



## CULLATHER BRAIN TUMOR QUALITY OF LIFE CENTER



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(804)287-7809 [www.braintumorqol.com](http://www.braintumorqol.com)

Volume 5

### Cullather Center Happenings!

By: Dr. Sherry Fox

Many of you have told us that you love to hear how things are going at the Cullather Center and so we wanted to include a brief update in this publication. Over the past 15 months we have served 136 patients and families. Our second volunteer training in October was a big success and we now have 14 officially trained volunteers! We are conducting additional volunteer training sessions in January 2008. As you will note in this newsletter we hosted our very first "Holiday Happening" to bring together our wonderful patients, families, and volunteers for an evening of fun and entertainment to kick off the holiday season. Once you read the story about the party in this issue or talk to those who attended I am sure you will not miss the one next year!

Many of you may remember that I was invited to the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) on September 27, 2007 for the delivery of the inaugural lectureship for the UCSF Brain Tumor Survivorship program. It was an incredible experience and the first time a nurse had ever been invited to do such a presentation. The lecture was extremely well attended by neurosurgeons, neurologists, medical residents, nurses, social workers and staff from the National Brain Tumor Foundation. Perhaps most importantly patients and caregivers were also present. I have since been contacted by one of the caregiver attendees who would like to start a center like the Cullather Center at UCSF. Several important opportunities to work with colleagues across the country on projects benefiting brain tumor patients are emerging from my trip to UCSF. One notable project includes an invitation to participate as one of 25 experts on brain tumor patients in the country at a Quality of Life forum hosted by the Tug McGraw Foundation in March of 2008.

In November, I attended the Society for Neuro-Oncology meeting in Dallas, Texas. This meeting brings together researchers, scientists, and health care professionals from around the US and the world to present and discuss key scientific findings in the quest to cure brain tumors. Patients and families also attended this meeting. The State of Virginia was well represented at the meeting by Kevin and Marguerite Sciuk, David Bailey and I. (see photo). Research for the treatment of brain tumors presented at this meeting was heavily focused on molecular targets within brain tumors and treatments to attack those targets including such things as vaccines, and monoclonal antibodies. Although no new breakthrough therapies were presented at the meeting, much progress is being made in identifying new targets within the tumors and novel ways to get to those targets. The greatest inspiration from the meeting came not only from the findings and the presentations but rather from the number of people who are dedicated and tireless in their scientific efforts to find the cure for brain tumors!

It has been a wonderful and busy year at the Cullather Brain Tumor QOL Center. The next year will continue to be focused on the development of new and better services for our patients. Stay tuned for more "Cullather Center Happenings" in future newsletters.



Standing: (l. to r.) Kathy Oliver, David Bailey, Dr. Sherry Fox  
Seated: Kevin and Marguerite Sciuk

# First Annual CBTQLC Holiday Happening!

By: Maribeth Carr

The holiday spirit was celebrated early this year with the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Cullather Brain Tumor Quality of Life Center's *Holiday Happening*. More than 70 guests, including volunteers, brain tumor patients, families, and supporters gathered on November 27<sup>th</sup> for an evening of celebration, relaxation and fellowship.

Delicious treats and refreshments were prepared and served by renowned Richmond caterer, Joe DeFazio and his staff, including scallops wrapped in bacon, chicken salad, country ham and cornbread bites, roasted vegetables and many other savory delicacies. The food was outstanding!! Beautiful music by gifted young harpist Erin Roukous provided just the right ambience for the celebration. Relaxing massage treatments by Pam Owen and Jamie Lewis, hand therapy and beauty treatments provided by Kyle Grinnage and Venous Bolton of BeautiControl and healing touch massage by Annette McCabe were definitely a highlight of the evening. Holiday crafts for the children were led by Sue Copper and their creations were proudly used as gift tags on Christmas gifts. Precious family photos were also taken by talented photographers, Michelle Kennon and Leslie Strickler and then later sent to guests following the event!

Families and volunteers really got into the spirit of things as they donned elf and Santa hats during the evening. A raffle was held throughout the night, and twelve lucky guests received Christmas baskets filled with restaurant and grocery store gift certificates, toys, food, beauty products, holiday items, and much more. In addition, many special guests left with a beautiful poinsettia, and each patient's family was given a tin full of homemade goodies to enjoy during the holidays.

Dozens of volunteers and local businesses donated their time, goods, and services to make these gifts and prizes possible. The joyful evening was a huge success thanks to our many dedicated volunteers and very generous sponsors. The true meaning of the holiday season was shared by many!



*Marie Smook, Ted Smook,  
Ben Hathaway, Eddie Hathaway*



*Mr. & Mrs. Winston Traylor*



*Cullather grandchildren, Wigginton and Hockaday Children*



*Danny and Crystal Schoof*

# Living a New Normal: Racing Lawnmowers for Fun!

By: Maureen Bannister

I had the honor of interviewing brain tumor patient Darlene Haydon and her loving husband James at St. Mary's Hospital as Darlene was recuperating from pneumonia. Thankfully, Darlene has recuperated well and is now resting at home.

## 1. How did you become involved with the Cullather Brain Tumor Quality of Life Center?

**James:** "We heard about the center through St. Mary's Hospital. When Darlene was in the hospital last summer, Dr. Sherry Fox visited her room and let her know about the Center and the services they offered for brain tumor patients."

## 2. What have you found to be most helpful about the center?

**James:** "We have really appreciated the offers of support from the volunteers at the Center. We will never forget our experience the evening of the 'Holiday Happening' gathering on November 27<sup>th</sup> at the Center." **Darlene:** "I was treated 'like a queen.' It was a very special night that we will always treasure. We were very moved by how kind all the volunteers were to us and were especially excited to win a basket of goodies at the end of the night!"

## 3. What advice or "words of wisdom" have you found most helpful throughout your journey?

**Darlene and James:** "Prayer. Lots and lots of prayer. It's the best advice and the best gift anyone can give you. We've had prayers from California to Iraq. Our minister's son is fighting for our country over in Iraq and every week he talks to him and tells him who needs prayers and it has worked - Darlene's cancer is gone!"

## 4. What are your hobbies and interests?

**Darlene:** "Lawn mower racing, crocheting and my four grandchildren - especially the grandchildren. To us family is the most important thing."

## 5. What would readers find most surprising about you?

**Darlene:** "That I race lawn mowers! I started racing at age 58 and was still doing it at 60 until I got sick. My husband and children race too, but I own the biggest trophy!"

## 6. Do you have a favorite quote or daily words that give you inspiration that you would like to share?

**Darlene and James:** "I love you. Be happy. Very simple words that say it all. And James and I do everything together. If we need to get bread at the store, we go together. We live a simple life, we

don't ask for much, but we know how loved we are."

## 7. Tell us about your family.

**Darlene:** "We have two children, Kimberley who is 37 and Kevin who is 32. We have four grandchildren, Alan who is 16, JW who is 7, and two year old twins Holly and Haley. They are all the light of our lives and I cannot wait to get my strength back to take care of the precious twins!"



James and Darlene Haydon

## Volunteer Opportunities

By: Amv Click

Was one of your New Year's Resolutions to give back and volunteer in a meaningful way? Well, The Cullather Center has a place for you and your talents!

**Traveling Meal Makers:** Is cooking something you enjoy? We would like to begin a committee that occasionally provides a meal for a patient and their families on a situation by situation basis. Maybe for those returning home from a hospital stay or during an especially stressful time. We need volunteers who are willing to make a casserole or two, volunteers who would like to deliver the meals, and anyone who would like to help us organize this committee.

**Greeting Card Group:** We are looking for volunteers to send personalized cards to patients and their children and spouses during birthdays as well as offering encouragement and thoughts throughout the year. We also need volunteers to provide cards and stamps. If you would like to be involved in the organizing of this committee, we would love to have you!

**Center Scrapbooker:** Do you enjoy organizing photos and putting together scrapbooks? Well we could certainly use your talents! Now that the Center is hosting events, fundraisers and speakers, we would like to record our memories and experiences. Also, if you have scrapbooking supplies that you would like to donate, we would be delighted to accept them.

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Website Updater: This opportunity requires a person or committee to regularly update the content that appears on the Center's website. We have an actual Web designer who would input the information, so we just need a volunteer(s) to keep up with the information posted. This group could meet monthly or as frequently as needed.

"The Basket Group": We would like to convene a group to create "The Good Help" Basket. This would be basket that we would give to brain tumor patients/families in the hospital. The basket would contain helpful items like a roll of change, a small notebook and pen, snacks, phone card, magazines or puzzle books, small sample bottle of lotion or toothpaste, and the list goes on.

As you can see, all of these committees are in their infancy of the planning stages, so we are open to any ideas, thoughts and comments you would like to share! Please call Cathy at the Center at 287-7809 to volunteer.

## Gifts that keep on giving:

By: Cathy Willis

If you participate in any of the following you will be supporting the clients of the Cullather Center.

"Indomitable Spirit" Purchase a beautiful P. Buckely Moss hummingbird print, "Indomitable Spirit", created especially for the Center. The print is \$100 and all proceeds go directly to helping our patients.



Make a donation in Honor or Memory of a loved one: Your donation will support the Center's work so that we can continue to provide quality guidance and care to our patients. All donations are tax deductible and are a wonderful tribute to a loved one. Donations may be sent to:  
Cullather Brain Tumor Quality of Life Center  
5875 Bremono Road,  
St. Mary's Hospital  
MOB South, Suite 108  
Richmond, VA 23226

Please call 287-8700 for credit card donations.

Order a Prayer/Memorial Bracelet with the name or endearment of your loved one, dates, prayers, or scripture references. Feeling the bracelet on your wrist or seeing the name can bring a smile to your face or help you feel close to the person named. Each bracelet contains a religious symbol near the clasp (cross, crucifix, medal, star of David, etc.) as a sign that this is not just an adornment, but a vehicle for prayer. Many styles and colors are available. Enter CBTQLC and Code # 2005 when you order, (to order call 804-358-6104 or go to [www.rosarieswithnames.com](http://www.rosarieswithnames.com)) and a portion of the proceeds will come to the Center. These bracelets also make great gifts.



Prayer/Memorial bracelet in crystal fire polished glass/pewter gold finish with medal and crucifix



### Volunteer:

Our next Volunteer Training sessions will be January 22, 2008 from 11:00AM-1:00PM and January 28, 2008 from 6:00PM-8:00PM  
RSVP to Cathy at 287-7809. You need only attend one date.



