

BUSINESS

Clinic specializes in ‘country medicine’

By SARA BLANKENSHIP
Staff

FANCY GAP – Nestled on a hill close to the Blue Ridge Parkway in Fancy Gap, you will find something that may seem unlikely this day in age.

The stone house of Ben Roberts and wife, Nurse Practitioner Susan Tracy Roberts, is not only their residence, but also their business. This is the location of Fancy Gap Medical Clinic and inside the walls of their light-filled office, anyone can receive reliable and quality healthcare at an affordable rate – something that is rare in Southwest Virginia.

Susan and her husband, who serves as practice manager, are practicing what they call “country medicine.”

Susan’s brother, Dr. John Tracy, has been providing care in the area for more than 10 years and is serving as a collaborating physician with the practice.

He is the author of “A Country Doctor,” which details this unique type of healthcare.

“It describes the kind of medicine he’s done and what we are trying to do here,” Susan said. “You don’t see this kind of care in a city.”

The Robertses relocated to the area in January from Greensboro, N.C., when the house and medical office space were available to purchase from Dr. Tracy. In Greensboro, they were sole owners of popular fine dining restaurant Undercurrent, which gave them valuable experience in running a small business. The couple took on partners in the restaurant in order to pursue the venture of opening their own medical practice. “It’s a better schedule for this time in our lives,” said Susan.

They wanted to be able to provide service at a low cost to an underserved area. By working out of their home, they have virtually no operating costs — Susan serves as sole medical provider and Ben handles the administrative duties.

The Robertses offer a variety of basic medical services through their



The clinic is inside the couple’s home in Fancy Gap.

Gazette photos by Sara Blankenship

practice and at \$40 per office visit; it’s reasonable as well. Physicals are \$60 per visit, as are basic gynecological services. They will also be able to provide certified Department of Transportation exams excluding the drug-testing portion.

They offer general lab work, about 25 tests, at a discounted price for patients and testing is done in-house. The practice also offers treatment for minor injuries and management for chronic disease; however they are not accepting patients for chronic pain issues. Basic mental health services will also be offered. Susan said mental health is near and dear to her heart and is something she does a lot of.

A unique service they will offer is a weight loss program. For \$40 a month, patients will have access to Susan as a counselor and motivator, including guidance, meal plans and recipes. There is a medication component to the program, but it will only be prescribed to patients that it would be a fit for.

An interesting part of the program utilizes Ben and his chef background. “We have done classes to show patients how they can cook healthy, with real food and not just heating up something processed,” Ben said.

The practice accepts Medicare and is in the process of acquiring credentials for all major insurance providers.



An aspect of the practice that the Robertses pride themselves on is their accessibility to patients and ability to give personalized care. They are usually able to accommodate same-day appointments, as well as after business hours and on weekends. “A lot of our patients have the same issue; their physician either won’t answer their calls or call them back,” explained Susan. “We will always be available by phone and will call back to check in and see that our patients are following their regimens.”

Fancy Gap Medical Clinic opened its doors on Feb. 2, but was followed by a period of snow and bad weather.

To date, they are seeing more than 200 patients, which they con-



Ben Roberts and Susan Tracy Roberts, NP-C

sider a success.

Office hours are Monday through Wednesday during the remainder of 2015, due to Susan lending her hand to a local hospice on Thursdays and Fridays. Starting in 2016, they hope to be open five days a week, with services also available after hours and on weekends.

“Our driveway will always be plowed, so our doors will be open,” joked Susan of the upcoming winter season.

Susan has a heavy background in gerontology, but is licensed to provide medical services to anyone over the age of 13. She received her education at the University of North Carolina campuses of Chapel Hill and Greensboro.

In the near future, the Robertses

plan to become members of the Carroll County Rotary Club, which will extend their community involvement to other areas. However, it’s the country and family medicine model of their practice that stands to have the biggest impact.

In Susan’s words, “The service we provide is unique; it’s common sense medicine that’s affordable and it’s going to help the community.”

Fancy Gap Medical Clinic is located at 1661 Turner Spur Road, off of Greenberry Road in Fancy Gap. Visit www.fancygapmedical.com or call (276) 728-0735 for additional information and appointments.

Access Home Health Care celebrates successes

By SHAINA STOCKTON
Staff

WOODLAWN — Less than a year after opening their business in Woodlawn, the staff of Access Home Health Care and Rehabilitation has already made a positive name in the community for their quality of patient care.

The full-service home health agency opened its doors last November, offering a range of services including nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, medical and social work and home care assistance.

CEO and Doctor of Physical Therapy Brad Lineberry, who grew up in the Woodlawn area, was excited to not only offer these services, but it was his personal goal to usher a dramatic shift in home healthcare to serve the patients first, with emphasis on quality rather than quantity.

“I didn’t like the way I was seeing healthcare progress, moving away from the healthcare and moving more toward the business sector. We are getting too far away from what matters, and that is patient care,” Lineberry said in January.

According to Access Home Health Care’s mission statement, the staff is dedicated to making a “positive change in the lives of [their] patients by delivering an elite standard of comprehensive health care and rehabilitation services through a highly trained professional and para-professional staff.”

According to Lineberry, the business initially began by offering skilled nursing, physical therapy and home care services. “But since then, we have expanded to become a full-service agency,” he said.

From the beginning, Lineberry said that teamwork was the key to success with each patient, and that nursing teams would be used to provide a continuity of care from the start of a patient’s treatment to the finish. “This way,



Dr. Brad Lineberry

[nurses] can detect a minimal change that might not be seen by someone who has never laid eyes on a patient before,” said Lineberry.

Patients are offered 24/7 services with Access, including holidays if needed.

Since November 2014, Lineberry and the staff at Access have been hard at work developing relationships with their community, specifically with their patients. Currently, they assist around 50 patients, and have discharged 45 from their care.

Business manager Jeannie Barber noted recently that the facility received Joint Commission accreditation. “Two days after we were visited, we received the phone call that we were officially accredited.”

The representative of the joint commission commended the agency for its attention to detail. “She was really impressed with us. Before she left, she said she’d been

doing this for 10 years, and this was the best facility she’d had an initial visit with,” said Barber. “She said that we have the ability to lead the nation in home health agency services.”

Access employs a number of certified healthcare professionals. Since November, they have created 20 jobs. At this time, they have employed four CNAs (two office and two field), two LPNs, an RN with wound care certification, a physical therapist, a speech therapist, an occupational therapist and several other positions. Job tasks are all accomplished in-house.

Lineberry is a graduate of Wheeling Jesuit University. He previously graduated from Radford University with a Bachelor of Science degree in exercise, sports and health education, with a concentration in exercise science. He has practiced in the field for nine years.

Barber said more positions are being created as their

business grows.

In the interest of patient care, Access currently covers a 60-mile radius, with patients from Carroll, Grayson, Floyd, Bland and Patrick.

Barber noted that they have one patient in Stuart, which is an hour drive from their facility. “If we have a patient dedicated to us, we are dedicated to them, too. We don’t just take on the patients who are convenient for us,” she said.

In January, Lineberry stressed that his staff would not rush from patient to patient, with time limits to fill any quotas. Instead, he and his staff would practice a minimum time requirement of 45 minutes per patient, per session.

During this time, staff is given time to get to know their patients, and go the extra mile to make them feel comfortable and trusting. For some patients, all it takes is a simple gesture.

“I had a patient, 94 years old, who told me he had not had meatloaf since his wife had been put in the nursing home. So, I stayed with him for two hours. I made him meatloaf, mashed potatoes, cornbread, the works,” Barber said.

“Then we had another patient tell us this morning that he’d had several physicians in the area, and that we were the greatest with patient care he’d ever seen. And that makes us feel good, when someone tells us that. That’s what we want to do... go way beyond 100 percent.”

As they continue, they hope to expand their services, as well as do their part to help other local businesses and organizations grow in their

own ventures.

“For our patients, we will be starting a program that is like a graduation program. They will earn certificates when they graduate from therapy, things like that. Those are milestones that should be celebrated,” Barber said. “We will also reach out to other senior centers, and offer therapy programs... and that is just the beginning.”

She wants patients to know that they have a choice in who provides their healthcare. “I don’t think patients know this, and so most times they will take whoever is offered. But that is why we’re here. We want to provide more healthcare, more quality, and give them a choice of who they want.”

“We would also love to join up with other local businesses, and promote them,”

Barber added. “If the community helps us, we want to do everything we can to help them achieve their goals, as well.”

Thanks to their success so far, Access staff are excited to delve into other projects, for the good of their patients and the rest of their community. “We’re so excited to be here. Every employee comes in every day with a smile on their face, excited to be at work. Brad has so many values and so much integrity. He wants to make healthcare right, and we want to surpass all of our patients’ expectations.”

Access Home Health Care and Rehabilitation is located at 2851 Carrollton Pike, Suite A3, in Woodlawn. For more information, call (276) 266-3149.

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