

# Companion

December 2005

*Hospice of the Rapidan* is a not for profit community based organization providing skilled medical care and social, grief and spiritual care for people with a limited life expectancy and their caregivers

**Virginia Licensed, Medicare & Medicaid Certified**

*Serving the counties and citizens of Fauquier, Culpeper, Orange, Madison and Rappahannock*

P.O. Box 1715  
Culpeper, VA 22701  
540-825-4840  
[www.hotr.org](http://www.hotr.org)

**Founded 1983**



## Making A Difference When It Counts *Hospice of the Rapidan* and You

More than anything else, *Hospice of the Rapidan* is a community. It's a community of people with complementary skills, training and talents coming together to serve the needs of our neighbors as they face the end of their lives with bravery and dignity.

What makes our vision of hospice care work so well is easy to understand. It's the active involvement of our dedicated corps of volunteers—people just like you.

Our volunteers assist with every aspect of *Hospice of the Rapidan*, from patient care and comforting families to fundraising and events (like our recent Tree of Lights Ceremony), to answering phones and stuffing envelopes. This is the time of the year many of us think about “giving” in all its forms, and few volunteer opportunities offer the satisfaction and spiritual rewards that working with our patients provides. Most of our volunteers tell us volunteering a little of their time to help *Hospice of the Rapidan* with its vital mission is more gratifying than they expected.

Becoming a volunteer is easy and volunteer opportunities abound! We provide comprehensive training for all volunteers, so you can decide if you



**Chuck Tippett with Rappahannock Electric Co-operative Stringing Christmas Tree Lights**

want to experience the profound rewards of working directly with hospice patients and their families or help us with other activities such as office work, fundraisers and special events. There is no minimum time commitment and we can arrange your hours to suit your schedule.

*continued on page 2*

### In This Issue ▼

- 2 Calendar of Events
- 4 Creative Ways to Give
- 5 New Board Members

- 3 A Hospice Story
- 4 Quilt Raffle Raises \$2,800
- 5 Personal Tree of Lights Story

- 3 Social Workers Bring Hope
- 4 Letter from the Director
- 6 Welcome Letter

Join us at one or more of the following events!

**January**

**Grief Workshop**  
*Coping with Grief: How to Brighten the Winter Blahs*  
**Thursday 26th, 2006**  
**7:00-8:30 p.m.**  
 For more information call Craig at 540.825.4840

**February**

Evening seminar presented by Dr. Ira Byock, Author of *The Four Things That Matter Most*  
**Wednesday 22nd, 2006**  
**7:00-8:30 p.m.**  
 St. Marks Lutheran Church, Charlottesville Refreshments, informal discussion and book signing to follow. For information, directions, and parking information call Suzanne Hilton Smith at 434.982.8407 or Cindy Westley at 434.924.5724.

**March**

**Grief Support Group—**  
*6-weekly sessions*  
**Tuesdays, March 7th-April 11th**  
**7:00-8:30 p.m.**  
 for more information call Craig at 540.825.4840

**April**

**Ceremony and luncheon** to recognize Hospice of the Rapidan's volunteers in observance of National Volunteer Month. Date to be determined.

**May**

**Inaugural Hospice of the Rapidan/Culpeper Lions Club Golf Tournament**  
 —Stay tuned for details of this exciting event!

**Making a Difference When It Counts** *continued from pg 1*

Volunteers are instrumental in providing patient and family support, companionship and caring assistance to help make each day as full of life as possible. You can make a difference in someone's life by being a friend or companion in a time of need. Other volunteers prefer to help in our office instead of with patients. Either way, we will find a role for you to meaningfully contribute to the lives of our patients and their families.



**Volunteer Lyle Sanford, Chaplain Liz Danielsen and Executive Director Kathy Clements at the Tree of Lights Ceremony**

Volunteers help our patients, their families, and our organization in many ways:

- Sitting with patients while a caregiver rests, works, or completes needed errands
- Running errands for patients
- Light housekeeping or yard work
- Patient companionship
- Assisting with *Hospice of the Rapidan* events such as the Service of Remembrance and the Tree of Lights Ceremony
- Office work at *Hospice* and other projects not involved with patients (like assistance with mailings and answering phones)
- Other activities and projects based on their unique talents, such as wheel-chair ramp or other light construction, music therapy,

massage therapy, hair styling, and so on

This is also the time of year we tend to look back and appreciate all the wonderful contributions our volunteers have made to our patients, their families, and our organization. As is true in many aspects of life, it's the little things that make all the difference.

Among the many meaningful differences our volunteers made in 2005, both large and small, these stand out:

- Volunteers helped to arrange birthday parties for patients
- One volunteer played a weekly chess game with a patient and another had a weekly game of checkers
- One volunteer read romance novels to an elderly patient who adored them
- One volunteer regularly brought 7-11 coffee to a patient who thought it to be the best coffee in the world
- One volunteer escorted a patient to her son's wedding—what a special gift indeed!
- Another volunteer stayed an entire day with her patient so her patient's daughter could attend her grandson's college graduation
- One of our more active volunteers, a music therapist, played the harp at each visit to a non-responsive patient who, from time to time, would move his foot in rhythm with the music
- Many of our volunteers went out in all sorts of weather to deliver prescriptions for patients
- Another volunteer created weekly art projects for her elderly patient with the "help" of her 5-year old great-granddaughter.

Other volunteers have provided fantastic support for *Hospice of the Rapidan* in our office or at our events, including these gems:

- One volunteer has been coming to the office twice a week for over 4 years to help with data entry!

*continued on page 5*



**Cole Shelton, a senior in High School, helping to set up the Christmas tree for Hospice of the Rapidan**

## A Hospice Story

It all seems so backwards. In the normal course of events a son observes the death of his father. But here I am, a healthy 85-year old, who has just experienced the death of my 53-year old son.

I was not taken completely by surprise. My son, Roland, was diagnosed last year with a brain tumor, the neurosurgeon stating that it was terminal. My son was given approximately a year to live. Later, following the suggestion of this and other physicians, Roland was placed under Hospice care.

I had never experienced first hand just what Hospice is and what it does and I was astounded. I knew they took care of people who were dying but "took care" is hardly the phrase. They sent a nurse who checked out his condition followed by a social worker to his house to assess the situation. He was given assurance that they would be there regularly, to see to his mental and physical health and that is exactly what happened. They became the eyes and ears for his doctor.

Roland told me that the Hospice workers who came to his house became his "family." They checked out the contents of his refrigerator. They vacuumed his floor. Because his right

side was partially paralyzed, they helped him make meals. Occasionally they brought treats from local stores.

A wheelchair was obtained and suddenly he was able to move from one room to another without the struggle of dragging one leg behind him.

Life became happier but a steadily growing tumor would not be denied. His vital signs were regularly checked and necessary medication was administered. On my regular visits to him he was helped to the outside porch where we relived old times. But ultimately he became bed bound, sleeping 22 hours a day and being kept pain free.

My beloved son, Roland, died on September 24th, ironically just one day before my birthday. My life moves on just the way he would have wanted it. And while I would give anything to have our deaths reversed, my emotions are at rest knowing not only that he is at peace now but also that his final period before death was peaceful.

Robert B. Iadeluca, Ph.D.

## Social Workers Bring Hope and Compassion to Area Families

I'd like to introduce you to Robin Johnson and Berni Olson. It is a cold and gray day with the feeling of snow in the air and Robin and Berni are preparing to head out and visit their *Hospice of the Rapidan* patients. Their day will be busy, something they are both accustomed to, but it will also mean the world to their patients and their families. Robin and Berni are social workers on Hospice's staff, key members of the team that provides compassionate care for our patients and their families.

Each family is unique and has different needs. All of this is taken into consideration as they head out to provide the support and counseling that is part of *Hospice of the Rapidan's* comprehensive offering to meet the needs of the whole family of each patient.

*Hospice of the Rapidan's* social workers provide a wide range of care depending on the needs of each patient and family member. At one visit it might be simply holding hands and listening in order to provide comfort. At another

the need might be helping a child prepare for the loss of a parent or assisting a spouse to lovingly care for a lifelong partner. Occasionally it means applying all they have learned about compassion and human nature to help a family member or patient say "goodbye," "I'm sorry, forgive me," or "thank you" in a way that will have meaning for years. Helping families draw together and find the strength to cope and become comfortable with the changes they face is what hospice work is all about.

Last May one of our patients, Ms. Flora Falls, celebrated her 100th birthday under our care. Robin along with Debbi, one of our Registered Nurses and several of our staff and volunteers that Flora had come to know, gathered with Flora's family at her side to help celebrate. Being a welcome part of celebrations like this remind us at *Hospice of the Rapidan* of the role we play in the lives of the patients and families of our community.

In addition to their patient care responsibilities Robin and Berni are

active in *Hospice of the Rapidan's* outreach program. In that capacity they also speak to civic groups, hospital and medical group staff and community organizations. In November they held a free seminar about the sensitive subject of Advance Directives at the Culpeper Library for area residents. Robin commented, "It's a privilege to walk alongside these families and be able to offer help during their difficult time."



Volunteer Helen Lathrop and Ms. Flora Falls, celebrating Ms. Falls 100th birthday

While *Hospice of the Rapidan* may feel fortunate to have Robin and Berni as part of our team, the real winners are our patients and their families.

## There Are Many Ways You Can Help Support *Hospice Of The Rapidan*

Did you know that you can support *Hospice of the Rapidan* without writing a check? It's true! Gifts of property with tangible value and services useful to Hospice not only help make our programs possible, they can also provide significant tax benefits to donors.

Gifts of property such as some artwork, collectibles (stamps, coins, etc.), securities (stocks and bonds) and whole life insurance policies can generate greater tax savings than cash donations if they are structured correctly. Donations of other property such as used automobiles and boats can also be advantageous to donors.

Donations of services are also an effective way to support *Hospice of the Rapidan*. If you own or work for a business that provides services useful to Hospice, donating your service may provide meaningful benefits to Hospice and tax advantages to your business that are attractive. For example, *Hospice of the Rapidan* is very appreciative of Jesse Wise and

Wise Service & Recycling LLC of Culpeper for helping with our recycling needs. Similarly Chris Petersen at Petersen Jewelers in Culpeper has generously helped with our engraving needs for our volunteer and other awards, Vicki Mallins who designed and made our Hospice Flag and James A. Brown of Brown's Electrical in Madison donated his services to hook up our Tree of Lights. This is a terrific way for local businesses and *Hospice of the Rapidan* to partner together for the benefit of our community.

Not every item or service is appropriate for this type of gift, so people and companies interested in making an "in-kind" gift are encouraged to contact me at 540.825.4840 or phutton@hotr.org to discuss the opportunity. Like any substantial organization *Hospice of the Rapidan* uses a variety of business and professional services, so let me hear from you if you have an idea that might assist us in our work for this community.

Pete Hutton  
Director of Development

## Quilt Raffle Raises \$2,800 To Benefit *Hospice of the Rapidan*

The Dolly Madison Quilters' Guild of Orange donated a beautiful handmade 100" x 66" quilt, which was raffled off on November 22 to benefit *Hospice of the Rapidan*. Entitled "Grandmother's Flower Garden," it was quilted entirely by Guild members. Response to the generous donation of this work of art was tremendous from all five counties served by *Hospice of the Rapidan*. The raffle netted \$2,800 to support our programs. All of us offer a heartfelt "thank-you" to the ladies who worked so hard on this quilt and to the community who bought raffle tickets in support of our mission.



**Kathy Clements, Executive Director, *Hospice of the Rapidan* and Suzanne Moubray, president, Dolly Madison Quilters' Guild, picking the winning raffle ticket**

## Letter from the Director

2005 has flown by and it is hard to comprehend that we will soon be ringing in 2006. Like many, as this year comes to an end I find myself reflecting back on 2005. With my reflections come a gratitude for so many blessings: my wonderful family and friends who have been there and loved me through the good and the challenges; this beautiful area that we live in; the people who make up our community, who keep the spirit of a small community alive even as our population grows; the donors and friends of *Hospice of the Rapidan*, many of whom have been with us since our humble beginnings in 1983; and the patients and families, now numbering over 2500 since 1983, who have opened the doors of their homes and their hearts to our care and services.

Last, but certainly not least, I am grateful for the many volunteers, board members and staff who make up *Hospice of the Rapidan*. These folks are the very heart of hospice work. Each person works diligently to ensure that caring, compassionate and full medical hospice care is delivered to this community. I am so grateful to them for all they do for our patients, families and our community.

So indeed as 2005 draws to an end I can look back on a great year with many wonderful memories and give thanks for so many blessings. In this newsletter you will read stories of how we continue to care for our patients and families but also about how the community continues to care for *Hospice of the Rapidan*.

Thank you!

**Kathy Clements, RN, CHPN**

## Hospice of the Rapidan Welcomes Two New Board Members

The entire *Hospice of the Rapidan* community is pleased to welcome Mike Powell and Pastor Michael Jackson to our Board of Directors. Each of them brings years of experience and a proven record of community service to our organization and we are fortunate indeed to have their assistance and leadership.

Mike Powell has been an attorney in Madison County for over 32 years. He accepted an invitation to join our Board of Directors in part because of his first hand experience with *Hospice of the Rapidan*, which provided care for his father during the last 6 months of his life. Mike grew up in Madison County, attended the United States Air Force Academy and law

school at the University of Arkansas. He returned to Madison County upon graduation and served as Clerk of the Circuit Court of Madison for 22 years. He is now a member of the law firm Berry and Early with offices in Madison and Stanardsville.

Pastor Michael Jackson has been giving back to the community for years through his spiritual work. After a successful 23-year career with Sears he was called to the service of God and others. He attended Washington Bible College in Maryland, IMI College and Seminary, and earned his Doctorate from Life Christian University in 2005. In 1996 he founded the Emmanuel Christian Center in Ruckersville and has minis-

tered there ever since. When a fellow pastor recommended he consider assisting *Hospice of the Rapidan* he commented, "I felt I just had to find a way to help after I realized what *Hospice of the Rapidan* was all about. Some people are afraid of the word hospice, particularly in the black community, and I hope to help dispel those fears. I also want to let other pastors know how they can help their congregations understand there is help out there with end-of-life issues from *Hospice of the Rapidan*". Pastor Jackson is a member of the Central Virginia Task Force of local spiritual leaders and a member of the Ministers Association of Albemarle, Madison and Culpeper.

## Making a Difference When It Counts

*continued from pg 2*

- Harpists and pianists who play at some of our events thus enhancing them
- A volunteer who works for Rappahannock Electric Cooperative who safely and beautifully wired our Christmas Tree this year

There are so many special contributions it is hard to keep track. Certainly some worthy of mention here have been forgotten, which is to be expected when so many people attend to the little things that make all the difference simply because they should be done, without regard for whether anyone else notices. That, in a nutshell, is the true spirit of volunteering... isn't it?

Join us in continuing this proud tradition with a rich and rewarding volunteer experience! Call Ruth Pavlik, our Volunteer Coordinator, at **540-825-4840**, or email her at [rpavlik@hotr.org](mailto:rpavlik@hotr.org) for more information or to ask questions.



**Volunteer Mollie McMahon reciting a Commemorative Poem at the Tree of Lights Ceremony**

## A Personal Tree of Lights Story

Karen Whitlock and her daughter Kaitlin Harris joined us at our Tree of Lights Ceremony in memory of Kaitlin's father Greg Harris, who received care from *Hospice of the Rapidan* during the last few months of his life. Karen and Kaitlin sang Christmas Carols and paused to reflect while our Chaplain spoke about life and hope. All of us at *Hospice of the Rapidan* are inspired by families like Karen and Kaitlin's and hope to help others when the need arises.



**Karen Whitlock and her daughter Kaitlin finding comfort at the Tree of Lights Ceremony**



**Volunteers at *Hospice of the Rapidan* office helping out with Christmas cards**



**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**



**Culpeper County High School Woodwind Ensemble, playing carols at the Tree of Lights ceremony**

## Welcome Letter From Our New Community Relations Director

Dear Friends,

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Nancy Walbridge and I recently joined the *Hospice of the Rapidan's* family of staff as Community Relations Director. I consider it a privilege to work with such a caring, professional and committed group and look forward to helping to enhance Hospice's involvement in the communities we serve. I will be working closely with the staff; helping them tell the *Hospice of the Rapidan* story and doing my best to assist them in carrying out our mission.

Within the first weeks of my tenure I spent a day traveling with one of our nurses and another day with our chaplain. These days opened my eyes (and heart) to the miracles our nurses, social workers, grief coordinator, chaplain and volunteers were accomplishing on a daily basis. Sharing some of these stories in each issue of *Companion* will be one of the delights of my new job.

*Hospice of the Rapidan* provides such an important range of services to people at a critical time in their lives that I was surprised to learn how many families in our communities remain unaware of the compassionate end-of-life care available right here in central Virginia. Even more surprising to learn was how many families in our area don't even know what hospice is or the expert care and comfort it provides. Part of my goal at *Hospice of the Rapidan* will be to make

sure all in our area who need them are aware of our services, and they are available to all regardless of their ability to pay.

*Hospice of the Rapidan* is all about the patients we care for. Take our beautiful 95 year old patient Ernestine. She takes great delight in her weekly visit from our chaplain and Lyle, a music therapist who is one of our volunteers, who sing hymns and pray with her. Her loving daughter is learning how to help her mom adjust and prepare for saying good-bye. Her smiles and "thank-you for being here for me" are the true measure of the value of the services we provide.

My goal is to do what I can to ensure *Hospice of the Rapidan* is an active, productive member of the communities we serve, and that every family in need of hospice services knows who we are and how easy it is to access our caring staff. This is a significant responsibility and I will be calling on you, our donors and friends, from time to time for your input and expertise. Please feel welcome to call me at anytime to share your thoughts, suggestions, etc.

May all of you have a safe and healthy holiday season!

Sincerely,  
Nancy Walbridge