



# BRANCHES

from the

# WILLOW TREE

Volume 3, No 1

Spring, 2010

## Message from Christine



Christine Coll RN,BS  
Administrator

Spring is a welcome visitor at Willow Tree Hospice. The hard winter days made for rough going for our staff who routinely traverse the county in order to care for their patients and families. With their characteristic dedication and “can do” attitudes, the staff insured that care was provided, supplies were delivered and that patients could count on their needs being met. This seems like the perfect forum to thank all the Willow Tree staff for their professionalism and reliability during the snowiest winter in recent history.

Now that spring is officially here, we are busier than ever. Our census has doubled over the past few months and we have hired additional staff who are ready to begin orientation. Among the new additions are 3 Hospice aides, a Social Worker and a Registered Nurse. We will continue to serve our Community and all of us at Willow Tree would like to thank all of you who support us every day. Your words of encouragement, your volunteer efforts, and the many other ways you let us know you care are inspiring and very much appreciated.

On May 19, 2010, Willow Tree Hospice is partnering with Maris Grove, a Retirement Community located in Glen Mills, PA, as well as with Senior Helpers, a non medical home care agency to host an event for children of aging parents. This event will be held from 9a.m. to 11a.m at Maris Grove and will feature a panel discussion hosted by ten geriatric health care specialists from the area. This event is a perfect opportunity for the community to ask questions and to learn about the many resources available to the elderly in Chester County. Admission is free and a continental breakfast will be served. Please call me at 610-869-2201 for more information.

For more information about Willow Tree Hospice  
contact 610-869-2201 or visit [www.willowtreehospice.com](http://www.willowtreehospice.com).

## Power of a Pet Therapy Visit

We can never underestimate what transpires between a patient and our pets. Although Darla is still in-training to be certified with Paws for People, it didn't stop the smiles and connection between Anne and this 5 month old mix. The bond between these two demonstrates the power of unspoken words and the love that transpires between pets and people.

When Darla stops by for a visit, it is as if time is standing still for Anne. Anne hugs her, gives her treats, then the two settle down for a quick nap together. Anne's cup runneth over from the attention and kisses that are bestowed on her. She feels better, happier and more relaxed during and after a therapy visit.





## A Day of Calming Care

Candles were burning, soft music was playing in the background and forty-two individuals received Healing Touch on our Day of Calming Care. In the Jenner's Pond Retirement Community's activity room, located in the Ruston building, a sanctuary of calming space was created to facilitate compassionate energy therapy sessions. The Jenner's Pond and Willow Tree staff, along with the residents, left the room with smiles on their faces and a sense of peace and calm that benefited them throughout the day.

Healing Touch uses gentle light or near-body touch to clear, balance, energize and support the human energy system. The six attending practitioners used their hands in a heart-centered and intentional way to support and facilitate physical, emotional, mental, spiritual health and self-healing. Some of the benefits of Healing Touch are pain and anxiety reduction, relief from stress and depression, strengthening the immune system, improved feeling of well-being, enhanced recovery from surgery and a deepened spiritual connection.

We would like to thank the Jenner's Pond community for their curiosity and adventurous spirit in experiencing this work. It is awesome how healing touch changes one's life....follow your hearts!!



## **The Willow Tree**

The willow tree has been an important symbol throughout history; its elegant, graceful foliage conveys soothing and melancholy reflections. It has been used historically to help someone reflect upon his or her life. People once wore the willow branch or put it under their pillow to help gain inner strength while grieving during a loss. Not only was it believed to help one to gain strength but it was also thought to give courage needed to express thoughts and feelings. The willow tree was also used medicinally to help reduce pain, similar to aspirin. It once symbolized joy and inspiration to some and quiet reflections to others.

## NEW EMPLOYEES



Beth Trout, CNA



Jackie Lauer, CNA



Victoria Caldwell, CNA



Lori Shields, LGSW



Amy Newman, RN

## **Oh, I'm just a Volunteer**

Melinda Chichester, Director of Volunteer Services

I have been a professional Volunteer for over 20 years and until recently these were the words that came bubbling from my mouth when people asked me what I did: "Oh, I'm just a volunteer". But recently, when I received an article from a valued co-worker, I vowed that those words would never pass my lips again. Here are some interesting facts....

"U. S. Government data for 2008 shows that 61.8 million Americans or 26.4% of the adult population contributed 8 billion hours of volunteer service worth \$162 billion. Much harder to calculate is the impact of community service on civic life, except when one tries to imagine what life would be like without the hundreds of nonprofit organizations, foundations, faith-based charities and service clubs.

Community service is contagious when we take pride in what we do. Serving helps you connect with other people; it encourages you to learn things you didn't know; you feel needed, depended upon and valuable. Sometimes it opens doors to a new career, friends or a mate.

What ever you have to bring to the table, there is a right match for you, and a world that badly needs your time and care."

\*2young2retire: The Blog

At Willow Tree Hospice our volunteers range from 11 to 88 years of age and each one of them contributes their own unique talents. They have a calling to offer Community Service, Pet Therapy visits, Healing Touch sessions, assist with Administrative projects or to sit quietly with our dying patients. These volunteers bring unique gifts and talents with no expectation of anything in return. We truly value their contributions.

## **Stay Positive, Productive During Stressful Times**

*Do you experience times when daily stress gets to be more than you can handle?*

While those who contribute their time to worthy causes are not immune to stress, you may know from experience that volunteer activities can actually reduce the tension of daily life.

Becoming involved in activities unrelated to our daily jobs can not only calm the spirit, they can invigorate us.

Here are some additional ways to diminish stress:

- Exercise rigorously – at least 30 minutes a day – and get sufficient sleep.
- Spend time planning for something that's fun – a weekend getaway, a party.
- Get your mind off your worries: Read a book. Take up a hobby.
- Don't forget to savor and celebrate your accomplishments. Treat yourself.
- Make a conscious, daily effort to think and act positively.
- Recognize the humor that exists in everyday experiences. Smile and laugh.
- Determine ways to make a difficult or boring job fun.
- Continue to do good deeds – that's an automatic cure!

Although a certain amount of stress in our lives can actually be healthy, you can minimize daily tension by staying focused on these strategies.

\*Volunteer Management Report – February 2010

*Whenever you see someone  
without a smile.....  
Give them one of yours.*

## Chaplain Chat



Music is often called the language of God. Tiny babies dance to it, and people with dementia often remember the songs of their childhood. Music can flood us with memories, soothe us on our difficult days, cause us to tap our feet, bring a song to our lips and uplift our hearts.

Our chaplain program recognizes the importance of music and Willow Tree provides CD players and CDs to all of our patients who request them. Music does what we cannot do; it stays with our patients 24/7, bringing comfort and peace that is so important at this time of life.

Rev. Gayle Reuter  
Director, Chaplain Services

## Eyes and Ears – Our Hospice Aides

Willow Tree Hospice's Aides have a wide range of responsibilities. They carry out the mission, goals and objectives of Willow Tree Hospice as they provide care to our patients. The Aides assist patients with bathing, dressing and other activities of daily living; our hospice aides also observe patient conditions and report back to the registered nurse.

Their work duties include, but are not limited to, transferring patients from bed to chair, assisting with some medical procedures and monitoring food and fluid intake. Hospice Aides are the "eyes and ears" of the nurse. They excel in the care of terminal patients and are able to stay calm in stressful situations.

The Hospice Aide insures that the rights of the patients are always protected; including the right of privacy, their right to accept or reject care, and the right to be included in their health care planning.

The responsibilities of the Hospice Aides are enormous and challenging. These Care Givers are profoundly dedicated to our organization and to the patients and families they serve. Every day they demonstrate our guiding principles of *Integrity, Reliability and Compassion*.

## Staff Education and Self Care Day

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, Willow Tree Hospice Aides spent a relaxing and productive day in the multipurpose room at Jenner's Pond. The focus of the mini retreat was to provide the hospice aides with mandatory education but as importantly, to provide them with massage and healing touch therapies. The hospice aides give generously of themselves every day as they care for the personal needs of our hospice patients. We want to make sure that these wonderful women remember to nourish and replenish themselves on a routine basis. To this end, "caring for the caregiver" education was presented throughout the day as well.

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