



Darrell Long incorporates his skills and his past military experience in caring for his patients at the Oklahoma City VA Hospital.

by Traci Chapman

Darrell Long is not just someone who provides care to veterans in his job as an Oklahoma City VA Hospital LPN - he knows about his

patients' service, their sacrifice and just how much they have given for their country.

He's one of them, after all, a 46-year-old who served in the U.S. Army for seven years, a man who comes from

a military family going all the way back to World War I.

"My great-grandfather, my grandfather - they served in World War I and II, my father served before then but

was of the Vietnam era, I served during the First Gulf War," Long said. "I know that dedication to service, I feel that dedication to service."

For Long that began right out of high school, when

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College of Nursing Holds Commissioning Ceremony for Class of 2018

Oklahoma Baptist University's third annual College of Nursing Commissioning Ceremony was held Thursday, Aug. 25, in the Craig-Dorland Theatre inside Shawnee Hall on the OBU campus. During the ceremony, the new class of nursing students graduating in 2018 was welcomed and initiated. The ceremony focuses on patient-centered care and affirms that the obligation of putting patients first begins on the first day of nursing school and continues throughout each nurse's career. The ceremony also promotes a culture of respect, dignity and compassion in both patients and health care professionals.

A total of 37 students from the College of Nursing class of 2018 participated in the ceremony, including Hannah Adams, Alex Akers, Whitney Allen, Kaitlyn Bailey, Lauren

See CLASS Page 2

Job Fair Scheduled for September 13th

Alliance Deaconess is ready to invest in your future, if you invest in theirs.

New Graduates and Licensed Practical Nurses are invited to tours with key staff members, refreshments and door prizes at the upcoming Alliance Deaconess Job Fair Tuesday, September 13th from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the Legacy Conference Room 5501 N. Portland in Oklahoma City.

Alliance Deaconess is looking for qualified nurses to join it's highly skilled, long-tenured nursing team and offer a quality team who puts a patient first to learn, grow and care with a friendly environment where people respect and support each other and our values.

Candidates will also enjoy a leadership team that is invested in employees and rewards and recognizes appropriately. Alliance Deaconess offers a sign-on bonus and a competitive benefits package.



CLASS

Continued from Page 1

Baustert, Marina Berkley, Natalie Buzan, Blake Compton, Marsha Davidson, Krysten Denney, Courtney Diehl, Jared Fink, Landry Forth, Miranda Granger, Ashleigh Gruns, Anna Hollingshead, Meaghon Hollyfield, Dani Ingle, Sarah Klerekoper, Aleksandra Miletic, Ashley Morris, Cayla Munroe, Katrina Nguyen, Gregory Orr, Baylee Owen, Sarah Pruitt, Kyle Reich, Sarah Robbins, Tanner Robertson, Ashlynn Salyer, Chelsea Sehorn, Ellen Smith, Maysn Ungerer, Alexandra Vestal, Sydney Ward, Olivia Williams and Cacy Wyatt. For more information, visit www.okbu.edu/nursing.

With its campus in Shawnee, and locations in Oklahoma City and Broken Arrow, OBU offers 10 bachelor's degrees with 88 fields of study and five master's degree programs. The Christian liberal arts university has an overall enrollment of 1,986, with students from 40 states and 35 other countries. OBU has been rated as one of the top 10 regional colleges in the West by U.S. News and World Report for 24 consecutive years and has been Oklahoma's highest rated regional college in the U.S. News rankings for 22 consecutive years. OBU is one of three universities in Oklahoma and the only private Oklahoma university listed on Great Value College's rankings of 50 Great Affordable Colleges in the Midwest. Forbes.com consistently ranks OBU as a top university in Oklahoma and the Princeton Review has named OBU one of the best colleges and universities in the western United States for 11 consecutive years.



Oklahoma Baptist University's third annual College of Nursing Commissioning Ceremony was held Thursday, Aug. 25, on the OBU campus. During the ceremony, the new class of nursing students graduating in 2018 was welcomed and initiated. Pictured, the nursing class of 2018 outside Stavros Hall. OBU photo by Jeremy Scott.



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St. Anthony Welcomes Joan Martin Family Nurse Practitioner

St. Anthony Hospital is pleased to welcome Joan Martin, RN, MSN, FNP-C, to St. Anthony Physicians Group Blanchard.

Martin earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Oklahoma Wesleyan University in Bartlesville. She then obtained her master's degree in nursing administration from the University of New Mexico, followed by a Nurse Practitioner Certificate from West Texas A&M University.

St. Anthony Physicians Group Blanchard is located 2002 N. Council Ave. The clinic is open Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. To schedule an appointment please call (405) 485-4701.



Joan Martin, RN, MSN, FNP-C

LONG

Continued from Page 1

he enlisted in the U.S. Army. He served for seven years, working as a multichannel transmission systems operator, both on American soil and during a deployment to Korea.

"It was a really interesting job, but it wasn't just what I wanted to do with the rest of my life," he said.

The answer to what Long was meant to do would be a while coming. After his discharge, he worked "all over the place," providing security for IBM, as a warehouseman, a commercial/residential landscaper, even an over-the-road truck driver. But, it was always a way to pay the bills, and there was something missing. That's when the Moore native decided to go back to his roots and take a look at his past - and, there, he said, he found his future.

"My mom had suffered from medical complications; we lost her in 2001 - I just couldn't get past the 'what ifs' of that," Long said. "In high school, I loved science and biology, and I realized that what I should do is go to nursing school."

That's what Long did, enrolling in Platt College in 2008 and graduating

as an LPN the next year as class valedictorian. Long said the next step was easy.

"I always knew I wanted to work at the VA," he said. "I felt the connection - after all, I'm a veteran too - and I know what the military is like, what our patients are going through, I just knew I could make their lives better."

Hospital administrators agreed, hiring the new LPN first to work on the cardiac floor. It was a great routine, fulfilling work and a chance to bond with patients every day, but it was about to change, a slight detour in his expected journey, thanks to an idea posed to him by VA Hospital Specialty Clinic Chief Terri Sharp.

"It was a new position, 'specialty clinic float nurse,' something never tried and a one-of-a-kind opportunity to work throughout the VA's 19 specialty clinics, which serve thousands of veterans each day.

"My day typically starts with a text - where they need me today," Long said. "It might be radiology or oncology, outpatient infusion, cardiology - anywhere."

Beyond never knowing what is in store for him on a particular day, Long said the position offered him exactly what he wanted - being able

"Veterans deserve the best care, the best advocates they can get, and that's something all of us take very seriously," Darrell Long, LPN

to work with as many patients as possible, at the same time training in several specialties.

"It's unique because there are six different teams so there is also that teamwork dynamic," Long said. "You have to go in with the attitude you're here to help them, you're a relief pitcher who's there to make everyone's life easier."

It's a position that fits Long's personality perfectly, he said. He gets to use his medical training, learn new things and work with people who are always happy to have his help - and he gets to spend his days with the patients he knows rely on the VA and its staff to get the best care possible.

"Veterans deserve the best care, the best advocates they can get, and that's something all of us take very seriously," Long said. "When I worked on the floor, I felt limited in my capacity to help them, but with this

job I connect with vets all over the hospital.

"If I can control that 15 minutes, that 30 minutes, I might spend with a patient and make that patient's life a little better, then I've done what I know I've always been meant to do," he said.

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CAREERS IN NURSING

IT'S ALL IN THE FAMILY - BRADFORD VILLAGE ASSISTED LIVING

by James Coburn - Writer/Photographer

Lydia Stewart smiles when asked what has kept her career centered at Bradford Village for a decade.

"It's the people and taking care of the residents," said Stewart, LPN, Health and Wellness director at the Bradford Village Retirement Community for assisted living, located in Edmond. "It just gives me a good feeling to know how appreciated I am by the residents. They give me love back. I feel their love every time I walk through the dining room."

The dietary department has not been issued a deficiency during a state survey since 2010. The entire building has not gotten a deficiency for two years.

She has been a licensed practical nurse for 34 years and graduated from a vocational technical institute in Minnesota, she said. During the first seven years of her career Stewart was working in a small town hospital.

She's proud to say that she will celebrate 10 years of working at

Bradford Village in January. She worked in long-term care at first and also gained experience in skilled nursing. Stewart also did MDS coordinating office work in the nursing home before she transferred to assisted living. Stewart has served in her current capacity at the assisted living center for four years.

"I still have a lot of people I am very fond of at the main building," she said. "The one's here (assisted living) are the ones that keep me here."

Stewart said the staff at the assisted living center is very kind and caring to both the residents and to other staff members. That is what she admires about their persona, she said.

Their knowledge about what they will be doing is important, Stewart said. Integrity goes a long way for a nurse as honest and caring people. So Stewart looks for employees who are passionate about geriatric care.

"They treat all of my residents like they are part of their family," she

said. "When they are very concerned with a resident they are quick to come to me and say something is not right with so-and-so. You know it's very important to me that anyone who works for me has a caring attitude toward them."

Some of her former patients that she had in the skilled nursing unit are now coming to live at the assisted living center, she said. Stewart recognizes them from the time she spent helping them in skilled nursing.

She said knowing that she has spent time helping the residents is important to them because it makes them feel more comfortable. She also has an open door for the residents in assisted living to come talk to her about any issue.

One of her staff members, Denise Egger, has worked for Bradford for more than 30 years. Another one, Alesia Guin, has 17 years of longevity.

She said it benefits the residents when having a continuity of familiar

faces they know they can rely on and trust. It provides them with a sense of peace, comfort and security. Anxiety is relieved.

"It's very important to me that not only the residents but their families know they can approach me," she said.

Bradford Village offers independent living, assisted living, long-term care and skilled nursing, Stewart said.

She laughed when thinking about what caused her to become a nurse 30 years ago. When she was a young girl, her mother had dressed her up as a nurse for Halloween.

"I've just always been the nurturing one in the family," she said. "So everyone just came to me with their boo boos when my mom wasn't available. So that's kind of how I got into it."

Her residents at Bradford Village also carry that nurturing spirit. They also look out for each other, she said. When somebody is not feeling well



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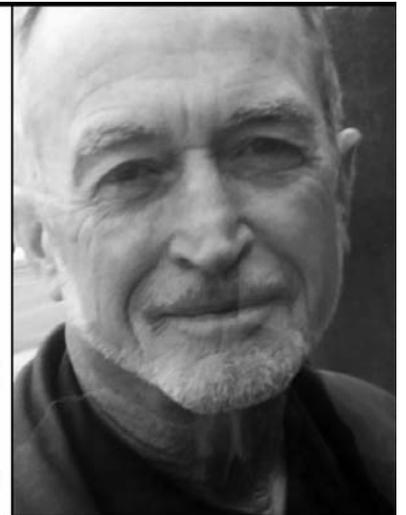
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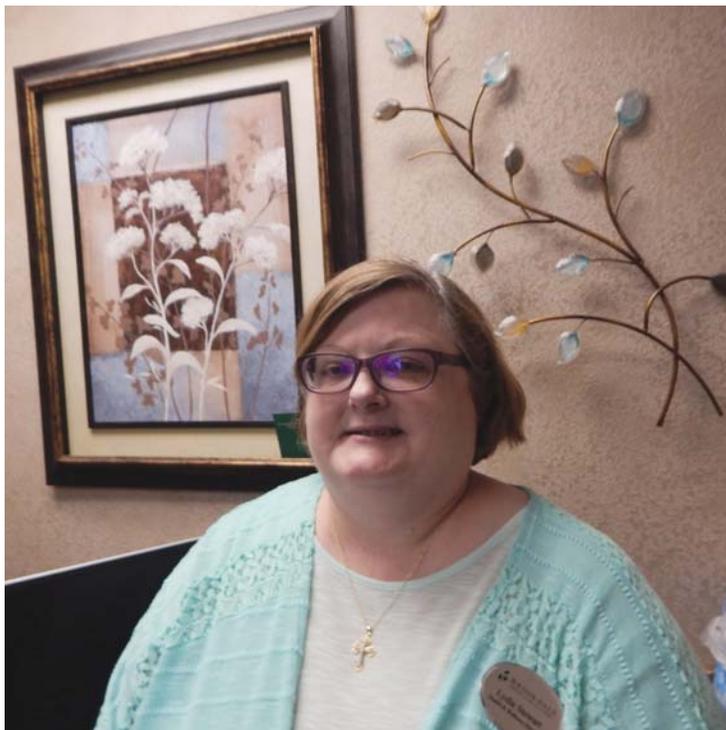
Ellis lived a full life. He fished, hunted, played golf, taught science, was a chess instructor and did taxes for his friends free of charge. He was a Christian and a great husband, father, son and brother. My brother Ellis and I grew up together and were best friends. We talked to each other almost every day on the phone. His death was a shock to all who knew and loved him. Being such a loving and giving person, it stood to reason that he would continue that legacy in death. God blessed our family with Ellis and he continues to bless us through the man he saved.



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LifeShare



Lydia Stewart, LPN, Health and Wellness director at Bradford Village Retirement Community for assisted living, says she loves hearing the compliments from residents about the staff.

they will reach out to a familiar staff member because they know they will be well taken care of.

Residents will greet new residents coming to live at the assisted living center. They will also strike up a conversation when new people are touring the building. Residents will introduce themselves and tell them what they enjoy about living at Bradford.

"We have lots of activities going on that they can participate in if they so choose. Overall it's the warmth of the place. You feel it when you walk in," she said.

Every month there is a birthday party of the month for everyone who has had a birthday. November will bring a large family Thanksgiving celebration with wall-to-wall tables to include the family members.

"We make sure that everybody is allowed to bring in their family members and share with them," Stewart said. "We have a 101st birthday coming up for one of our residents. It will be my third one over 100 years old. That's pretty exciting."

On Christmas a gift is shared with each resident. On Christmas Eve a story is read and throughout the holiday season there are visiting groups of carolers singing to the residents,

said Stewart, who likes to read and see movies.

"We just do different activities related to Christmas," she said.

Quite a few nurses and retired teacher, physicians, insurance salesmen, dentists and people from all walks of life call the assisted living center their home.

"They all come here and are brother and sisters to each other," Stewart said. "It was humorous. One of my residents was going on a trip and he came by and said, 'Ok mom, I'm leaving.' And he's 94 years old."

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Physician Covers Importance of Thyroid Cancer Awareness



St. Anthony Physicians Thyroid Center staff with Dr. La Greca on the far left. Thursday, September 1, the staff showed their support by wearing their Thyroid Cancer Awareness T-Shirts.

The American Cancer Society's 2016 estimate for new thyroid cancer cases in the United States is 49,350 for women and 19,950 for men. "Women are two to three times more likely to develop thyroid cancer than men," said Amanda La Greca, M.D., St. Anthony Physicians Group Thyroid Center.

Thyroid cancer can occur at any age, but about two-thirds of all cases are found in people between the ages of 20 and 55. There are four main types of thyroid cancer, Papillary, Follicular, Medullary and Anaplastic.

Papillary thyroid cancer is the most common type, making up about 70-80 percent of all thyroid cancer. "It tends to grow slowly and in general the prognosis is very good with a very low mortality rate. However, it can spread to the lymph nodes in the neck, which could cause a higher recurrence rate but not a higher mortality," said Dr. La Greca.

According to Dr. La Greca, Follicular thyroid cancer makes up about 10-15 percent of thyroid cancer in the United States and tends to occur in older patients than does Papillary cancer. Follicular cancer is more likely to spread to blood vessels and other areas of the body, particularly the lungs and bones.

Medullary thyroid cancer makes up 5-10 percent of all thyroid cancers and is more likely to run in females and be associated with other endocrine problems.

Anaplastic thyroid cancer is the most advanced and aggressive thyroid cancer and is the least likely to respond to treatment. Fortunately, Anaplastic thyroid cancer is rare and is found in less than 2 percent of patients with thyroid cancer.

So what signs should we be looking for? "The most common early

See THYROID page 9

Oklahoma's Nursing Times Hospice Directory

- another free service provided by Oklahoma's Nursing Times -

Alpha Hospice: 7512 N Broadway Ext., suite 312 Okc, 405-463-5695 Keith Ruminer/volunteer coordinator/chaplain

Autumn Bridge Hospice: 405-440-2440

Autumn Light Hospice: 580-252-1266

Carter Healthcare & Hospice: OKC - OKC Pat McGowen, Vol. Coordinator, 405-947-7705, ext. 134; Tulsa - Samantha Estes, Vol. Coordinator, 918-425-4000

Centennial Hospice: Becky Johnson, Bereavement Coordinator 405-562-1211

Choice Home Health & Hospice: 405-879-3470

Comforting Hands Hospice: Bartlesville: 918-331-0003

Companion Hospice: Steve Hickey, Vol. Coordinator, Guthrie: 405-282-3980; Edmond: 405-341-9751

Compassionate Care Hospice: Amy Legare, Bereavement/Vol. Coordinator, 405-948-4357

Cornerstone Hospice: Vicky Herrington, Vol. Coordinator, 918-641-5192

Crossroads Hospice: Elizabeth Horn, Vol. Coordinator, 405-632-9631

Cross Timbers Hospice: Ardmore-800-498-0655 Davis-580-369-5335 Volunteer Coordinator-Shelly Murray

Excell Hospice: Toni K. Cameron, Vol. Coordinator 405-631-0521

Faith Hospice of OKC: Charlene Kilgore, Vol. Coordinator, 405-840-8915

Frontier Hospice: Kelly Morris, Vol. Coordinator, 405-789-2913

Golden Age Hospice: 405-735-5121

Good Shepherd Hospice: 4350 Will Rogers Parkway Suite 400 OKC OK 73108 405-943-0903

Grace Hospice Foundation: Sharon Doty, Dir of Spec. Projects - Tulsa 918-744-7223

Harbor Light Hospice: Randy Pratt, Vol. Coordinator, 1009 N Meridian, Oklahoma City, OK 73107 405-949-1200

Horizon Hospice: LaDonna Rhodes, Vol. Coordinator, 918-473-0505

Heartland Hospice: Shawnee: Vol. Coord. Karen Cleveland, 405-214-6442; OKC: Vol. Coord. Tricia Woodward, 405-579-8565

Heavenly Hospice: Julie Myers, Coordinator 405-701-2536

Hope Hospice: Bartlesville: 918-333-7700, Claremore: 918-343-0777 Owasso: 918-272-3060

Hospice by Loving Care: Connie McDivitt, Vol. Coordinator, 405-872-1515

Hospice of Green Country: Tulsa: 918-747-2273, Claremore: 918-342-1222, Sapulpa: 918-224-7403

INTEGRIS Hospice, Inc. & the INTEGRIS Hospice House: Ruth Ann Frick, Vol. Coordinator, 405-848-8884

Hospice of Owasso, Inc.: Todd A. Robertson, Dir. of Marketing, 877-274-0333

Humanity Hospice: Kay Cole, Vol. Coordinator 405-418-2530

InFinity Care of Tulsa: Spencer Brazeal, Vol. Director, 918-392-0800

Indian Territory Home Health & Hospice: 1-866-279-3975

Interim Healthcare Hospice: 405-848-3555

Image HealthCare : 6116 S. Memorial Tulsa, Ok. 74133 (918) 622-4799

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LifeLine Hospice: April Moon, RN Clinical Coordinator 405-222-2051

Mercy Hospice: Sandy Schuler, Vol. Coordinator, 405-486-8600

Mission Hospice L.L.C.: 2525 NW Expressway, Ste. 312 OKC, OK 73112 405-848-3779

Oklahoma Hospice Care: 405-418-2659 Jennifer Forrester, Community Relations Director

One Health Home Health in Tulsa: 918-412-7200

Palliative Hospice: Janet Lowder, Seminole, & Sabrina Johnson, Durant, 800-648-1655

Physician's Choice Hospice: Tim Clausing, Vol. Coordinator 405-936-9433

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PromiseCare Hospice: Angela Shelton, LPN - Hospice Coordinator, Lawton: (580) 248-1405

Quality Life Hospice: 405 486-1357

RoseRock Healthcare: Audrey McCraw, Admin. 918-236-4866

Ross Health Care: Glenn LeBlanc, Norman, Chickasha; April Burrows, Enid; Vol. Coordinators, 580-213-3333

Russell Murray Hospice: Tambi Urias, Vol. Coordinator, 405-262-3088; Kingfisher 405-375-5015; Weatherford-580-774-2661

Seasons Hospice: Carolyn Miller, Vol./ Bereavement Coordinator, 918-745-0222

Sequoyah Memorial Hospice: Vernon Stone, D. Min. Chaplin, Vol. Coordinator, 918-774-1171

Sooner Hospice, LLC: Matt Ottis, Vol. Coordinator, 405-608-0555

Kurkjian Named VP of Oncology Services at Mercy



Dr. Carla Kurkjian with Dr. Cullen Thomas, president of Mercy Clinic in Oklahoma, pose together at the opening of the Coletta Building in June. Dr. Kurkjian joins Mercy as vice president of oncology services at the Coletta Building.

Carla Kurkjian, MD, has joined Mercy as vice president of oncology services at the Coletta Building. Dr. Kurkjian graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Oklahoma. She received her medical degree from OUHSC, and completed an internal medicine residency and hematology/oncology fellowship at OU. She also completed a one year fellowship from the National Cancer Institute. In addition, she recently completed an MBA at Stanford University School of Business. Dr. Kurkjian joins Mercy from OU - where she has worked as an associate professor since 2009. Her new role with Mercy started Sept. 1.

THYROID Continued from Page 8

sign of thyroid cancer is an unusual lump, nodule or swelling in the neck. Most nodules on the thyroid are usually benign, but it's important to have any unusual growths examined by a health care professional," Dr. La Greca advised.

Diagnosis of thyroid cancer is typically made on the basis of an ultrasound-guided needle biopsy of a thyroid nodule, an outpatient procedure, or the cancer is confirmed by testing after the nodule is removed during surgery. Dr. La Greca performs her own ultrasound-guided needle biopsies in her office. "Although thyroid nodules are very common, less than one in ten contain a thyroid cancer," she said.

We've learned the different types of cancer and what symptoms to look for, but what causes thyroid cancer? "Thyroid cancer is more common in people who have a history of exposure

to high dose of radiation (especially during childhood), have a family history of thyroid cancer and are typically older than 40 years of age," said Dr. La Greca. "However, for most patients we do not know the specific reason why thyroid cancers develop."

Although thyroid cancer doesn't always show symptoms, many tumors are found in the early stages when patients or their doctors find lumps or nodules in their throats. "Be sure your doctor includes a cancer related exam in your annual exam," suggested Dr. La Greca.

For those who know thyroid cancer runs in their family, it's important to be proactive. "If people in your family have had Medullary thyroid cancer, you and your children should have a blood test as early as possible to find out if the gene is detected that causes this cancer. If you or your children have the gene, your doctor may suggest surgically removing the thyroid gland to lower the risk of cancer," she said.

The Hospice Directory above does not represent a list of all Hospice facilities statewide. For a complete list visit www.ok.gov/health



**Vicki L Mayfield, M.Ed., R.N.,
LMFT Marriage and Family
Therapy Oklahoma City**
*If you would like to send a
question to Vicki, email us at
news@okcnursingtimes.com*

Q. I was recently in treatment because I wanted to kill myself. I became very depressed and suicidal because my marriage was falling apart and I couldn't save it. My therapist asked me why I wasn't angry with my husband. What is wrong with me that I wanted to die because of what he did? - Melissa Jenny

Here is Melissa's story:

I married Rick in my early 20's. I had a few boyfriends before Rick but nothing serious. We have been married over 30 years. I had suspicions during our marriage that Rick was cheating but no real proof. We have three children who are now adults.

The last 10 years have been very rocky. Rick has always been controlling and frequently accused me of cheating or lying to him. During our 30 year marriage I have never cheated nor has he ever found evidence that it occurred. But he accused me anyway.

I became more suspicious and hired a private detective. He had pictures of Rick walking out of a casino and hotel room with a young woman, on many occasions. He quit his job and withdrew a large sum of money from his retirement. He had been spending many hours (while I was working) at casinos. He talked me into borrowing money on our home that had been paid for.

Rick finally admitted that he had a gambling addiction and a girlfriend. And it had been going on for a long time. I was so overwhelmed that I did not know what to do. I really was angry at Rick but I found myself thinking of ways I could kill myself as a way to deal with the problem.

To Melissa:

So lets get this straight. You wanted to kill yourself because your husband lied, cheated and gambled leaving you heavily in debt. You have a degree and a full time job. You are in good health. You have sounded the alarm that you need help. Don't stop now.

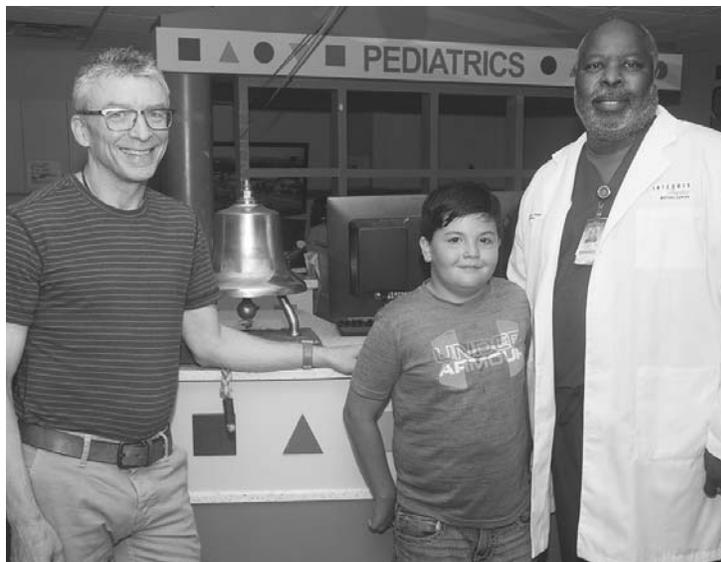
You mentioned you were in therapy and plan to return to your therapist. Excellent plan.

Find a CODA meeting. (Codependents Anonymous) This is a 12 step relationship program designed to help you find strength and power within yourself to make healthier choices. You learn more about your family of origin, the role you played as a child and how not to be someones doormat.

Killing yourself because of your husband's behavior is not an option. Let this be an opportunity for you to re-examine your life and decide how to take care of you.

You don't need a knight in shining armor. You just need a sword. BEHIND every strong woman is herself.

The Paul Silverstein Burn Center Now Treating Children



Dr. Christopher Lentz, Medical Director INTEGRIS Paul Silverstein Burn Center; Collen Elkins, Burn Survivor; Dr. Johnny Griggs, Medical Director INTEGRIS Baptist

The Paul Silverstein Burn Center at INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center opened in 1975, and since that time the facility has treated mostly adults. Oklahoma children have routinely been sent out of state to receive specialized burn care - until recently.

Working closely with the pediatric unit at INTEGRIS Baptist, the burn center started accepting some pediatric patients in late 2013. They started with small burns and have slowly begun to see children with a greater percent of burns.

Collen Elkins of Geronimo, Okla., is one of them. The 11-year-old was injured by gasoline in a bonfire accident. He received third and fourth degree burns over nearly 40 percent of his body including his torso and both upper and lower extremities. He spent two months in the hospital before going home earlier this year.

Tuesday 8/23, Elkins made a special trip back to the hospital to be the first pediatric patient to ring the Fireman's Bell.

The Oklahoma State Firefighters Association loaned the burn center an actual fire bell from its museum to be used specifically for children. Upon discharge from the hospital, pediatric burn survivors will ring the bell to signify their personal victory and medical accomplishment. A similar bell in the burn unit is for adult use.

"We feel this is a fitting and symbolic way to applaud all burn survivors, regardless of their age, for their determination and hard work, and to recognize the courage and bravery it takes to overcome this type of injury," says Christopher Lentz, M.D., medical director of the Paul Silverstein Burn Center.

The Elkins family hopes sharing their story will prevent other burn injuries. Members of the Paul Silverstein Burn Center, the INTEGRIS Baptist pediatric unit and the Oklahoma State Firefighters Association attended the event.



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"Work and more work. I've got a bunch of teenagers so it's sports mainly."



Nicole Jones, RN

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