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COMPASSION

We are a Companion for the Journey

*Photo of Big Creek by Royce Cowan
Read his story on page 6*

Autumn
2017
Life Lines
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Our Continuum Of Care

Chris Comeaux, President/CEO

In this issue of Lifelines, you will read about the many innovative ways Four Seasons ensures 100% support for you and your family along the way, enabling

you to care for your family better. We have found there is true value in being able to provide top quality care *wherever* you and your family call home. You will be deeply touched reading about one patient's journey with ALS and the positive experience he's had while being cared for by Four Seasons. You will also read about the new Care Navigation program we are launching so you and your loved ones have access to knowledgeable professionals who can help you navigate the healthcare maze as you deal with a serious illness. This is one of the many ways we are innovating to serve you better, and we look forward to having this program available before Christmas 2017.

Our Four Seasons team continues to assimilate our acquisition of Compassionate Home Care to provide all the services you need to be supported to stay at home as you deal with serious or advanced illnesses. Home Care is a unique type of service that can be provided alongside other healthcare services you may be receiving, such as palliative care, hospice, home health, and more. We have the most compassionate, caring, and competent team members who you can trust with your loved one or family member. We encourage you to call (828) 696-0946 to begin the conversation.

Four Seasons is doing outstanding work in Buncombe County, and we're proud to hold an exciting November event featuring Dr. Atul Gawande's incredible book and accompanying Prime Time film documentary *Being Mortal* on November 10th at the Asheville Community Theatre. Both the book and film lay out the significant importance behind taking your care into your own hands and partnering with people whose interests are aligned with yours to get you the right care, at the right place and the right time, like Four Seasons. After the film, we have a robust panel of area and industry leaders to engage and provide dialogue on this very important topic. We hope you'll join us for this unique opportunity.

An area of improvement we are working on at Four Seasons is how to tell our story better, so that those who need our services know exactly how and when to call. Part of the challenge is that our organization started almost 40 years ago, focusing solely on *hospice care*. A short-time later, we became locally and

nationally known for our advances in the research of, practice, reimbursement and teachings of *palliative care*. We have been so busy building this *care continuum*, we did not pause to shout from the rooftops and let you know what's coming next or remind you of what's been!

So, let's recap:

- Four Seasons is your only local, independent, community-based nonprofit palliative and hospice care provider in WNC.
- We were founded in 1979 serving our first patient in 1981.
- With the expansion of our service lines, keeping you in our focus, we now can offer you our **Care Continuum: Care Navigation, Home Care, Palliative Care, Hospice Care and Bereavement Support.**

During my time at Four Seasons I have heard many stories from our staff of times they've helped their own family members navigate an advanced illness. We most often hear, *"If I did not work with Four Seasons, I am not sure I could have done what I did to support or steer my family in the right direction. I wonder what other people do who don't have access to the same tools, information, and resources that I do?"*

The Mission of Four Seasons is simple. We are here to **Co-Create the Care Experience** for our patients and families. Your wishes are truly our goals. I have seen our staff and volunteers go beyond the call of duty to create the best care experience possible even in the hardest hour. Four Seasons is committed to making sure no one goes without the care they need, regardless of one's ability to pay. We believe strongly in our values of *compassion, balance, respect, integrity, teamwork, excellence* and *resilience* and incorporate them into our daily work. We are happy to meet you and your loved ones to discuss options, answer questions and make each part of your care journey the best and easiest it possibly can be. We are confident in our competence and here to help anyone in our community needing help navigating a serious illness. If you or a loved one is having a hard time, call Four Seasons. The most common thing our patients and families tell us is: *"I wish I would've called sooner"*.

We are proud of how our organization provides each of these types of care to you and your loved ones. Our commitment as experts in our fields, as well as my personal commitment, is to ensure that you have a trusted, consistent, advanced, and available provider of care to call on when you need it most.



Four Seasons: The Care You Trust

Millicent Burke Sinclair Ed.D, MBA, SPHR®, SHRM-SCP, *Chief Operating Officer*

Through our commitment to co-create THE care experience, YOU and YOUR loved ones are the focus of all we do. We exist to provide exceptional care wherever you may call home. We honor and respect what matters most to you and your family members. For that reason and so much more, we are pleased to extend to you an additional service that will further our commitment.

Over the next few months we invite you to join with us as we step out and walk with you throughout your entire serious or advanced-illness journey. The very moment you have a need, call us and we will have a care navigator dedicated to you immediately. You and your loved ones are not alone, we are here and we care. Through all of our service offerings: Care Navigation, Home Care, Palliative Care, Hospice Care, and Bereavement Support we can be trusted to provide you with what is most important. Your health, your desires, and your family come first – let Four Seasons be who you trust.

Four Seasons: Care Navigation Services

Maureen Williams MEd, BSN, RN, CHPCA, *Director of Care Navigation*

Our community needs and deserves competent guidance and support while experiencing their own or a loved one's journey with a serious illness. To navigate the "whitewater rapids" of healthcare alone is daunting and that is where Four Seasons Care Navigation services appear, in a moment of confusion, when one might feel lost and not know where to turn.

Adding this as a service line, we aim to:

- Provide additional help with medical record review
- Partner with primary physicians to support the client
- Collaborate with clients, family members and providers to arrange and attend visits and manage care
- Educate clients and families on available care
- Serve as an advocate to help the community understand life choices



Hospice patients who are Veterans receive special certificates of appreciation as part of their Four Seasons care.



Because of community support, hospice patients and their families are able to receive Four Seasons tender care.



Dignity Matters

Loretta Shelton, *Executive Director*, Four Seasons Foundation

If the test of a community is in the way it cares for its weakest and most helpless members, our community has passed the test. For almost forty years, this community has proven its greatness by generously supporting Four Seasons hospice care for its most helpless members.

As a community-based, nonprofit hospice provider, Four Seasons exists to serve you and your loved ones – to provide dignity, compassion, and support when it is most needed.

A dignified death and the profound effect it has on the family and those close to the person who has died has lasting significance. Patients and families served by Four Seasons benefit from physical care and symptom control, as well as emotional, spiritual, and bereavement care. Without hospice, too many patients die in distress with uncontrolled symptoms and relatives being unsupported at this vulnerable time. By supporting hospice, you make comfort, dignity, and peace possible.

During the year and especially as the holidays approach, your support is extremely important. Through Veterans Day and Thanksgiving, then Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa, about 280 people a day will need Four Seasons end-of-life care.

By giving generously (your gift of \$1050 will provide one week of in-home hospice care), you help ensure care for the community's weakest and most vulnerable members, regardless of their ability to pay.

Please send your gift today and help us make care possible for all who need it. Your community is counting on your support.

Thank you so much for your help. May your holiday seasons be blessed.

For more information please contact:

**Four Seasons Foundation, 221 N. Main Street, Hendersonville, NC 28792
or call (828)513-2440 | www.FourSeasonsCFLFoundation.org**

Let's Discuss Being Mortal

*"Hope is not a plan."
~ Dr. Atul Gawande*



We hope you will join us for a FREE Film Screening & Panel Discussion



• **Emcee:** Millicent Burke Sinclair, Chief Operating Officer of Four Seasons.



Panelists:

• Dr. Ashley Albers, DO, has worked with Four Seasons for 4 years, first in a palliative care role, and now serves as the hospice medical director.



• Rev. Michael Wermuth, Four Seasons Chaplain and US Navy Veteran, has previous experience as hospice Chaplain in Traverse City, MI plus more than 20 years of experience as a Senior Pastor.



• Teresa Tahu, MSW, has been with Four Seasons for 7 years. She has a passion for advocating for client voice and choice and educating the community about the importance of advance care planning.



• Robert Haggard is a principal with The Van Winkle Law Firm, where his distinction as a Board Certified Specialist in Estate Planning and Probate Law offers a wealth of experience and knowledge.



• Sharon West is a registered nurse, international speaker and published author focusing on healthcare disparities and culturally appropriate approaches to medical care.



• Jen Teague is the Executive Director of The Council On Aging Asheville of Buncombe County. She has over 12 years of experience working with older adults.



• Ray Riordan is the NC Director of Grassroots Lobbying and Advocacy for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

Based on the bestselling book by Dr. Atul Gawande, the PBS FRONTLINE documentary film, Being Mortal, explores what matters most to patients and families facing serious illness. Regardless of your age, you have a part in the discussion that asks:

"Have you and your family had these important conversations and planned ahead?"

Friday, November 10

5:30 Reception • 6:00 Film

**Asheville Community Theatre
35 East Walnut Street
Asheville, NC 28801**

*To reserve your seat,
as tickets are FREE,
please call 828.254.1320
or email Callie:
cdavis@fourseasonscfl.org*

There Are No Gold Medals For Suffering

as shared by Royce Cowan, Father, Son, Brother, Friend & Four Seasons Patient



Q: Tell us about your life up to the point of your diagnosis of ALS.

A: Before the diagnosis I enjoyed spending time with my new wife outdoors. When we had the time we'd go hiking, mountain biking, or kayaking. Of course we liked to travel. We had just finished our honeymoon when the process of being diagnosed began.

Q: Describe your first impression of Four Seasons care.

A: My first impressions of Four Seasons was really good. I enjoyed meeting with my care team. They found me sitting in the early autumn sunshine and it didn't take long for us to connect and hit it off.

Q: What is your experience of having Four Seasons involved in your care plan?

A: There is no question that my quality of life instantly improved upon being admitted as a Four Seasons hospice care patient. They fought hard for me when I could no longer fight for myself.

Q: What is something you want to tell the community about Four Seasons care or your Four Seasons experience?

A: I think what I would like to tell people the most is that absolutely no one with ALS (or any other disease) should pass without the comforting touch that Four Seasons provides. Why people deny extra help bewilders me. Are we too proud? Is there some confusion about the cost? They don't give out Gold Medals for folks who suffer the most or ask for the least help at the end of life. So, why not give it a shot? Call Four Seasons earlier than you think you should, get them involved and get the care you and your family needs most.

Q: Is there a myth or misconception that you've experienced and want to share?

A: Hospice doesn't have to be gloom & doom. My experience with Four Seasons has been anything but. I live a fuller, brighter life now; and it's all thanks to the loving workers that are part of my hospice care team.

Q: Tell us something about your care team members.

A: It takes a special kind of person to work for Four Seasons, my hospice provider. They are all kind, gentle, warm, and caring. They do the job that most of us could not imagine doing and they are simply amazing at it. The staff go above and beyond for me each and every day, as I'm sure they do for everyone else too. We have become more like family than anything else.

Q: Overall are there any other details you want to share to encompass your Four Seasons Experience?

A: I'm going to tell you about my experience with the "end-of-life" care Four Seasons provides to our community. For most people, 'hospice' is a word that triggers strong emotions; fear, death, dying, being gone, and passing on are terms we associate with the word 'hospice'. People often fear the worst and begin to cry when they receive a terminal diagnosis or recommendation for hospice care. "Daddy's gonna die," proclaimed Lillian loudly one afternoon. My four year old hasn't quite fully grasped the totality of death yet. Much the same as most folks' understanding of hospice care, just another thing that I quickly learned after being diagnosed with ALS on September 7, 2010. Fast forward 6 years or so...

After some struggles in my home environment and as my illness progressed, my options on what I would and could do next were dwindling. The options I felt I was left to choose from were: to slowly die feeling hopeless and lost, or be admitted to Four Seasons hospice care program. Weighing those two options, I knew I desperately wanted the latter and so began my journey to get admitted to Four Seasons.

Though a great blessing it was to be admitted into Four Seasons care, being admitted did not come instantly. During my first interview for hospice I was sitting upright in my chair. It was one of my good days and so I was denied services. During my second interview the evaluation took a bit longer and I was exhausted. I was not able to get up on this occasion, instead only able to lie in bed and watch the nurses, social worker and doctors talk about my care plan and goals. It was not one of my better days and so I was accepted and admitted to Four Seasons hospice care program. That day was nothing short of a modern day miracle, a true blessing in disguise.

I was assigned a care team of angels to watch over me. This team consisted of my CNA (Amanda), Social Worker (Kelly), and Nurse (Brandi). I am not sure where I would be today without having these people in my life.

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In addition to the beautiful, autumn image of Big Creek, NC on the cover of this issue of LifeLines, and the stunning gold leaves at the beginning of this article, the colorful nature images to the right were also photographed by Royce Cowan, Four Seasons patient, who has graciously allowed us to publish them.



Q: Tell us about a special moment/memory involving Four Seasons.

A: It was an overcast morning as I laid awake in bed, getting prepped for another typically boring day. The curtains to my window were open just enough to see the flash of a rider atop a steady horse pass by. I knew the rider immediately. It was my social worker, Kelly and she was certain to charge my mood with her recognizably energetic smile and contagious spirit. Amanda opened the corner of the window to give my surprise a “time til up” status report.

Kelly and I would often chat during her visits; that is something most people don’t realize you get out of hospice care – great conversation. Kelly told me about her equestrian lifestyle, endurance rides and love of horses while I would babble on about stories from my childhood. Most of my memories included my father’s two Arabian horses. You could say our friendship grew out of horse tales.

When Amanda and I ventured outside that day, the building was bustling with interest of other visitors. The sun was now shining down upon our enduring smiling faces. Kelly had brought her horse to see me. There is something healing about an animal’s nuzzle and the crisp clean cool morning air. Certain people have the capability to create moments that span a lifetime. That day Kelly and Amanda did just that for me. It’s a span of time I’ll always remember.

Then again on two other separate occasions... Kelly, Amanda and their team were at it again, out to create another memory for me that will span my lifetime.



So, our second interaction with horses was when Kelly participated in an endurance ride where she and a friend rode in my honor, even sporting shirts that said Riding for Royce. She came by to show me the shirts and visit with my daughter, Lillian and I and brought along not one

nor two but THREE horses. Lillian especially loved the miniature pony and even got to brush her off. Watching the smile on her face and listening to the laughter and giggles coming from her tiny body were priceless sounds to my ears that day.



The third and extremely special day that Kelly and Amanda made possible for me this year was getting to actually travel to a horse farm right outside Asheville to visit with a herd of Arabian horses. I was able to bring Lillian with me and on this day she was able to hop on the back of one of the horses and ride, alongside my trusted horse friend Kelly of course. We all sat around and enjoyed a picnic lunch in the field, complete with all my favorites berries, smoothies and cheesecake! I was surrounded by green grass, blue skies, my daughter and friends that care about not only my health and well-being but about ME too. ALS is not a disease you should fight alone and hospice takes all of the feelings of being alone away.

Overall, I am forever in debt to Four Seasons for giving me the most compassionate, caring team to support, navigate and advocate for me.



Fighting for a better Quality of Life

as shared by Kelly Caudle, Four Seasons Social Worker

Until I met Royce Cowan, my knowledge and experience with patients afflicted with ALS had been limited to only two other patients. I thought I had a good idea of the scope of the disease; I was wrong. I have been enlightened by Royce. And... I am truly grateful for his mentoring.

The day I met Royce, I noticed three things in the first five minutes after walking into his room. I noticed a big part of his heart was with his daughter, Lillian, whose photos and artwork decorated the room. I picked up on how much Royce was an outdoorsman and a lover of nature. Beautiful photographs that reflect his passions, taken by Royce and enlarged to poster size images, adorned the walls. The third thing I sensed was his wariness. I had made the visit with a colleague; Royce barely made eye contact and was reluctant to interact.

I immediately sensed what could be transpiring in his head – distrust or maybe disappointment. I had read his chart and had learned some of his history through other clinicians. I knew that multiple caregivers had come in and out of his life. I knew of some of the heart breaks he had endured. I understood the great challenges of the care he was receiving in a facility that was understaffed. I tried to tell myself that I recognized the gravity of his situation, but that was ignorance on my part. How could I possibly? The one thing I did know for certain was that I was not going to let Royce down – I was going to fight for a better quality of life.

It took multiple visits before Royce began to open up and really express himself to me. I got a smile on the fourth or fifth visit. There is nothing like a

Royce Cowan smile to put a jump on your heart and a skip in your step! The whole Four Seasons team began exchanging stories of “I got Royce to smile today!” and it was definitely a certain kind of friendly competition.



Knowing that Royce had a blog, I indulged my curiosity and spent an hour reading through it. I read about the trials and tribulations of ALS, remembrances of Royce's youth and adult life prior to his disease, and articles he had written to educate others on ALS. I was amazed that this guy had lost so much yet was still willing to reach out to others and give so much back. I don't know if I personally would be so gracious. I might just be angry if this happened to me. My motivation to help Royce maintain a more peaceful existence just multiplied – I was on a mission!

It was no secret that Royce was unhappy in his environment. The facility was unable to provide

the care he needed and deserved. Our team had multiple meetings with staff to advocate for him in hopes of more effective care. Royce was continually left in his bed for hours when he so desperately wanted to get up like many of us do in the mornings; there were times he did not get up until 2:00PM. His medications were not being given at the designated times; they sometimes were not administered at all. He would miss meals because no one was available to feed him. Our team continually threw around ideas to try and make his life better. Amanda, a Four Seasons CNA who is truly an amazing and dedicated caregiver, increased her visits with Royce to four times a week. A volunteer was trained to come feed Royce once a week. I began to make weekly visits to offer my support and presence.

Finally, Royce gave me the green light to look for a new facility, yet this was an arduous process. I began “Operation Royce” by accompanying him to visit selected facilities. After many months of phone calls and personal visits by me, meeting with staff and pleading my case with the “higher ups” of multiple facilities, being told “NO” time after time, I felt depleted and defeated. In desperation, I reached out one more time to one last place. This time I was told, “Kelly, I have a room”. I immediately broke out in tears. Royce was moved from a one-star facility to a five-star facility.

In the end, I didn't feel like a hero. I felt like I had done as exactly as I should have in my role as social worker. This is the mission of Four Seasons. You strive to make patients' and caregivers' lives better. That should always be the goal. The best reward for the sweat and tears that went into improving Royce's life... Can you guess? That one-in-a-million smile!

Volunteer Spotlight

as shared by Kristina Israel, Volunteer and Wellness Coordinator

Howard Carl, Jr. began volunteering with Four Seasons in 1994 – starting at the Elizabeth House during its first years of operation. After three years at EH, he began visiting hospice patients in the home care and skilled nursing settings.

When asked about his motivations to volunteer, Howard recalls his profession as head of a trust in New Bedford, Mass. “I was encouraged to go out into the community and get involved, so I joined the boards of many different organizations. At one point, it felt like I was on every board in town!” He continues, “After I retired I wanted to get off the boards and into the trenches. That’s when I got involved in Hospice.”

In addition to serving Hospice patients and families, Howard also volunteers as a Faith Community Representative with the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Hendersonville. As their Faith Rep, Howard submits items for Four Seasons to go in the monthly newsletter at his church, and has arranged for speaking engagements. “It’s a small congregation, mostly older people... a good number have had experience with hospice. People know me, and they know I’m involved with Four Seasons.”

Is there a connection between Howard’s faith and his volunteer service? Emphatically, yes; he recalls the second commandment of Jesus in his answer:

“My belief is that, in this respect, God tells us to love one another.... You do that by being active in some way, by taking care of people.

“We are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves, and that is what we are doing when we volunteer.”



Employee Spotlights

Jill Rosenberg, *Compassionate Home Care Director*

I've had the great honor of experiencing two very rewarding careers in my life. Two of the most trusted professions, two of the most respected: Education and Nursing. After college, I was a teacher in the public school system until deciding midlife to continue my education and become an RN. Upon graduation, I worked in Oncology and then hospice for over 20 years before taking on my recent role as the Director at Compassionate Home Care.



The best part about my job is the team that I work side by side with. Our care team collaborates efforts to allow people to stay in their own homes and live independently for as long as possible. I love being part of our mission: *Positively Impacting Lives*.

Here are a few FAQs I want to share with you:

What types of care does CHC provide?

Individualized care plans, Personal care, Companionship, Housekeeping, Meal prep, and Transportation. At Compassionate Home Care we allow loved ones to be away with confidence.

Where does CHC provide care in Western North Carolina?
Henderson, Transylvania, Buncombe, and Polk counties.

How are Home Care services paid for?
Private Pay, Long Term Insurance, Veteran's Administration

Is there a minimum or maximum amount of time I can acquire assistance in the home through CHC?

We are able to provide you or your loved one care in your home for as little as an hour a day to as much as 5 to 7 days a week!

Sarah Leatham, *Four Seasons Community Relations*

Originally from the Midwest, I grew up coming to the mountains of WNC to attend summer camp. Like so many, I fell in love with the area and after college at Florida State University and seven years in Chicago, the move to Flat Rock finally allowed me to call Henderson County home. My role at Four Seasons is to help facilitate the conversation in our community, on both an individual basis as well as in a group setting, that Four Seasons is here to support you with a care continuum of services such as care navigation, home care, palliative care, hospice care and bereavement.



What I enjoy most about my new career is educating, assisting and supporting my community. It is both a blessing and empowering to work at an everchanging organization with such a strong emphasis on living out their mission, vision and values. It is also an honor to represent both Four Seasons and Compassionate Home Care brand in Western North Carolina. The "Four Seasons difference" is based on strong relationships built, sustained and nurtured with individuals for when they need us and for when their needs change. We are a part of the journey and welcome becoming part of the family. Whether it is with a co-worker or a client, the relationship must be built on trust, integrity and mutual respect.

If I could tell you one thing about Compassionate Home Care it would be how freeing it is to actively select what you desire to invest your time in doing, while letting someone else take care of the things you no longer wish to do. Scheduling may be for as short as an hour, or round the clock, providing peace of mind to clients and their family members.

The most important aspect for someone to understand about palliative and hospice care are how both service lines honor the wishes of our patients first and foremost. I would like more people to become educated earlier in their journey to fully understand how Four Seasons can play a pivotal role in their decision-making process and navigation of their care needs.



Community Events & Education

OCTOBER • 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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NOVEMBER • 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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DECEMBER • 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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31						

OCTOBER

- 10 12-1pm @ Park Ridge Health, Duke Conference Room: Long Term Care Insurance with Nathan Garnett
- 19 8am-4:30pm @ Greatrex Place Board Room: Volunteer Recruitment Open House
- 30 12:30-4:30pm @ Greatrex Place: Volunteer Training & Orientation

NOVEMBER

- 2 8-5pm @ Greatrex Place: Patient & Family Support Training
- 6 12-1pm @ Park Ridge Health, Duke Conference Room: Hope Thru the Holidays with Lara McKinnis & Bereavement Team
- 9 6-7pm @ Park Ridge Laurel Park: A to Z – Long Term Care Planning with Cindy Shirmer
- 10 5:30pm @ Asheville Community Theatre: *Being Mortal* Film Screening and Panel Discussion

DECEMBER

- 1 5:30pm @ First Citizens Bank Plaza Main Street/Hendersonville 27th Annual Tree of Lights Celebration
- 2 10:15am @ Main Street/Hendersonville Join Us to Walk in the Hendersonville Christmas Parade

Call 828-692-6178
for additional information
about these events.



27th Annual Tree of Lights Celebration
Friday, December 1, 2017 @ 5:30pm

Proceeds of luminary sales support hospice care and grief counseling.

Remember your loved ones at the 27th Annual Four Seasons Tree of Lights Memorial Service held at the First Citizens Bank plaza in downtown Hendersonville.

During the memorial service, visit the many lovely luminaries that have been purchased in memory of loved ones who have died. Please join us for hot apple cider, homemade cookies, live music and lots of opportunity for catching up with old friends and making new ones.

Tree of Lights 2017 is sponsored by First Citizens Bank and Pardee Hospital. Free event parking provided by First Citizens Bank at 539 N Main Street.

Order Luminaries at www.TreeOfLights.com

For more information, please call (828) 513-2440.