Celebrating Success

On April 30, Clara’s House hosted an Open House celebration to mark five years of serving patients and families. It was a beautiful afternoon, and we appreciate all who made the event so special. A heartfelt thank you to presenters: Dr. Lynda Acker, Shelley Cooper, and Cinnamon LeBlanc; Sabika Jewelry; and musician, Rachel Shell. One of the highlights was the People’s Choice Art Display which consisted of works by volunteers as well as hospital staff. What a truly talented crowd! Many votes were cast and, at the end of the day, a winner was declared. Congratulations to Marilyn Otto, a Clara’s House and Healing Garden volunteer with her beautiful, flower quilt. (cont. pg. 2)

Honey Is In: Buzz on Over

Dr. Steven Filby, FirstHealth cardiologist and bee keeper extraordinaire has generously agreed to donate the proceeds from the sale of his Whispering Creek Farm Honey to Clara’s House. A limited quantity is now available at Clara’s House for $7 a bottle while supplies last. For more information, call 910-715-4220.
Celebration Pictures

Clockwise From l to r (Cinnamon LeBlanc prepares for yoga; Bill Johnston relaxes in front of his artwork; Teresa Hessler and Magda Sonderfan: volunteers, artists, and floral designers; Anne Agnew, Kathy Johnson, and Barbara Mattern enjoy the Healing Garden that they work so hard to maintain; Bill Shore, the rose whisperer; JoAn Moses admirers Terri Birkhauser’s beautiful painting; Herm and Jerri Collier relax in the kitchen; and Dr. Lynda Acker, shares her wealth of knowledge on the Monarch Butterfly.

Celebrating 5 wonderful years!
New Music Therapy Program

Recent scientific studies have indicated that music therapy can benefit patients with Parkinson’s disease (PD) by producing substantial effects on movement-related and psychological symptoms.

Fortunately, Rachel Shell (pictured here) is a licensed music therapist and has recently relocated to the Sandhills. Rachel presented to the Parkinson’s support group in April, and the information and exercises she shared were very well-received.

Thanks to the support of The Foundation of FirstHealth, Clara’s House has received funding for a trial implementation of a Music Therapy program specifically for patients with Parkinson’s.

Beginning Monday, May 22nd, sessions will occur on the 4th Monday of the month at 4pm. Reservations are necessary. For more information contact Laura Kuzma at 910-715-4230 or lkuzma@firsthealth.org.

Hospitality Book Club Calls for Recommendations

The Clara McLean House Hospitality Book Club completed the 2016-2017 schedule and will take a brief hiatus during the summer months.

The group will reconvene in September of 2017. All are welcome to participate, and those interested should feel free to submit recommendations for the upcoming year. The guidelines for selections are:

- A general theme of hospitality or taking care of one another.
- Must be available in paperback and/or at local libraries.

Recommendations may be submitted throughout the summer by emailing lkuzma@firsthealth.org or calling 910-715-4230.

Many thanks to all participants. Have a great summer!
In Loving Memory of Rachel Trahern

On April 26, 2017, the world lost a very special person when Rachel Trahern passed away from cancer. Rachel was a wonderful friend to this community and was instrumental in the nurturing of the Healing Garden.

Throughout her adventurous life, which took her all over the world, Rachel maintained a positive outlook, a love of nature, and an infectious smile. She will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

To read more about her fascinating journeys, contact rainslie@firsthealth.com for a copy of Rachel’s life story.

Pre-Surgical Breast Cancer Class at Clara’s House

If you or someone you love has ever had to go through surgery for breast cancer, you know the myriad of questions that surface in those early days of waiting.

In order to address patients’ concerns and to provide an informational forum, Lynn Lanier, Oncology Nurse Navigator has worked with the Daisy Foundation to develop a comprehensive pre-surgical education program that includes all aspects of the surgery and recovery.

The class takes place at the Clara McLean House on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of every month at 2pm.

For more information, contact Lynn Lanier at 910-715-3521.

Healing Garden Volunteers (from l to r): Chris Geertgens, Lynda Acker, Barbara Mattern, Phillipa Davidson, Nancy Kendrick, Anne Agnew, Donna May, and Sally Olson work hard to refurbish the Secret Garden with the addition of monarch-attracting zinnias.
A Note from the Director by Rebecca Ainslie

As we celebrated our 5th birthday milestone with gratitude for the many people who have made it all possible, I would also like to share a few special words of thanks to the staff of Clara McLean House. They have had their “boots on the ground” since our opening, creating this new initiative from scratch, and they continue to bend with flexibility as we learn something new each day. I have always felt that the greatest treasure we have are our human resources, and I am very proud of our team who work together so beautifully to ensure that our guests receive the special attention and care that they need and deserve (as demonstrated in the guest comments below).

Patricia Wallace is the glue (sometimes literally) that holds the operations together with a big heart and a healthy sense of humor (a requirement for the job). She is a great juggler! Laura Kuzma is the extraordinary advocate, especially to those dealing with cancer and PD. She is a friend and shepherd to 150 volunteers, she lovingly writes this newsletter, and she is a creative and funny lady. Pam Hudson gives special attention to our Foundation members, provides opportunities for spiritual care, and coordinates third party fundraisers~all done with a quick wit and a smile. Christa Smith and Charlene Horton work to keep Clara’s House clean and fresh. They are the eyes and ears on the second floor, as they encourage the guests during their stays. Joe Gendron is responsible for our conference areas and data entry and is known to come up with surprise one-liners to keep us smiling! Tammy Brown, Kathy O’Donnell, Davina Kuhn, Maribel Alston and Kathryn McEntire are Relief Managers who handle house operations starting at 5pm and all through the night and on the weekends. Each manager has a wonderful style of keeping the focus directly on the patients and families, for which they constantly receive compliments.

I feel incredibly grateful to work with this wonderful staff and their spirit of kindness. With them, I feel as though we can accomplish anything!

May, 2017

I drive a tractor trailer for a living and I just want to thank everyone here and at Moore Regional Hospital for your kindness. My stay here was peaceful. Clara’s House and the hospital are homes of angels.

Wesley B.

May, 2017

Not only was this place beautiful, peaceful, and quiet, but you could also feel the love and kindness and compassion with everyone you came in contact with. Thank you for providing a safe haven for me while my husband was in the hospital on the ventilator. I was able to come here and rest, relax, and shower; but most of all, have some quiet time with God for him to refresh me. Thanks to everyone that played any part in serving and assisting at this beautiful place. Blessings to you all.

Jamie L.
Raeford, NC

May, 2017

Thank you for having such a nice place for someone that needs peace and a place to rest as a loved one is in the hospital. Lovely rooms for resting and a beautiful garden to be with our Lord.

Cindy S.
As front line providers, nurses are essential to the FirstHealth mission of caring for people. They are there 24/7 constantly monitoring the medical condition and conferring with multiple clinicians, while also serving as advocates for patients and their family members.

The Foundation is committed to supporting our nurses through various enrichment programs as well as continuing education scholarships. In fiscal year 2016, nine nurses received scholarships totaling $16,000 to advance their education to the Bachelor’s degree in nursing; and more than $35,000 was raised to fund additional educational opportunities for our nurses. We hope you will join us and StandUp4Nurses. Your help is greatly appreciated!!

The FirstHealth Fitness Center is excited to announce a new addition to their slate of programs: Rock Steady Boxing (RSB), a fitness program designed specifically for patients with Parkinson’s disease in an effort to improve balance, strength, endurance, and cognitive functioning. Through the Neuro Care Fund of the Foundation of FirstHealth, the Fitness Center was able to acquire the necessary equipment and have two trainers certified as RSB instructors. For more information or to register, inquire at the front desk of the fitness center or call 910-715-1800.

FirstHealth trainers, Brittany Sayers, and Randy Ballard, are now certified RSB instructors and are ready to take your punches.

Note Cards Available
Now you can send words of encouragement to friends and family and support Clara’s House and the Healing Garden at the same time.

Created from images found throughout Clara’s House and the Healing Garden, these cards are now available for purchase at the front desk.

Boxes are $12 each and contain 10 cards and envelopes.
A Peace of the Spirit by Pam Hudson

When I turned 25 (not that long ago…..really!?), I was given a surprise birthday party by my best friend. It was a good time…and I still remember it, not so much the specifics of what we did, but I clearly remember how it made me feel…..like I was cared for, and planned for, and loved.

We just celebrated our 5th birthday here at Clara’s House with a wonderful afternoon of fun and fellowship! And as we did I could not help but think about all the caring and planning and love that had gone into our time together, and all that goes into what we do here every day at Clara’s House. From our beginnings we have been upheld and promoted by such a spirit of community support! From those early pioneers who researched and developed the idea, to those who financially provided a way, and to all those who give of their time and talent and treasure still, that we may care for and extend kindness to our patients, families and community members.

We have all joined together as we have grown and strengthened these past 5 years…..with all that going for us, it is no surprise to me at just how blessed we truly are!