



# Music & Heart

**Emily Kiefer**

Complementary  
Therapies Coordinator

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## From Linda Darden, CEO/President



Each November we celebrate National Hospice & Palliative Care Month, and this year I am thinking about the incredible foresight of Dame Cicely Saunders, who founded the hospice movement in 1976. She was a pioneer in end-of-life care, linking expert pain and symptom control, compassionate care, and a holistic patient-centered approach to care. She believed in empowering patients and families to make decisions about care based on their personal wishes.

The model of care she envisioned, which centers on a team providing care to meet the medical, emotional, spiritual, and social needs of both patients and their caregivers, has remained unmatched in healthcare as we know it today.

Since our inception in 1977 as the first provider of hospice care in North Carolina, we have had the honor of serving generations of families. Our patient-centered approach to care means treating each person uniquely with their goals and values as the cornerstone. Our approach includes caring for the family so they have peace of mind, knowing we are with them every step of the way.

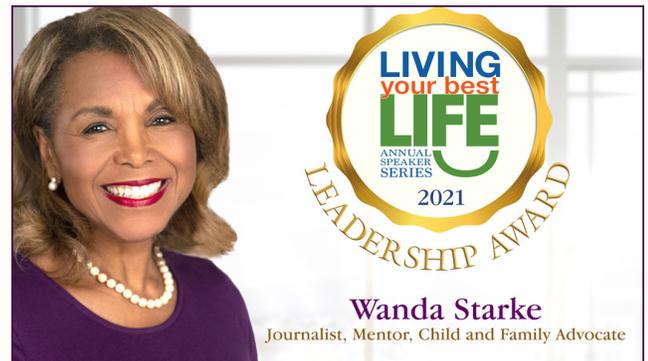
With this philosophy of care as a guiding force, we have created other layers of supportive care — not just for our patients and families — but available to the entire community. Programs that enhance our mission are described in the pages of this newsletter. Advance Care Planning, support for people who are grieving a loss, a specialized approach to care for varying diseases, caregiver education and support, music therapy to soothe the soul — these are just a few of the layers we believe lead to a better quality of life for those in our care.

Finally, I invite you to join me in a moment of gratitude for the work of our compassionate team of professionals and volunteers, as well as all those who dedicate themselves to the mission-centered work that we celebrate this month. For so many on our team, this is not simply a job, but rather a calling. I am grateful for the entire team that makes up Trellis Supportive Care.

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## Living Your Best Life Leadership Award

It was a pleasure to present this year's Best Life Leadership Award to Wanda Starke, best known as a longtime news anchor at WXII 12. As part of our 6th annual Living Your Best Life Speaker Series, this special recognition identifies a trailblazer who elevates the possibilities and potential of lives in the Triad. Among her many contributions, Wanda produced a weekly segment, "A Place to Call Home," profiling children waiting to be adopted. It was a personal issue for Wanda, who was adopted as a young child herself. As a journalist and expert storyteller, she has brought positive messages and thoughtful stories that have touched countless people in our community. Learn more at [BestLifeSeries.org](https://www.BestLifeSeries.org).



# A Heartbeat Becomes a Lasting Legacy



We are seldom ready for that final goodbye. We search for ways to hold onto our loved ones, perhaps by saving a favorite shirt they wore, a piece of jewelry, or even a voice recording. In the case of some of our caregivers, it is the sound of their loved one's heartbeat that becomes a lasting legacy.

Our music therapist, Emily Kiefer, said, "The heart symbolizes love, identity, and the center of our emotions. It's the vessel for our feelings." Emily also points out the natural relationship between music and heartbeats. "There is a beat in music, just as there is a pulse to our heartbeat, and musicians have long used a heartbeat pattern in creating music."

Using a patient's heartbeat to create a lasting legacy can be therapeutic. "It is a creative representation of a person's identity, a message to leave behind. Some legacy work includes a voice recording, while some centers on a song recording with the patient's heartbeat as a key element," shared Emily.

Music can stir our emotions, taking us to a time and place. For patients and families who have a particular connection to a piece of music, it is meaningful to pair their heartbeat to that music. This process is therapeutic for patients who are not verbal as well.

"I want to be sure people trust me and trust the process. It's easy to see this as a 'product' when in fact it is a process — a chance to work with a completion of a relationship and a continued relationship. The legacy provides a way to remember someone by creating this unique representation of their identity," shared Emily.

Using an Eko digital stethoscope, Emily takes an actual recording onto a device and gives the family a chance to hear the heartbeat. Then, the family can take the project where they like, keeping just the heartbeat, adding music, creating a CD, or even placing the recording in a stuffed animal.

"Research shows that those more involved in the process really do find it useful in the long run," Emily shared. "I had a call from a family member letting me know the recording was a great source of comfort and a continuation of her relationship with her mom."





*ARE YOU READY FOR WHATEVER COMES YOUR WAY?*

As advocates of Advance Care Planning, we encourage people to have thoughtful conversations about how they want to be cared for at the end of life. Not only does it pave the way for your wishes to be honored, but it also takes some of the strain and anxiety off your loved ones who may someday become your caregivers.



It begins by simply talking with loved ones, and at some point, your doctor. It is an excellent way to exercise your right to make health care decisions that fit your goals and values. It's an important step in making sure that you are ready for whatever comes your way. We believe in making this easily accessible for anyone wanting to learn more and complete their Advance Directives.

Register for one of our free weekly workshops (Tuesdays at 1:00 or 7:00 pm) by emailing [KLawler@TrellisSupport.org](mailto:KLawler@TrellisSupport.org)

*TO PALLIATE MEANS TO EASE*



Other synonyms of the word palliate are alleviate, relieve, soothe, and lessen. Palliative Care is a medical specialty focused on helping patients feel better and achieve the best possible quality of life. We have highly trained Palliative Care specialists that provide a wealth of knowledge about treatment choices, likely outcomes, and peace of mind as medical decisions

are considered.

Many patients, still seeking curative therapies, benefit from a consultation. Our specialists can help patients understand a new diagnosis and treatment options, as well as help relieve pain, nausea, fatigue, weight loss, breathlessness, depression, or anxiety associated with any serious illness.

*BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT ALONE IN PROVIDING CARE*



Part of providing supportive care means caring for the caregiver too. Caring for a loved one can be overwhelming. Even if you have healthcare experience, no amount of training and guidance will make it easy.

Yet, a visit with an experienced nurse can help boost caregiver confidence. "I sit and talk to the caregiver about the challenges and learn about the needs of the patients. There are many tips and tools we can share to make it easier," shared Jennifer Markland, RN for Trellis Supportive Care. "Often just walking through the caregiver's routine will help identify areas that a little coaching will make easier. I also learn about what supplies would be helpful and I am able to provide them quickly," added Jennifer.

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## *BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT ALONE IN PROVIDING CARE* (continued from page 4)

In addition to supporting our patients' caregivers, we provide Caregiver Confidence workshops to anyone in the community. Some of the topics provide practical suggestions, such as keeping medical records organized, knowing how to safely store and dispose of medication, and fall prevention. There are also hands-on tips, including how to prevent bed sores and safely transfer your loved one in and out of bed or a chair. Call or visit our website to learn more.

## *RELIEF FOR THOSE IMPACTED BY DEMENTIA*

According to the CDC, dementia is not a specific disease. It's a general term that describes the impaired ability to remember, think, or make decisions. It interferes with doing everyday activities. Nearly 1 in 7 adults over the age of 70 has dementia, and the numbers rise significantly with age.



The good news is that supportive care is available. Every staff member at Trellis Supportive Care has completed Aliviado training specifically designed to support patients and caregivers impacted by dementia. Aliviado is a Spanish word meaning to feel relieved — no longer anxious or worried. Our support of patients and families includes:

- Providing caregivers with training and education so they are better equipped
- Knowing what the patient is going through to better understand what the caregiver is going through
- Utilizing tools such as pain assessments and a caregiver strain index to improve care

Ultimately, Aliviado training provides our care teams a rich understanding of their part in providing what patients and caregivers need most.

## *GETTING TO THE HEART OF CARE FOR CARDIAC PATIENTS*



### **Advanced Cardiac Care**

Did you know that only 5% of heart failure patients discharged from the hospital utilize in-home hospice services? “We look forward to a community where heart disease patients receive timelier, high-

quality care at home so that they have a better quality of life,” shared Michael Lalor, Chief Medical Officer for Trellis Supportive Care.

“In collaboration with the American Heart Association (AHA) and nearly 75 of the nation’s leading nonprofit palliative and hospice care organizations, we are on a mission to improve the quality of life for patients living with heart disease. This means that cardiac patients will receive advanced treatments and therapies in their home. These specialized therapies include IV diuretics, Milrinone and other inotropic infusions, and LVAD therapy. Additionally, we remain available to our patients 24/7, offering symptom & medication management, and we will coordinate care with our patients’ cardiologists,” added Lalor.

Despite the longer survival times for heart failure patients enrolled in hospice than those not enrolled, services remain underutilized for this population. A lack of awareness of hospice and palliative care offerings is resulting in too many patients missing out on a better, and longer, quality of life and time together with their families. This specialized in-home care can change that.



# Making Your List and Checking It Twice?

## A SPECIAL HOLIDAY GIVING OPPORTUNITY

Thanks to our community's generosity, Trellis Supportive Care can provide quality care and special touches to patients and caregivers every day. Our staff continue to deliver comprehensive medical and therapeutic care for everyone we serve. Your support makes our services and programs possible.

One great way to support the hospice mission in this season of giving is through our Holiday Honor Card program. Holiday Honor Cards remind your loved ones you are thinking of them during the holiday season and let them know that you have donated to Trellis Supportive Care in their honor.

For a \$10 donation per card, we will provide cards that you can personalize and mail yourself. For a \$15 donation per card, our staff will personalize and mail your cards to the recipients of your choice. Our cards are appropriate for any holiday in this festive season — but if you would like them to be delivered by Christmas, please place your order no later than December 8th. A picture of this year's holiday card design can be found above.

**To place an order, contact Marianne DeCristo at (336) 331-1322 or [MDeCristo@TrellisSupport.org](mailto:MDeCristo@TrellisSupport.org).**

If you'd like to donate in other ways, you can:

- Visit [www.TrellisSupport.org/donate](http://www.TrellisSupport.org/donate)
- Call (336) 768-3972 and ask for a member of the Donor Relations team.
- Text the word "trellis" to (336) 331-5487. You will receive a link to a secure donation page.

## LEARNING TO LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE

On October 13, we introduced award-winning journalist and author, Celeste Headlee, to our live, virtual audience at our Living Your Best Life event. Celeste shared research on long-held assumptions about time use, idleness, hard work, and goals, showing us how habits we have developed are doing more harm than good.

The message tied nicely with our mission of helping people live their best lives while concentrating on wellbeing. She shared some strategies to help us stop overworking and underliving:

- Set time limits on your workday.
- Zoom fatigue is real. Consider a telephone call because it's a healthier option and can give you a shot of serotonin.
- Chronic loneliness is bad for your health. A smile, wave, or a five-minute chat with another increases a sense of belonging.



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- Stop multitasking and, instead, make a list of the tasks to accomplish each day, focusing on each one in 20-minute intervals, and then take short breaks.

Establishing a sustainable work-life balance creates a sense of calm that will give us the capacity to feel compassion and empathy for others. If we follow Celeste's advice, we can each become someone who is not only filled with wellbeing, but someone who spreads wellbeing, too.



INTRODUCING:

# Plentiful PLATES



grocery deliveries two times each month.

As funding through this grant-funded nutrition program draws to a close, we remain committed to continuing with our grocery deliveries to patients and families in need. Our new program, Plentiful Plates, is only possible with the support of our dedicated volunteers and the generosity of the community. Plentiful Plates will provide groceries and nutritional supplements, like Boost or Ensure, to up to 25 patients per month. Thank you to everyone who helps make this possible.

To learn more about helping with deliveries or supporting this program, please contact Rebecca Sink at 336-331-1327 or email [RSink@TrellisSupport.org](mailto:RSink@TrellisSupport.org)

In response to COVID-19, the Piedmont Triad Regional Council Area Agency on Aging launched opportunities for non-profits serving seniors 60+ to provide an extra layer of support. For our patients identified as being food-insecure, we arranged





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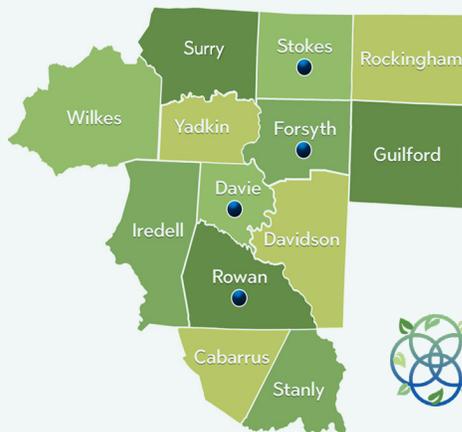
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# The CIRCULAR - Fall/Winter 2021 Issue

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