

Denton County SENIOR™

Fall/Winter 2009

A Magazine devoted to the interests of those 50 and older.

*“Age Is Just
A Number”*

Complimentary Issue

PLUS:

*One Man's
Journey*

**Fighting
STROKES**

FLU Season Tips

**Carpal Tunnel
Syndrome**

Hospice: *The Bluebonnet Approach*

By: George Fettingter, CEO

Generally speaking, the purpose of all hospice agencies is similar. Hospice agencies provide the special attention needed by patients in the late stages of a terminal illness. This makes choosing the right hospice provider a significant challenge for families. Bluebonnet Hospice's goals are to improve the quality of life for the patient and to support his or her loved ones.

What separates Bluebonnet from other agencies are the principles upon which Bluebonnet was founded. Bluebonnet is a family owned and operated company with a commitment to treating patients like family. Since 1999, when Bluebonnet was established, it has required all of its personnel to share and practice the same principles as its owners. Those practices include providing exceptional patient care, exceeding expectations, and trust and commitment.

Providing Exceptional Patient Care

At Bluebonnet, we live and breathe exceptional patient care. Bluebonnet's care is not governed by the clock, but rather defined by the patient's and family's needs. Whether the visit is half an hour or 24 hours, Bluebonnet's staff is committed to provide exceptional care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Exceeding Expectations

Bluebonnet's goal is to exceed the expectations of the patient and everyone involved in that patient's life. It is our goal to provide excellence in all areas of care including but not limited to keeping the patient comfortable and pain free, consulting and counseling with all family members, assisting in the bereavement process, and working side by side with skilled nursing

facilities and assisted livings to ensure exceptional patient care.

Trust and Commitment

Bluebonnet's staff understands our word is our bond. When we make a commitment, we follow through. Whether it is a scheduled visit, a social work consult, or community involvement, Bluebonnet makes a commitment to our families.

Choosing hospice for a loved one is a tough decision. Bluebonnet Hospice works with the family to make this transition as painless as possible through our core principles. To ensure you are presented with Bluebonnet Hospice as an option, request a referral for our services through your physician. **S**

In Denton County call 940-323-2122. For Collin County the number is 469-519-2727.



"We treat our patients like family."

Home Health Care

- Physical, Occupational, and Speech Therapy
- Wound Care/Wound Vac.
- Comprehensive Diabetic Care
- Medication Management
- Skilled Nursing
- Oncology Care

Hospice

- Medical Director
- Hospice Nurses
- Hospice Home Care Aides
- Social Workers
- Chaplains and Bereavement Counselor
- Volunteers
- Medications

Serving several North and East Texas areas, including: Denton, Collin County, Dallas County, Mineola, and surrounding areas.

Denton Bluebonnet Home Health and Hospice
2701 W. Oak St., Suite # 102 • Denton TX 76201
Phone number 940-323-2122

“Age is Just a Number” say Fran & Barry Lazarus

By: Helen V Hutchings

Their words, “Age is just a number,” truly describe the adventurous spirit and outlook of Barry and Fran Lazarus.

Prior to relocating to Summit County, Colorado, Barry and Fran lived an active, involved life on the east coast in West Hartford, Connecticut. Fran, 65, is a retired accountant. Barry, now 66, is a retired urologist and served in Vietnam as a battalion surgeon for the 173rd Airborne Brigade. They have two children and four grandchildren. Barry and Fran ventured out to Summit County for two months because of its reputation for world class skiing.

Returning to their house in Connecticut, Barry and Fran put it on the market. Since, in addition to skiing, both have always been passionate hikers and backpackers, their move to Silverthorne, Colorado in 1997 is one they’ve never looked back or regretted.

Being naturally adventurous and curious, travel is another pleasure Fran and Barry share. Trips have included summiting Mt. Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in Africa at 19,340 feet, two trips to Nepal, solo backpacking the 221 mile John Muir Trail, which travels from the floor of Yosemite Valley to the summit of Mt. Whitney, the highest peak in the continental US. Barry is proud to have completed seven marathons, including the New York and Boston. Fran is an age-group running champion and has completed New York and Newport marathons. All told the Lazarus’ have traveled to more than 60 countries, always preferring to arrange their own trips and itineraries.

Barry and Fran had worked and planned so they could retire at an early age and were pleased when they achieved that goal, retiring at ages 54 and 52 respectively. They stress that, “Retirement was not because we were dissatisfied with our careers or lives; but rather, because we wished to pursue an active outdoor lifestyle while we felt we still could. Our travels had opened our eyes to the big wide world out there and our hiking many mountains had developed a keen desire to see and do more.”

On a visit to Breckenridge, Colorado Barry and Fran learned of an organization called The Over the Hill Gang. They dropped in on a meeting of the group expecting to find a dozen or so “old people.” Instead there were over 60 members present and more surprising still, three to four dozen members weren’t in attendance as they were away competing in the Senior Winter Olympics. Barry and Fran had found their group. They recall that, “They skied us into the ground for a week or so. We were both humbled and grateful.”

The routine became skiing every Tuesday at Breckenridge, every Thursday at Keystone, with side trips to Vail and Beaver Creek in between. Barry and Fran are actively involved with the Over The Hill Gang International (OTHGI) guiding local ski groups as well as venturing overseas for ski trips to Europe and summer bike tours to exotic locations such as Vietnam. Serving as guides has given Barry and Fran an opportunity to work for a great organization while carrying on with their passion for travel as they ensure that plans are carried out and their fellow-travelers/guests are happy.

In 2001 Fran’s life was forever changed. She was diagnosed with breast cancer days before 9/11 and immediately underwent surgery, chemo and radiation. Not allowing this invader to knock her down, Fran is proud to say that she skied nearly every day during chemo and through the 31 radiation treatments too. True to character, Fran has mentored and served as a role model to other women since her own experience and recovery. She has also been the keynote speaker for Relay for Life in Summit County, sponsored by the American Cancer Society. Both Barry and Fran work as volunteers for the Komen “Romp to Stomp” and Avon Breast Cancer Walk. They also give talks to groups all around the state with all admission charges and proceeds given to breast cancer research organizations.

Fran and Barry are proud to say that they remain the only team with both competitors over 50 to have ever won a leg on The Amazing Race.

Fran and Barry, who describe themselves as “serious reality show junkies, were watching the award-winning CBS show *The Amazing Race* one day. Simultaneously they looked at one another and said, “We can do that!” They sent in a voluminous application and video. Next came a long interview process to weed the over 18,000 teams of two who had applied down to 11. Barry and Fran prevailed and found themselves one of those 11 teams chosen to appear on Season 9 in November 2005. And, to date, Fran and Barry are proud to say that they remain the only team with both competitors over 50 to have ever won a leg on *The Amazing Race*.



Fran and Barry Lazarus

Fran and Barry finished fifth and remark that, “The experience was life altering in ways we had not expected. On our travels around the world since competing we have been recognized numerous times, including outside a monastery in Tibet, and on the streets of Bangkok and Europe.”

Barry and Fran, high school sweethearts now married over 40 years, keep themselves young because they think young. They have found a great balance donating their time and talents to worthy causes and enjoying their outdoor activities. They care for their health and pursue their dreams as they share a passion for life and live their mantra, “Age IS just a number.”