

# Story lines

A bi-monthly publication from  
AuthoraCare Collective

January/February 2023

## From Friends to Family

### 60-Year Friendship Endures Illness, Devastating Hurricane

By Charity Apple

**T**o Elizabeth “Betty” Androshick, Leona E. Ratomski was more than her best friend; she was family.

“I was her ‘bonus’ sister,” Androshick said.

The two attended the same high school and lived in the same neighborhood. Ratomski never married nor had children.

“She was a quiet, sweet woman. She taught us Polish carols. And she loved the Philadelphia Eagles – she knew the players and what positions they played. Her brother was assistant coach at our high school for several years,” she said.

Androshick held a party with roses, tea, and cake for Ratomski’s 90th birthday in May 2022.

“She treated my family as her own,” Androshick said. “She was very kind. She would always give cards and lottery tickets for birthdays.”

As Ratomski’s health began to fail, Androshick brought her friend of more than 60 years from Shenandoah, Pa., to Englewood, Fla. to receive home hospice care.

Then Hurricane Ian hit the Florida coast and the women were evacuated to an Airbnb.



*Betty Androshick and the late Leona Ratomski were more than friends – they were family. Front row (from left to right): Matt Barusic and Leona Ratomski. Back row (from left to right): Marisa Barusic; Betty Androshick; and Pete Barusic. [Photo submitted]*

Androshick’s daughter, Marisa, and son-in-law, Pete Barusic of Greensboro, frantically followed the storm coverage. Pete made the trip to Florida with a U-Haul to retrieve salvageable items and the women would fly back to Greensboro with Marisa.

“Every street looked like a war zone,” Androshick said. “The beds and carpets were soaked. Everything, including all the clothes in our closets, were destroyed.”

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) declared the house a total loss.

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Charity Apple, Linda Ann Fitts, Theresa Hancock,  
Paul Russ, Cindy Skinner

# Community Commitment

## Empowering Patients to Live on Their Terms

Welcome to a New Year with new opportunities.

When many people think of hospice, they think of endings. However, I think of possibilities.

I am honored to be part of an organization that creates opportunities for emotional healing and closure during sacred times. I am grateful to serve a mission that empowers individuals to shape and guide their care journey on their terms.



Kristen Yntema

We offer care wherever people live and in our Hospice Home and Beacon Place facilities. Each day, our team is walking alongside nearly 700 individuals, each on their own hospice journey with their own story.

I am proud that we can care for the whole person, meeting their individual needs. Additionally, we support their loved ones: those who may eventually be left behind.

As a community-based organization, we also respond to the unique needs of the areas we serve.

With tremendous community support, we provide care for those with newly diagnosed illnesses and chronic conditions. We serve medically fragile children and those young people coping with illness and loss. Our grief programs extend well beyond hospice families, providing support for many types of loss, some expected and some of which is sudden and traumatic. For example, we offer specialized groups for loss due to overdose, suicide, and even violence.

These expanded services are in service to our commitment to our community. We do not seek to profit from the patients we care for. Instead, we invest our resources to impact lives that can benefit from our expertise in new and innovated ways.

Today, there are 18 hospice providers serving our community. Some are for-profit and some, like us, are nonprofit.

As consumers have choices, it is ever more important that AuthoraCare remains committed to a diverse array of quality services. Our responses to community need in the form of robust grief support, Kids Path, and palliative services, are not offered by each of our competitors. Nor does every other program offer in-patient care like we have at Beacon Place and the Hospice Home. These programs elevate us as a choice. Simply put, not all hospice programs are alike.

# Community Commitment

(cont. from pg 2)

Quality, breadth of services, and community commitment are woven into the fabric of AuthoraCare. For nearly 40 years, we have served the community with compassionate commitment. And each of these programs create the possibility for someone to be empowered to live life on their terms.

I am grateful for your support. And thank you for being an ambassador of our work.

*Kristen Wither Yntema*

**Kristen Wither Yntema, MBA, MHSA**  
President and CEO, AuthoraCare Collective

## From Friends to Family

(cont. from cover)

Their community was without water for seven days. Pete and Marisa brought water and snacks, which they shared with the neighborhood.

The women were housed in three different Airbnbs following the hurricane. While in an Airbnb in Orlando, Androshick fell and fractured her hip. So Ratomski, who had never flown on an airplane before, boarded a flight to Greensboro with Marisa.

"There's a photo of her smiling on the plane," she said.

Androshick, a retired Home Health and Ostomy Nurse, and Ratomski, a former Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), were familiar with hospice and palliative care. Androshick's first husband and parents received hospice care.

The family was thankful that Ratomski would be cared for at the Hospice Home in Burlington.

"Pete greeted her at the Hospice Home when she was admitted," she said.

Due to Androshick's injury and a COVID-19 diagnosis on Nov. 18, she only visited Ratomski once before her death on Nov. 27.

"Whenever we would say goodbye, we would say 'I love you' in Polish. We were able to do that one last time – on the video screen," she said.

Androshick misses her friend but is thankful that "she enjoyed one good year with us."



*Betty Androshick, left, and the late Leona Ratomski, have been friends for 60 years. [Photo submitted]*

“Whenever we would say goodbye, we would say ‘I love you’ in Polish. We were able to do that one last time – on the video screen.”

- Betty Androshick



# Spiritual Care for All

## AuthoraCare's Chaplains Support Patients, Families & Staff

By Charity Apple

"What soothes your soul?"

It's a question Chaplain Gail Smith often asks AuthoraCare Collective patients.

"What soothes someone's soul is what really matters to them," Smith said. "That could be the outdoors, music, or their family. It's a completely individualized response."

At AuthoraCare, chaplains provide expert care for mind, body, and spirit.

"We meet people where they are," she said. "We address their fears and concerns."

Chaplains provide spiritual counseling for those with religious affiliations as well as those who identify as agnostic, atheist, or no identifier at all. On any given day, 84% to 85% of our hospice patients seek spiritual support.

"As chaplains, we provide care that is equitable and respectful of all people," said Heidi Dechow, Director of Chaplaincy.

One of the aspects that Smith enjoys most about being a chaplain at AuthoraCare is not only being there for patients and families during the really difficult times, but being there for the celebrations, too.

Elmo Cobb recently celebrated his 95th birthday and his team provided balloons.

"We discovered later that he had never received balloons," Smith said. "It was so meaningful for us, as a team, to be able to do that for him."

A couple had an anniversary and the team provided them with two red roses.



*Chaplain Evan Sieges performs a Veterans Pinning Ceremony in honor of Veterans Day at Abbotswood at Irving Park in 2021. [Charity Apple]*

"We're there to help them live each day to the best of their ability," she added. "I love their stories."

Smith is one of 16 chaplains serving patients and families at AuthoraCare. Since June 2022, all newly hired chaplains are required to obtain the status of board certification within the first two years of being hired.

"We anticipate an additional one to two chaplains will achieve the status of board certification over the next year," Dechow said.

Becoming board certified is a multiyear commitment, said Chaplain Tagore Jenkins.

"You participate in a yearlong clinical chaplain residency after completing a clinical internship. This is after earning Bachelor's, and Master's degrees," he said. "Fifty hours of continuing education is required annually. Every five years, a chaplain must complete a peer review. It really makes a difference in the quality of chaplaincy."

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# Spiritual Care for All

(cont. from pg 4)

Jenkins was a U.S. Navy Chaplain who did a one-year tour with the U.S. Marine Corps (the Marines don't have their own chaplains). He also served as Lead Chaplain with the Veterans Administration in Ann Arbor, Mich., until his retirement in 2015.

"As chaplains, we're trained to listen to people and to be objective," he said. "We have to be present and provide comforting and compassionate care."

As a U.S. Navy Chaplain, Jenkins said there are three things he learned about chaplaincy that he also has witnessed at AuthoraCare:

1. Provide for your own.
2. Facilitate for others.
3. Care for all.

"AuthoraCare really cares about our patients and families, but the organization cares about employees, too," he said. "Our director, Heidi Dechow, is a chaplain and she knows how important it is to support not only those we serve, but to take care of our staff, too. Heidi, along with other leaders here, want us to succeed."



*From left to right: Tina Benson, IPU RN, and Chaplain Carolyn Burrus demonstrate a Blessing of the Hands ceremony inside the Hospice Home in May 2021. [Charity Apple]*

*Elmo Cobb received balloons for his 95th birthday. Chaplain Gail Smith and her team delivered the balloons and Cobb said it was the first time he had ever received balloons. [Gail Smith]*





# A Campaign for Comfort & Care

## Your Support Makes an Impact

By Theresa Hancock and Cindy Skinner

Patients and families deserve the comfort of home. While state-of-the-art when built, our in-patient facilities need updating. There have been many advances in facility and equipment design, and the spaces require a refresh.

We will soon begin renovations of the hospice in-patient units – Beacon Place in Greensboro and the Hospice Home in Burlington. As stewards of these wonderful community resources, we want to maintain the properties for future generations. Most importantly, we want them to provide the greatest comfort and care possible for patients and families.

Therefore, the AuthoraCare Foundation is embarking on a campaign to raise \$360,000 in capital support for the upfit of Beacon Place and the Hospice Home. Combined, there are 36 patient rooms, and each room needs to be updated. In addition to flooring and wall coverings, each patient room will be updated with state-of-the-art smart beds, lift chairs, sleep chairs for guests, dressers, and end tables. The beds will provide safe and comfortable rest while utilizing technology to improve care delivery.

Donors can support the campaign at any level but are encouraged to make an impact at the following suggested levels:

- \$50,000 could renovate a wing of five patient rooms
- \$25,000 could provide four “smart beds”
- \$10,000 could upfit one patient room
- \$5,000 could furnish a patient room with end tables, a dresser and lift chair
- \$2,500 could provide a comfortable sleep chair for a guest
- \$1,000 could freshen the patient’s view with new artwork and window coverings



*Each patient room at Beacon Place and Hospice Home will be updated with Centrella Smart + Beds. [Charity Apple]*



*The Centrella Smart + Bed is one of the items donors can help contribute funds toward during the Comfort & Care campaign. Carla Alston, CNA Team Leader at the Hospice Home, is shown with the bed. [Charity Apple]*

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# A Campaign for Comfort & Care

(cont. from pg 6)

The priority at both Beacon Place and Hospice Home has always been to ensure all patient rooms were single occupancy and furnished to resemble a home-like setting. Beacon Place residents enjoy private patios, and the facility is surrounded by healing gardens, making it truly feel like home. Hospice Home is fondly known as the house that love built.

Updating the beds and furnishings will provide numerous benefits to the clinical staff. The state-of-the-art beds will be a comfort to each patient and the height of the bed is adjustable for the clinical staff to better care for the patient. The beds will provide the capability to weigh the patients which will assist with knowing when a patient's health is deteriorating. Bed alarms will increase patient safety by sounding an alarm when activated. These updates will enhance the caregiving experience for our staff by protecting their physical stamina, avoiding injury, and improving their overall work experience.

We also understand that a family's experience with a loved one's serious illness and eventual end of life is a difficult journey. Creating the most homelike and comfortable atmosphere can ease the complex feelings experienced throughout that journey.

Our goal is always to help make a patient's remaining time be more meaningful, dignified, and comfortable. While we cannot add days to life, we can add life to whatever days remain.

If you are interested in supporting the Comfort & Care campaign, please contact one of our Public Support Coordinators - Theresa Hancock [Theresa.hancock@authoracare.org](mailto:Theresa.hancock@authoracare.org) or Cindy Skinner [cindy.skinner@authoracare.org](mailto:cindy.skinner@authoracare.org).



Carla Alston, CNA Team Leader at the Hospice Home, receives training on the Centrella Smart + Bed. [Charity Apple]



16<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL

Corks for Kids Path

Elm & Bain

620 South Elm Street  
Greensboro, NC

Friday

June 16

7-10:30 p.m.

Greensboro's Premier  
Wine Tasting Event

[corksforkidspath.org](https://corksforkidspath.org)

#corks2023

# Measuring Up

## Comparing Hospice Programs Easier for Consumers

By Paul Russ

Providing expert hospice care has been our top priority for more than 40 years. Today, as AuthoraCare Collective, this commitment to quality is reflected in [our mission and Core Promises to those in our care](#).

“Expert care is not just a tagline,” said Merrill Seyler, RN, BSN, MHA, Vice President of Quality and Compliance. “It is our reason for existing; to provide personalized support for mind, body, and spirit to those facing life’s greatest challenge and their loved ones.”

While measuring our quality with objective data offers insight to help continually improve services, excellence in care has also become a business imperative.

“Patients can choose from more than 18 hospice providers that serve our community. Working to offer the best care possible is essential given the competitive landscape hospices are in now,” Seyler said.

Prior to August 2022, quality information about hospice programs wasn’t publicly available. Consumers had little information to compare one hospice to another when making the difficult decision to forego aggressive, curative treatments and elect hospice care.

Today, consumers can go to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) website and review quality scores and the experience of care provided by any hospice program. Additionally, the consumer can see how long a hospice provider has been in business and whether they are for-profit or nonprofit. The free tool is called Care Compare and can be found at [medicare.gov/care-compare](https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare). Individuals can even do a side-by-side comparison of the hospices in their area.



There are four data points that consumers can review and compare:

1. **Experience of care:** This is a 40-question survey that the patient’s caregiver completes around three months after their loved one dies. The survey asks questions regarding hospice communication, timeliness of care, support, respect of the patient, pain and symptom management, and training provided to the family member. The caregiver can also provide an overall rating and their likelihood to recommend the hospice. Previously, CMS simply provided the raw scores for these categories; now CMS uses star rating to make it easier for the consumer to interpret the experience of care results.





## Measuring Up

(cont. from pg 8)

2. **Hospice Item Set (HIS)** is the second data point available on the CMS website. This captures in a single measure the proportion of patients for whom the hospice performed all seven care processes. The care processes include:
  - a. Beliefs/Values Addressed (if desired by the patient)
  - b. Treatment Preferences
  - c. Pain Screening
  - d. Pain Assessment
  - e. Dyspnea (shortness of breath) Treatment
  - f. Dyspnea Screening
  - g. Patients Treated with an Opioid who are Given a Bowel Regimen
3. The third quality metric is called the **Hospice Care Index**. The Hospice Care Index (HCI) captures care processes occurring throughout the hospice stay, between admission and discharge. The HCI is a single score based on 10 indicators that Medicare calculated from claims data. The index design of the HCI simultaneously monitors all 10 indicators. Collectively these indicators represent different aspects of hospice service and thereby characterize hospices comprehensively, rather than on just a single care dimension. Each indicator equally affects the single HCI score, reflecting the equal importance of each aspect of care delivered from admission to discharge. Examples include gaps in nursing visits greater than seven days, and number of minutes a nurse spends in the patient's home during the week and on weekends.
4. The final quality metric that CMS captures and shares publicly is titled: **Hospice Visits Last Days of Life (HVLDDL)**. The HVLDDL measures the visits made by hospice staff at the end of life. This measure is constructed from Medicare hospice claims records. It indicates the hospice provider's proportion of patients who have received in-person visits from a registered nurse or medical social worker on at least two out of the final three days of the patient's life.

"AuthoraCare achieved four out of five Stars on the Experience of Care survey," Seyler said.

This exceeds or matches most of the competitors in our market. For the Hospice Item Set, AuthoraCare scored 98%, exceeding both the state and national averages.

"We are also above state and national benchmarks for the Hospice Care Index, achieving a perfect 10/10," Seyler said.

"Focusing on quality and having data like this is a real gift."

"Ultimately, we want to provide the best care we can. So, scores that aren't as high as we like are opportunities to focus our energy. For example, we have an opportunity to improve on the final measure: Hospice Visits Last Days of Life," she said.

For this measure, AuthoraCare beat the national average by over 13 points but only matched the state average, coming in at 63.7%. A quality improvement initiative was launched to address the issue and the multidisciplinary team created a tool based on patient data and trends.

When the tool scores at a specific threshold, an email is generated that alerts the care team to increase visit frequency.

"We piloted the tool last year and then launched throughout the organization this fall, and our HVLDDL performance in the month of December grew to 73%," Seyler said. "This means we are visiting more patients in their final days of life and providing them with our expert care when they need it most."

If you are searching the [medicare.gov/care-compare](https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare) site, we are currently listed as Hospice and Palliative Care of Greensboro, but that information is in the process of being updated to AuthoraCare Collective.

# Light Up A Life

## Held In-Person on Dec. 4

By Charity Apple

**L**ight Up A Life was held in-person, for the first time in two years, on Dec. 4 at First Lutheran Church, 3600 W. Friendly Ave., Greensboro.

The service also was livestreamed on Facebook and the recording can be found on our website: [authoracare.org/light](https://authoracare.org/light).

The Rev. Dr. Jill Duffield, Senior Pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, gave a heartfelt program about the importance of “not being alone in one’s grief.”

Those in attendance, as well as those at home, were invited to light their candles and say the name of their loved ones out loud.

The service was part of the 2022 Light Up A Life campaign, which raised \$84,575 for AuthoraCare Collective.

Donors could contribute in honor or memory of someone through Dec. 31. Through contributions, a symbolic light was placed on one of two Trees of Remembrance located at 914 Chapel Hill Rd. in Burlington; and Kontoor Brands, 400 N. Elm St., Greensboro.



*Tree of Remembrance at Hospice Home, 918 Chapel Hill Rd., Burlington. [Charity Apple]*



*Tree of Remembrance at Kontoor Brands, 400 N. Elm St., Greensboro. [Paul Russ]*

A \$10 minimum was suggested, and the average gift was \$82.24. Those who gave gifts through Nov. 29 had the name of their loved ones listed in the program, which can also be found at [authoracare.org/light](https://authoracare.org/light).

All donors and honorees received a Light Up A Life notification card.

Diane Marks, Resource Development Manager, said that 1,004 cards were sent to donors and 1,573 cards notified loved ones of tributes, totaling 2,577 cards mailed out by volunteers and staff members between October and the end of the year.

“There are friends and family members that give annual gifts, which speaks to the quality of our care,” Marks said. “It is overwhelming to see the generosity of folks, especially during the holidays.”



*The Rev. Dr. Jill Duffield offered Words of Reflection. [Charity Apple]*

# Honor Loved Ones Through Bricks, Engravings

By Charity Apple

Commemorative bricks and courtyard engravings honor loved ones on the Greensboro and Burlington campuses, respectively.

For the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic, a Brick Dedication Ceremony took place on Nov. 5 at the Lusk Center in Greensboro. Chaplain John Connor delivered the message and Neill Clegg provided music.

"The donor specifies where the brick will be installed," said Diane Marks, Resource Development Manager. "And we do our best to honor that request."

LaShanda Adams, RN at Beacon Place, honored her mother, the late DeAnna Adams, a Beacon Place CNA, Hospice Aide, with a brick dedication this year.

"We decided to do this in her honor because of what AuthoraCare and Beacon Place meant to her. My mother embodied everything it meant to be a caregiver at Beacon Place and when she finally landed a position here (after trying for quite some time), she was home. Her co-workers were family to her and have been since her passing," LaShanda Adams said.

"Even after being diagnosed with Stage IV cancer, my mother continued to come to work every day that she physically could. She put the pain of her condition and the depression from her prognosis aside to provide exceptional care to others nearing death. She was truly my hero. Most importantly, she was essential, and I refuse to let her be forgotten. That is what this brick dedication symbolizes to me,"

Orders for bricks are being accepted now through June 30 and the bricks will be installed in the fall of this year.

Minimum donation is \$150 per brick, and they can be placed at either Beacon Place or Kids Path in Greensboro. Each brick can have a maximum of three lines and 20 characters, which includes spaces, per line. A form is available online at [authoracare.org/give/commemorative-bricks](https://authoracare.org/give/commemorative-bricks).



Neill Clegg (right), who provided music for the Brick Dedication Ceremony on Nov. 5, is shown with his wife, Victoria. [Linda Ann Fitts]



Chaplain John Connor delivered the Brick Dedication Ceremony at the Lusk Center on Nov. 5. [Linda Ann Fitts]

For more information, email [contact@authoracare.org](mailto:contact@authoracare.org) or call Diane Marks at 336-579-3824 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

Courtyard engravings are a lasting tribute to loved ones on the Burlington campus and can be made by making a minimum donation of \$150. Thirty characters per line are allowed and each engraving is etched zinc. A form is available online at [authoracare.org/give/courtyard-engravings](https://authoracare.org/give/courtyard-engravings).

For more details, email [contact@authoracare.org](mailto:contact@authoracare.org) or call Alanna Cousin at 336-532-0146 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.



## Mimi Toomey Joins AuthoraCare's Board of Directors

AuthoraCare Collective welcomes Mary Clare "Mimi" Toomey to serve as a Director of the 2022-2023 Board of Directors.

Toomey is Deputy Group Director, Office of Communications, Integrated Communications Management Staff at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in Washington, D.C.

She became aware of the Board of Directors position through stakeholders at the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) who suggested that AuthoraCare Collective President/CEO Kristen Yntema reach out.

"I have seen firsthand, on both a personal level and a professional level, impacts hospice care makes for individuals, their families, and friends. It is critical now, more than ever, to ensure the field remains strong while keeping within the mission of the founders of the Hospice movement," Toomey said.

She has worked at CMS for eight years and prior to her current position was Deputy Director of the Policy and Programs Group; she oversaw the

Policy and Programs Group within the CMS Innovation Center, established under the Affordable Care Act. Prior to CMS, Mimi worked as a policy advisor at the Administration on Aging and at the local level providing community based long-term services and supports.



Mary Clare "Mimi" Toomey

Toomey is originally from Chicago and now resides in Alexandria, Va., where she takes advantage of every opportunity the D.C. area provides. When she needs a break from the "noise" of D.C., she heads to the Maryland Eastern Shore where she has a little slice of paradise on the Chesapeake Bay.

## AuthoraCare Featured on TV News

AuthoraCare Collective's grief support services have been featured on local news stations in the last several months.

Ryan Mahler, Director of Adult Grief Support & Counseling, appeared on WGHP-FOX8's 4 p.m. newscast on Sept. 2 to talk about grief support offered at AuthoraCare. She was interviewed by anchor Natalie Wilson. Mahler also appeared on Jan. 11's 4 p.m. newscast opposite anchor Natalie Wilson to discuss AuthoraCare's upcoming grief workshops.

Risa Hanau, Clinical & Community Educator, was featured in a Zoom interview with WFMY-News2 anchor Lauren Coleman on Nov. 29 in a segment about grief and the holidays. Hanau also appeared on WGHP-FOX8's morning newscast with Brad Jones on Dec. 14 to talk about dealing with grief during the holidays.

Brad Jones, anchor at WGHP-FOX8 (left), poses for a photo with Risa Hanau, Clinical & Community Educator at AuthoraCare Collective, on Dec. 14. [Charity Apple]



Natalie Wilson, anchor at WGHP-FOX8 (left), poses for a photo with Ryan Mahler, Director of Grief Support and Counseling, on Jan. 11. Mahler also appeared in a segment on WGHP on Sept. 2. [Photo submitted]

# AUTHORACARE COLLECTIVE IN THE NEWS

## President/CEO Receives Two Recent Honors

Kristen Yntema, President/CEO of AuthoraCare Collective, received two honors recently.

She was named Vice-Chairwoman of Cone Health Foundation's Board of Directors and appointed to the Association for Home & Hospice Care of North Carolina's (AHC) Board of Directors.

The Cone Health Foundation is Guilford County's largest health-specific philanthropy.

"The Cone Health Foundation is an important organization for our community and has an amazing track record of making investments that result in better outcomes for our community. I am looking forward to continuing to learn from my counterparts on the board and from the amazing staff at the Cone Health Foundation," Yntema said.

The AHC-NC is a nonprofit trade association which represents home health and hospice providers throughout the state. AHC advocates for its members and the many patients they serve.

Devin Griffith, Chief Operating Officer, is immediate past chair.

Yntema is honored to be involved in both organizations.



*Kristen Yntema*  
*President/CEO of AuthoraCare Collective*



## Hospice League Golf Classic

**Alamance Country Club**  
2402 Pineway Dr.  
Burlington, NC

**Monday, May 8**  
**8 A.M. To 2:30 P.M.**

A four-person Captain's Choice Tournament benefiting the Hospice Home. For more information, contact Cindy Skinner, Public Support Coordinator, at 336.329.0313, ext. 7166.



# What's Happening?

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Living After the Loss of a Parent

*Lusk Center | 2501 Summit Ave. Greensboro, NC*

**6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Thursdays, Feb. 16 and 23; March 2, 9, 16, and 23**

**Deadline to register is Feb. 9.**

### Living After the Loss of a Spouse, Partner, or Constant Companion

*AuthoraCare Collective | 914 Chapel Hill Rd. Burlington, NC*

**6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Thursdays, Feb. 16 and 23; March 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30**

**Deadline to register is Feb. 9.**

### Living After the Loss of an Adult Child

*AuthoraCare Collective | 914 Chapel Hill Rd. Burlington, NC*

**6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays, March 7, 14, 21, 28; April 4, 11, 18, and 25**

**Deadline to register is Feb. 28.**

To register, call 336.621.5565 or email [griefsupport@authoracare.org](mailto:griefsupport@authoracare.org).

To register and receive information, contact 336.621.5565 or email [griefsupport@authoracare.org](mailto:griefsupport@authoracare.org).

Visit [authoracare.org](http://authoracare.org) for our most current calendar.

## ONGOING SUPPORT GROUPS

### Homicide Loss:

**6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. fourth Tuesdays of each month.**

*Facilitated by Lynley SanGeorge. If interested in participating, call 336.579.3799.*

### Overdose Loss:

**6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. second Tuesdays of each month.**

*Facilitated by Kimberly Grove. If interested in participating, call 336.478.2565.*

### Suicide Loss:

**6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. second Mondays of each month.**

*Facilitated by Jennifer Moore. If interested in participating, call 336.532.0112.*



# SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

## HEART FOR ART

### Former Kids Path Client Gives Back

By Charity Apple

Kids Path counseling made a lasting impact on Kylah Bates' life.

Following the deaths of her grandfather in 2018 and great-grandfather in 2019, Bates said expressive arts therapy helped her cope with the losses.

It was after her cousin's death, in September 2022, that Bates was inspired to give back to Kids Path through the Holiday Cheer program.

"I began reflecting on how all of them – my grandpa, great-grandpa, and cousin believed in giving back to their communities. My grandpa would drive the church van and pick up those who wanted to attend church but didn't have transportation. He was also a good cook and prepared meals for those in need. My great-grandpa would drive an ice cream truck around the neighborhood in the summer and give out snacks. And my cousin traveled out of the country, helping others in need."

"I decided to finish what they would want to continue doing, if they were still here," she said.

Bates set up her Kustom Kayz creations artwork in front of the Food Lion on East Market Street in Greensboro. From noon to 4 p.m. Mondays through Fridays (Dec. 1-20), except for one bitterly cold day, Bates sold her custom creations with all proceeds going to Kids Path. She also set up a jar at her father's workplace, for donations.

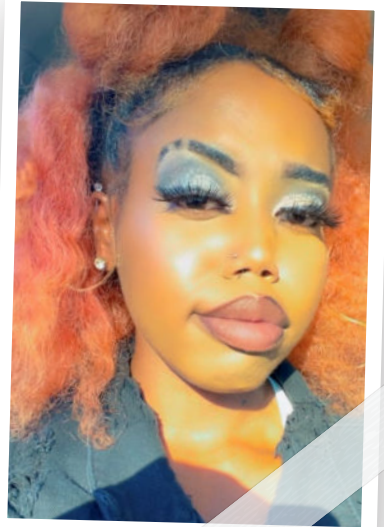
She collected \$300 from the sale of three paintings along with cash donations. The money was delivered to Kids Path on Dec. 20.

"Growing up with a single mother of three kids, I know how hard she tried," Bates said. "I want parents to be able to be proud to give their children gifts on Christmas Day."

Bates developed an interest in artwork in seventh grade. As a junior at North Carolina A&T State University, she continues to create art on shoes, jackets, and canvases. Her artwork can be found on Kustom Kayz on Instagram.

She is majoring in animal science. Following graduation, she plans to attend N.C. State University to major in veterinary medicine. But she doesn't want to give up on artwork completely, adding that she wouldn't mind pursuing a degree in art as well.

"Creating art – whether it's painting or doing hair – is therapeutic for me," she said. "It's a way to do something I love and open up without feeling awkward."



Kylah Bates [Photo submitted]



This is an example of the custom artwork that Kylah Bates creates. [Photo submitted]



Kylah Bates, a former Kids Path counseling client, contributed \$300 to this year's Holiday Cheer program. [Photo submitted]

## A DESIRE TO HELP

## Volunteers Assist with Holiday Cheer

By Charity Apple

Chance encounters brought Allison Nichols, Walter “Bird Dog” Riddle, and Doug Shambley together. A desire to help children in need has inspired them to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for Kids Path patients and families through the years.

The result of their teamwork could be seen on Dec. 19 as three trailers filled with toys, clothing, and other items were unloaded at AuthoraCare Collective’s Burlington campus for Holiday Cheer, a program that assists children with life-limiting illnesses and children coping with loss.



Walter “Bird Dog” Riddle

Members of the Orange County Sheriff’s Department, along with AuthoraCare staff, unloaded boxes, bikes, and toys into the building. More than 33 businesses and 11 individuals, along with several anonymous donors from Alamance and Orange counties, contributed.

Thanks to the generous donations of gift cards, gifts, and other items, 196 kids were served through Holiday Cheer this year.

Nichols and Shambley first met 11 years ago when Shambley purchased an ice cream shop in Mebane. That interaction led to years of friendship and raising funds.

Shambley learned about Kids Path after meeting Samantha “Sam” Harvell, a Kids Path patient. Harvell died on Nov. 15, 2008, at the age of 15.

Prior to her death, she requested that Shambley continue to raise funds to make a difference in other kids’ lives.

“I don’t have any kids,” he said. “These kids are my kids.”

Riddle helped Shambley with the first Tricky Ricky Ride in 2009, a motorcycle ride in memory of Shambley’s brother, who was cared for by what was then known as Hospice of Alamance-Caswell.

Since that time, Riddle has become synonymous with raising funds and collecting donations for Kids Path.

“Bird Dog has kept things going. He is steady, winning the race, and getting things done,” Shambley said. “While Allison’s organizational skills are just incredible.”

Nichols and her husband, Hank Clapper, along with her mother, Susan Nichols, and her aunt, Karen Sexton, not only sponsored a family but sorted and helped with packaging the items, which took an estimated 28 hours to do so. They carefully labeled each gift with the child’s name as well as caregivers’ names.

This year, Nichols posted information on social media, with a link to donate through Amazon, and was amazed at the responses. Boxes arrived at their home throughout the day and night.

“We couldn’t do it without the people in the community,” she said. “It is overwhelming in the best way.”



Allison Nichols



Doug Shambley



# SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

## Holiday Cheer 2022 Assisted 196 Children, 116 Adults

By Charity Apple

During the holidays, Cathy Lohr imagines what it must be like for those who benefitted from AuthoraCare Collective's Holiday Cheer program to unwrap gifts that they may not have otherwise received.

Because of the generosity of donors (individuals and businesses), 196 children and 116 adults received Holiday Cheer in 2022.

Adult patients and caregivers were provided for by Greensboro donors who earmarked their gifts to be used for adults, in addition to children.

Adult patients' wish lists ranged from personal care items to a favorite snack.

"They were so excited to be able to pick five items from that list," Lohr, Volunteer Coordinator for Kids Path, said.

Along with gift cards, gifts were also accepted as donations from the community. This is the first time, since the COVID-19 pandemic began, that gifts were given in addition to gift cards.

Lohr typically delivers gifts to a couple of families each year and the impact it makes, she said, is incredible.

"They're struggling – financially and emotionally – and this is something positive in their lives," Lohr added.



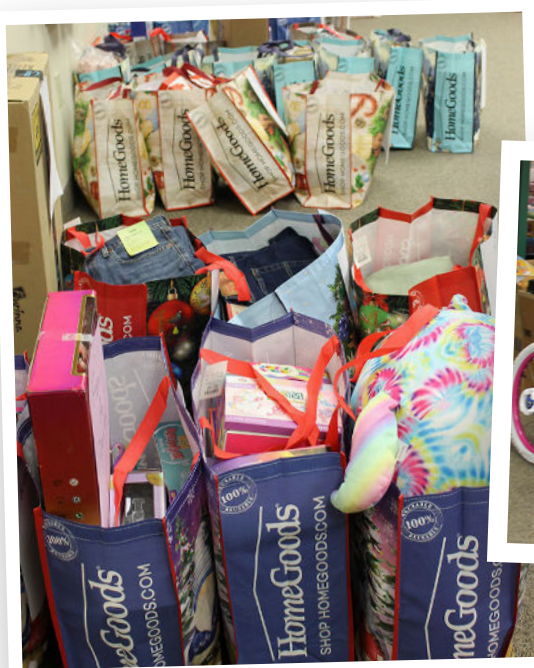
*The Orange County Sheriff's Office, along with a number of other volunteers/donors, pose for a photo on Dec. 19. [Charity Apple]*

In addition to Kids Path patients and families, children and families from the Cone Health's Pediatric Specialists Complex Care Clinic were assisted this year.

"There were a lot of tears and appreciation because this was a complete surprise," said Dr. Stephanie Wolfe, Kids Path Director, Kids Path Physician, and Pediatric Neurologist with Cone Health's Pediatric Specialists Complex Care Clinic. "It's not only about the money, but the stress that is lifted off these families' shoulders. This allows them more time with their family members."

This was the first time Wolfe, who became Kids Path Director in the fall, had witnessed the outpouring of support from the community.

"It was bigger and better than I ever imagined," she said. "It made such an impact on these patients and their families' lives. We are so grateful."



*Three truckloads of items for Kids Path's Holiday Cheer were dropped off at AuthoraCare Collective's Burlington campus on Dec. 19. [Charity Apple]*

continued on pg 18



## Holiday Cheer 2022 Assisted 196 Children, 116 Adults

(cont. from pg 17)

Through the support of businesses, individuals, and various community groups, we were able to provide Holiday Cheer to 196 children and 116 adults. Below is a list of those who contributed to Kids Path Holiday Cheer and Adult Holiday Cheer either through donations or volunteering. We also had several anonymous businesses and individuals who donated. Thanks for your generosity!

Adams Family	Doug's 24-Hour Towing & Recovery	Plaza Tavern
Al's Burger Shacks	Down Home Harley Davidson of Burlington	Procter & Gamble
Allen Tate Realtor - Green Valley	Downtown Fitness	ReRe's Boutique
Apple Electronics	Durham Family	Remax of Hillsborough
Ashley Austin	Eclection Emporium	Renee King
Boxer Freight	First Baptist Church - Journey Class	RJR Electric Heating & Air
Bradley Family	Foust Fuels	Ronnie Stallings (Cadillac Ranch)
Brake Family	Gallagher Insurance, Risk Management & Consulting in Durham	Ross Family
Brenda Macfadden and Friends	Hank Clapper	Roxanne and Jason Leif
Brown Brothers Body Works	Jessi Sexton	Sharkey's
Brown family	Josey Family	Sharpe Road Church of Christ Women's Ministry
Brownlee family	Karen Sexton	Skid's of Elon
Bryan Farrar	Lambert Family	Smokey's
Building Lives Christian Center	LaShay's	Southern Acorn Market
Buoys on Hyco Lake	LJ Rogers	Sunshine Realtors
Career and Technical Education Center - Kimberly Mahaffey	Lohr Family	Susan Nichols
Carver's Restaurant	Lucky's Saloon	TA Davis Construction
Centric Brands	Maple View Farm Ice Cream	The Honeysuckle at Lakewood
Cone Health - Cytology Department	Maple View's County Line Creamery Company	The Honeysuckle Tea House
Cone Health - HR Department	Muffins Ice Cream Shoppe	The Lofts at White's Furniture
D&D Lawn Care	My Tavern	The Marathon
Daniel Family	Orange County Sheriff's Office	The Summit Church
Daniel K. Cheek, D.D.S.	Peggy Hopkins	Tommy Brown
David Barnhill		Tri Delta Alumnae
Dery Family		Union Grove Farm
Divine Med Spa		Whiskey Sowers

## COMMUNITY CORNER

### Kids Path Updates Shared with Kiwanis Club

By Theresa Hancock

The Edward R. Murrow Golden K Kiwanis Club invited Lindsey Nowacki, Kids Path Counseling Supervisor, to speak at the biweekly meeting on Dec. 5 at the Leonard Recreation Center.

The group has supported AuthoraCare and Kids Path for over 26 years. Nowacki updated members on the Kids Path programs and renovations to our campus buildings.



*Lindsey Nowacki, Kids Path Counseling Supervisor, spoke to the Edward R. Murrow Golden K Kiwanis Club on Dec. 5 at the Leonard Recreation Center in Greensboro. [Theresa Hancock]*

### Lake Jeanette Orthodontics & Pediatric Dentistry Honors AuthoraCare with a Gift

By Theresa Hancock

Lake Jeanette Orthodontics & Pediatric Dentistry have been supporters of Corks for Kids Path for many years.

This month, the business surprised us with another act of kindness. While planning for their philanthropic giving, they received input from their patients and business partners.

Kids Path is honored to be selected this year. Thank you for your continued support.



### Butterfly Sculpture Gets an Update

By Theresa Hancock

The Kids Path Garden in Greensboro will be fluttering with activity this spring.

Ecolab Foundation has awarded AuthoraCare \$3,000 to add butterflies to our garden in recognition of Kids Path hospice patients we served.

The sculpture will be updated by renowned local metal artist, Jim Gallucci, who created the original artwork. Each brightly colored butterfly has the child's first name and years of life. A dedication ceremony is planned for later this year.



**ECOLAB®**



### P&G Donates \$2,111 to Beacon Place

By Theresa Hancock

Employees at Procter & Gamble's (P&G) Bryan Park campus donated \$2,111 to Beacon Place to enhance the comfort and care of patients, especially those with children and grandchildren.

Theresa Hancock, Public Support Coordinator, picked up the check on Dec. 8.

The funds were raised during P&G's Vibrant Living Breast Cancer Awareness auction and raffle.

Candy Wright, one of the event organizers, said the team feels a personal connection to the cause because several plant employees and family members have experienced breast cancer.

Plans for next year's events are already in the works.

## Burlington Shag Club Raises \$7,500 for AuthoraCare

By Cindy Skinner

The Burlington Shag Club presented AuthoraCare Collective with a check for \$7,500 on Dec. 22.

Funds were raised through the nonprofit social club's first-ever car show Aug. 13 at Rack & Rolls, 1243 Plaza Dr., Burlington, and its "Thankmas" Christmas party Dec. 10 at the Burlington Shrine Club, 904 Plantation Drive., Burlington.

The car show featured 109 cars, trucks, and motorcycles. The five judges presented 35 awards; over 20 door prizes were awarded; and a 50/50 drawing was held.

The dinner/dance included an auction.

The Burlington Shag Club is dedicated to preserving shag dance and beach music. Each year, the club holds multiple fundraisers to benefit Alamance County charities.



Cindy Skinner, Public Support Coordinator, and Amber Allen, a member of the Burlington Shag Club, pose with a donation to AuthoraCare Collective. [Charity Apple]

## AuthoraCare Holds Teen Night in the Garden

By Charity Apple



Theresa Hancock, Public Support Coordinator, donated artwork to the Teen Night in the Garden. Each participant received a set of four postcards with different pieces of art on them. [Lindsey Nowacki]

Teen Night in the Garden was held Oct. 24 and 26 on the Greensboro and Burlington campuses respectively.

Middle school and high school-age Kids Path clients were invited to make collages with stickers, magazine clippings, coloring supplies, and decorative paper.

"They made collages about themselves or their special person," said Lindsey Nowacki, Kids Path Counseling Supervisor.

Note cards were donated by Theresa Hancock, Public Support Coordinator on the Greensboro campus. The

note cards featured a chicken, duckling, giraffe, sloth, and zebra.

"The teens used them to describe themselves," Nowacki said. "They each picked out the one that described them most. It was a very imaginative and expressive exercise. It was a fun way to describe themselves without the awkward teen pressure that comes with 'Tell us about yourself.'"

Near the end of the night, a fire pit provided teens with the opportunity to let go of things they no longer wanted or needed to hold onto, while acknowledging things that were important to hold onto.

"They stood in a circle and gave each other space," she said. "Most people didn't want to say what the item was – and that was OK."

Nowacki said that the counselors received a lot of positive feedback and would like to do more workshops like this one.

"Teens have an unspoken connection," she said. "They realize, without having to say a lot, that they're not the only ones grieving. It was really special to see them make eye contact and to give time to acknowledge another person's pain."

## Elks Golf Classic Earns \$26,175 for AuthoraCare

By Theresa Hancock

On Jan. 2, the Greensboro Elks Lodge #602 golf committee presented a check from the proceeds of the Elks Golf Classic to Theresa Hancock, Public Support Coordinator at AuthoraCare Collective, and Matt Logan, AuthoraCare Foundation board member.

Since 2011, the Elks Golf Classic has raised over \$242,000 for AuthoraCare Collective.

The golf tournament was held Sept. 16 at Bryan Park's Players Course in Browns Summit with a pre-tournament and social auction Sept. 15 at the Elks Lodge in Greensboro.

Special thanks to Vickie McCall, who chaired the 2022 event!

Mark your calendars for this year's event – Friday, Sept. 15.



Front row (from left to right): Debbie Barrow (Exalted Ruler of the Greensboro Elks Lodge #602); Nancy Brown; Theresa Hancock, Public Support Coordinator at AuthoraCare Collective; Jessica Brown; Joni Park; Rusty Gunter; and Vickie McCall (Golf Chair). Back row (from left to right): Matt Logan, who is on the 2022-23 AuthoraCare Collective Foundation Board of Trustees; Jerry Peter; and Van Gunter. [Kelley Salmon]



## Our Mission

AuthoraCare Collective empowers people to be active participants in their care journey, enabling them to live on their own terms through personalized support for mind, body, and spirit.

# The POWER of KNOWING

**A Free Webinar Series**

## Women's Heart Health

Understanding comes from knowing. February is American Heart Month and for women, cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 cause of death. This webinar will discuss the risk factors that women face the role of prevention and lifestyle changes that can be made to improve heart health.

**Friday, February 24, 2023 | Noon - 1 p.m.**

Register at [authoracare.zoom.us](https://authoracare.zoom.us)

**Now Streaming On Demand at** [authoracare.org/knowning](https://authoracare.org/knowning)

Grief and Loss During COVID-19 | Parts 1 & 2

The Benefits of Palliative Care During COVID-19

Advance Care Planning During COVID-19

Diversity & Inclusion Series

The Impact of COVID-19 on Children and Teens

Giving Thanks: An Overview of AuthoraCare's Services

Healing Hearts During COVID-19

Beyond the Casserole: Supporting Grieving Persons

COVID-19 Vaccine: Question, Answers, Concerns

Dementia | Parts 1 & 2

Finding Joy During A Long Journey of Illness

Aging in LGBTQ+ Communities | Parts 1 & 2 Leaving a Legacy

Transitions & Life Changes

The Death Experience | Parts 1 & 2

Staying Socially Connected: Avoiding Social Isolation

Life Tools for People Living with Dementia and Their Care Partners

Caring for Veterans: Serving Those Who Have Served

Celebrating Diversity in Hospice & Palliative Care

Healing at the Holidays: Practical Guidance for Grieving Adults & Families During the Holiday Season

**NEW!**

## Getting Social



Connect with us to stay informed about the latest news, upcoming events and more!