

Nurses from 1A

concerns with the objective of avoiding mediation situations in the future.

“We respect and value each and every one of our caregivers at PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Medical center, and especially appreciate that, through this process, our caregiver’s focus remained on our deeply held commitment to providing quality and compassionate care to the people in our community,” said Rick Yecny, Chief Administrative Officer at Peace Harbor.

The new contract, which was negotiated over three days beginning Aug. 1, will be effective through March 31, 2020.

Kevin Mealy, communications manager for ONA, attributed a portion of the negotiations eventual success to local public support.

“Community members have been vocal supporters of nurses through citizen journalism, letters to the editor, and opinion pieces in local news outlets, as well as on social media,” said Mealy.

The new contract’s highlights include:

- Making the workplace

safer for nurses and patients by expanding security for home health nurses who work off-site and make unaccompanied home visits during the middle of the night.

- Promoting staffing improvements by changing call pay requirements to discourage excessive call shifts and limit back-to-back-to-back shifts.

- Helping recruit and retain skilled nurses by closing the hospital’s wage gap for nurses with 7 or more years of experience.

As part of the agreement, the hospital also recognizes nurses’ service with a 3-percent cost-of-living adjustment retroactive to Jan. 1, 2017; 3-percent adjustments in 2018 and 2019; and a 2-percent adjustment in 2020.

The cost-of-living adjustments are aimed at ensuring Peace Harbor’s compensation keeps pace with inflation and attracting new nurses to Florence.

“As we move forward together, we will continue focusing on the important work we do to ensure we are not only among the best places to get care, but among the best places to give care,” said Yecny.

Survey from 1A

Barbara Rasmussen of Florence said, “I don’t know that much about why businesses don’t come here. I’d have to research that.”

A few people interviewed stated that since they had lived here less than a year, they did not feel they had the right to talk about what the city needed.

And for some, these ideas just never came up.

“I haven’t really thought about it a lot,” said area resident Brenda, who chose not to use her last name.

Weese hopes that people will take the time to think about these issues.

“If you care about the price of homes and the availability of jobs,” she said, “the survey is a chance to make a difference.”

The survey can be found at www.ci.florence.or.us or at Florence City Hall, 250 Highway 101.

Garden from 1A

On June 7, Sunni Days Yard Care put out a call to help a deserving veteran in the community. Owned by military spouse Sunni Perkins, the yard care service wanted to give back by donating free yard beautification to a local veteran.

Perkins found the perfect candidate in Carol, saying, “It’s only fitting that we help a fellow military spouse in need.”

And Carol was in need. “The yard, because of all the rain this year, was just a jungle,” she said.

So Sunni Days came to the rescue, perfectly manicuring the hydrangea outside and trimming the yard with impeccable detail.

Carol smiled as she looked over the work they had done.

“It’s really amazing, what they did,” she said.

The flowers were never Lance and Carol’s idea. When they moved to Florence a few years back, they purchased the home from local florist Bobbi Brubaker, who owned Flowers by Bobbi.

Flowers were understandably rather prevalent in the yard, but the Blalocks had no idea what to do with them.

They were proud nomads before then, traversing the country in their RV as long as they had known each other.

When they first met, Carol

only had one question for Lance: Do you like to camp?

“When I think back on it, we were on the road most of our lives. We were very fortunate, and that’s all thanks to him,” she said.

One of Carol’s favorite stories is when they had taken a small boat out to an island. As they got on shore, the boat drifted. Lance, who had been an accomplished athlete when he was younger, jumped into the ocean and swam to bring it back.

“He was my hero,” Carol remembered. “An athlete, a scholar and a gentleman. What else could you ask for?”

“His biggest attribute was that he had a great sense of humor.”

When they were first dating, Carol and Lance went to go see the Steve Martin film “The Jerk” 32 times together.

As Martin did in the movie, Lance got himself a pair of aviation goggles and a scarf, putting them on to make his wife laugh — as he was always able to.

But then in 2007, the Parkinson’s diagnosis came.

The disease took small tolls at first; a tremor in a hand, stiff muscles. But as the years passed the symptoms became more pronounced. He would lose balance and bouts of confusion would set in.

Traveling wasn’t as easy anymore, so they moved to Florence. And that’s when they were faced with the

flowers.

Lance saw it as a challenge. Carol took up acting classes, and Lance got to work on the yard.

When he wasn’t watching the Denver Broncos or laughing at “The Big Bang Theory,” his favorite show, he was pulling weeds.

“He loved this house and being able to contribute to something,” Carol said.

The Parkinson’s snuck up on them. Its devastating effects had, over the years, become routine.

“He was falling quite a bit,” she said. “I didn’t notice because you’re with this for 24/7 and it just becomes normal. I caught him every time he would fall, and he would bounce back.”

“He was declining, and he knew it,” Carol remembered. “So the gardening gave him a sense of purpose.”

Carol is just now being able to talk about these things, the pain of the loss fading as the joyful memories remain.

Of the work that Sunni Days did for Carol she said, “I know that he took pride in the yard and the house. I just think it’s a blessing that they’ve decided to do this for a veteran, that they selected me. Lance would have been so honored.”

Carol is a woman of faith. After Lance passed away, she was looking for signs that he was still around.

Everyone stays around a little while, she believes.

And she sees him everywhere. She sees his smile in the thousands of pictures that he left behind. She hears his voice in the birds outside on a cool summer morning.

And she sees his love in the yard he left behind.



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You will also receive two official Community Wide Garage Sale signs as well as a tip sheet on how to have a great sale. Please post signs only on private property with the owner’s consent. Posting signs on City utility poles, street or signal light poles, and median strips is against the municipal code. Maps will be available at the Florence Visitors Center.

Name _____ Phone _____
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