HospiceCare
for body mind and spirit

Winter 2011

Comfort and joy in time of sorrow
From the Executive Director:

Demand for service unprecedented

By Larry E. Robertson
Executive Director

The W.Va. End-of-Life Center in Morgantown recently reported that requests for end-of-life or palliative care were higher in the past year than anytime in the past five years. About the same time, the National Census Bureau reported that the first set of Baby Boomers would be filing for Social Security benefits beginning in January of 2011. And finally, the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) reported that hospice utilization in the United States had increased to the point that 38.5% of all Americans that died last year did so under the care of a local hospice program. Collectively, these reports indicate that local hospices like HospiceCare must be prepared to handle an influx of requests for service in the near future that is unprecedented.

HospiceCare has already taken steps to assure that it will have the capacity to handle the increase in demand. We are in the midst of a couple of building campaigns including a fundraiser for a 10-bed inpatient hospice unit to be built in Lewisburg and we just recently filed a Certificate of Need with the WV Health Care Authority to build a 10-bed inpatient unit within the confines of Thomas Memorial Hospital in South Charleston. Once completed, HospiceCare will have 44 inpatient hospice beds to better serve the end-of-life care needs in the 16 counties throughout central and southern WV served by our various teams.

The in-home staff has also beefed up its numbers adding registered nurses, social workers, CNAs and counselors to its ranks in anticipation of growth in the in-home, nursing home and personal care home arenas that care for 90% of our patients. We cared for 2,300 patients and their families in 2010 and conservative predictions for 2011 see that number growing by at least 12% to almost 2,575 patients.

As most senior citizens are aware, there has been no increase in Social Security benefits for the past two years. HospiceCare services have suffered a similar fate, as the average increase in service reimbursements from Medicare and Medicaid (which provide 90% of our funding) for each of the past three years has been less than 1%! With utilities and employee health insurance costs increasing by double digits, we are now more than ever dependent upon the local communities that support us financially through various fund-raisers and individual giving to balance our budgets annually.

Just as the number of paid staff will be increasing, so will the need for HospiceCare volunteers. The NHPCO reported last year that roughly 550,000 hospice volunteers provided 25 million hours of service throughout the U.S. At HospiceCare in 2010, our 300-plus volunteers logged in over 21,000 hours of time and drove more than 125,000 miles in their commitment to volunteer services. If you are interested in joining our volunteer team please call us at (304) 768-8523 and ask for Melanie Allen, our new Director of Volunteer Services.

And finally, thanks to everyone who supported us during 2010, whether it was financially, through service or encouragement. HospiceCare is about people helping people at a critical juncture in the lives of families, friends and neighbors. We can’t do it alone and hope that you will continue to support us in 2011.

Happy New Year!!!

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On the Cover: Summertime Santa!

Gabby Cogar, 2, and her mother, Sage, enjoyed a visit with Santa Claus during a “Christmas in July” party at the Hubbard Hospice House. The event provided a brief emotional escape, helping lift their spirits during their stay at the house with their father/husband, Stoney Cogar, a hospice patient until his death a few weeks later from cancer. Thanks to dedicated efforts of staff and volunteers at the Hubbard Hospice House, special events like this help make families’ visits more bearable during such difficult times. More on “Christmas in July” on page 10.

KVHA rides in with support

Kanawha Valley Horseman’s Association selects HospiceCare as Summer Challenge of Champions charity.

7 Golf-Gala in the works
Organizers planning new Golf Outing and Dinner Dance fundraiser to benefit HospiceCare for Sept. 16, 2011.

8 Christmas cookies never tasted so good
CNA finds mother’s long lost recipe during routine home visit.

10 Welcome to our new Volunteer Director
New Director of Volunteer Services Melanie Allen fit in perfectly with our Fall 2010 Training Class.

11 HPNA conference
Local chapter of Hospice & Palliative Nurses Association hosts first gathering at the University of Charleston

12 A Community of Caring

13 Grace Riders ride again!
Motorcyclists make the trip from Chief Logan State Park to Hubbard Hospice House in memory of Darlene David.

14 Love Light shines bright

As a Precaution . . .
HospiceCare wants you and your loved ones to know that we do NOT do telemarketing or fundraising over the phone. Recently we have been notified that there are organizations conducting phone solicitations for monetary contributions, saying that a portion of the money will go to local hospice organizations. These groups are NOT affiliated with HospiceCare in any way and we do not endorse their fundraising activities. If you or a loved one would like to make a donation directly to HospiceCare, we ask that you please use the enclosed envelope or call our Main Office directly to discuss your gift at (800) 560-8523. Thank you for your understanding regarding this matter.
NEW DEVELOPMENTS!

Toast to Hospice kicks off Capital Campaign

HospiceCare’s 12th Annual Toast to Hospice Wine Auction on Nov. 5 at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine Alumni Center raised nearly $49,000 to benefit patients and their families who reside in and around the greater Greenbrier Valley area served by the Lewisburg Office. Special thanks go out to Judy Polan and Eugene Jeffus, as well as Mark and Allyson Liebendorfer of The Country Vintner of West Virginia, who have worked tirelessly year after year to make this event so special. This year’s Toast also served as the kickoff to a $2.5 million capital campaign to build a new 10-bed inpatient facility housed on the Lewisburg office campus at 223 Maplewood Avenue. For more information on the planned facility, please contact Capital Campaign Chairperson Sharon Rowe through the Lewisburg Office at (304) 645-2700, or Development Director Jim Wilkerson at the Main Office in Charleston at (304) 768-8523.
Despite temperatures soaring into the 90s along Kanawha Boulevard, thousands of visitors, dozens of volunteers, and a record number of chili cooks all kept things real cool and light for the 12th annual Smoke on the Water Chili Cook-off June 19th at the newly renovated Haddad Riverfront Park in Charleston! Thanks to two bands, food vendors, the YWCA Kids Zone, chili pepper-eating and frozen t-shirt contests, a new park canopy for added shade, and a mysterious dancing chili fairy, the day was a lot of fun and a huge success to benefit HospiceCare, raising $6,000 from chili sample and water/pop sales. Special thanks to all the event sponsors and our amazing Chili Cook-off Committee President Jennifer Piercy-Igo and all of her fellow members for making this event so successful year after year after year! We couldn’t do it without you!
KVHA comes riding in on horseback to help

HospiceCare is grateful to the Kanawha Valley Horsemens Association and the Winfield Riding Club for their generous support through the 2010 Summer Challenge of Champions Horse Show held July 29-31 at the Winfield Riding Center in Putnam County. This year’s show attracted more than 150 horses and 250 riders and trainers of all ages to compete in more than 80 different classes. In addition to all the wonderful riding contests, there was a festive family-fun open house with carnival games, a clown making balloon animals, and a caricature artist on Friday evening of the event. This was HospiceCare’s first year as the main charity for the three-day event, which helped raise $8,500 to benefit programs and services for hospice patients and their families. Executive Director Larry Robertson and Development Assistant Jeff Sikorovsky accepted the donation at KVHA’s annual Award’s Banquet Nov. 6 at the Charleston Marriott. Special thanks goes to KVHA President Rick Comer and show Chairperson Brett Hamilton, as well as all of the participating barns, spectators and dozens of sponsors for making this KVHA show one of the most successful ever. HospiceCare is greatly honored to have been chosen by KVHA members as this year’s charity and hopes to continue to be part of this awesome annual event as well as other shows throughout the year.
Golf Outing and Dinner Dance

Party in the works to celebrate 10 years of Hubbard House

What organizers hope will become an annual fundraising event, the HospiceCare Golf Outing & Dinner Dance is planned for Friday, Sept. 16th, 2011 at the Edgewood Golf Course and Country Club to help celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the opening of the Elizabeth Hubbard Hospice House — the state’s first inpatient hospice facility opened in April, 2001 in Charleston.

Steering committee members have a goal of attracting at least ten $10,000 corporate sponsors to support the Golf Outing and Dinner Dance to help HospiceCare renovate and remodel the Elizabeth Hubbard Hospice House so that it continues to thrive as a community asset well into the future. Other sponsorship packages also are available to better suit varied individual and corporate budgets.

Over the past 10 years, the Hubbard House has served thousands of patients and their families in their greatest time of need and has been a model for other such houses built around the state. While we have worked diligently to maintain and upgrade wherever possible — including recent renovations to the formal living room, family kitchen, sitting room and front gardens — the house itself as a whole is in need of some tender loving care to keep it serving our families for years to come.

The idea for the Golf Outing and Dinner Dance grew out of more than a decade of similar golf outings hosted by local insurance executive Keith Stonestreet (left) that benefitted HospiceCare programs and services. Our hope is that this “FUN-raiser” will be bigger and better than all the rest combined and grow even larger in years to come — all for the benefit of HospiceCare patients and their families!

So don’t forget to mark your calendars and please consider helping us help others!

For more information on sponsorship packages for this event, please contact Development Director Jim Wilkerson at HospiceCare, (304) 768-8523, or by e-mail at jwilkerson@hospicecarewv.org.

Friday Sept. 16th, 2011

9 a.m. — Player Registration, Edgewood Golf Club
10 a.m. — Shotgun Start (Scramble Format)
6 p.m. — Reception and Silent Auction, followed by Dinner, Dancing, Live Auction and Awards Presentation at Edgewood Country Club, Charleston
A CHRISTMAS COOKIE STORY

Home visit leads hospice CNA to her mother’s long lost recipe

By Jeff Sikorovsky
Development Associate

HospiceCare CNA Pat Taylor wasn’t expecting anything out of the ordinary this past summer when she was assigned to patient Kenneth Lashur of Charleston. Kenneth’s wife, Nadine, had needed help caring for him at home and requested a certified nursing assistant.

This routine assignment, however, would turn out to be a blessing in disguise for Pat, helping her uncover a beloved Christmas treasure she thought she had lost forever as a child after her mother died of breast cancer in 1962 at the tender age of 36.

Pat, now 59 of Clendenin, said her mother, Louise Romeo, a first-generation Syrian-American, enjoyed baking her own recipe of “Fruit Cocktail Cookies” for her husband, Steve Romeo, to share with his employees at the carpenter’s union for Christmas. “Mom would bake her cookies and Dad would make the Italian stuff, meatballs and bread,” she said about her father, who was three-quarters Italian and one quarter Irish.

After Pat’s mother died, her recipe was lost and so was the annual Fruit Cocktail Cookie tradition. But Steve would continue to bring the meatballs and bread to his employees in place of the cookies. “I would stay up all night with Dad and learned how to make the meatballs and bread and we would eat that,” Pat said.

Coincidentally, Kenneth just happened to be one of Steve’s employees back then. Pat had even met him when she was younger, but did not remember him. She said his face did look familiar when she saw him at his home this summer, but if it was not for her persistence, she might have missed this serendipitous reunion.

Pat had called twice for a CNA home visit, but Nadine told her Kenneth had refused. He didn’t want any outsiders to come in and help. The next time Pat called she said she would just stop by briefly to introduce herself and check in on Kenneth to see how he was doing. “When I got there I peeked in Kenneth’s bedroom and he had company. He saw my face and I saw his, but I didn’t recognize him. I decided to sit and wait with Nadine in the kitchen. We talked about his illness and just started discussing some of the traditions that he wanted to pass on to the children,” Pat said. “Kenneth enjoyed making wine and hot peppers in tomato sauce.”

Pat chatted with Nadine almost 45 minutes before their visitors left and she got to check in on Kenneth. “I went in and introduced myself to him. I put the rail down on his bed and picked up his hand to shake it and then

continued on next page
held on to it. I told him I wasn’t there to impose on him or force my will on him, but that I had wanted to see him to make sure he was comfortable and doing alright,” she said.

“‘I’m surprised you stayed,’ he said. I told him, ‘I’ve been waiting for days to meet you,’ so that broke the ice with us. And that’s when he shared with me a beautiful prayer card he had just received from his neighbor. ‘It’s a Catholic card,’ he told me, explaining he was of another Christian faith. ‘Well my father was Catholic,’ I told him. ‘They pray to Mary. He chose to join the Orthodox Church with my mother in which we were raised.’”

At this point Pat recognized his face, but couldn’t remember when she had met him before.

“Oh, I knew a guy, who was just the sweetest most wonderful guy, that went to the Greek Orthodox Church,” Kenneth chimed in, as a smile came across his face. “I’m not sure, but I think he built those great big wooden doors at St. George Orthodox Church. He was an absolute master carpenter and he was the best in town at doors and cabinets.”

Pat was thrown for a loop — he was talking about her father! “He had a really nice family. His wife used to make … not fruit cake, but these fruit cookies and he would bring them to us every Christmas. He told me that he lost his wife and they had several kids. He was just a special type of guy,” Kenneth said.

“I let go of his hand at this point. My hand was sweating. He had held my hand the whole time. His hand was on the bottom, but he put his big ol’ fingers around mine and never let go,” Pat said.

“Kenneth, may I ask what this man’s name is?” I asked. He said, ‘Well his name is Steve Romeo.’ By that time I am in tears. All through it, I felt the presence of my parents in the room. I think Mom and Dad were both there. I told him, ‘What a coincidence, that was my father.’ At this point we were both in tears and he started calling for his wife Nadine,” Pat said. “‘This is Steve Romeo’s little girl, you know the one who made the fruit cookies,’ he told Nadine. She said, ‘Oh my goodness, Honey. I think I still have that recipe she gave me here.’ She was amazed.”

Nadine walked back to the kitchen and when she returned she handed Pat the original cookie recipe written in her mother’s own handwriting. The recipe wasn’t lost after all — Louise had just given it to Nadine. “I’ll tell you what, you take the recipe and make me a copy of it and you keep the original,” Nadine told Pat.

Holding her mother’s original handwritten recipe now framed (pictured below), Pat said, “Look what the Lord sent me!” And there, in the upper right-hand corner of the recipe, Nadine had written: “Steve Romeo’s wife.”

For Pat and all of her family, this will be the first Christmas since 1962 that they will be able to taste Mom’s cookies along with Dad’s meatballs and bread. “My oldest brother’s wife bakes a lot, but hasn’t been able to get those cookies right. Hospice nurse Jetti Young has a fruit cookie she makes, too. They were almost there, they just weren’t Mom’s,” Pat said.

Recipe and story continued on page 14
SUMMERTIME SANTA AND HIS HELPERS

Christmas in July warms the spirit

It was five months before Christmas and all through Hubbard House, several volunteers were stirring, but no silly mouse. A handful of loyal elves had prepared an afternoon treat for volunteers to gather, to chat and to eat. There were Toni and Libby, and yes Kendra, too, to bring cheer to their helpers and even a present or two. Guests were volunteers — Janet Morris, Debra Graham, and Bill Dobbs; as well as Linda Hardman, Karen Richards, and Marian Gaum (a transplant from South Africa!). But the guest of honor was St. Nick himself, played admirably by volunteer John Johnson, that dear jolly elf. Everyone enjoyed sitting with dear old Kris Kringle, but the most grateful of all was a little girl who needed a giggle. Bringing a smile to the face of this tiny two-year-old, whose father was a patient in a room down the hall, was just what Santa needed to raise the spirits of us all, bringing light to the darkness of our long daily haul. When all the presents were handed out and the last cookie crumbled, Santa donned his red hat, grabbed his candy cane and out the door he tumbled. And as he turned to go with a twinkle in his eye, he wished everyone at the party a Merry Christmas in July. Ho, ho, ho!

A SURPRISE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

For someone who has volunteered at the Hubbard Hospice House 2-3 times a week for the past 10 years, it seemed strange to Monty Pierce that no one had wished her a happy birthday when she reported to duty on Oct. 27th, her 80th birthday!!! That’s because everyone at the Hubbard House was playing dumb so that they could surprise Monty with a cake and ice cream celebration at noon at 28 Bradford Street — the beautifully restored pink Victorian-era home owned and run as a bed and breakfast inn by another one of our volunteers, Bob Miller. Volunteer Coordinator Toni Bee invited the unsuspecting Monty to “lunch” there for her birthday. Needless to say, she was pleasantly surprised when everyone greeted her there to wish her a happy birthday!
Melanie Allen came to HospiceCare in the fall from United Talent in Charleston where she staffed temporary job openings for her business clients. As HospiceCare’s new Volunteer Director, Melanie works hard to make sure she has the best volunteers to meet the needs of our patients and their families. Lucky for her, our volunteers are a dedicated bunch willing to go the extra mile; lucky for them, her friendly and vibrant personality makes her a perfect fit in her new role.

Starting work here in October, Melanie was thrown right in with the new volunteer training class at the Main Office (below), which helped bring her up to speed quickly about the history and inner-workings of HospiceCare. While she admits to an affinity for the excitement of roller coasters, which suits her well for the twists and turns of new job managing more than 300 hospice volunteers, she said she’s more of a “homebody” who likes to bake cookies and cakes for her family and her church. Melanie and her husband, Kevin, bought a house in Pinch in 2002, where they live with their 5-year-old son, Brackston.

So won’t you help us welcome our newest member of the HospiceCare Management Team and make her feel at home here, too. ♥

Melanie Allen of Pinch says she looks forward to the challenge of running the Volunteer Department.

HospiceCare welcomes the Fall 2010 Class of volunteers who completed their training course in October: Barbara Amos, Joe Armstrong, Karen Ashworth, Brockie Augenstein, Harriet Cartmill, Sallye Clark, Lela Cogar, Doris Feagans, Marianne Gettman, Janie Givens, Debbie LaFleur, Helena Lee, Cyndi McGill, Mildred Skaggs, Leah Smith, Melba Smith, Mary Waldron, Chuck Young, and Nancy Young, along with our new Volunteer Director Melanie Allen (center in purple).
Congratulations to nurse Carol Matheny, RN, and the rest of the members of the Charleston Chapter of the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association who hosted their first HPNA Conference Oct. 21 at the University of Charleston. The focus of the conference was “Compassionate Care at the End of Life” and featured a dozen speakers discussing various end-of-life issues.

Speakers included: Rich Bishoff, funeral director for Harding Funeral and Cremations and a member of the HospiceCare Board of Directors; K. Joy Buck, RN, MSN, Ph.D., an associate professor at the WVU School of Nursing, Eastern Division and HPNA board member; Linda Cooper, RN, MSN-CS, LPC, a clinical nurse specialist and counselor at the Hubbard Hospice House; Deborah J. Cotes, D.O., medical director of Palliative Care Services at Charleston Area Medical Center; HospiceCare’s Medical Director Dr. Michael Covelli, M.D., FACS; Hospice of Huntington President and CEO Charlene Farrell, RN, BSN, MBA; speech and language pathologist Jacqueline Frazier, co-owner of LinguaCare Associates, Inc.; Jason Kimbrel, R.Ph., Pharm.D., BCPS, vice president of Clinical Operations for HospiScript; Dr. Elizabeth Kryzinski, M.D., a pediatric oncologist at CAMC’s Women’s and Children’s Hospital; Mary Mihalyo, B.S., Pharm.D., R.Ph., assistant professor of Pharmacy Practice at Duquesne University and executive vice president of Hospice Services for ProCare Hospice Care; Robin W. Shepherd, MSN, FCN, a hospice nursing and education consultant from Asheville, N.C.; Dr. Paula Taylor, M.D., Medical Director at Hubbard Hospice House and an ER doctor at St. Francis Hospital; and HospiceCare Chaplain Pete Thompson M. Div.

Sponsors included HospiceCare, Hospice Foundation of W.Va., Hospice of Huntington, and Hospice Education Institute. Vendors and supporters included: American Hospice Equipment Company; ProCare HospiceCare; HospiScript; Advanced Medical Supply; Elana Health; Infusion Solutions; and Mountain State Vital Care.
A Community of Caring

Sojourner’s finds refuge in HospiceCare annex building

For three months this past fall, while their current East End location got a complete make-over, the YWCA Sojourner’s Shelter operated out of HospiceCare’s annex building on 2nd Avenue across the parking lot from our Main Office on Charleston’s West Side. More than 50 residents and a dozen staffers moved into the updated temporary facility on Aug. 24. “While occasional renovations and repairs have been made throughout the past 18 years, the shelter facility has not received an extensive overhaul due to the complexity of completing certain projects while simultaneously housing an average of 64 individuals daily,” YWCA Executive Director Debby Weinstein said. Renovations and repairs to the shelter included upgrading the kitchen, relocating a laundry facility, removing carpet and installing tile, replacing industrial size hot water tanks, and fixing plumbing, electrical, heating and cooling and sprinkler systems. Also, a bed bug problem was remedied, security was upgraded, and offices were redesigned, all for a cost of around $330,000. “After much consideration, we realized that a temporary program relocation was greatly needed to accomplish these critical projects,” Weinstein said, noting that a chance meeting with hospice Executive Director Larry Robertson at a United Way meeting in June set the whole plan in motion. Sojourner’s Director Margaret Taylor (top left) said, “HospiceCare has been good to us. We only pay utilities. A lot of people have stepped up to the plate. I want to thank everyone for playing a role in this. It’s a joint effort. Charleston has always been a caring community. We are truly grateful.” Assisting Taylor with the move were (l.-r., bottom right) YWCA Board Secretary Martha Pettit, Sojourner’s Assistant Director Sandy McGrath, and Carolyn Meadows with the YWCA.

Quilters warm office with color

Janet Morris and Juanita Reed of the Kanawha Valley Quilters Guild presented Volunteer Coordinator Libby Gates and Executive Director Larry Robertson this beautiful quilt to help add a little color and warmth to the bare beige walls in the conference room at HospiceCare’s Main Office. Other guild members who stitched the quilt included: Anne Sims; Marliese Sigman; Carrie Swing; Clara Poe; Clara Johnson; and Cathy Taylor. The guild meets every Monday from 9:30 a.m. to noon at the South Charleston Library for anyone who is interested in lending a hand, needle and thread!

Smith Co. Motor Cars drives the green

Executive Director Larry Robertson and Development Director Jim Wilkerson accepted a donation for $5,000 from Jed Smith, president and CEO of Smith Co. Motor Cars, who hosted the Mercedes-Benz Classic Pro-Am Golf Tournament at The Greenbrier Sporting Club this past summer.
Recipe
Continued from page 9

“Without my job here this never would have happened. I never would have had the chance to meet and take care of Kenneth and Nadine,” Pat said, having worked for HospiceCare 14 years. “It’s a privilege to do what we do, and here was this blessing I received because of this job. It was just an absolute blessing for me. It’s the essence of hospice. I think with our jobs sometimes you get burned out. You feel like a sponge and just take everything in and can’t take anymore. That’s when something like this happens and makes everything so worthwhile. But every day’s good for me or else I wouldn’t do what I do. I love it here.”

Fruit Cocktail Cookies

1 cup shortening
1 cup brown sugar
½ cup white sugar
3 well-beaten eggs
1 cup of raisins
2 cups fruit cocktail drained (lg. can)
1½ cups of nuts (walnuts or pecans)
1 teaspoon of vanilla
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon baking powder
4 cups of flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon cloves

• Mix cream, sugar and shortening together.
• Add eggs and vanilla.
• Add fruit, nuts and raisins.
• Sift together baking soda, baking powder, flour, cinnamon, and cloves.
• Add a little at a time of the dry mixture to the wet mixture until all is mixed well.
• Mix thoroughly.
• Drop by teaspoon on baking sheet.
• Bake at 400 degrees until brown (no minutes given).

Darlene’s angels ride again for Hubbard Hospice House

While morning thunderstorms kept many riders from hitting the road for the 3rd Annual Darlene David Memorial Ride, Hubbard Hospice House Administrator Mary Kathren Robinson welcomed a dozen hearty members and friends of the Grace Riders Christian Motorcycle Club to the house on Saturday, July 17. Timmy David has organized the event every year since his wife, Darlene David (left), died at the Hubbard House in January 2008. Raising $1,650 for the Hubbard House this year brought the event’s three-year total to more than $5,000. Enjoying the window of sunshine through dark clouds to make the hour-long run from Chief Logan State Park to the Hubbard House were: Lana and Tony Evans, John and Bev Faine, brothers David and Brad Craddock, Jim Nelson, and Bob Horn. Three Charleston Police Department Motorcycle Unit Officers Tim Hill, R.H. Coleman and T.I. Malone, escorted the riders through the city and up the hill to the house. This year, HospiceCare nurse Carla Zielinski and her son, Aaron Stuter, represented the hospice staff in the ride for the first time. Special thanks go to house dietary manager Terry Rosenfeld and her staff for preparing a wonderful snack of fresh-cut watermelon, cookies and drinks, as well as to Walt Hammock for another one of his original cake designs, this one featuring a small model Harley Davidson from his own collection. Here’s hoping for clear skies and sunshine to attract more riders for the next run this coming summer.

Visit us online at: www.hospicecarewv.org
OUR 27th Annual Love Light Tree season kicked off Friday, Nov. 26th and ran through to Christmas at the Charleston Town Center Mall, the Greenbrier Valley Mall in Lewisburg and Boone Memorial Hospital in Madison. More than 300 community volunteers were on hand throughout the month to help donors fill out ornaments that they then placed on our trees in honor or memory of a loved one. More than $20,000 was collected in just the first week! The money raised is used to cover the cost of care for families in need. HospiceCare would like to extend a big heartfelt thank you to everyone at the Town Center for supporting our efforts each year for nearly 30 years, with special thanks to the mall’s parent company, Forest City Enterprises, Marketing Director Lisa McCracken and her wonderful staff, for their generous support and assistance year after year after year. We’d also like to thank our friends at United Bank in the mall for helping us safely manage the funds we collect each day. And to Shirley Justice and the ladies of the Boone Memorial Auxiliary — Betty Bryson, Carolyn Young, Nancy Hanlon, Tammy Searles, and Dawn Rita Woods — we couldn’t do any of this down south without you! If you received an ornament and invitation in the mail in November but did not make it to one of our displays and would like to give, please do so in the envelope provided and you can hold on to your ornament for next year. Or if you did not receive one in the mail and would still like to make a donation to the Love Light Tree campaign, please use the enclosed envelope in this newsletter. We hope you had a wonderful holiday season and enjoy a great year ahead!
Major, mother, wife, nurse makes it home safe

It is with feelings of great joy, pride, gratitude and RELIEF that HospiceCare welcomes home one of its own safe and sound from a six-month tour of duty in a military medical hospital in war-torn Kabul, Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. Nurse Practitioner Lora Bowens, a Major in the National Guard, left for Ft. Benning, Ga. April 17 as part of the 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, a 3,500-member unit based out of Vermont that is part of that state’s largest call-up since World War II. It was one of the first combat brigade units to be called up as part of an infusion of 30,000 more troops to the Afghanistan theater. Lora’s family — husband David, daughter Katiebeth, and son Joey — greeted her with hugs and a hero’s welcome at the gate at Yeager Airport upon her return to Charleston in November. Katiebeth and Joey didn’t let her out of their grasp the rest of the evening, sandwiching her in the backseat of the car on their way to IHOP for a family dinner. Lora, who started with HospiceCare in 1992, and returned in 2006 after a short time away, returns to work at the Hubbard Hospice House Jan. 3. Hubbard House Administrator Mary Kathren Robinson said this spring that the increase in troops in Afghanistan had touched several families at the Hubbard House, including Linda Murphy’s son Brent Adkins, who left April 30, and Diane Walker’s stepson Michael Walker, who left May 7. Thanks to yellow ribbons hung at the house in their honor and prayers for their safe return, they, too, made it home safe and sound in time for Thanksgiving, she said.