ANNUAL REPORT
2009

A TOP 100 NATIONAL HOSPITAL
Right in your backyard
President’s Letter

Despite the many challenges the healthcare industry faced in 2009 Rutherford Hospital Inc. has much to be proud of when we review the past year as an organization. I am pleased that the leadership, the medical staff and the employees of RHI have pulled together and shown great perseverance for the sake of providing outstanding healthcare for our community and our region.

RHI continued to be recognized in 2009 as a leader in healthcare quality and responsibility. In fact, RHI was recognized yet again as a Top 100 National Hospital by Thomson Reuters and as a Top 100 facility by Cleverly + Associates. We accept these honors not for our own glory but in the name of providing the best possible healthcare to you and your family.

In addition, many new processes and innovations were implemented in 2009 in order to improve patient care. New methods of treating patients in Emergency Department and through our EKG services are but a few examples of how we assure you that RHI will stay abreast of the most efficient ways to provide our services to our customers.

We welcomed new facility additions to our cancer program as well as the patient navigator position to assist those diagnosed with cancer. Many other activities that you will read about in this report serve notice that we are committed to providing the resources necessary to be a leader in this area for cancer resources.

As I have stated before, it is our mission to provide you with expert care and outstanding customer service marked by compassion. When you have a need, you should expect the best from us, and you have my commitment that Rutherford Hospital Inc. will combine experience with expertise and treatment options with well-coordinated services. It is my pleasure to serve you as President and CEO of Rutherford Hospital Inc. and I look forward to another memorable year in 2010.

David M. Bixler
President and CEO
Rutherford Hospital, Inc.

J. Toliver Davis
1922 - 2009

J. Toliver Davis served over 30 years on the Board of Trustees at Rutherford Hospital and held the title of Trustee Emeritus. He served the board from April 1962 - December 1991. During his time as a trustee a number of significant achievements took place:

- Rutherford Hospital School of Nursing merged with Gardner-Webb;
- The Norris-Biggs Clinic was constructed;
- The Hospital Auxiliary was begun;
- A new patient tower was constructed;
- The Norris-Biggs Wing was renovated;
- A $13 million expansion project included two patient floors, a new lobby, a main entrance, relocation of outpatient services and the demolition of the 1951 wing;
- The acquisition and operation of the Woodlands Skilled Nursing Center;
- A $2.8 million modernization of the hospital’s radiology department;
- The opening of the Lake Lure Area Medical Services facility;
- The opening of an inpatient behavioral health center in the hospital.

He was a member of the First Baptist Church of Forest City and served his country in the United States Navy during World War II where he received a Purple Heart, was awarded a Silver Star and served in the United States Naval Reserve retiring at the rank of Lt. Commander.

Davis attended Mars Hill College and was a graduate of Wake Forest School of Law. He served as Clerk of Court and retired as a Federal Magistrate Judge for the Western District of North Carolina.

He also served three terms in the North Carolina Legislature and formerly served as the attorney for both the Town of Forest City and Rutherford County. In addition, he served on the Board of Trustees of Gardner-Webb University.

J. Toliver Davis’ leadership and impact will be felt for generations to come in Rutherford County. It is in his memory that we dedicate this issue of our Annual Report.
Auxiliary

Auxiliary Celebrates Another Outstanding Year

The Auxiliary presented hospital CEO David Bixler and Trustee Joe Carson a check for $68,335.24. The money was raised over the past year through the Auxiliary’s various service projects and fund raising events.

The Rutherford Hospital Auxiliary in September was the recipient of the 2009 Five Star Award at the North Carolina Hospital Volunteers Annual Conference in Greensboro. The Five Star Award is the highest ranking possible, which the Rutherford Hospital Auxiliary has earned for 11 consecutive years. A score of 400+ points earns the Five Star rating and points are given for services including recruitment, scholarship contributions, implementing new projects and promoting National Volunteer Week. The Rutherford Hospital Auxiliary scored 425 points.

In October new officers, the Extra Mile Award, a $68,334 check presentation and the recognition of outstanding volunteers were on the agenda for Auxiliary’s annual meeting.

Outgoing Auxiliary president, Sharon Taylor, was honored by receiving the Auxiliary’s Extra Mile Award. The award is given to volunteers who unselfishly take on roles that others may not want to accept, explained Ginger Dancy, director of RHI volunteer services. “They are also willing to accept weighty responsibilities that others are not willing to accept at that particular time, so their willingness to participate is very significant. They also may not realize how their leadership has influenced others to do their best when volunteering,” Dancy added.

Taylor has over 1,600 hours of volunteer service during the eight years, and has served as chairman for the Surgery Waiting area. She also has served on the Auxiliary board in several areas when the Auxiliary received several honors including, State Fund Raising Award, State Community Related Award, Administrator of the Year Award and also the Five Star Award for 11 consecutive years.

Taylor joins a prestigious group of other Extra Mile winners including, first recipients Earl and Virginia Taylor in 1990, Helen Rogers, Naomi Yelton, Peggy Wells, Colleen Biggerstaff, Jackie Long, Margaret Miller, Darlene Gowen, Brenda Hess, Bonnie Cherry, Dr. Joe and Mrs. Lib Godfrey, and Elisabeth White. Extra Mile Award recipients who are deceased were also mentioned, including Edna Robertson, Harry Stroud, Pauline Chandler, Betty Keeter, Lib Monteith, Tommy Keeter and Pat Melson.

Auxiliary volunteers serve in the Emergency Waiting, Front Desk, Gift Shop, ICU Waiting, Medical Records, Massage Therapy, Messenger, Outpatient Services, Pet Therapy, Radiology and Surgery Waiting.

Volunteers also serve as Teen Volunteers, caretakers of St. Luke’s Chapel, work with the Toy Chest, cancer program, tray favors, Education Department for community programs and also are clowns for special occasions.

Two volunteers, Dr. Hampton Casebolt and Kay Hollifield, were recognized for more than 2,000 hours of service and joined a group of Lifetime Auxiliary members for their leadership has influenced others to do their best when volunteering.

Dr. Hampton Casebolt and Kay Hollifield were named Lifetime Auxiliary members.

Letters To The Community

Michael S. Wheeler, M.D.
Chairman, Board of Trustees

Rutherford Hospital Inc. in 2009 stood as an example of commitment - to its mission, its vision, and its responsibility to the community. As difficult economic times have shrouded the region and the nation, the residents of Rutherford and surrounding counties took heart in knowing that Rutherford Hospital would not only maintain a level of excellent care-giving, but would be recognized again for being a leader in quality and efficiency. As you will read in the pages that follow, more than one organization has given RHI recognition as a national Top 100 hospital. We hope this serves as a reminder to all of our local residents that comprehensive medical care, delivered with an emphasis on customer service, is available right here at home.

C. Phillip Whitworth, M.D.
Chief of Staff

The medical staff of Rutherford Hospital is committed to excellence in quality of care. By examining processes involving patient care and comparing ourselves to national guidelines and standards, the medical staff continues to meet this goal. The hospital provides us with the latest technology to facilitate this quality. Our physicians direct and supervise education and outreach programs in the community in coordination with the hospital. The medical staff works as partners, with you the patient, to achieve and maintain your best health and to promote healthy lifestyles in our community.

Michael Wheeler, M.D.
Chairman

Joe Carson
Vice-Chairman

E. Thomas Hardin
Secretary

Diane Hamrick
Treasurer

Matt Bright

Tommy Davis
Paul Deck

Jerald DeLaGarza, M.D.

David Eaker

Larry Harrill

Lee Harrill

Terry Hines

Thomas J. Jaski, M.D.

Myra Johnson, Ph.D.

Rutherford Hospital, Inc.
Board of Trustees 2009

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Joel Winker, M.D.
Lloyd Wood

16

www.MyRutherfordHospital.com
Rutherford Hospital Named
A Top 100 National Hospital

Rutherford Hospital was selected by Thomson Reuters Top Hospitals as a recipient of its 100 Top Hospitals Award for the fourth consecutive year. The hospital previously received the Thomson Reuters 100 Top Performance Improvement Leader award for 2005, 2006 and 2007.

This year, for the first time, the hospital is the recipient of two national benchmark (highest performance) awards: the 2008 Thomson Reuters 100 Top Hospitals National Benchmarks Award, and the 2008 Thomson Reuters 100 Top Hospitals Everest Award for National Benchmarks, which was awarded to only 23 hospitals nationally.

The National Benchmarks Award recognizes hospitals with the highest hospital-wide performance compared with the national peers, based on an overall score on the 100 Top Hospitals National Balanced Scorecard. This award acknowledges the organizational achievement Rutherford Hospital has made by aligning its board, leadership team and medical staff in a concerted effort to achieve balanced excellence.

RHI joins Duke University Hospital as the only hospital in NC or SC to be named a 100 Top Hospital. In addition, the hospital received the 2009 Thomson Reuters 100 Top Hospital National Balanced Scorecard Award.

The mission of the Rutherford Hospital Foundation is to secure gifts of support for the hospital, ensuring that the community continues to receive a broad range of healthcare services. Many of the programs that we support are directed toward those that we are otherwise unable to pay for that medical care. The following hospital services received support through the Foundation in 2009:

- Asthma Camp, Health Ministry, Cardiac Care Scholarships, Lifesense Service for Seniors in Need, Diabetes Education, Tobacco Prevention, Mammograms for Uninsured Women, Breast Cancer Patient Navigator, Cancer Resource Center Renovation, Spiritual Care, Empty Arms Grief Support, Infant Care Services and Patient Family Support Care Center Room.

The 16th year Thomson Reuters has honored the Top 100 hospitals and the national announcement of the 2009 award winners can be seen at www.100tophospitals.com and www.modernhealthcare.com.
“Gifts That Touched Lives” in 2009

2009 was the year to try different approaches to raise funds for hospital programs and services. What a delightful year we experienced! Our generous supporters helped the Rutherford Hospital Foundation to bring more gifts than ever before. We received 483 donations for $307,331 in total income. Both the number of gifts and the total giving were up in 2009, a testament to the generosity of the people of our county during times of need.

Among our important milestones:

• Received second-year funding from The Duke Endowment to pay for our Cancer Resource Center renovation and partially fund the Breast Cancer Navigator program. 67 women were given compassionate care and access to additional resources during their cancer treatment and recovery as a result of this grant.

• Presented the 2009 Stargazer Ball with a “Britain On Better Times” theme. Over 200 guests attended. We were able to secure donated the space for our event, allowing us to generate additional proceeds from the Ball.

• Paid Lifetime subscriptions for 51 precious seniors who were unable to afford this life-saving service. This is an increase of 10 subscriptions over 2008.

• Totally funded Camp WheezKnot through sponsorships, grants and unrestricted gifts. 39 children attended the summer camp. They enjoyed a medically supervised recreational camp and learned to better manage their symptoms of childhood asthma.

• Presented the 22nd Annual Golf Classic at Clehorn Plantation. 224 players, 40 volunteers and over 100 sponsors participated.

• Completed a significant real estate transaction from Buster and Louise Huggins. This generous gift resulted in a benefit to the Foundation of over $80,000.

• Offered “Fashion with a Passion” women’s event with Doncaster and Covenant Advisory Group to raise money for mammograms for women without health insurance. 45 women were given mammograms as a result of this event.

• Received second-year funding from The Duke Endowment to pay for our Cancer Resource Center to offer tobacco prevention in our county schools.

• Completed a significant real estate transaction from Buster and Louise Huggins. This generous gift resulted in a benefit to the Foundation of over $80,000.

• Offered “Fashion with a Passion” women’s event with Doncaster and Covenant Advisory Group to raise money for mammograms for women without health insurance. 45 women were given mammograms as a result of this event.

• Established Foundation Committees to address four donor prospect constituencies. These committees have developed the framework and strategy to enter a significant fund-raising campaign for 2010. Over 60 community volunteers have committed their time and energy toward this campaign.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend a sincere “Thank you” to our supporters and volunteers for a successful year of service. Our Foundation is grateful for every gift of time, talent and treasure given to support quality health care offered through our hospital.

Jill W. Miracle
Executive Director
Rutherford Hospital Foundation, Inc.
(828) 286-5070

RHI Earns Another Top Value Award

Rutherford Hospital this year made the Cleverley & Associates Top 100 Hospital List for 2009 using the company’s Community Value Index (CVI) ranking. Cleverley’s CVI was created to provide a measure of the value that a hospital provides to its community.

Every acute care hospital’s data in the United States was reviewed with the following CVI components: financial viability and plant reinvestment, hospital cost structure, hospital charge structure, and hospital quality performance. RHI has earned the right to be called a Five-Star and Top 100 facility by Cleverley & Associates for achieving higher-than-average results in all four CVI core areas.

The Community Value Index list of top community value providers was recently published in Cleverley & Associates “State of the Hospital Industry – 2009 Edition.” Cleverley & Associates, based out of Columbus, Ohio, is a recognized healthcare financial consulting firm specializing in operational benchmarking and performance enhancement strategies.

It’s Here:
MyRutherfordHospital.com

Rutherford Hospital Inc. has proven its worth through an outstanding medical staff, new technology, expanding service lines, and staff who demonstrate the highest standards of customer service.

Now RHI has a new website to reflect all of that and more. In the latter part of 2009, MyRutherfordHospital.com was launched in order to give patients and guests an expanded view of RHI’s services and people. Among the features to the new site are:

• Listings and descriptions of all services performed by RHI departments and physicians
• A Find-A-Doctor search function to help you locate a physician
• Easy access to listings of classes, events and programs
• Symptom navigator similar to WebMD
• Videos and Tours of recent news and interesting services
• Constant feeds for RHI news and health news that are relevant to you
• Featured physicians and employees who work at RHI to serve you
• Testimonials from patients, employees and physician about RHI
• CEO blog with the latest thoughts from Dave Bixler
• Maps and resources for finding where our services are offered

continued on page 4
We’re excited about the new site, but we also are excited about what can be added to it,” said Matt Webber, RHI director of marketing. “The internet is changing constantly and so are the consumers who prefer to get their information from the internet. We feel fortunate that RHI can now adapt to the needs of its consumers more easily with the creation of this site.”

Webber added that one of the first features that visitors will find on the homepage of the new site is an item called “Share Your Experience.” Here, patients and family members can share with others their positive experiences at RHI. It’s just one of the many ways the new website will invite the community to be an active part in the life of RHI.

“I think the public will be pleased with the look and feel of the new site,” Webber said, “because this site was designed with their needs in mind.”

New Emergency Department Process Impacts Patient Satisfaction

Rutherford Hospital in March implemented a new strategy to process its Emergency Department patients more quickly and the resulting patient satisfaction scores have placed RHI among national leaders, according to Press Ganey, which measures healthcare patient satisfaction for 3,000 healthcare institutions nationally.

Since March 9, when RHI adopted a more efficient way of receiving E.D. patients and placing them into treatment rooms with fewer delays, patients have ranked the Emergency Department at Rutherford Hospital overall in the 99th percentile nationally. That means RHI’s scores place among the top 1 percent of all Emergency Departments in the United States that treat 30,000 - 40,000 patients per year. In addition, patients rank their experience at RHI in the 99th percentile of all North Carolina hospitals. RHI’s overall score of 90.6 was significantly greater than the average score of all other North Carolina hospitals, which was 82.0.

The new process involves having a hospital staff member greet each patient at the Emergency entrance between 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 p.m. The greeter, who is a Patient and Family Support staff member, quickly takes basic information from the patient and then leads them directly into the Triage area if it is not occupied by another patient. Once there, the Triage nurse performs a quick assessment and conducts a short registration with the patient before taking the patient immediately back to an available room where treatment begins.

Debra Colazzo is one of the RHI patient liaisons who assists patients through the new Emergency Department process begun in March 2009.

“The new process was developed by a variety of staff members and is a way to help decrease wait times for emergency patients,” said Joann Ullrich, RHI’s Emergency Department nurse manager. “After starting the new process, the E.D. staff quickly realized that it helps meet our patients’ needs more promptly and keeps the flow going; thus, wait times are lessened. The majority of time this process occurs without delay. This has made us more efficient and makes sure the patient is seen more quickly than ever before.”

As part of an internal recognition program, the Emergency Department nursing staff recently won an RHI performance award for having the highest overall patient satisfaction scores in the entire organization for the March 2009-May 2009 quarter, a feat never before accomplished for Ullrich’s staff.

Giving Back To Our Community

Community Benefit Report

Rutherford Hospital has supported its community for more than 100 years with quality medical care, wellness programs and vital healthcare services. Community Benefit is collaboration with a community to benefit its residents – particularly those below the poverty level, minorities, and underserved groups – by improving healthcare status and improving quality of life. Improving access to services, health promotion and education, disease prevention and support groups are among the services and activities that address these community health needs. As a not-for-profit hospital, RHI embraces its role as the healthcare provider of choice for our community.

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<td>Charity Care (at cost)</td>
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<td>Medicaid Losses (at cost)</td>
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New MRI “Puts Us at the Forefront”

A new MRI has been installed in the hospital and Claude Waters, Director of Radiology, said the benefits of having this new piece of equipment and having it in a new location are enormous.

“First, people will appreciate that we’ve moved our MRI services inside the hospital instead of having it in a trailer outside the building,” Waters explained. “So the convenience factor alone will make people very happy. Also, this puts all of our imaging services in one physical space within the hospital.”

Dr. Luke Person, radiologist, added that the new MRI is an upgrade from the hospital’s current MRI and will provide better images and better diagnoses for patients. “It puts us at the forefront of imaging technology,” said Person. “There’s no need to travel elsewhere. We have it here at home.”

Perhaps the greatest technological advantage the new MRI will provide is more detailed breast exams, something that Dr. Person says will give more peace of mind to patients and better information to physicians treating breast health issues. Breast MRIs and MRI-guided breast biopsies are more thorough ways to detect breast cancer, he said, and all of that means greater accuracy of test results.

“From the breast health issues this MRI will address, we will experience better quality of all MRI imaging,” Person added. “We will see improvements in MRIs of the pelvis, abdomen, and small joints, and we will see better imaging of the spine in cancer patients. The end result is dramatic improvements for our patients and the physicians who treat them.”

Douglas Sheets Named President of NC Medical Society

Douglas D. Sheets, MD, of Rutherford OB/GYN Associates was installed as the 156th President of the North Carolina Medical Society in October during the Society’s Annual Meeting in Raleigh. Dr. Sheets succeeds Albert J. Osbahr, MD, of Hickory, who served as president during the past year.

A strong advocate for physicians who practice in rural areas and smaller communities, Dr. Sheets expects to address a variety of issues during his tenure as president of the Medical Society. “Along with the many issues tied to health care system reform, I expect to advocate for patient safety and welfare while representing the Medical Society in the coming year,” Dr. Sheets said. “We want to provide access to quality health care for all citizens of our state.”

Dr. Sheets grew up in Churubusco, Indiana, where his mother and father were the only EMTs in the area. He received his undergraduate and medical degrees from Indiana University and completed his residency training in OB/GYN and family practice at Bayfront Medical Center in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Dr. Sheets says he has delivered almost 4,000 babies since he and his wife Kay moved to Rutherfordton in 1978, when he entered private practice with Rutherford OB/GYN Associates and joined the staff at Rutherford Hospital. He has served as Chief of the OB/GYN service and as Chief of Staff. He continues to serve on several hospital committees.

Outside of his practice, Dr. Sheets enjoys making pottery and stained glass, hiking, photography and spending time with his three adult children who live in the area.
Rutherford Orthopaedics Breaks Ground to Expand Facility

A groundbreaking ceremony was held in August for a new addition to the offices of Rutherford Orthopaedics. Surgeons from Rutherford Orthopaedics joined RHI board members, administrators and staff in announcing the project, which is expected to be completed in 2010.

“The addition at Rutherford Orthopaedics is in response to growing demand by patients and the surrounding communities to provide an even greater volume of orthopedic services and care,” according to Dave Bixler, Rutherford Hospital president and CEO.

Rutherford Orthopaedics employs all board-certified orthopedic surgeons Drs. Mike Roberts and Chip Bond, along with Dr. Jason Glover, who is a fellowship-trained foot and ankle specialist.

Rutherford Orthopaedics has consistently produced among the highest patient satisfaction results in the organization, Bixler added. In order to more fully serve the growing

New Cancer Comfort

Enduring cancer and the chemotherapy treatments that often accompany the diagnosis can be as draining emotionally as they are physically. The surroundings of the treatment area for cancer patients, therefore, can actually serve an effective purpose in the healing process. Katie Miller, a patient and family support liaison at RHI, saw this as an opportunity to help enhance a cancer treatment room on the 2nd Medical Unit.

“After visiting a cancer patient, I had the desire to provide a more comfortable room for the cancer patients as they battle for their life. I thought the patients deserved only the best for the last days,” said Miller.

“The first patient to utilize the newly designed room was a newly diagnosed cancer patient. The nurse told me she was coming from ICU and was very sick. I asked a coworker to visit her and bring her a gift bag. The patient was so appreciative and thanked her with tears. Throughout the week the nurse said the patient kept commenting on how she loved the pillow that was in the gift bag. It was the perfect size to hold her head up on the chair or to cradle her swollen arm while in bed. She said she also enjoyed the plants and soft music that were in the room as well.”

RHI is grateful to the Rutherford Hospital Auxiliary for providing the funds to make this room so unique for patients who need this special touch during a difficult time in their lives.

New EKG Process

Is Cutting-Edge

The hospital was proud to have implemented a new electronic EKG management system in the fall. Five new EKG machines were purchased to interface with computers to make electronic interpretation possible. Working in conjunction with our PMCS system EKGS can now be accessed from office or even home computers and confirmed within minutes. The process has received good feedback from physicians who read EKGS and the hospital immediately saw the positive effects from the technology. “We’re happy to help physicians deliver more effective patient care,” said Joyce McCain, director of cardiology services. “To have what we have for a hospital our size is pretty amazing.”

Baby Expo 2009 A Big Success

In August Rutherford Hospital held its “Baby Expo 2009.” Previously the event was called the RHI Baby Fair, but the name change means that the focus has shifted more toward information and education about services and programs for expectant parents, new parents, grandparents and those planning a pregnancy, according to Lucy Collow, RNC, the event's organizer and RHI's coordinator of Great Expectations. Among other activities, attendees met Sharai Amaya, MD, the newest OB/GYN physician at Rutherford OB/GYN Associates, as well as other practice physicians Jim Godfrey, MD, Jeff Sabolovic, MD and Celeste Wiltsie, MD.

Camp WheezKnot - RHI also presented “Camp WheezKnot” again this past summer. The goal is to offer a fun and safe camp for children ages 7-12 years old who have common needs – to manage their chronic asthma, have a medically supervised camp experience and make friends for life! Over 25 volunteers staffed the camp including regular camp leaders, RHI medical staff, nurses and respiratory therapists. In addition to educational sessions, the camp provided sports activities, including swimming, boating, fishing, and healthy foods, crafts and other entertainment.

RHI Supports Kids with Camps

Camp G.O.L.D. Rush - Teaching kids to control diabetes so diabetes doesn't control them is what Camp G.O.L.D. Rush is all about. The first-ever installment of this camp, organized by Anita Phillips of the RHI Education Department and held this past summer, combined sports and fun with diabetes education and support to give children with diabetes, and their families, the tools they need to live happy, healthy, balanced lives. Campers heard from a tri-athlete who has learned to manage diabetes and also enjoyed a hay ride, a puppet show, crafts, lunch, petting and feeding two llamas, and learning how to make healthy snacks.

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New Cancer Resource Center and Patient Navigator Program Established

Rutherford Hospital partnered with The Duke Endowment to build a new Cancer Resource Center and initiate the Cancer Care Patient Navigator Program.

When you are facing cancer, knowing that you don’t have to do it alone can make all the difference. A Patient Navigator is an experienced cancer care nurse who works with patients from the time of their diagnosis and lends support through treatment, recovery and survivorship. Dee Allen, RN, a cancer survivor herself, currently serves as the Patient Navigator. This program helps patients and their families to better understand their diagnosis and treatment as well as provide emotional support along the way. As the treatment for cancer becomes increasingly complex, it is important to know that Rutherford Hospital is here to provide you with knowledgeable and caring medical professionals who will be with you every step of the way.

The new Cancer Resource Center, unveiled to the public in April and conveniently located in the OneSource Healthcare Services building in Forest City, is a place where patients come for support and resources. A compassionate nurse experienced in cancer care is available free to those who need them. Support programs and groups are offered which help patients meet other cancer survivors and learn ways to better cope with their treatment and side effects.
This past spring Haley decided there was still more she could do. Along with her grandmother and mother, Haley started to collect yard sale items. Haley and her grandmother Freda Ledford proudly presented $200 to the Pink Ladies Cancer Support Group of Rutherford Hospital at one of the group’s meetings. When asked what she would like to accomplish with her donation, Haley stated, “I want my donation to help ladies here in our community, to help them get mammograms.”

Cancer Survivor’s Unique Idea

Thanks go to Arlene Coberg, a breast cancer survivor and member of the Pink Ladies Cancer Support Group. She was saddened to hear that many women in our county forgo having their annual mammogram because they do not have medical insurance and cannot afford the cost of a mammogram.

She purchased a dozen ceramic piggy banks, spray painted them pink, dressed them up with pink ribbons and hit the road. Along with the kindness of local businesses, she has made it possible for everyone to donate their change and help women who need a mammogram. The proceeds go to the Rutherford Hospital Foundation’s Mammogram Program and 100 percent of the funds are used to provide mammograms for women in our community. “In just two weeks Arlene’s pink piggy banks collected over $100. What a difference this will make for women in our county!” states Jamie Ingraham, RN, BSN, Cancer Outreach Coordinator for Rutherford Hospital.

Cancer Survivors Try Hand at Dragon Boat Racing

“Team Mashed and Splashed,” a group of breast cancer survivors from Rutherford and Spartanburg counties, competed in its first Dragon Boat Race in August and placed third in their division.

The motivation for these survivors to hit the water and paddle their hearts out was to raise money to support Rutherford Hospital Foundation’s Mammogram Program. The program helps women who are medically uninsured and unable to afford a screening mammogram obtain one free of charge.

“This is one of many fund raising events that support the Mammogram Program but none is more appreciated then the effort these cancer survivors put forward to help others,” stated Jill Miracle, Executive Director of Rutherford Hospital’s Foundation. She added, “Each year the Foundation provides screening mammograms for 80-100 women in our county and the majority of the funding comes from individuals or groups of women committed to helping others.”

The Dragon Boat Race in August was part of the Hickory Nut Gorge Olympiad event that raises money for local charities. Jamie Ingraham, Cancer Outreach Coordinator for Rutherford Hospital and the team’s captain, said, “It is an honor to be designated as one of the charities supported by the Olympiad. There couldn’t be a better testament than the spirit of these ladies that there is life after a cancer diagnosis. I hope this encourages other cancer survivors to join a support group and get involved.”

RHI, UNC Partner In Fight Against Cancer

This year Rutherford Hospital and Dr. Matt Rees, oncologist, announced a partnership with graduate students from the University of North Carolina School of Public Health and Walter Shepherd, Executive Director of the North Carolina Comprehensive Cancer Program, in the fight against cancer.

The joint project to develop a computerized cancer risk assessment tool was launched this fall. A computer program will provide individuals with a personalized report outlining their risk of being diagnosed with the six most common types of cancers. The level of an individual’s risk is based on their answers to questions about their family history and health practices. Along with the capability to provide a personalized cancer risk assessment, the program will provide an individualized plan of how to reduce the risk of being diagnosed with cancer and ways to find cancer in its earliest stages when treatment is most effective.

The Cancer Outreach Program plans to offer the personalized cancer risk assessment to the community free of charge at the Cancer Resource Center located in Forest City, at community health fairs and on the hospital’s website. Rutherford County will be the pilot county for the project and there are plans to launch the project statewide through the North Carolina Comprehensive Cancer Program. The computer program should be available for use in Rutherford County in the spring of 2010.

Graduate students from UNC Chapel Hill met with hospital and community members to discuss the cancer risk assessment tool.

New Physicians Join Medical Staff

Rutherford Hospital Inc. was pleased to welcome three new physicians to the medical staff in 2009.

Sharai Amaya, M.D., an Obstetrician/Gynecologist, joined Rutherford OB/GYN Associates in July. A native of Galifey, SC, Dr. Amaya attended Erskine College, the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, and completed her residency in the Greenville Hospital System where she achieved the highest academic standing in the residency. Dr. Amaya was also awarded the Donald F. Richardson National Research Award by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists for research regarding endometriosis.

Dr. Mary Campagna-Gibson, neurologist, also recently joined Rutherford Internal Medicine Associates. With expertise in neurology and sleep medicine, Dr. Campagna-Gibson has a clinical interest in all aspects of neurodiagnostic medicine, including epilepsy, sleep studies and nerve conduction studies.

Dr. Rick Halliday joined the RHI team of Hospitalists from Craven Regional Medical Center in New Bern, NC. He graduated from North Carolina State University and completed his residency in Greenville NC. He practiced hospitalist medicine in Scottsdale and Phoenix, AZ, before returning to NC to practice at Craven Hospital. As of September 1st he began serving as the Medical Director of the hospitalist program at RHI. A hospitalist is a physician whose primary focus is the medical care of hospitalized patients.