sit with them – you don't even have to talk. You don't have to do anything, but really be there with them." Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. M.D.

Volunteers happily assist with administrative tasks such as data entry, stuffing envelopes, making copies, and answering the phone.

Volunteers from the Club Estates Garden Club begin to festively decorate the Center for the holidays.

2000

Chaplain interns and the Bereavement team begin Afternoon Teas in the library Volunteers host the Teas to bring amily members together for mutual support, music, tea and sweets.

### **Dealing With Grief and Loss** Bereavement Program Evolves to Meet the Changing Needs of Families

Guided meditations as a way to cope with grief



n the past two decades, as our **I** hospice program has grown, particularly with the recent addition of the hospital general inpatient units at Emory and Piedmont, bereavement needs have changed. Families have become more diverse in national origin, ethnicity and religious affiliation, requiring increased cultural sensitivity and translation services.

The Center's 13-month bereavement program is designed to meet the evolving needs of families with services like 24-hour counseling by phone, support groups and regular

mailings on coping with loss. We've expanded these programs to teach meditation to build resilience during the grieving process.

Another integral part of our bereavement program is support provided by our hospice chaplains. Over the past twenty years there's been an increased emphasis on spirituality and less of a focus on traditional religions among patients. We have four full-time chaplains who are experienced working with patients and family members from all faiths and beliefs.

Our bereavement camp, Camp STARS, was originally formatted as two annual sessions, one for children and one for families. Recognizing that grief is a process that impacts the entire family, we have bi-annual sessions for families, including one's "chosen family" of friends and other loved ones.

### New Simulation **Training Room Keeps Up With** Modern Families

Many of our hospice patients are supported in-home. Recognizing the diverse challenges presented by changing demographics, living styles and family dynamics, our new simulation training room at Hospice Atlanta Center prepares our hospice teams to work in a variety of situations. The space-which allows clinicians to practice basic and advanced procedures in a home-like setting-is used during orientation, evaluations and "refresher courses." so practitioners working in the field are equipped to handle a variety of challenges wherever they serve.

# **Residential Patients Find Comfort** in Their New Home at Hospice Atlanta Center Generosity of Donors Enhances Latest Addition

Since 1996, Hospice Atlanta Center maintained a small number of residential patients (those unable to receive care in their own home). At the beginning of 2015, we opened an entire wing devoted to residential care. Less a "facility" and more like a private home, our residential care wing is designed for hospice eligible patients whose home isn't equipped for care



or whose family doesn't live locally. Medicare reimburses all medical costs, but patients pay a monthly fee for room, board and amenities.

Thanks to the generous donations raised during last year's annual fall gala, In the Moment - A Celebration of Life, the homelike atmosphere has been significantly enhanced.

Speakers' Bureau launched for volunteers to present on various topics related to hospice and aging as a gift to our community.

2004

Volunteer Dot Cohen

starts Dot's Knitting Circle

Spiritual Care training to volunteers interested in offering prayer, silent presence, meditation, Eucharistic ministry and just a listening ear to patients and their loved ones.

2008

Chaplain Daphne Clements begins

An "intuitive" volunteer begins offering her gentle presence to patients upon the request of a family member.



Volunteers lend baking skills to prepare food for Afternoon Teas and other Center events, including the mother and daughter teams from the National Charity League who bring sandwiches and baked goods for our patients every weekend.

Core group of volunteers begin Vigil Care program to sit with patients who are close to death when they don't have family present.



Pet Peace of Mind

volunteers care for patients' pets

so the patients can keep their pet

with them in their final days after

Volunteer Master Gardner Elizabeth H. begins taking care of our Chapel Garden and indoor plants.

Through the We Honor Veterans program, military veteran volunteers honor a veteran patient's service with a certificate, pinning and sincere gratitude



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FEATURE

We've purchased beautiful, updated furnishings, new dishes, meal warming carts, and frosted doors that allow for more privacy in common areas.

When visitors arrive, they're greeted like family and this feeling of inclusiveness is maintained throughout the patient/family experience.

"There's no request that hasn't been addressed perfectly. Communication is excellent, with no lag time between shifts. It's gorgeous, peaceful and every single person we come into contact with has been extremely gracious." Donna, daughter of a resident (Chicago, IL)

> Volunteers range in age from 16 to 85, most of whom have had a loved one in hospice care. Volunteers bring many skills, talents and training including licensed massage therapy, Reiki, polarity therapy, hair dressing and cosmetology.

#### CARING VOICES

# **One Longtime Supporter's Quiet Commitment** Starr Moore Reflects On Her Shared History with Hospice Atlanta Center

Ttarr Moore will be the first to tell you, "It's not about me." And while we respect her wish to deflect attention from herself, it's worth noting she donated the salary for the first employee of Hospice Atlanta. The year was 1979, when the concept of hospice care was new to Atlanta, the organization was housed within the basement of St. Joseph's Hospital and the entire "staff" was made up of volunteers.

A native Atlantan, Starr has always been dedicated to philanthropic initiatives that benefit our city. Her interest in advocating for compassionate care stems from an early experience watching a muchloved aunt battle cancer. Starr knew there had to be a more peaceful way for a loved one to pass.

She wanted to gain a deeper understanding about the process of dying-or as she's quick to clarify-"the process of living, while dealing with a terminal illness." Starr read books by Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, among other works on the subject. Then, a friend introduced her to Sister Ellen McSorley, a pioneer in the Atlanta hospice movement. Sister Ellen managed a volunteer-driven organization that would become known as Hospice Atlanta.

Those who know the history of Hospice Atlanta Center know it could not have sustained those early years without the

financial support of Starr Moore. As the years passed and Hospice Atlanta became part of Visiting Nurse Health System, Starr has continued to be a significant donor and guiding force to the organization.

So why is Hospice Atlanta Center so dear to Starr's heart? "It provides comfort to families, patients and friends at a very difficult time of life. It changes what could be a horrible



"It's not about dying, this is about living."

gentler, kinder."

Starr Moore, on the strength of Hospice Atlanta

nightmare to something that is calm,

Starr stops in the Center occasionally

to share a cup of tea with guests and

staff and volunteers. "I'm passionate

about the fact that this organization

continues to thrive and that it be there

for my end of life and for the people I

love. I'm inspired about our future and

I'm very pleased to be a part of it."

visitors, and to stay in touch with

#### Leaving a Legacy Doesn't Have to Be Complicated The Advantages of Planned Giving

Though not always so visible, planned gifts are a powerful way to make a positive and lasting impact on the work we do. If you've ever thought about leaving a planned gift for any charitable organization that's close to your heart, here are a few things you should know.

IT'S SIMPLER THAN YOU MAY THINK - You don't have to hire an attorney to set up a planned gift. Although you can include this type of gift in a will or trust, you can also designate Visiting Nurse Health System as a beneficiary (or partial beneficiary) of existing assets, like a life insurance policy or IRA.

THIS IS A POSITIVE WAY TO SHOW YOUR PASSION - Remembering an organization like Visiting Nurse beyond your lifetime is a significant way to demonstrate what means the most to you. It underscores the value and commitment you place on our mission to improve lives.

TAX RELIEF IS AN ADDED BENEFIT - Estate taxes can be a burden for many families, so planned giving is a way to support the cause you're passionate about, while benefitting from tax relief.





In The Moment

A Celebration of Life

# **Returns to Zoo Atlanta Supports Pediatric Hospice Care**

ate in the day on Sunday 🖵 24th, more than 450 gue us at Zoo Atlanta as we cel the 25th anniversary of the DO. We raised more than \$5 in support of pediatric hosp the only nonprofit program kind in Georgia. It was a w afternoon filled with face p sand art, wildlife viewing a more. Guests were able to several of our pediatric hos families, as well as hear Ja Hart (the father of 4 year o Matthew, who is currently our pediatric hospice progr passionately speak about th

# SAVE-THE-DATE

Please join us to honor the Four Founding Families of the Andrew and Eula Carlos Hospice Atlanta Center as we continue to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of Georgia's first and largest inpatient hospice facility.

## Thursday, October 27, 2016

Stave Room at American Spirit Works 199 Armour Drive, Atlanta GA 30324 7:00pm - 10:00pm Cocktail attire

#### Live Auction · Band · Buffet · And More!

Your attendance will help ensure Visiting Nurse has resources available to serve all who need care, regardless of their ability to pay.

For sponsorship opportunities and tickets visit vnhs.org/InTheMoment or call 404-215-6010. We'll see you there!



**EVENTS** 

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family's experience with Visiting ed Nurse and our hospice program.

> Thank you to all of our sponsors and guests who came out to support our pediatric hospice patients and Visiting Nurse, especially John N. Goddard Foundation, Bank of America, Cumulus Media and WSB! To learn more about sponsoring next year's event, contact Kristin Stanley at 404-527-6542 or Kristin.Stanley@vnhs.org. ..... To view event photos, visit and like the BIG-TO-DO Facebook page at www.facebook.com/VNHS.BIG.TO.DO

#### PROGRAMS

### Visiting Nurse Launches Digital Strategy, Including New Website and Expanded Social Media Presence Funded By A Generous Donor

 $\mathbf{T}$  hanks to a generous donation from a long-time supporter, as of mid-June vnhs.org has a fresh new look and an enhanced user experience. Plus, our social media presence, including Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, has been greatly expanded. In fact, we've more than doubled our fan base leading up to the launch of our new website! Visiting Nurse and Hospice Atlanta are now engaging our community online as our patients, partners, supporters and staff have come to know us-as Georgia's leading nonprofit provider of person-centered healthcare at home.

In the summer of 2015, a well-defined digital strategy presenting Visiting Nurse as the authoritative voice was born to engage consumers and healthcare professionals online using any device. For more than six months, we reviewed competitive websites and best practices in web design and usability, and integrated feedback from site users and other stakeholders. In early 2016, we selected two of Atlanta's top web development and digital content firms to help us greatly strengthen our online presence.

Today, when accessed using any device–desktop, laptop, tablet or mobile phone–<u>vnhs.org</u> visitors will notice an enhanced user experience with a clean design, streamlined access to information through intuitive site navigation, audio, video and blog posts, and faster page loading times. Not only do site visitors benefit from the improved online experience, but users searching for healthcare at home and the many other services offered by Visiting Nurse will quickly find our website is a valuable resource thanks to our



sharpened search engine optimization. Behind the scenes, an upgraded content management system allows us to post information on the site more quickly and efficiently to provide our site visitors with the most current information about how Visiting Nurse can help. Soon we will launch phase two of our digital strategy, which includes expanding our social networks on YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, and Google+, all designed to drive traffic to our website, expand awareness of Visiting Nurse, and to deliver information to our constituents in other formats and in other channels where they prefer to get their information.

"The number one goal was to refresh and draw attention to our online presence, making it mobilefriendly, while being an inviting and engaging source for information," said Mary Arthur. "We have four key user groups using our site as a resource, and we want each to have an optimum user experience: patients and caregivers in crisis need

> quick and easy access to information; our provider partners want to learn more about the breadth and depth of our services and access their online portal to documents; job seekers want to learn about opportunities to join

our team; and, donors and volunteers want the complete picture to feel confident about investing their time and resources with us. Timing was important because so many people access the web using mobile phones, and we want to make it easy for them to find and benefit from the resources we offer."

We invite you to visit <u>vnhs.org</u>, and to Like and Share our posts on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. We welcome your feedback!

# January 1, 2016 - May 31, 2016

Honor and memorial gifts offer a lasting, visible legacy in honor of a special loved one or in recognition of an outstanding caregiver.

We would like to thank all the people who have generously made honor and memorial gifts. If your name has been omitted or reported incorrectly below, please accept our sincere apologies and notify the Office of Advancement at 404-215-6010.

The following people were thoughtfully remembered with a gift in their name:

In Honor of: Mr. James Ralph Cooper Ms. Sarah Creech Ms. Mary C. Arthur Ms. Ila Joan Crunkilton Ms. Leah Bulow Mr. Mike Daughtrey Mr. Brian Cohen Mrs. Dorothy Dumais Mr. John (Jack) Curtin Ms. Mary Farill Mr. & Mrs. Billy Galliger Ms. Laurie Folev Mrs. Denise Galvin Mr. Chad Greenspan Ms. Michelle Lock Mr. James Giblin Ms. Ina Wilson Greer Ms. Lavida Moody Ms. Mary Jane Nations Mr. Charles Harman Ms. Rebecca O'Dell Ms. Ruth Harris Ms. Megan Palumbo Mr. Giles Eugene Hathaway Ms. Alison Robbins Ms. Bernice Hill Mr. Jeff Williams Ms. Diane Holland Mr. Doug Windey Mrs. Judith (Judy) Horton Mrs. Iona Hudgins In Memory of: Mr. Kenneth Johnson Mrs. Doris R. Kelly Ms. Jennie Adkins Mrs. Phyllis Kelly Dr. James E. Averett, Jr. Ms. Zula Sue Kelly Mrs. Linda Banks Ms. Sushil Kochav Mr. Paul Koehler Ms. Gloria Shelton Baublits Ms. Betty Ann Bearden Mr. David Lawhon Dr. Garland Bennett, Jr. Mr. Simon Phillip Levetan Ms. Sylvia Berkowitz Mr. Frank Lindauer Mr. Ron Blanton Mr. Andrew Loeb Ms. Jan Bowden Ms. Marilvn Mav Ms. Greta Brandy Mrs. Marilyn McGlynn Ms. Bettie Brannen Mrs. Jackie Meeks Ms. Ermagene Miller Mr. James Bullard Mr. Robert Bunn Ms. June Mindrup Ms. Mary Stack Campbell Mr. David Murray Ms. Mary Cannon Mr. William Nestel Ms. Marjorie Cardaneo Mr. Frank Olin Mrs. Eula C. Carlos Ms. Barbara Ortega Mr. David Carr Ms. Mary Ostrom Mr. Robert L. Cook Mr. Matthew Pensec Mrs. Betty Cook Ms. Maria Genoveva Perez

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Address Service Requested

#### Look Homeward

Bill Henagan Board Chair

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please address all correspondence to Advancement@vnhs.org.

> 404.215.6000 vnhs.org



# Remember the Life of Someone Dear to You

Place a Memorial Paver in Hospice Atlanta Center's Garden

With a gift of \$1,000 or more a paver creates a lasting tribute to a friend, a favorite relative, or someone with whom you shared special memories. Additional memorial opportunities are available.

For more information, please visit vnhs.org/Donate or call the Office of Advancement at 404-215-6010.



Giving Monthly Makes a Difference All Year! Fund Ongoing Needs for Those Who Are Less Fortunate

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United Way of **Greater Atlanta** 

Demonstrate your commitment to our mission and help provide necessities for our patients such as medical supplies, skilled nursing care, and physical therapy, as well as continual training for our experienced clinicians.

Sign up securely on vnhs.org/MonthlyGiving