

## From Our Offices

This month, a personal note. I am experiencing a wide range of emotions as I announce my retirement as Director of HEMOCARE's Mental Health Division effective July 1. I am looking forward with joy to having more time to spend with my family in Georgia and my husband's children and grandchildren in California. I also happily anticipate more time for travel, hiking, sailing, photography and some of my other long-time hobbies. I may even have time to read a novel or two!

On the other hand, my anticipation is bittersweet. I will miss being a part of a great organization. I have enjoyed my time with HEMOCARE over the past 15 plus years, and our accomplishments mean a lot. Most important to me are the relationships I have had with some truly special people. There are too many of you to name, and I wish I could tell each of you individually what you have meant to me. We are all fortunate to work for a company where employees as well as clients are truly valued and respected and where so many dedicated employees do a great job. I can only say that this attitude goes from the top down; **Rankin** set the tone when he started HEMOCARE over 16 years ago, and it continues today. I respect and enjoy Rankin, and will miss working with him on a regular basis.

One of the things that I feel good about as I prepare to leave is that I know that there are many dedicated people at HEMOCARE who will continue the good work we are known for. I am especially glad that **Margaret Mason** has accepted the position of Director and will provide great leadership as HEMOCARE adapts to our ever-changing environment. Many of you know Margaret, who has been with HEMOCARE over 13 years. She is currently the Director of Quality Assurance and Training, but does so much more. She is the one responsible for the good training HEMOCARE is known for and for seeing that we maintain quality. She's also just a great person!

Thanks to each of you for all you have done, and keep up the good work!

*Sara*

## Anniversaries

Among the many great HEMOCARE direct care employees are 19 who celebrate their 5<sup>th</sup> or greater anniversary with HEMOCARE this month. **Ann Byrd** of our Boone office and **Carol Robinson** of Statesville have been with us 11 years, while **Myrtle Summers** of Statesville has reached the 10-year milestone. **Shirley Baker** of Statesville; **Sally Lancaster** of Tarboro; **Priscilla McDuffie** and **Ardell Powell** of Whiteville; and **Kimberly Simon** of Wilmington are all celebrating 8 years of service. **Karen Barnes** and **Betty Flood**, both from Tarboro, have been with us 7 years. **Jessica Call** and **Mary Harmon** of Boone, **Jim Johnson** of Statesville and **Carolyn McFarlin** of Tarboro are veterans of 6 years with us, while **Jill Falco** of Boone; **Peggy Hart** of Tarboro; and **Gail Jones**, **Lydia Powell-Riddick**, and **Becky Sutton-Zerr** of Wilmington have all been with us 5 years.

We appreciate the dedication and skills of each of these employees and indeed of you all. Thanks for all you do.

## Employee Spotlight

**Amanda Bellamy** has been employed with HEMOCARE Management for eight years. She was hired to work with a client who received CAP/MR/DD services and remained with the client for six years. Since Amanda's first assignment, she has



also worked with additional individuals receiving services under the programs for Developmental Disabilities and CAP/DA services. She continues to increase her understanding of developmental disabilities as she faces new challenges with each day.

Amanda is a very dedicated employee. She is always willing to help and lend assistance. She manages her time wisely in

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## Client Spotlight

**Patrick** is an outstanding young man with a great personality. He is full of life and enjoys staying busy. Patrick is a very tall young man and definitely a "gentle giant."

Patrick has been with HEMOCARE for the last 10 years, receiving



services since March 2000. His Behavioral Technician, **Mary Harmon** began working with Patrick in November 2004. Since she began supporting Patrick she has noticed that he has an easier time adapting to change and has increased his independent living skills. Mary provides Home and Community Supports and Respite, and Patrick has two additional Behavioral Technicians, his Aunt **Karen Blair**, who provides his Personal Care Services, and his brother, **Chris Marshall**, who fills in as needed. Patrick enjoys working with all of his staff, and together they make a great team.

Patrick likes to stay busy with a variety of activities. One of his favorite is going to the YMCA to work out as a way to stay healthy. Patrick also enjoys bowling and riding on his dad's golf cart at his home. Patrick's all-time favorite activity, though, is

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# Learning Opportunities

- **Handling a Crisis with Your Consumer**, Whiteville, June 23, 4 pm
- **Meal Planning and Diets**, Tarboro, July 8, 3-4 pm
- **DSS: Reporting Allegations, Definitions of Abuse and Legal and Ethical Responsibilities**, Boone, July 9, 9-11 am
- **More Alike than Different: Cultural Competency**, Statesville, July 21, 9-10 am, repeated 4-5 pm

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## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT (Continued from page 1)

order to find a balance between HOMECARE, her night job and family. Amanda is known within the HOMECARE office for her great sense of humor and her ability to make others smile.

The Wilmington office greatly appreciates Amanda's hard work and dedication. We look forward to working with her for many years to come.

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## CLIENT SPOTLIGHT (Continued from page 1)

going to Appalachian State University to watch his brother, Chris, play football. When Patrick is sitting in the stands, he is cheering loudly for his brother's team to win.

Patrick's parents, Charles and Martha Marshall are very supportive of Patrick and his services, and they are constantly aware of his needs. Patrick has a close relationship with his parents, brother and aunt. They have many fun outings in the community as a family.

Patrick has made progress with his communication skills using a Dynovox Speech Machine, which has become part of his routine during the past year. He is able to type information in his Dynovox, and it repeats the information back to him. Patrick has used the Dynovox to learn his parents' cell phone numbers, home address, and home phone number. Patrick also uses the Dynovox each day at Alexander Central High School as he works on his assignments.

One of the things that Patrick is really looking forward to this summer is attending summer camp. He looks forward to meeting new friends and being around old friends that he met at the camp last year. Patrick knows he will have a good time with the busy schedule of fun activities at the camp.

Patrick has made accomplishments during the last year and refuses to let his disabilities slow him down. Each day you can find Patrick with a positive attitude and a slight grin on his face to go with his great personality. He is definitely an inspiration to others.

# Sweet Dreams: Sleep Hygiene

Many describe sleep as one of the best parts of their day, while others chase sleep in desperation because they don't get enough. This may sound dramatic, but sleep really is crucial to our survival. Sleep disruption, lack of sleep, and on a more significant level, sleep disorders, all have at some time or another impacted most people.

To be our best, feel our best, and function at our best, we all need an appropriate amount of sleep. This is often times predetermined by our body's stage of life, development, psychological stressors and perhaps other factors. Researchers continue trying to understand why some need more than others. Why do some people function well with six hours while others need eight to 10? Considering sleep's importance, how do you know if you are in fact getting enough sleep? If we do find that sleep escapes us, is there a cure for insomnia besides a pill?

What many do not know about sleep is that just as we take care of our bodies with daily hygiene habits, sleep can also be managed and taken care of with a consistent routine known as *sleep hygiene*. Just as you take care of your teeth daily to keep them healthy, you can practice good sleep habits with daily and nighttime rituals.

General factors to consider that may impact the quality of your sleep include the amount of time you actually spend in bed, what you eat and drink, your daily exposure to natural light, exercise, napping habits, and when and how you handle anxiety or stressful thoughts during the day. Sleep is regulated by an internal clock known as your *circadian rhythm*, which impacts the length and quality of sleep. This clock is mainly regulated by exposure to natural light and a naturally occurring chemical in our brain known as *melatonin*.

Both can be impacted by environmental and biological factors. Temperature, aging, drug use (including nicotine, caffeine and alcohol), sickness and shortened daylight hours can all also impact this delicate rhythm. The more consistent your internal clock can be maintained, the better sleep you will get, and the easier it will be to wake up to an alarm clock.

Once we reach 40, our sleep patterns generally change. Individuals usually find they awake more during the night than they did in their younger years. Exercising too strenuously within 3 hours of bedtime and drinking alcohol within 6 hours of bedtime can have the same impact.

Creating good *sleep hygiene* means developing pre-sleep rituals (just like we do for children) in order to interrupt the connection between worries and stress and bedtime. These can be as short as 10 minutes in the evening or as long as an hour and can include activities as simple flossing and brushing your teeth, getting your clothes ready for the next day, reading something light, or concentrating on your breathing and thinking about what you are grateful for when you lay down to sleep. Do not make a "to do" list in your bed! However, you may find that you can turn off the noise before you enter your bedroom by making a list of the stressors of the day along with a plan or to do list to address them. However, try to follow it up with a period of relaxation like a warm shower or a hot bath. If you are still lying in bed and find you can't fall asleep, don't continuously look at the clock; this will just leave you more frustrated and activate your brain. Cover it up if you must.

Other sleep tips you can practice for a better night's rest: Don't eat or drink large amounts before bedtime, but don't go to bed hungry; avoid nicotine, caffeine and alcohol in the evening; Wait until you are somewhat sleepy before going to bed; keep your bedroom comfortable, cool, dark and quiet; only use sleeping pills as a LAST resort but you can consider herbs and nutrients that might help insomnia; avoid napping after 4 p.m.; exercise regularly. Go to bed at the same time every night and try to wake up at the same time every morning, and don't read heavy material, make to do lists, talk on the phone, or play cards in bed.

Sweet Dreams, everyone!