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Serving Henderson, Buncombe & Transylvania Counties



Life Lines

April 2010

Four Seasons' Bi-Monthly Publication

2009 REPORT TO OUR CARING COMMUNITY

In 2009, we cared for more than 1,100 hospice patients and more than 1,300 palliative patients in our community. With both our Hospice and Palliative Care programs, we served more than 72% of the deaths in Henderson County, which is one of the highest proportions in the country.

About Four Seasons

Four Seasons is one of the premier hospice and palliative care providers in the country. We've provided a high level of compassionate and professional care for people facing serious life-limiting illness in Western North Carolina since 1981.



CIRCLE OF LIFE
Award Winner

We are a recent recipient of the prestigious Circle of Life award, which recognizes exemplary palliative and end-of-life care.

Led by health care professionals, social workers, spiritual care professionals and volunteers, we work passionately to serve more than 700 patients daily across an area that includes Buncombe, Henderson and Transylvania counties. Our purpose is to help patients and their families face end-of-life issues with as much care and compassion as any other milestone in life so they can enjoy the best quality of life possible.

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Jean Hoogstra

30 years of volunteering

Jean Hoogstra reflects on 30 years of volunteering

by Barbara Eck, Four Seasons volunteer



On a blustery late winter day, it was a breath of spring to visit the cheerful Carolina Village apartment of Four Seasons founder Jean Moulthrop Hoogstra. Jean's spry steps and lively mind are remarkable for her 93 years. When asked if I might give her age, she laughed, "Certainly! I've earned it!" Her husband of 14 years, Don, joined us to talk about the early days of Hospice of Hendersonville. Jean, who has been widowed three times, states both her third husband, Dick Moulthrop, and present husband, Don, have been ardent supporters of Four Seasons.

Jean and Dick Moulthrop moved from California to Hendersonville in 1977. Two years later, Jean happened to read an article about St. Christopher's Hospice in London and it impressed her greatly. "It seemed so logical," she says, "to treat dying as a natural event, to relieve pain and suffering, and to give care and support to patients and caregivers at the end of life."

Immaculate Conception Church, where Jean was a member, was looking for an outreach program. At the same time, Sister Therese Galigan was attempting to form a hospice for Buncombe County. Sr. Therese was invited to speak at the church about hospice. In May of 1979, Jean and a local psychologist, Dr. John Esse, attended a workshop on hospice in

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Chris Comeaux
President/CEO



Greg Burnette
Four Seasons board chair

Life Lines

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We welcome your comments and/or suggestions. Please call or write:

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Message from the President/CEO

Four Seasons continues to improve

◦ by *Chris Comeaux, Four Seasons President/CEO*

This past year has been a challenge. Normally, an annual letter talks about how excited we are about this past year's accomplishments, and we certainly are excited and proud of another banner year for Four Seasons. Those accomplishments are directly attributable to our staff, volunteer staff, and our community. Despite 2009 being a tough economic year, our donors still came through and supported our mission and for that we are thankful. So why was it a challenge? Because success always brings the challenge of how you continue to move forward and not rest upon the accomplishments of the past. All of us at Four Seasons will embrace this challenge because the heart of the matter is to continue to be innovative and improve our services for patients and their families.

So what kind of year was 2009? This past year, Four Seasons was honored with the Circle of Life Award, the most prestigious award an end-of-life care organization can be granted by the American Hospital Association. We continued to implement a system of accountability in our organization that focuses on measurements of success to ensure we are on the journey to provide best-practice end-of-life care. Our vision speaks of settling for nothing less for the patients and families we serve. We continued our drive for financial sustainability to

ensure Four Seasons is here for patients and families far into the future. We expanded our service offerings into Buncombe and Transylvania Counties to ensure all patients and families needing end-of-life care receive it. We completed a branding campaign to better tell the story of what we do by changing our name to be "Four Seasons" rather than "Four Seasons Hospice & Palliative Care." The main reason we did this is because many people, until they truly experience hospice care, think hospice is only for those in the last days and hours of life. Nothing is further from the truth. Four Seasons has some of the most innovative programs to walk alongside families dealing with a life-limiting illness during the last years. Also we found many people don't truly understand that palliative care is a program which allows us to serve those dealing with a serious life-limiting illness, even while they are still seeking aggressive, curative treatment.

So, yes, it was an exciting year and a successful year, but our goal is to continue on our journey to improve the end-of-life care Four Seasons provides. We want our services to be a soul-healing and life-remembering experience for patients and their families. So 2010 will be a challenge as well, and the next, and the next.....

Board of Directors

Four Seasons ~ a fabulous team

◦ by *Greg Burnette, Four Seasons board chair*

It is no secret that the staff of Four Seasons is superb. As a member of the board, I'm proud to have such a dedicated group of associates representing this organization. Whether they're directly involved with patient care, or serving in a support role, they share a commitment to make Four Seasons the premier end-of-life care provider in Western North Carolina. I've had the opportunity to interact with several of our team members in a variety of settings and you can feel the passion and pride they have for Four Seasons. This is not something that just "happens." A team with this commitment and pride can only be developed through extensive communication and articulation of the mission and vision. I applaud the work of our CEO, Chris Comeaux and his Senior Leadership Team for their work to build such a fabulous team.

One component of the Four Seasons team that is worthy of special recognition is our volunteers. Without the work of over

370 members of our community that tirelessly give of their time, Four Seasons would not be the organization we know today. Our volunteers do so much that it would be impossible for Four Seasons to serve the number of patients it does every day without their support. In fiscal year 2009, our volunteers contributed 29,983 hours, the equivalent of 14 full-time employees, which represents a monetary savings of \$607,156 last year.

While the number of active volunteers is significant, there is always room for more. Four Seasons offers volunteer opportunities that fit the skills and interests of almost anyone. Whether it's providing support to our patients and families, working at the Hospice Home Store or helping to maintain the grounds at Elizabeth House, we welcome your involvement. To learn more about volunteer opportunities at Four Seasons, please visit our website, www.FourSeasonsCFL.com or call us at 828-692-6178.

Discovering hope with a horse named "Gus"

◦ by *Tricia Williams, Heart Songs coordinator and Libby Struik, MSW intern from Western Carolina University*

Have you ever felt that everything in your life has been upside down and backwards? That's how Donna described her life after the death of her 15 year-old brother, Enrique. Enrique was served by Four Seasons and died in the summer of 2009 after a long illness. Following his loss, Donna began looking for help to deal with her confusion and feelings of grief. She longed to be accepted simply as a normal teenager again, and to be able to grieve the loss of her brother without feeling different and alone. Her Heart Songs counselor at Four Seasons suggested she attend the "Healing with Horses" teen support group. Donna had many good memories associated with horses and her brother while they were growing up. She thought this program might be a way to reconnect to happier times. She never expected to meet a special horse named "Gus" who would change her life and give her a new perspective on her grief.



As a part of the therapeutic group experience, the teens were given an opportunity to openly discuss their insights and thoughts at the end of each day's session. Donna learned from listening and sharing

that she was not so different. She felt the group's acceptance as she opened up to their empathy, and then bonded with the others as they shared their burdens of being grieving teenagers. She expressed the intensity of her relief when she shared, "It helps to be with other kids who can understand how I feel because they're going through it, too."

One of the final activities each teen performed with their chosen horse was to send a message to their loved one by painting a symbol or word that described their grief experience. On Gus, Donna painted the word "HOPE." She had begun the group feeling that her life was upside down and backwards. This unique therapy of self-exploration with a horse named "Gus," and the support of a group of her peers, enabled her to reconstruct and envision her life with a sense of hope – to be able to move forward even in the midst of the loss of her brother. On a very personal level, Donna experienced what the goal of the program provides for grieving teenagers – healing with horses.

On a bright blue-sky day in November, Donna and four other teenage girls gathered to meet their four-legged therapists at Horse Sense of the Carolinas for a day of receiving support and comfort for the death of a loved one. "Horse rules" state that the teens do not need to talk for this unique experience – but they gradually opened up, due to the quieting strength and presence of their "equine counselors." These gentle horses are natural catalysts for creating a safe place for self reflection by "listening" to the teens with nonjudgmental acceptance. Surrounded by a nurturing outdoor environment, the teenagers were guided by an equine specialist and licensed professional counselor to explore and process their grief. The unique connections developed with their equine companions helped the teens learn about themselves and their grief journey.

Donna was not only dealing with her own grief, but also an unbearable overlay of responsibilities as a 14-year-old stu-



Four Seasons has collaborated with Horse Sense of the Carolinas in Marshall, NC since 2007 to provide a support group to grieving teenagers within the community. Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) is a unique therapeutic approach to counseling which supports connections to the horses using metaphorical similarities to encourage clients to process issues and problems. This special program for helping teens process their grief journeys was developed by the professionals at Horse Sense with a request from the Heart Songs program.

To learn more about Horse Sense, visit www.HorseSenseTherapy.com



This two-day program is supported by a grant through United Way. Referrals to this program are received by Four Seasons from the local area high schools, community agencies and personal requests by clients and their families.

Four Seasons walks alongside daughter through her parents' illnesses

◦ by *Kathy Thielke, community relations coordinator*

Thurman "T.R." Creekmore and his wife, Annie, spent a lifetime together. They were married almost 68 years when he died in 2008. "They were each others' support, their whole world," said their daughter, Carolyn Dozier. "They had many friends, though not many close ones. Mom and Dad were very close amongst themselves," she said.

When T.R. became ill at the age of 92 with mesothelioma, the family struggled to deal with his illness and his actions. He had been healthy his whole life up until that point. "He would call me up to 13 times a day," Dozier said. Doctors referred T.R. to Four Seasons, and the hospice team was able to help both T.R. and the rest of the family. "Without hospice, I don't know what I would have done," Dozier said. "I probably talked with someone from hospice every day, especially in the last three months. They were able to help me with a lot of the problems I was dealing with," she said.

As happens so many times after one spouse dies, Annie Creekmore's health began to fail after the loss of her husband. "Mom had a hard time after dad died. She was in the hospital four times in the four months after he died," Carolyn said. She said her mother first received palliative care from Four Seasons. Her mother's palliative care provider, Karen Dowdy PA-C, consulted the family when she thought hospice care would be appropriate. "Her terminal diagnosis was not as 'clear' as my father's was," she said. As a result, some of the family members had a tougher time accepting hospice care. The hospice staff made themselves available, and family members could call them at any time about their mother's care. "That made a real difference," Carolyn said.

Carolyn said that one of the special things about hospice care for both her mother and father was that they were both able to remain in their "home," a local assisted living facility, throughout their care. Before her mother became a



Thurman "T.R." Creekmore and his wife, Annie, celebrated his 90th birthday in 2006.

patient of Four Seasons, one doctor suggested to Carolyn that she needed a nursing home. Carolyn knew her mother didn't want to leave the only home she knew, and was relieved when hospice enabled her to stay there.

Carolyn remembers a special time that occurred the Saturday before her mother died on Tuesday. "She loved Bon Worth. My sister came to town for the day and we took her shopping. It was one of the best days she had in a long time,

the weather was nice, and she wanted to go shopping. So we took her. It was a very good memory for my sister and me. I had been saying I sure hope there is a Bon Worth in heaven! It was worth every penny to see her have a 'happy day' right before she passed."

Shortly after this happy day, the hospice staff recognized Annie's decline and told the family that the end was near. One year and eleven days after her husband died, Annie passed away. "Mom was a sweet, sweet lady," Carolyn said.

Carolyn said she wants everyone to know the benefits of Four Seasons' care. She said that she wants people to not be fearful of the hospice diagnosis. "The sooner you get on hospice, the better, if that's your diagnosis," she said. "It gives the hospice staff a chance to get to know you."

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Patient discharged from hospice care finds continued support with palliative care

◦ by *Kathy Thielke, community relations coordinator*

John "Jack" D. Johnston, Jr. is an Asheville native who spent his career teaching law at Duke and New York Universities. When he retired in 1990, he moved back to Asheville. He and his wife, Diana, built a summer home on Pinnacle Mountain in Henderson County. In 2006, they made it their permanent home. His wife, a certified elder law attorney, operated her own firm for years, and is now of counsel to the Van Winkle Law firm in Hendersonville. Together, they were enjoying small town life in the mountains where Jack grew up.

In August of 2009, Jack suffered a flare-up from a chronic disease, lymphocytic leukemia, which had been dormant for years. When it came back, Jack's platelet count dropped to dangerously low levels. He was admitted to Mission hospital, where his doctors tried everything they could to bring the count up, from steroids to chemotherapy to the surgical removal of his spleen. When his body didn't seem to be responding, his doctors referred him to Four Seasons hospice care. His platelet count had risen slightly, and he was allowed to return home with the hospice team managing his care. "Someone from Four Seasons came to both Mission and my home. They knew my case even before I was discharged," he said.

Jack went home to Pinnacle Mountain on September 18, 2009. "Immediately, they (Four Seasons) had a bed and table, wheelchair, and medications – everything I needed. The service was remarkably good," Jack remembers. Jack said the severity of his illness was a shock for his wife and family. "It was a terrific burden on my wife, Diana. She has been a brick through the whole thing," he said. One of his daughters was able to spend four weeks with him, which enabled Diana to keep working, and the Four Seasons team provided expert medical care.



Jack Johnston recently went on a hike with Dr. Margaret Noel, MD, his geriatrician. "She encouraged me from day one, and even predicted that I would be discharged from hospice," Jack said.

Because of the surgery to remove his spleen, Jack needed very skilled nursing care upon returning home, he said. The hospice nurse came by three times a week to maintain the apparatus used to help the incision heal. When he returned to the surgeon for follow-up, the incision had healed so well that he no longer needed such close monitoring. The hospice staff continued to visit routinely, and amazingly, his platelet count returned to normal levels. "The theory is that the splenectomy helped," Jack said.

"As a result of all that, not only did I heal and get back on my feet, I never had any worry or concern that what I needed would be provided by of Four Seasons," he said. "The hospice social worker visited me several times, providing information on support services available in the area and offering assistance with paperwork or bureaucratic problems that might arise. None did, but it was a relief to know he was there to help if needed."

Jack's health improved so much that he was discharged from hospice care on December 9, 2009. The Four Seasons team, however, continues to support Jack and his wife with palliative care services. Jack said, "I have not had any problems since. On palliative care, I am assured that whatever I need is available. If and when I come back to hospice, it will be there again."

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Ruth Seiber-Johnson and
Michael Cheek*

*Sit-down dinner,
auction, and
entertainment.*

*The auction will feature many
fabulous items and packages,
including local artists' wares.*

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and festivities!*

*All proceeds from this event
will benefit the many services
of Four Seasons.*

*Save the date
and come walk
the red carpet!*

*Contact Anne Marie
Scherbarth, event coordinator,
for more information at
828-233-0319.*

Timeline and pictorial review of 2009

*We are here
to help you...*

Have you or someone you know experienced the loss of a loved one?

Four Seasons offers individual counseling, support groups and educational information for those who are experiencing grief and loss related to the death of a loved one or someone close to them.

It is not required that the person who died was a Four Seasons patient. Our services are available to all.

Services are free of charge to any grieving person who lives in our service areas.

For more information on our services, to register for a class or group, or to make an appointment with a counselor, please call 692-6178.

We are here to help you.

Winter 2009

Four Seasons expands services to Buncombe County



April 13

Elizabeth House Marks 10th Anniversary

April 21

Volunteer Appreciation Party



May 19

Four Seasons reveals new brand look



June 19 & 20

Frugal Design Showcase

July 24

11th Annual Golf Tournament



July 31

"Big Reveal" Home Store redesign unveiled



April 3

"O What a Night" Auction & Gala



May 2 & November 14

Horse Sense Camp



May 23 & 24

Home Store celebrates Garden Jubilee

July 24

Circle of Life Award



August 22

Camp Heart Songs



Statement of financial position

◦ as of September 30, 2009 ~ comparative amounts for September 30, 2008 are provided

| | 2009 | 2008 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Current Assets | | |
| Cash/Cash Equivalents | \$ 2,155,275 | \$ 1,881,975 |
| Accounts Receivable | 1,801,833 | 1,691,884 |
| Other Receivables | <u>348,647</u> | <u>277,012</u> |
| Total Current Assets | <u>\$ 4,305,755</u> | <u>\$ 3,850,871</u> |
| Property & Equipment | | |
| Total Property (net) | <u>\$ 6,879,735</u> | <u>\$ 6,934,118</u> |
| Total Other Assets | <u>\$ 120,740</u> | <u>\$ 113,176</u> |
| Total Assets | <u>\$ 11,306,230</u> | <u>\$ 10,898,165</u> |
| Liabilities and Assets | | |
| Total Current Liabilities | <u>\$ 1,326,349</u> | <u>\$ 1,120,181</u> |
| Total Long-Term Liabilities | <u>\$ 717,033</u> | <u>\$ 1,180,000</u> |
| Total Liabilities | <u>\$ 2,043,382</u> | <u>\$ 2,300,181</u> |
| Net Assets | | |
| Total Unrestricted | \$ 9,048,468 | \$ 8,333,215 |
| Temporarily Restricted | \$ 139,482 | \$ 209,871 |
| Permanently Restricted | <u>\$ 74,898</u> | <u>\$ 54,898</u> |
| Total Net Assets | \$ 9,262,848 | \$ 8,597,984 |
| Total Liabilities & Net Assets | <u>\$ 11,306,230</u> | <u>\$ 10,898,165</u> |

September 17

Bereavement Conference for the Community

October

Center of Excellence Consulting Service Begins

Fall 2009

"Best of the Mountains"
and
"Landmark of Excellence"
Award for Rebranding



FOUR SEASONS
Compassion for Life

December 4

19th Annual Tree of Lights



We want you...

Four Seasons is looking for volunteers in Henderson, Buncombe & Transylvania counties and would love to talk with you about the many volunteer opportunities you can begin to help us with now. Here is a partial listing of volunteer opportunities:

Family Support
Respite Care
One-On-One Patient Care
Special Events
Fundraising
Elizabeth House
Nursing Homes
Assisted Living Facilities
Office Assistance
Deliveries
Gardening
Special Services
Hair Care
Language Translation
Therapies
Sewing
Baking
Home Store

If you are interested in learning more, please give us a call at 692-6178.

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Washcloths

Baby wipes

*Lightly-scented body
sprays and lotions*

*If you would like to
donate any of the items
on the Wish List for
Greatrex Place or
Elizabeth House,
please call
Kathy Thielke at
233-0332.*

*Or, if you prefer,
you may drop them by
Elizabeth House
581 South Allen Road
or
Greatrex Place
571 South Allen Road.*

Research

Four Seasons patient benefits from research study

◦ *by Kathy Thielke, community relations coordinator*

Ron Farley has always been interested in the medical field. As a young man in Cookeville, TN, he paid his way to college by working at a funeral home. As unusual as that sounds, Ron said it gave him experience preparing the bodies for burial and learning human anatomy. The Vietnam War interrupted his education, however, and Ron joined the U.S. Navy for 6 ½ years. While he was in the service, he became a hospital corpsman. When he was given his choice of duty, he chose operating room training. While training for the operating room Ron also found the love of his life, Nancy, a pediatric RN, who was working at a civilian hospital across the parking lot from the Naval hospital.

After he left the Navy, Ron went to nursing school in Portsmouth, VA and eventually became a family nurse practitioner. He enjoyed a short career working in the medical field, including hospital emergency rooms in Virginia and North Carolina. It was while he was working

in an emergency room during the 1980s that Ron suffered an accident which injured his back and left him disabled. As a result, he has had six back surgeries and many other treatments, one of which left him with a condition similar to multiple sclerosis. He lives daily with severe pain which he controls with prescription pain medication.

He came to be a patient of Four Seasons' palliative care program after being in the hospital with pneumonia. He had had it twice and was on a ventilator for a week. Four Seasons was called in for a palliative care consult. They provided expertise with the guidelines for what Ron wanted.

Because of the medication Ron was taking to control his pain, he was dealing with some unpleasant side effects, like constipation. Todd Neel, a Four Seasons palliative care nurse practitioner and Ron's case manager, recognized that he might benefit from a research study. The study was on a drug used to treat constipation caused by prescription pain medication.

Kathleen Gay, LPN, research coordinator, made an appointment to visit with Ron and went over all the study details, requirements and instructions. Ron began the study not knowing if the medication he was taking was real or a placebo. He said that it worked right away – within ten minutes. He knew that this was either a really good medication, or that he was experiencing a very powerful placebo effect.

Ron continued on the study for ten weeks. After it was over, Ron knew he wanted to keep taking the medication. Kathleen Gay kept in close contact with Ron and kept Todd informed of Ron's progress during the study. Todd Neel was instrumental in making sure that he could continue and that it would be covered by Ron's insurance company.

Ron says he is glad that he participated because now he can take enough pain medication to be comfortable and still have a functional bowel. Ron said he would encourage anyone who is eligible to participate when the opportunity arises. "You are helping yourself, but you are also helping 10,000 others," he said. "We think we are all unique, but there are other people out there who have exactly what you do."

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Elizabeth House helps family “build on the positive”

◦ by **Elizabeth B. Watson, Four Seasons volunteer**

The story of Kim Mckibbin and her personal relationship with Four Seasons has many facets. She is a freelance graphic designer who works with Four Seasons professionally on publications. She is also a ten-year volunteer, who helps plan events such as the annual gala. Her volunteer participation included multiple terms on the board of directors, and her husband, Bill, currently serves on the board. Last year, they were honored to light the trees at the Tree of Lights event at the Historic Henderson County Courthouse during the holidays. Each light is given in memory of or to honor a loved one. On that tree, many lights glow in memory of McKibbin family members.

That’s just part of their story. You can’t spend time with Kim and not recognize what a delightful and caring person she is. She has been a loving, gentle caregiver to several family members. A few years ago, her grandparents came to live in the busy McKibbin home. Just keeping up with Kim’s son’s schedule is amazing. Cole, 13, goes rock climbing twice a week, plays soccer, is working toward becoming an Eagle Scout and acts as visual tech for the church youth group. Kim’s busy schedule includes Cole’s activities and her work as a graphic designer, volunteer responsibilities, and an active tennis schedule.

Kim remembers one special evening when her grandparents lived with the family. Bill had been for a run and Kim had put the car and the tennis racket away. In the midst of another busy day, this newly extended family sat together to enjoy each other and eat ice cream. Kim recalls happily those evenings with three generations under one roof and how close the relationships became.

Sadly, Kim’s grandmother, Mary, broke her hip. While in rehab she suffered a stroke. The family decided to call in hospice and she went to be at Elizabeth House. During the several weeks she was there, her family experienced the compassionate care that was given Kim’s beloved grandmother.



Kim Mckibbin and her son, Cole, were able to share some special times with their family, focusing on inter-generational relationships and making lasting memories in the comfortable, home-like environment at Elizabeth House.



Cole, who was 10, went to visit his great grandmother and even at his young age felt very comfortable at Elizabeth House. Kim commented that it was never frightening for him. Mary died in January of 2007. Only nine months later at Elizabeth House, Kim’s grandfather, Paul, also died surrounded by his family. His granddaughter believes he died of a broken heart. Mary and Paul were married 65 years.

Four Seasons offers bereavement services for children through the Heart Songs program. When Cole’s great-grandmother, whom he called “Nanny,” was dying, Tricia Williams, the director of Heart Songs, counseled Cole and his family. One day they rolled bits of clay into balls for Nanny to press her thumb in, leaving her finger print in the clay. Although she couldn’t talk, she was aware of the moving significance of what they were doing. Those soft pieces of clay were fired and given to family members. Now the balls are tucked into their pockets to touch for comfort or kept within reach to press their thumbs into the special print left behind.

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Elizabeth House Wish List

Lightly-scented personal care products:

*Body Spray
After Shave
Body Wash
Body Lotion*

Lotioned or extra soft facial tissues

Colored bath towels

Flat colored twin size sheets

Masculine colors/print cotton material for gowns

Polyfil stuffing for pillows

Full or twin size washable colorful bed quilts

Calming music and gospel music CDs

Combo CD/radios for bedrooms

Non-slip socks or slippers

Individually wrapped mints, candy and snacks

Small size dessert paper plates and napkins for hospitality service to families

Bird seed (Shelled Sunflower or Black Oil Sunflower)

Books on CD

Leaving a gift of compassion...

If you would like to help support Four Seasons but are unsure how you can manage it with a fixed income and rising cost of living, a planned gift may be the answer.

Planned giving is any gift that is arranged or provided for during the donor's lifetime that may not actually be received in its entirety until after the donor's death.

Gifts can be made in a variety of ways based on your financial situation and the goals you want to achieve.

For more information on these or other ideas for planned gifts, please call Tina Gentry at 233-0313.

continued from page 9

Elizabeth House helps family "build on the positive"

Tricia also takes Heart Songs into area schools giving guidance to grieving children who are identified by the school counselor. Tricia also made a special clay pot with Cole in which he now keeps his pencils. It was first painted white, then deliberately broken into large pieces. With colorful markers Cole thoughtfully wrote characteristics of his great-grandmother, Nanny, on each piece. The individual pieces were then glued back together to represent his "cracked, yet complete" and life-long memories of his Nanny.

Early in 2009, the McKibbins gathered at Elizabeth House once again to be with Bill's father in his last days. There were nights when the family slept there. Again, they appreciated the compassionate care given by the professionals to each patient and family member.

It's not surprising to learn that within months, Kim was caring for another relative. Her father stayed with her as he went through chemotherapy and radiation treatments for cancer. He died at his home in South Carolina in June of 2009.

Kim, whose parents divorced when she was a child, learned early the importance of "building on the positive." She feels her experiences at Elizabeth House were positive because she was able to focus completely on her strong relationships with dying loved ones, while the Four Seasons staff took care of what Kim calls the "necessities" - their medical needs. She will always be grateful to Four Seasons for all it did for everyone in her family. And she smiles as she says that many flavors of ice cream are always in the McKibbin refrigerator for evening treats today.

This article has been graciously written and contributed by one of our outstanding volunteers: Elizabeth Watson (Betty) moved here in '95 from MA with her husband Doug to escape long snowy winters! They have four daughters and six grandkids who live afar. She's an author of short stories and poetry, volunteers at St. James Thursday Thrift Shop and belongs to the Garden Club of Hendersonville. She's pleased to be a volunteer at Elizabeth House.

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Jean Hoogstra reflects on 30 years of volunteering

Asheville. They were truly inspired by the need for a hospice program in Henderson County and invited key community members to join them. That core group of 10 became the Ad Hoc Steering Committee. By July 1979, they had defined their Mission, and by year's end they had incorporated. Regular meetings were held at the home of Jean and Dick Moulthrop.

By early Feb. 1980, the board had developed a speaker's bureau to take their mission and message to any group, church or organization that would have them. Interest and support in the community grew. A generous grant from the Lane family and an offer of free office space at the First Presbyterian Church further aided the fledgling organization in its growth. Soon they had developed a newsletter and a training program for volunteers.

There were only a few hospices running in the United States at this time. The oldest was in New Haven, Connecticut, established in 1975. Another was in Marin County, California, and was just being developed. The hospice concept was based on information and experience obtained from St.

Christopher Hospice of London, which was established through the efforts of Dame Cicely Saunders in 1967. The program was brought to the United States by Rev. Edward Dobihal, founder of Hospice of New Haven. Jean and her group in Henderson County were on the leading edge of this movement.

Jean credits those early years as being the most exciting and rewarding years of her life. "We came to see this work as a sort of ministry," she says. "We were filled with expectation and enthusiasm." She is reluctant to think of herself as the founder. "We were a group of ten and everyone helped to bring this together."

There was no paid staff in the early days, just hardworking volunteers with great dedication. Recruiting more volunteers was vital to their success. "Response to the call for volunteers was truly astounding," Jean remembers. Training sessions were held regularly and there were 25 or more for each session.



Jean Hoogstra shares a few mementos from the early days of Four Seasons, circa 1980, when it was operating as Hospice of Henderson County.

When Hospice of Henderson County opened for patient care in 1981, it marked a major milestone. Miriam Kussrow was hired as the first Home Care Coordinator. All patient care was given in the homes of clients. No one envisioned a patient care facility being part of this Hospice. When Elizabeth House was built in 1999, Jean felt especially proud. "It is such a lovely facility, and patients receive such loving care. The staff and volunteers who work there are very special people."

Jean reflects on the organization today. "I never dreamed our early efforts would develop into such an amazing organization. It's more than I can comprehend!" In recent years, her eyesight has failed, forcing Jean to cut back on her speaking and involvement. But she still remains in close touch with many of the staff. "I tell them they are my grandchildren, my great extended family! All those involved have done a remarkable job!" She enjoys having small groups to lunch and catching up on both their work and personal lives. "I still bother Chris all the time, too," she says with a twinkle in her eyes, speaking of President/CEO Chris Comeaux. "He is doing an outstanding job as CEO and we are so lucky to have him."

We are very lucky to have Jean Moulthrop Hoogstra, too. Founder with a dream and the determination to bring that dream to fruition, she remains our matriarch with a mission. Four Seasons is her ministry and her legacy. Over 10,000 patients and their families have benefited from her vision.

This article has been graciously written and contributed by one of our outstanding volunteers: Barbara Eck is a new volunteer with Four Seasons. She recently moved to Hendersonville from Cape Cod, MA and is a retired nurse. In addition to her volunteer work at Elizabeth House, Barbara enjoys square dancing, hiking with her dog Skipper, quilting and beadwork. She is also a writer and health educator.

Every gift counts...

Four Seasons has been providing services to those in need in Henderson County and surrounding areas for over 29 years. We are very grateful for the support that we receive from the community.

Although we receive reimbursements from Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance, these reimbursements are not enough to cover all of the costs for the services that we provide. For example, we receive little or no funding for palliative care services and our bereavement programs.

We wish to thank each and every person who gives to Four Seasons because we could not provide the services and the level of care that our organization is known for without your gifts.

For more information on donating to Four Seasons please visit our website: www.FourSeasonsCFL.org

2009 REPORT TO OUR CARING COMMUNITY

This Report to our Caring Community shares with you Four Seasons' exciting journey through 2009 as well as our statement of financial position for our fiscal year ending September 30, 2009.

For the first time we are happy to share with you a number of heartfelt stories that highlight the many differentiated services Four Seasons provides on a daily basis.

If you would like additional information about Four Seasons, please call us at 828-692-6178.

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Four Seasons is an independent, non-profit, volunteer-supported organization led by a dedicated Board of Directors.



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Highlight of Year

Four Seasons receives Circle of Life award

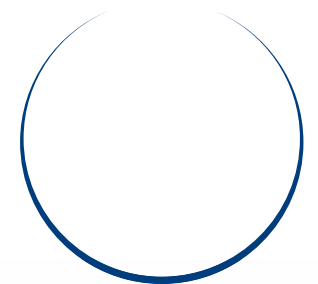
◦ *by Kathy Thielke, community relations coordinator*

In 2009, Four Seasons was recognized by the American Hospital Association (AHA) with the prestigious Circle of Life Award. Four Seasons was one of only three programs nationwide recognized for expanding the reach of palliative and end-of-life care in its area.

President/CEO Chris Comeaux and representative Four Seasons staff members Nikki Granere, CNA; Eunice Frady, clinical nurse coordinator; Jane McKown, chaplain; and Rikki Nugent, nurse practitioner, travelled to San Francisco on July 24 to receive the award.

AHA President and CEO Rich Umbdenstock said of the award recipients, "Dealing with life-threatening illness and end-of-life decisions is difficult for all involved, and the Circle of Life honorees understand that respect, compassion, and honesty are vital aspects of palliative care."

Chris Comeaux said, "The Circle of Life Award acknowledges that we are one of the best end-of-life care providers in the country. We will continue to live up to that expectation in all our interactions with patients, families and community partners. We are entering a very challenging time in healthcare where there are many unknowns. Our goal is to not just preserve, but to further our mission and vision."



CIRCLE of LIFE™
Award Winner