Duke Hospice Volunteer Newsletter
July 2011

Duke Hospice Volunteer Continuing Education Opportunities:

The Duke Hospice Book Group will meet Thursday, July 14 at 6 p.m. in the Durham office to discuss Art Buchwald’s *Too Soon to Say Goodbye*, Buchwald’s wonderful tales of being pitched out of a hospice home because he wouldn’t die, the funeral he planned, the eulogies he commissioned early so he could read them before he died, and the usual award-winning Buchwald tomfoolery. You can borrow a copy of the book from the Volunteer Services Library. Many heartfelt thanks to Rana Davis for leading this group. RSVP to Rana at (919) 943-6604 or rcmccutchen@earthlink.net.

If you know of a hospice-pertinent book or film that could use some conversation by bright, service-minded folks, please let Carolyn know. The Book Group has a great deal of fun and learns a lot from these gatherings and we are looking at also offering a movie night this fall.

Mark Higgins, president of Hall Wynne Funeral Service & Crematory of Durham, will again present *Funerals 101* (talk and tour) at his office at 1113 W. Main Street on Tuesday, July 12th from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. The focus will be on the support provided by funeral homes to families at the end of life. If you have interest in learning what death services are available here in the area, plan to attend. Higgins is engaging, funny, and very wise about the place his service holds in the continuum of end of life care. Call Carolyn to RSVP. Mark has a couple of interesting articles on the funeral business that you can access through the Hall Wynne website at www.hallwynne.com: “The Way of All Flesh,” *Business North Carolina*, October 2008, and “Caring in a Business of Caring,” *Triangle Business Journal*, January 21, 2011.

The July Admission Packet Assembly (aka PAPER SLAM!) workday is coming up Saturday July 16 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Durham office. Call Carolyn if you would like to participate. In addition to the good time we have, this monthly chore is critical to the smooth functioning of Duke HomeCare & Hospice, and our clinicians thank you profoundly. Please join us.

*The Duke HomeCare & Hospice website has a new look.* Take a gander and let us know what you think. [http://dhch.duhs.duke.edu/](http://dhch.duhs.duke.edu/) You may see staff and volunteers you recognize.
Australia Clay, one of our development volunteers, has scheduled a **fundraising / friend-raising day this Saturday, July 2**, at a local Harris Teeter from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. to talk up the good news about Duke Hospice, hand out brochures, and accept donations. Thirteen hours is a long day and Australia could use a number of folks willing to help out. Do you have a teenager who can talk to anyone? Or a friend who is interested in hospice work but isn’t ready to commit to training yet? Bring them along. To get the details, call or e-mail Australia at (919) 475-2777 or Australia_clay@yahoo.com.

Our next **Care Shawl meeting** will be held at Chapel Hill Bible Church, Thursday, July 28 at 7 p.m. Unity Spiritual Life Center will sponsor another care shawl meeting Saturday August 6 from 1-3 pm. This is a great opportunity for friendship, knitting and crocheting instruction, and inspiration. If you’ve been thinking about getting involved in this very popular service project, please come and see what’s happening. And many, many thanks to everyone who continues to contribute shawls, fleece blankets, and knitted/crocheted teddy bears. Our patients and families treasure these gifts from our community and let us know how much they mean to them.

**From the DHCH Development Department: Dee Blake, Michael Lowery and Dale Horton**

Thanks to all of the volunteers who helped with planning and on the night of our 9th annual **Oh, What a Night! Gala**. This year’s gala was the most successful yet: raising over $120,000 to support hospice patients and also offer bereavement services to the community. The night would not have been a success without our volunteers, sponsors, auction donors and attendees. We are starting to plan our 10th anniversary OWAN gala for next spring. If you are interested in learning how you can get involved, please contact Michael Lowery at (919) 479-0319 or Michael.lowery@duke.edu. Thanks for all you do for DHCH!

**BookNote:** One of our volunteers has identified a book you may find helpful in your hospice work, *Becoming Dead Right: A Hospice Volunteer in Urban Nursing Homes* by Frances Shani Parker (Ann Arbor: Loving Healing Press, 2007). In addition to a great number of remarkable stories, Parker shares her thoughts on access to hospice care, her “Ten Tips for Becoming Dead Right,” as well as a great bibliography and list of resources. If you discover a good book title that you’d like to share with our volunteers, send it along to Carolyn for inclusion in an upcoming newsletter.

A very popular service we offer allows our patients to create a lasting record of their stories—memories and history—the **Gift of Words recording project**. If you would like more information, give Carolyn a call. We are also looking for volunteers to help with the details of running this program.

Throughout the year Carolyn makes **Supervisory ride-along visits and does annual evaluations**. These are great opportunities to share those tidbits that don’t have a real place in the written visit reports, an occasion to ask the little question that’s been tickling you for a while. Give her a call to schedule your ride-along while it’s fresh in your mind.

Also, while it’s fresh in your mind, please check your **volunteer badge expiration date**. If your badge expires BEFORE 09/01/2011, call Carolyn today to request a new badge. All DHCH volunteers must have a current badge and wear it whenever they are volunteering.
The weather has been ghastly hot recently, and even if you’re one of those people who love the heat, you’ve probably gotten your share already. One thing we need to be particularly careful about this time of year, for ourselves as well as for our patients, is **Heat stroke and Heat exhaustion**. These are VERY dangerous medical conditions that should be prevented if possible and treated immediately. There is a little chart of information from the Centers for Disease control attached to this newsletter. You will find typical symptoms and first aid care.

**Is there a vacation in your future?** If you plan to be out of town or your ability to take patient assignments this summer has changed, please give Carolyn an update. You deserve to kick back a little, but we want to make sure that our patients have visits over the summer even when you are away or otherwise engaged. Thanks for all you do. And have a great time!

Through all of its programs Duke Hospice strives to give extraordinary care to our patients and families. One of the ways we evaluate our efforts is through the **Press Ganey Satisfaction Survey** that each family is asked to complete when their patient goes off service (for whatever reason). *Our volunteers are sometimes well placed to encourage the family to fill out the survey form.* If you have an opportunity to do so, please let the family know that these surveys help improve our service for the next family. If in the course of volunteering, your patient or caregivers express any concerns about the care they are receiving or if they are wildly positive and enthusiastic about an event or a staff member, please let us know. Call Carolyn for information on our Strive for 5! program to ensure the best possible care for our patients and families or to let her know about patient/family comments. You are an important part of our hospice team and with your help we can bring a special kind of caring to all those in our care.

A RESOURCE FOR YOU Continuing Education for July—Bruce Feiler, writer for the *New York Times*, has written about “What to Say to Someone Who’s Sick.”

For more information contact:
Carolyn Colsher, DHCH Volunteer Services Supervisor
919 479-0385 (phone) 919 970-0227 (pager) carolyn.colsher@duke.edu
Website dhch.duhs.duke.edu

“Service is nothing but love in work clothes.”
Frances Shani Parker, *Becoming Dead Right: A Hospice Volunteer in Urban Nursing Homes*

*And thank you, as always, for everything you do for our patients and families. Carolyn*

Mission Statement: Duke HomeCare & Hospice will provide innovative, thoughtful care, using an interdisciplinary team approach, to achieve the best possible outcomes for the patients, families and communities we serve.