



Neighbors Helping Neighbors

The Newsletter of the Big Canoe® Wellness Collaborative

Volume 5 • Issue 4

November 2020

Hello Volunteers!

Welcome to our final Volunteer Newsletter for 2020! I hope this finds you and your families well. It has been a different year, for sure, as we have all struggled to cope with the many changes due to COVID-19. After reinstating all services over four months ago, with necessary process changes to protect our clients and volunteers, the Collaborative continues to provide rides, meals and visits to clients in Big Canoe. We are incredibly grateful for the many volunteers who enabled those services to continue. The Wellness Collaborative is truly a wonderful example of Neighbors Helping Neighbors!

As we approach year-end, we would like to say “Thank You” to Charlotte Johnson, who is moving from Visits Coordinator to Visits Back-up Coordinator and to David Patton who moves into the Role of Visits Coordinator. Additionally, Carolyn Mackey is stepping down from Rides Back-up after years of assisting that program. We will miss Carolyn and are so appreciative for all she has done for the Collaborative.

In other news, Beth Durban has joined the Steering Committee as our Support Group Coordinator. We are thrilled that Beth has agreed to lead these small, short-term grief support groups (look for her column in this Newsletter for more information). While initially offering grief support groups, Beth plans to later offer cancer support groups. This seems like a natural progression for the Wellness Collaborative and we hope you'll join us in spreading the word about the support groups to those within Big Canoe who might need that connection.

We are always looking for volunteers to join the Steering Committee, as a program coordinator or back-up to the coordinator. Please email us at bigcanoewc@gmail.com if you are interested in another role within the Collaborative or if you have any suggestions for our programs and services.

Thank you for all you do to serve your neighbors!

*Linda Ricklef
Steering Committee Chair
and Board Member*





10755 Big Canoe
Jasper, GA 30143
(706) 268-3334
info@bcwell.org
bigcanoewc@gmail.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Shiraz Alikhan

Vice-President

Jim Braley

Secretary/Treasurer

Jeff Stanley

Members

Judy Bellenger
Christine Flaherty
Bill Hoffman
Dr. Ross Milley
Ken Nichols
Linda Ricklef
Jack Schroder

STEERING COMMITTEE

Linda Ricklef, Chair
Laura Larimore
Charlotte Johnson
David Patton
Tracy Critchett
Cheryl Nicholson
Diane LaCharite
Phyllis Hogelin
Robyn Bish
Carolyn Mackey

From Our Board President, Shiraz Alikhan . . .

This has been a very unusual year for all of us and our clients. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank you, our wonderful volunteers, for hanging in there through “shelter in place” restrictions, the suspension and restart of our services, and the implementation of additional safety protocols to keep you and our clients safe. I hope that you are all doing well and staying safe. We’ve seen some uptick in service requests during the last few months but, in some ways, it feels like we’re starting over in making clients feel comfortable in asking us for help.

As we prepare for next year, we’ll also continue to see changes in the Board.

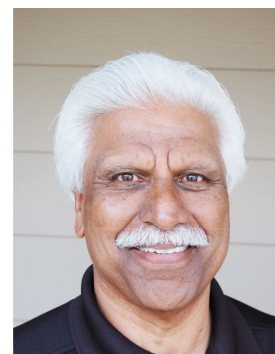
Ken Nichols has been a Board member since 2015 and served as Board president in 2017. Ken has provided steady counsel and provocative perspectives that helped us grow the organization.

Jeff Stanley has served as our treasurer since 2016 and has been instrumental in establishing our financial controls and procedures, as well as very capably managing our funds which puts us in a very good financial position going forward.

We deeply appreciate all that Ken and Jeff have done for the Collaborative and wish them all the best.

With Jeff’s departure as our treasurer, we are very fortunate to be able to welcome Gayle Falinski to the Board as our new treasurer. Gayle is a long-term resident of Big Canoe and an experienced CPA who has worked with other non-profit organizations.

While we continue to navigate the challenges of providing services during a pandemic, we feel very confident that we can deal with them because we have such a great team. Thank you so much for being part of our team.



*Shiraz Alikhan
Board President*

From our Rides Coordinator, Robyn Bish . . .

In These Uncertain Times... The Rides Program Drivers are still meeting the challenge and serving our Big Canoe neighbors.

Where are we now? The Rides Program currently has 28 active drivers. Clients are beginning to schedule appointments that have been “put off”. Since the June 15, 2020 restart of the Rides Program we have completed more than 20 rides. The process for transporting clients has been streamlined and appears to be satisfactory for both the clients and drivers (client and driver both wear masks and drivers do not wait inside the medical facility).

Looking ahead to 2021! We have an important position that needs to be filled. Our current Rides Backup Coordinator Carolyn Mackey has served faithfully since the inception of the Wellness Collaborative and will be “retiring” from her volunteer position at the end of 2020. Carolyn steps in and fills in for the Coordinator during vacations and other emergencies.

What can you do now? Consider if you would like to be the Rides Program Backup Coordinator. Send me an email or give me a call and I will be glad to explain the Backup Coordinator position in more detail....maybe even offer a “bribe”!

Seriously, I appreciate each driver in the Rides Program and understand very well that you are making a personal decision to participate at your convenience. Thank you for being an important part of our program!

Robyn Bish
404 226-4424 cell
bishrobyn@gmail.com

Robyn Bish



From our new Support Group Coordinator, Beth Durban . . .

Prior to moving to Big Canoe, I was a Nurse serving 3,000 parishioners and school children in a very large Catholic parish. My 14 years in this role gave me an opportunity to promote wellness in body, mind and spirit to a wide and varied age group.

One of the first things I was asked to do was to develop and facilitate a grief support group. My personal experience of being widowed at a young age and the many grief related college courses I had taken prepared me to do it. I developed a program to meet that need entitled “***A Time to Mourn.... a Time to Heal.***”

Fast forward to now, I have the role of establishing Support Groups for our community as a part of the WC Steering Committee. History repeats itself. The WC feels there is a need to offer a grief support group.

Let me explain a little about “***A Time to Mourn... a Time to Heal.***” It will be a small group of about six people meeting once a week for four weeks - an hour and a half each time. Hopefully we will be able to meet in the Spring of 2021 but our start will hinge on how Covid 19 is doing. Understanding and sharing one’s feelings with others who are experiencing a loss can help reduce the pain of isolation and provide hope and support instead.

Some of the objectives of the group:

- To understand the emotional and physical dynamics of grief
- To share personal experiences within a safe, caring and understanding environment
- To develop healthy coping skills and activities

Everyone learns in different ways, so there will be videos, music, sharing, and discussions. No one is required to speak and no one will be criticized or told how they should grieve. Each person’s grief is unique and significant.

Grief never ends...but it changes. It is a passage, not a place to stay. Grief is not a sign of weakness, nor a lack of faith... it is the price of love.

CPR Training

I have talked with Public Safety about providing CPR training. They are willing and able but the ready is delayed because of Covid. More to come!

Beth Durban
Support Group Coordinator



From Our Healthy Living Committee

By Sally Buckner . . .

The Silent Disease of Fragility

I'll refer to her as Kathy — an illustration of someone with several common health issues. Kathy thought she was healthy and physically fit. At age 45, she was trim, exercised regularly, and ate virtually no junk food. She felt great. But, after a routine DEXA (bone) scan Kathy was stunned to learn that she had severe osteoporosis. How did this happen to someone so young?

Bone is a tissue that is a reservoir for calcium, and forms the structure for our bodies. Its honeycomb configuration allows the bone to be both strong and relatively light. Unfortunately, with osteoporosis, the bones become very brittle. As bone mass, mineral density, and structure all diminish, the honeycomb deteriorates. Affecting both men and women, osteoporosis can develop undetected, and often is not diagnosed until someone breaks a bone.

Kathy was a poster child for someone particularly susceptible to osteoporosis. She was small-boned and Caucasian. Being lactose intolerant, she never drank milk or ate dairy products. At age 30 Kathy had a total hysterectomy. This limited her estrogen production — an important source of bone protection in females. She was later diagnosed with celiac disease and placed on a gluten free diet. With few gluten-free products available, her diet largely consisted of meat and cooked vegetables. Her only liquids were water and coffee. Given what was essentially a strict ketogenic diet, her bones were deteriorating undetected. Her system became highly acidic as her body worked to increase its alkalinity by leeching calcium from her bones. Additionally, she exercised aerobically but did no strength-training to stimulate bone formation.

Kathy took calcium daily to strengthen her bones, but it wasn't working. This was because she needed magnesium to enable her body to assimilate the calcium. In fact, the calcium (without magnesium) only gave her headaches, leg cramps and constipation.

So what should Kathy have done?

1. The impact of a high protein diet over time had cost her dearly. Our bodies need a balanced diet that includes both protein and complex carbohydrates. (Kathy could have eaten beans, for example).
2. Fortunately, she was eating vegetables which are great for bones. They are one of the best sources of vitamin C which stimulates the formation of bone-forming cells.
3. She needed calcium that was bio-available like the calcium found in dark leafy greens and cruciferous vegetables. Her calcium supplement should have been taken along with Vitamin K2, Vitamin D3, and Magnesium.
4. Recent studies have shown that probiotics can have a positive effect on calcium absorption and bone health. So Kathy should have considered adding yogurt, kefir, kombucha, sauerkraut, pickles, miso, tempeh, kimchi or sourdough bread to her diet.

5. Weight bearing exercise is key. Walking, particularly with elevation change, strength training, dancing, low-impact aerobics, elliptical training machines, stair climbing and gardening are all good choices. Additionally she should work on flexibility and balance to prevent falls.
6. Good news. Kathy can enjoy up to two drinks a day. In fact, they may actually help prevent fractures, however more than that could reduce the absorption of calcium.
7. Sunlight is important to the body's production of vitamin D. But this does not mean to pass on the sunscreen. If it is applied it just before going outside the 10-15 minutes before the sunscreen takes full effect offers enough exposure to boost vitamin D levels.
8. Finally, for a great bone boost, Kathy should consider putting the carcass of her Thanksgiving turkey to use. It is as easy as putting it in the crock pot and covering it with water, and a teaspoon of vinegar. For extra flavor add your choice of veggies...onion, celery, carrots. Cook on low for 10-12 hours for a delicious and beneficial broth. Your bones will thank you!

Sally Buckner is a member of the Healthy Living Committee, a part of the Wellness Collaborative. She is an A.C.E. certified Health Coach and Personal Trainer with additional Specialty Certifications in Senior Fitness, Fitness Nutrition, Behavioral Coaching, Mind-Body Fitness, and Weight Management.

*Sally Buckner
Healthy Living Committee*



Big Canoe Wellness Collaborative Services – As of October 31, 2020

Program Activity	2020 YTD	2019 YE	Since Inception
Client Service Calls (initiated through BC Info; some requested multiple services)	138	215	809
Services Completed:			
BC Info	49	41	170
BC Meals	52	192	489
BC Rides	83	171	595
BC Visits	30	69	224
Total	214	473	1,478