

Fall 2018

Hand in Hand

THE 1979 CIRCLE • YOUR GIFTS AT WORK



We are celebrating our 40-year anniversary — already!



Forty years. **40 years!** It is almost impossible for me to believe that many years have passed since we served our first patients. We began with a small group of providers caring for patients in their homes facing end-of life challenges. Look how far we have come!

patients and families last year, and right now, we are serving **more than 1,400 patients every day** across all of our service lines. Currently, 8% of all our patients are indigent, more than four times the national average.

Your support, through the 1979 Circle, will ensure that we will keep our promise in the years to come: **No one will ever be turned away.**

On behalf of our patients and families, thank you!

Sincerely,



1979 Circle

William M. Dunlap, M.D.
Co-founder

You know, of course, that “us” includes you. Whether you have supported us for 40 years or 40 days, it is your generosity that enables us to provide so many services and such a high level of care.

All of you deserve to be singled out for special mention – because of you, we served more than 6,200

The view above is from the Reid S. Towler Campus of Transitions LifeCare.

A LEGACY OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Since the founding of Hospice of Wake County, now Transitions LifeCare, we have depended on financial support from the community. Medicare and insurance companies did not cover hospice services until 1988, almost 10 years after serving our first patients. Thanks to the generous support of thousands of volunteers and donors over our 40 years, we are able to serve more patients and families than ever before!

One of the agency’s very first fundraising events, Oktoberfest, started in 1980 and lasted for 20 years. Raleigh’s Cameron Village shopping center agreed to host the annual multi-day event. It featured German food and drinks, special music events, and grew in size and prominence in Raleigh over the years. At its peak in the year 2000, 581 volunteers and staff served 15,000 people and generated as much as \$75,000 in profits. The event helped to elevate Hospice of Wake County as a pillar of Wake County’s community.

Everyone involved with Oktoberfest over the years is deserving of our deepest thanks.



“Oktoberfest was started in 1980 to not only raise funds to support Hospice’s mission, but the event over its 20 years raised tremendous awareness for its services and impact in the community. Our family was involved in many aspects of the event over the years, and to see the crowds grow at Cameron Village as the years progressed was truly heart-warming. We cannot say enough about the service and hard work of all the volunteers and staff who created this special experience for the community and the impact of the donations on patients and family members.”

SMEDES AND GEORGE YORK
CHAIRMAN, AND CEO/PRESIDENT, YORK PROPERTIES



“Oktoberfest” by Paul Minnis – hung in the Brenda C. Gibson Education and Community Services Center. That’s Billy Dunlap! (right, center)

Why we give

Morgie Towler Duke & Mary Stewart Towler Carlisle

FOLLOWING IN THEIR FATHER'S (ENORMOUS) FOOTSTEPS

Though he passed away in 2014 at the ripe young age of 90, Reid Towler is a constant presence in the lives of Transitions LifeCare staff and volunteers — every day, on our way in, we pass the sign marking our facility as the Reid S. Towler Campus of Transitions LifeCare. He never expected it, but Reid truly deserved this honor; his million-dollar gift was not only the single largest we had ever received from an individual, but it went a long way toward funding our hospice home, grief center, sanctuary and administrative building.

Today, daughters Mary Stewart Carlisle and Morgie Duke are living proof that generosity was a family value in the Towler household.



Reid Towler surrounded by his family

All in the family

Both Mary Stewart and Morgie are quick to point out that everyone in the family — their mother and other sister — are givers. “We love helping people in our community,” says Mary Stewart. “I’m grateful for parents and grandparents who instilled in us the need to give back. If you can share what you have, then share it.”



“It’s something that’s been passed down and I plan to pass it down to my son,” Mary Stewart concluded.

Morgie uses the “pay it forward” philosophy with her children. “You’ll discover the happiness that comes from helping someone else.”

A growing commitment

Both Morgie and Mary Stewart

recall their father’s growing admiration for hospice. Morgie remembers Reid’s comments as his friends starting passing away. “He said the ones who had hospice care talked a lot about the amazing work of the organization. He often commented that hospice is something that should never die out.”

Mary Stewart recollects her father noting the growing number of obituaries in which the family thanked hospice for exceptional care. He would say, “Have you read the paper? Just look at this. And at this.” He soon decided that if anything happened to him and he ended up at hospice, “that would be great.”

Reid did, in fact, end up with Transitions LifeCare but he was able to stay at home. “The woman who came was so wonderful. She was able to soothe him in a way we, as family, could not.” says Mary Stewart. Morgie adds, “The support they gave us is beyond description. It’s not just about the patients, it’s about the family.”

Firsthand experiences

Mary Stewart’s first experience with hospice was with her sister-in-law, who was just 38 when diagnosed with a lethal glioblastoma.

“What really impressed me was how much they showed they cared,” she states. “They would

come in and smooth lotion on her hands, comb her hair, put chapstick on her lips. Her mother was there, we were there, everybody was there. But it never occurred to any of us to put lotion on her hands. She couldn’t express her thoughts but I could tell it made her feel good. It just touched us all so much.”

Morgie too has witnessed our outstanding care. “My friend was at the Hospice Home and her care was absolutely remarkable. They even allowed her little dog to visit every day. He was such a comfort to her — just sitting quietly on her lap.”

A legacy of giving

All that the sisters have seen led to their own generous support of Transitions LifeCare.

“You know, we couldn’t help it,” explains Morgie. “With all the love and support that Daddy gave to hospice, it got into our systems by osmosis. And when someone we know has a gratifying experience with Transitions, it just deepens our commitment.”

Mary Stewart put it simply and eloquently: “When at their last stages, everybody should have hospice. They ease the transition for everyone.”

“Grandmother Towler was very generous with her time, money and talents. Daddy just grew up with it, so that’s the way Daddy was. In turn, it passed on down to us, too. And we hope to pass it down to our children.”

MARY STEWART TOWLER
CARLISLE