

House Calls

St. Luke's Visiting Nurse Association | Summer 2018



Caring for Patients Full Circle, A Conversation with Joanne Calabrese, DO

Joanne Calabrese, DO, has been practicing at St. Luke's Internal Medicine in Tamaqua for 15 years. Having received her medical education and practicing a short while in

Philadelphia, the transition to the small coal region was challenging at first. In the early 2000s female physicians were still sparse in Schuylkill and Carbon counties so Dr. Calabrese had to "earn her place" in the tightly knit community. The needs of the region were much different than those of Philadelphia, approximately 100 miles south of Tamaqua, but Dr. Calabrese embraced the challenge and set out to earn the community's trust.

Dr. Calabrese's training and education in internal medicine ensures that no two days are alike and she "sees a little bit of everything." She is well qualified to handle the broad and comprehensive spectrum of illnesses that affect adults. Dr. Calabrese regularly diagnoses and treats chronic illness, while promoting wellness and disease prevention. Dr. Calabrese, explains, "I treat everything from diabetes, to allergies and sinus infections, and also perform routine physicals." As a way to reduce readmissions, she often sees patients following hospital stays to confirm they are comfortable with their discharge instructions and assist with medication concerns. Dr. Calabrese sees patients over the age of 12, through all stages of life and health care needs. "It's not unusual for me to treat multi-generations

of the same family. I enjoy the ongoing relationships and getting to know the families and extended families," says Dr. Calabrese.

Recognizing an opportunity for education in the region, Dr. Calabrese's role in the community reaches beyond the confines of St. Luke's Miners Campus. Last summer she led "Walk with a Doc," part of a St. Luke's University Health Network family fun initiative, *Get Your Tail on the Trail*, encouraging individuals to meet their personal fitness goals. Much to her surprise, 70 individuals walked with her through town. "This type of event provides a great opportunity for me to interact with the community and for individuals to get to know me. And, everyone has a great time." The first walk was so successful that Dr. Calabrese now hosts several walks throughout the year. Dr. Calabrese has also donned a Cat in the Hat top hat on more than one occasion, reading to students in area schools. "Connecting with the community inspires me and ultimately helps me provide better care to my patients," shares Dr. Calabrese.

In her role as hospice liaison, Dr. Calabrese works with St. Luke's experienced staff of hospice nurses, social workers, chaplains, aides and volunteers, as well as a variety of area physicians. It is her responsibility to confirm patients meet hospice care criteria and then oversee their end-of-life care plan. Dr. Calabrese finds the hospice component of her practice rewarding. "Delivering bad news is not as unexpected as you would think. Patients are often not surprised to learn they are facing a life-limiting illness,"

Continued on page 4

St. Luke's VNA

St. Luke's Visiting Nurse Association, as part of the St. Luke's University Health Network, will provide compassionate, excellent quality, cost-effective home health care, hospice services and home-based parent/child programs.

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St Luke's
VISITING NURSE
ASSOCIATION

2 St. Luke's Hospice-Butterfly,
Blue Mountain Merger

3 Nurse-Family Partnership
Celebrates Mother's Day

4 Bike Event, Continued Joanne
Calabrese, Memorial Tree of Life

5-6 Memorial and Tribute Listing,
United Way, Luminaria Event



St. Luke's Hospice (and a Butterfly) Brought Peace, Comfort

When the nurses from the St. Luke's Hospice care team visited the Padua home, they comforted Dorothy, telling her that she would see and experience things that would remind her of her husband Nemesio after he passed away.

Those words proved to be true. Last summer, during an event honoring hospice patients who had passed away, something special happened.

"St. Luke's Hospice held a butterfly release in a garden outside of the church after the service," recalls Dorothy, a Bethlehem resident. "They opened up the box and these butterflies just fluttered around. It was beautiful and touching. All of a sudden, this one butterfly came and landed on my cheek and stayed there. He didn't leave me. My daughter said to me, 'Mom, that's Dad telling you that everything is okay.' I believe that's true."

'Mom, that's Dad telling you that everything is okay.' I believe that's true.'

Dorothy and Nemesio – who went by the nickname "Pat" – had been married for 61 years and raised two daughters. He worked in the banking industry for 34 years. "He was very practical," Dorothy said of her husband. "That was the banker in him. He was always telling me to be prepared for the future."

One thing they weren't prepared for was Nemesio's cancer diagnosis. What started out as prostate cancer spread to his liver.

"His wish was to pass away at home because he was most comfortable and relaxed there," says Dorothy, herself a cancer survivor.

She admittedly didn't know much about hospice. But she read about various care options, and she and Pat agreed that St. Luke's Hospice care was by far their best choice.

"I believe selecting St. Luke's Hospice was the best thing we ever did," Dorothy says. "They took such great care of Pat. Most importantly, they became our family. Pat really loved them. He looked forward to them coming here."

Today, Dorothy wears Pat's ashes in a butterfly charm on a necklace. She feels he's still with her and takes comfort in knowing that Pat was with her during the butterfly release ceremony. Everything, indeed, is okay.

St. Luke's Home Health Team Expands with Blue Mountain Merger



*St. Luke's Home Health Northwest Team
(not all team members were available for photo)*

Blue Mountain Health System's two Carbon County hospitals and other entities united with St. Luke's University Health Network on December 31, 2017, enhancing the health care and quality of life of Carbon County residents. As a result, St. Luke's Home Health gained more than 30 professionals including nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, home health aides, managers and back office staff.

According to Diane Ankrom, Vice President, Patient Care Services, Home Health at St. Luke's, the Blue Mountain Home Health transition to St. Luke's Home Health went amazingly well, involving efforts of many from both entities. Says Ankrom, "The transition touched just about everyone in home health in some way or another. Existing staff covered a larger caseload while precepting new staff, the scheduling and intake department coordinated the influx of new patients, and our facilities and purchasing manager was tasked with managing the physical move and the coordination of supplies." In addition, a new Education Coordinator and Admission Specialists facilitated training a large group of employees all at the same time. Throughout the transition, home health managers and the administrative team coordinated all the little details. "It was truly a team effort," recalls Ankrom.

St. Luke's Home Health professionals provide care and education to individuals and their family members as they recover from surgery, such as a joint replacement, or while managing an illness or injury. Services are provided in the home under a plan of treatment established and approved by the patient's physician. St. Luke's Home Health makes nearly 100,000 visits annually.

Thanks to the recent merger with Blue Mountain Health System, St. Luke's has a larger footprint in Carbon, Monroe, Northampton and parts of Schuylkill counties. Home health patients in these areas take comfort in their familiarity of the staff caring for them and the physicians benefit from the continued relationship with a home health team they already know.

According to Rhonda Young, formerly of Blue Mountain Home Health Care and now St. Luke's Home Health Patient Care Manager for the Northwest Territory, patients, physicians and employees are thrilled to be part of St. Luke's. "The added resources now available to our physicians and patients as a result of the merger are wonderful," says Young. Specifically, Young cited the educational opportunities, the availability of wound care centers and enhanced customer service. "Our physicians love how quickly they receive call backs," shares Young. When asked about the status of the transition between the two Home Health departments, Young replies "there is no more transition, we are all one team."

Echoing Young's sentiment, Ankrom goes on to say, "The individuals from Blue Mountain are all seasoned home health professionals and brought enthusiasm and positivity to the transition. It is truly a pleasure to have them as part of St. Luke's Home Health."

St. Luke's Home Health team is dedicated to helping patients stay in their homes and their neighborhoods. The dedicated staff provides home health services in Northampton, Lehigh, Upper Bucks, northeast Montgomery and adjacent portions of Berks, Carbon, Monroe and Schuylkill counties.

St. Luke's Nurse-Family Partnership Celebrates **Mother's Day**

On May 17, 2018, St. Luke's Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), in collaboration with The Banana Factory, hosted "Mommy and Me," celebrating motherhood and the bond mothers build with their children. The event included story time instruction provided by Miss Regina from the Bethlehem Area Public Library, music therapy with Miss Hilary of More Than Music, LLC., and family portraits courtesy of Little Dear Photography.

This event, held at The Banana Factory in Bethlehem, was part of NFP's ongoing effort to provide more family engagement opportunities and encourage moms to build social connections with other mothers in similar circumstances. "It's so important for these moms to begin developing their own social support networks," says Tiffany Grabinski, BSN, RN, Program Manager of St. Luke's Nurse-Family Partnership. "Having someone to talk to about your children is essential for maintaining positive parent-child relationships. In fact, it is something that is important to all moms, not just our NFP moms."

More than 60 guests attended "Mommy and Me," including 20 NFP mothers, their babies, and other family members. Grabinski said, "It was wonderful to see so many fathers at the event." The families and little ones especially loved the story and music times. Everyone gathered together on the carpet and sang favorites, including "Wheels on the Bus" and "Itsy Bitsy Spider." Moms and their families also learned how to make reading to your baby exciting and engaging. To commemorate the day, each family will receive a professional portrait captured at the event.

The event also served as the kick-off for the Nurse-Family Partnership quilt project. NFP moms were invited to write about the best thing about being a mom. Their writings will be taken to all upcoming NFP public events and will eventually be sewn into a hanging quilt for display in the NFP office and at special events.

Mothers enjoyed connecting with one another and allowing their babies to engage with other babies. In fact, many moms exchanged phone numbers. St. Luke's Nurse-Family Partnership looks forward to strengthening community and family relationships through future engagement activities.



St. Luke's Nurse-Family Partnership's Mission

To improve pregnancy outcomes by helping women engage in good preventive health practices, including getting prenatal care from their healthcare providers, improving their diet, and reducing their use of cigarettes, alcohol, and illegal substances.

To improve child health and development by helping parents provide responsible and competent care.

To improve the economic self-sufficiency of the family by helping parents develop a vision for their own future, plan future pregnancies, continue their education, and find work.



ANNUAL CHARITY BIKE EVENT



**RAISED MORE THAN
\$14,000
FOR ST. LUKE'S HOSPICE**

More than 200 riders, from age 7 to 76 and from as far away as Florida, participated in St. Luke's Hospice's 8th Annual Charity Bike Ride, held Saturday, June 2, 2018. Bike enthusiasts of all levels rode either the 20-mile or 30-mile trail ride, starting at the Lehigh Trailhead on the D&L National Heritage Trail in Lehigh.

Some participants were biking enthusiasts while many others took part in the ride to show support, and gratitude, for St. Luke's Hospice. This year's race event raised more than \$14,000.

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Continued from front page

explains Dr. Calabrese. "For many individuals and their families, the unknown is scary, but having a plan and knowing someone is going to help them through their journey is comforting."

Dr. Calabrese wishes people would take advantage of hospice care earlier. Too often people begin hospice care at the very end of their lives, missing the opportunity for patients and families to come to better terms with the situation, and missing out on a higher level of physical and emotional comfort care. "Waiting so long prevents people from taking advantage of all hospice care has to offer," laments Dr. Calabrese.

When asked what she finds most fulfilling about her career, Dr. Calabrese responds, "The connection I've formed with patients is almost indescribable. I am fortunate to really get to know people through my practice and, with the hospice component, taking care of people at the end of their life. It's not sad for me ... I feel privileged to see patients for 20 plus years and bringing them and their family full circle."

Dr. Calabrese, her husband and 9-year-old son live in New Ringgold with their three dogs.



Memorial Tree of Life

Honor a relative, a loved one or a special friend by dedicating a plaque in their name on the Memorial Tree of Life at St. Luke's Hospice House. Naming opportunities are available for those who desire to leave an everlasting memorial of a loved one on a Leaf, Acorn, Stone or Dove* plaque. One-time gifts and pledges of \$1,000 or more will secure your personalized plaque.

Philanthropy brings comfort and care to thousands of people each year. Proceeds from the Memorial Tree of Life will support St. Luke's Hospice Endowment Fund to ensure that everyone in need of hospice care will have access to this special resource, regardless of their ability to pay.

For more information about naming opportunities, memorializing a loved one or leaving a legacy gift, please contact Melissa Siegfried, Director of Development at 484-526-3691 or Melissa.Siegfried@sluhn.org

*Dove available only through December 2018

See enclosed envelope for order details.



St Luke's
Hospice

In Memory of

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Leonard Albanese
Gerald J. Albert
Howard H. Andreas
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In Honor of

Richard E. Katz
Edward Musselman
Donna Weaver
Marianne C. Williams

The following names were inadvertently omitted in our 2016 memorial and tribute donation listing. With apologies, we would like to recognize today.

In Memory of

Luther R. Campbell
Donald Glick
Hazel M. Kugel
Charlene A. Preletz
Robert H. Pursell
Betty J. Sterner

In Honor of

Jay H. Gilbert

We are very grateful to friends and family members who directed support to St. Luke's Hospice in memory of loved ones. If you are aware of corrections or omissions to this list, please contact the Development Office at 484-526-3067 or send an email to Developmentoffice@sluhn.org.

If you would like to make a memorial gift to St. Luke's Hospice, you can do so by sending a check to: St. Luke's Hospice, c/o Development Office, 801 Ostrum Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015 or make a credit card gift using St. Luke's secure online giving website at: <https://www.slnh.org/vna/donate>



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THANK YOU

SAVE THE DATE: NOVEMBER 10, 2018

The 6th Annual
Luminaria Lighting

The annual luminaria lighting ceremony provides friends and families an opportunity to honor the memory of those who have passed away but are not forgotten.



This year's event will be held at St. Luke's Center in Allentown.

House Calls is published by St. Luke's Visiting Nurse Association.

St. Luke's Home Health/St. Luke's Hospice/Nurse-Family Partnership
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