

## Editor's Column

Welcome to the 50th Anniversary issue of *InTouch*, VIPCare's flagship newsletter. By the time I arrived in 1985 Bill Johnson said, "You edited your college newspaper? Great! *InTouch* could use your talents." He didn't mention that I would be responsible for being both editor and writer. Getting staff to write articles and submit them on deadline is always the bane of editors.

Soon *InTouch* moved from being a series of mimeographed sheets stapled together to at least using typesetting and printing at William Byrd Press. Board member William Propert, designer of VIPCare's hand logo, was the managing editor.

I was relieved that I didn't have to typeset the product. At first I did use the old light-box and glue to do the layout. The pages were hand-carried over to the production plant on Byrdhill Road. The smell of printer's ink and the roar of the presses were quite familiar.

When we changed executive directors, I told Vic Maloy to write the major column which would be our offering to the community. "What should I write about," he asked? "Anything you want to," I replied. Night Musings was the result, which later became *Reflections on the Journey*. Both columns became successful books.

The era of Alf Goodykoontz and George Crutchfield transformed *InTouch*. Alf was the Managing Editor for the then Richmond Times. George was a long-time faculty member in the Mass Communications Department at Virginia Commonwealth University. Alf would periodically send critiques to either Vic or me that he had composed on what was obviously a manual Underwood typewriter, complete with strike-overs and misspellings. George bought me my first APress Style Book.

*InTouch* also made the transition to Business Press and submitting our copy to a layout designer via e-mail. The present four column format, along with the blue ink and light sepia color paper appeared somewhere in this time period.

The last official print edition of *InTouch* was submitted to the printer on May 5, 2015. We are now fully engaged in social media. This issue has numerous photos of the past and I apologize in advance if your photo is either absent or your grandchildren fail to recognize you. Alas, even when the Editor uses his Darth Vader voice, getting articles from writers is still a chore. *Selah!*

## Welcome to our 50th anniversary celebration

Doug Thorpe

My family loves to celebrate. Birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, cousins visiting – these are all occasions for celebration. Family photo albums are full of pictures of young Thorpes with chocolate frosting smeared across our faces, caught up in the fun of the celebration.

The celebrations that stick in our memories are the ones that teetered on the edge of disaster before quick action saved the day. A Tinkertoy sailboat floated majestically above a birthday cake until the candles set the mainsail on fire, bringing that sea voyage to an abrupt and dramatic end. Another year the piñata made of papier-mâché over a cardboard oatmeal can proved too tough for the bats of little boys. In case you were wondering, it turns out that boys enjoy tearing apart a piñata with their hands every bit as much as they like smashing one with a bat.

In 2017 The Virginia Institute of Pastoral Care turns 50. That calls for a celebration, something every bit as exciting as a burning sailboat cake or a candy-filled piñata or a chocolate-smeared face. In fact, to do justice to our 50th anniversary we have needed three celebrations. In February friends and neighbors joined us for an open house at our main office. In May St. Stephen's Episcopal Church helped us host author Marjorie Thompson for an inspiring public lecture.

We're capping it all off with a festive reception at the Virginia Historical Society, a fitting venue for marking 50 years of our history in Central Virginia. We'll recount the highs – and probably some lows – of those five decades. We'll recall friends whose faces appear in our family photo album. More quietly, we'll give thanks for the ministry of pastoral counseling and the thousands of people who, for 50 years, have trusted us with their care. Celebrate with us. ♦



Douglas Thorpe

## Who were those guys?

Donald Denton

For more years that any of us can remember, their photos hung in an imposing wooden frame in what used to be the Institute's formidable library. Three members of the faculty from the Medical College of Virginia, a hospital chaplain from another hospital, a seminary professor, the president of a university, five leaders of major faith groups, and a bank president comprised the original board.

Dr. Allix B. James who was President of Virginia Union University at the time, reminisced in *InTouch Spring 2007* about these twelve men. "At a strategic point, a small group of local pastors, theological educators and denominational leaders met in an informal session to see if the religious community could come forth with a plan to bring healing to a hurting society. After reviewing the existing mental health and counseling services available, it became quite evident that there was no agency committed to provide specialized pastoral care to bring wholeness to persons or groups who needed this remedy."

The members of this group formed the nucleus of the original Board of Directors for the Virginia Institute of Pastoral Care. A local church provided space for the temporary office. Members of the committee and a few local congregations provided seed money to hire a small staff and part-time, well qualified counselors with pastoral professional training to get the program started.

Each institution which these Founders served have undergone major changes in the past fifty years. Health care, education, financial services and faith groups all look different than they did in 1967. Yet there is still significant pain in our society that each institution seeks to assuage, and thus Virginia Institute of Pastoral Care, the institution their vision created, likewise still seeks to 'bring wholeness to persons' through counseling and education. ♦



William Johnson & Allix B. James

## Key Dates and People

### Education Program highlights

- By 1977 the program had served 112 ordained clergy from 17 faith groups and 4 foreign countries. Twenty-seven of these subsequently became certified at supervisory levels in either ACPE or AAPC.
- Eight Residents in pastoral counseling graduates.
- Experimental inner-city program in Basic Clinical Pastoral Education begins with thirteen clergy and four students participating.

### Board Members in 1979 (selected)

- Frances Fenderson
- Roscoe Cooper
- Mrs. Godfrey Tate
- Bishop Walter F. Sullivan

### Staff Members in 1979 (selected)

- Ted Haddix
- David Howell
- Ruth Hennessey
- Dodie Rossell
- Ned Stewart

## Key Decades and Dates

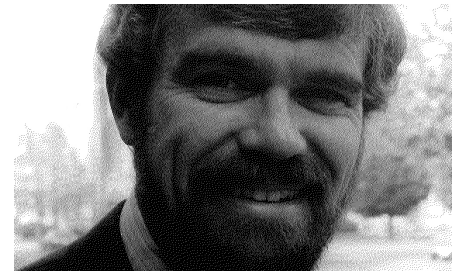
- 1971** – First Resident in Pastoral Counseling graduates.
- 1973** – Certification by Association for Clinical Pastoral Education.
- 1979** – Accredited by American Association of Pastoral Counselors as a Service & Training Center.
- 1981** – Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary approves VIPCare as placement center for Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Psychotherapy.
- 1982 – 1993** – Stipends for two full-time training programs, a Residency and a Fellow Year.
- 1993** – Death of ACPE Supervisor Bill Johnson, ending ACPE Certification.
- 1994** – Death of William B. Oglesby & establishment of Oglesby Scholarship Endowment.
- 1995** – Established relationship with the School of Theology at Virginia Union University as sister institutions. This allows academic credit for licensure.
- 2000** – Congregational Pastoral Care program offered at the School of Theology at Virginia Union University campus tailored to African-American and African contexts.
- 2001** – Dual Degree Internship offered for Masters of Divinity and of Social Work.
- 2004** – Pastoral Counselor Formation Program begins.
- 2009** – Pastoral Leadership Program begins
- 2014** – Goodykoontz-Crutchfield Educational Resource Center dedicated.  
W. Victor Maloy Education Scholarship Fund established.

## Pastoral Care of the Poor

(D. Mark Cooper – edited from Spring, 1977 InTouch)

One of the most difficult relationships that pastors encounter in ministry is the poor and uneducated person who has few resources and seems to be caught in a cycle of dependency and crisis. How do we as clergy assist this person? How can we provide pastoral care without becoming hopelessly involved in a never-ending relationship of crisis?

Work with persons caught in this lifestyle has been a concern of VIPCare over the last three years with its ministry at the Bainbridge Community Center. In this brief article I would like to examine some of the themes that have emerged from that learning process. The program ended last year.



Mark Cooper

A woman (a composite of many) knocked tentatively at my office door several months ago. It was apparent that she was upset. There were tears in her eyes. A notice had come from the water company: her electricity was to be turned off that week. Her bill was several months behind. Her efforts to catch up had failed. Could we loan her sixty dollars to postpone the inevitable? What do we do? Most of us have discovered that there are no simple solutions and several guidelines have become important to me.

First, in relationships of this nature, I think that it is important to maintain the integrity of the person who comes seeking help. It is important to let the person define their own problems and to list out their solutions. The woman described had tried to talk with the water company. She was willing to work toward paying off her debt by providing clean-up services for our center. She had some money of her own that she brought to add to the money she hoped to borrow.

Second, I feel that we have to move slowly and take care to avoid assuming all of the responsibility. Pastors by nature are caretakers and presented with a problem such as this, we jump to the rescue.

Finally, I think it is important for us to learn ways of relating in team ministries. When we are isolated in a parish we sometimes begin to feel a sense of absolutism – we are the only ones who can help. Learning about resources in the community and the meaning of referral broadens our sense of ministry. It also lessens the burden we often feel in dealing with the poor person.

In the case of this woman, she developed a long-term job that suited her and continued to relate to us in the center. She had a new sense of freedom and control over her own life. In the Gospel of St. Matthew, Jesus implies that in feeding the hungry and other such ministries we also give directly to him. In our rush to serve, we can destroy the person we serve. We can also find ourselves drained by the demands of those seeking aid.

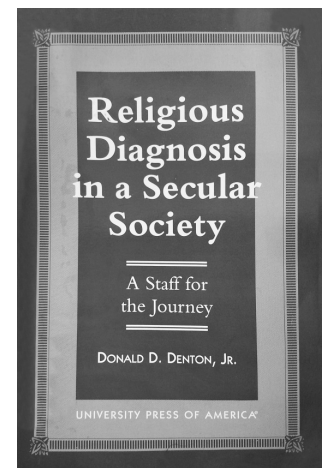
Pastoral care for the poor means mixing the concrete act with subjective concern for both persons involved so that we serve without destroying or being destroyed. ♦

## Beginning Training at VIPCare

Dennett Slemp

It was early 1969. I don't know if I was the first trainee. But I was certainly among the first. I can still hear the stairs creaking as I climbed to the third floor of the ancient building on Lombardy Street, VIPCare's first location. I had recently earned my Master's degree in pastoral counseling, but I needed supervision – lots of it. So I could truly practice this art. I was directed to a large counseling room. I sat there waiting, feeling my heart beating. Then in came Bob Myers, director of the Center. There were others, but he is the one I remember. Bob was a big man. He walked across the room and sat down solidly, decisively, in a big chair. I thought, "My God, this man knows how to sit in a chair." Before he had said anything, I knew this was a man comfortable in his own skin. Worse, I sensed he would expect me to be the same. But I did not feel that way. I was just a youngish guy wanting to be a pastoral counselor.

It impressed on me that there was more to being a pastoral counselor than having a degree. I had to learn how to relate to people in a way that was real and authentic – with myself and with these seeking my care – in a way that would invite them to become more real too. Then Bob spoke. His words matched the way he sat. And it matched the way he supervised me. I had other supervisors, along with him, in my training process. But he is the one I remember most clearly. I recall especially one bit of advice he gave me. He said, "When in doubt, tell the truth. Listen very deeply, be kind, be gentle if that works best, but tell the truth." ♦



Published in 1998.



# Grief Resolution

(Richard E. Augspurger – edited from Fall, 1977 InTouch)

Periodic and intentional visitation by a pastor with bereaved individuals during the first year following a death resulted in dramatic and beneficial effects for certain bereaved individuals. Such were the findings of my recently completed doctoral dissertation.

Grief is the normal and transient process of adjustment which is essential for the restoration of meaning and stability in one's life following the loss of someone important. The process of adjustment has beginning symptoms, middle phases and characteristics of resolution. Ordinarily people experience the most intense pain and discomfort during the first three months and approach resolution in the first year to year and a half following the loss. Without pastoral visitation they get significantly worse.

The pastor finds himself with ever-increasing demands upon his time. Often the pastoral priorities get set and include visitation of the hospitalized, the ill and the shut-in. Sometimes the bereaved get neglected because they are going through a natural process which "just takes time." The process of grief resolution takes more than time. Personal presence and support through the emotional upheaval and loneliness of grief can be of vital importance to the bereaved.

Visiting the bereaved, like visiting the terminally ill, can raise uncomfortable feelings for the pastor. "I don't know what to say," or "I don't know what to do" are typical. Such uncomfortable feelings increase the isolation and loneliness experienced by the bereaved and continued isolation for the problem-griever can result in profound consequences such as serious physical illness, total despair, fears of 'going crazy' and even suicide. If the pastor is able to overcome his uncomfortable feelings, often the bereaved are extremely grateful when visited.

It is my belief as a result of my research that all bereaved persons should be visited at least a couple of times in their home during the first year of bereavement. The non-active griever, those having difficulty resolving their grief, should be visited monthly during the first year of bereavement. Such a preventive pastoral care program is designed to minimize the possibilities of serious consequences from developing during the process of grief resolution. ♦

(Ed. Note: Dr. Augspurger now lives in the Greater Chicago area where he is Senior Consultant at First Transitions/First Strategies)

## Pastoral Education and Worships

(Programs from 1977 Fall InTouch)

### Pastoral Care Practicum

Focus on a broad range of pastoral care and beginning pastoral counseling. (Twelve weeks - \$200).

### Pastoral Counseling Practicum

Focus on tapes of pastoral counseling for the advanced student. (Twelve weeks - \$200).

### Individualized Pastoral Supervision of Pastoral Work & Counseling

Arranged at mutually convenient time. (Cost - \$25 per hour).

### Supervision of Supervision

Focus on the dynamics of clinical supervision of pastoral counseling. Student serves as co-supervisor of Pastoral Care or Pastoral Counseling Practicum. Pre-requisite: Member, A.A.P.C. and invitation by faculty. (Cost - \$200).

### Clinical Case Conference

Focus in case study and discussion of technique of pastoral care and counseling. (Twelve weeks - \$60).

### Reading & Research Seminar

Issues in pastoral care and counseling. (Twelve weeks. \$75 for reading, \$75 for research).

### Professional Development Consultation

For clergy and religious professionals. (Cost \$175).

(Ed. Note: Current costs for Reading Seminars and Practicum is \$500. Cost for individual supervision is \$95 per hour)

## The First Decade Current Events

**1967** – Hair opens on Broadway – the Age of Aquarius begun.

**1968** – Medical College of Virginia and Richmond Professional Institute merge to form Virginia Commonwealth University

**1968** – Tet Offensive in South Vietnam (February).

**1968** – Martin Luther King, Jr. assassinated (April 4).

**1969** – Neil Armstrong becomes the first human to walk on the Moon (July 20).

**1973** – Pohite Parkway completed, connecting Downtown Richmond with Brandermill.

**1974** – Richmond Public Schools forced to begin desegregation busing (Decided May 15).

**1973** – Arab Oil Embargo (October 19).

**1974** – Impeachment hearings begins against Richard M. Nixon (May 7).

**1974 – 1977** – Gerald R. Ford President

**1977** – Richmond Children's Museum organized.

**1977 – 1981** – James Earl Carter President.



Paul Nichols and Bill Johnson.



## Key Dates and People

**1979** – 1989 - William J. Johnson, Executive Director

**1982** – Certificate in Pastoral Ministry for Clergy begins.

**1985** – Coming to Terms with Uncertain Valor: the Vietnam Veteran and the Church. Presbyterian Outlook. Vol. 167: No. 39, November 11, 1985.

John Torres, local master sculpture and painter, loaned four works of art to VIPCare.

"My involvement with VIPCare is an attempt to minister to the spiritual qualities of those who serve in the healing of others."

VIPCare participated in two health fairs. Co-sponsored by Fourth Baptist Church and Management Orientation for Volunteer Effectiveness involved 300 persons. Also in cooperation with the Richmond Area Business Men on Health involved over 500 persons.

Martha R. Wilson guidance counselor at Glen Allen Elementary School, joined VIPCare's Board to serve on the Resource Development Committee.

St. Stephen's Center refurbished by the Women of St. Stephens. The Center was located on the second floor of the May Fair House at that time.

**1986** - Review of Managing Stress in Ministry in Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry: Vol. 8, 1986. Donald D. Denton.

**1989** – W. Victor Maloy becomes Executive Director



## Reflections on VIPCare's History at Fifty

W. Victor Maloy

In 1967 the Virginia Institute of Pastoral Care was birthed in Richmond, Virginia. It was conceived to be a place dedicated to healing both the mind and spirit – a place filled with purpose and vision.

The founders who nurtured the dream and breathed life into the vision and made possible pastoral counseling in the Richmond community, represented faith, business, health care, and a broad spectrum of faith and cultural perspectives. They were: Dr. Theodore Adams, Mr. William Daniel, Rabbi Ariel Goldberg, Dr. Ebbie Hoff, Dr. Allix James, Dr. Henry Lederer, Monsignor John McMahon, Dr. Robert Myers, Dr. Roland Riddick, Dr. William Oglesby, Bishop David Rose, and Dr. Pat Prest.

Those twelve founders gave us the Virginia Institute of Pastoral Care, one of the oldest pastoral counseling centers in the United States. It was a Field of Dreams vision for the broken hearted and broken in spirit. If you build it, they will come. The vision was that VIPCare would draw upon the faith resources of clients and staff in providing pastoral counseling, and by being linked to the faith community, would offer counseling at an affordable price.

For the first twenty years of its existence, VIPCare's central office was in a building owned by St. John's United Church of Christ on Lombardy Street. Then the central office was moved to Patterson Avenue and more recently to Richmond Medical Park. In addition satellite locations have existed from Ashland to Petersburg, and from Roanoke to Williamsburg, all located in faith communities.

There were early years marked by donated space and second-hand furniture and a struggle to survive from month to month. But the founders and the early staff never lost sight of being people of faith, who come from a people of faith, who expect there to be opportunity in struggle.

For fifty years the clinical and administrative staff has remained faithful to the founding vision, working intentionally at the boundary of faith and psychological and spiritual distress. Scores of clergy and laity have sought clinical training, taking pastoral care and counseling skills back into places of ministry. A library shelf is filled with research projects conducted and staff has distinguished themselves and VIPCare by giving leadership and direction internationally to the profession of pastoral counseling.

Clients speak of a sense of welcome and care that they feel at first contact. Others speak of a healing presence felt by virtue of being in the building - a sanctuary of sorts, as if the very place has developed a capacity for healing.

It has been a vision well kept for half a century, and one that honors those who first brought the vision into reality all those years ago. ♦



VIPCare's Current Board Members



William Johnson & W. Victor Maloy

Vic Maloy & Susan Aruda



## The Day the Building Almost Exploded

Donald Denton

The Institute had its beginning in a large three story brick building that a realtor would say, "it's a fixer-upper!" They would say this to either an out-of-towner who was unfamiliar with the neighborhood or someone whose optimism exceeded their mechanical skills by substantial degree. The building at 507 North Lombardy was mostly vacant but whose landlord used many of its rooms and floors for storage. VIPCare's offices comprised the much of the second and third floors although the first floor and several of the unused rooms on the upper



*Clinical Staff. Circa 1985*

down there, I took the precaution of going quickly to my office and grabbing my then-new portable computer. Its forty pound weight and bulk made negotiating the stairs a bit difficult, but I got it and myself outside. Placing the computer a safe distance from the building in the rear parking lot, I then approached the basement door.

From what I could hear, it sounded like the roar of the monster had increased. Pushing open the basement door, I soon confronted the fiery furnace whose door was now glowing red hot from the runaway fire inside the firebox. Unable to find a light switch, fuse box or anything approaching that magic switch which says, FURNACE OFF, I beat a hasty retreat outside. Bill Johnson, the executive director, was just getting out of his car.

"What's going on," he asked. "The furnace is running away with itself," I replied. With deliberate speed he entered the basement and the roar started to die down. He obviously knew where that FURNACE OFF switch was located! It took about half of the day for our offices to return to a livable temperature.

There were plenty of other challenges the 507 Building threw at early staff and clients. But none quite as vivid as the morning it seemed that the building was going to explode. Mercifully the building was razed and is now a parking lot. ♦

floors were of questionable serviceability. The landlord will remain anonymous.

It was on one of those glorious mornings in the early fall, when furnaces first come to life, that I unlocked the building's heavy front door. Immediately I heard the monster roaring. It was coming underneath my feet, from the basement. Unsure of what I might find

## The Second Decade Current Events

**1978** – Pope Paul VI dies (August 8).

**1979** – Average cost of a new home is \$58,100.

Average cost of one gallon of gasoline is 86 cents.

Three Mile Island nuclear reactor fails.

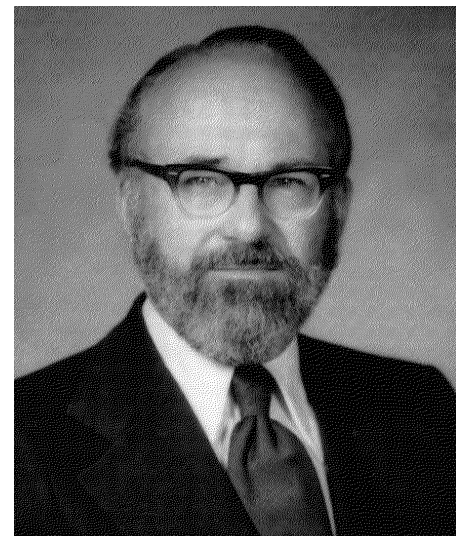
63 Americans are captured and held hostage in Tehran

John Paul II becomes new Catholic Pope.

**1982** – Vietnam Veteran Memorial is dedicated (November 13).

**1984** – First extra-vehicular space walk from the Space Shuttle

**1985** – Mikhail Gorbachev & Ronald Reagan hold summit conference in Geneva, Switzerland



*William B. Oglesby, Ph.D., founding board member.*

## How VIPCare is Different from Other Counseling Organizations

*(Ed. Note – Reprinted from November-December issue of InTouch, 1985)*

**The professional staff are certified clinical pastoral counselors.** The counselor has extensive professional training, is nationally certified, counsels on a full-time basis and works with other clinical psychologists and medical psychiatric personnel.

**All counselors must be recipients of two professional degrees beyond college.** First, all pastoral counselors have degrees in theology and are ordained ministers. They believe that each person is a "Child of God," and they are soul as well as body.

**VIPCare is national accredited as a Service and Training Center.** The American Association of Pastoral Counselors and the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education establishes standards for service and training which VIPCare has met.

**VIPCare has the credibility of eighteen years of service.** In addition to serving the needs of individuals, VIPCare has provided employee assistance programs for seven major faith groups and one theological seminary, providing counseling services to ministers and their families.

**Ten Counseling locations in the Greater Richmond Area.** Each center is conveniently located to provide immediate access by the client. Each center is staffed with professional counselors who are all committed to the same philosophy – that each client, no matter how dysfunctional and hurtful his behavior, thoughts or feelings may be to themselves or others, has within himself a center which can be the organizing point of change and growth toward greater wholeness.

**VIPCare's counselors are uniquely qualified.** VIPCare's staff provides individual, group, marriage and family counseling to any persons who need it and request it regardless of their ability to pay the full cost. ♦

## Key Dates and People

**1987** - "Pastoral Assessment of Children: Suggestions for Helping Children and Families." *Your Church Magazine*. Vol. 33: No. 1 (January/February, 1987).

**1987** - 1990 Donald D. Denton publishes another eleven articles in peer review journals, and professional trade publications on a variety of theological, ministry and pastoral care topics.

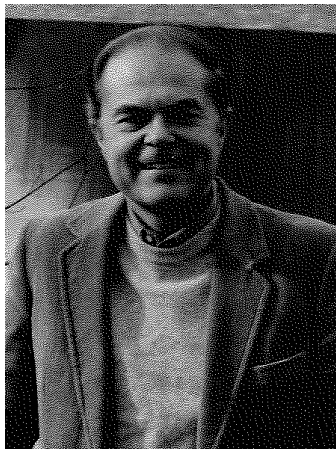
**1990** - Donald D. Denton receives Doctor of Ministry from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

**1990 - 2010** - Mary Fran Hughes-McIntyre is Director of Education.

**1993** - Part-time Internship in Pastoral Counseling established  
Parish Pastoral Care Program established



Ruth Hennessey

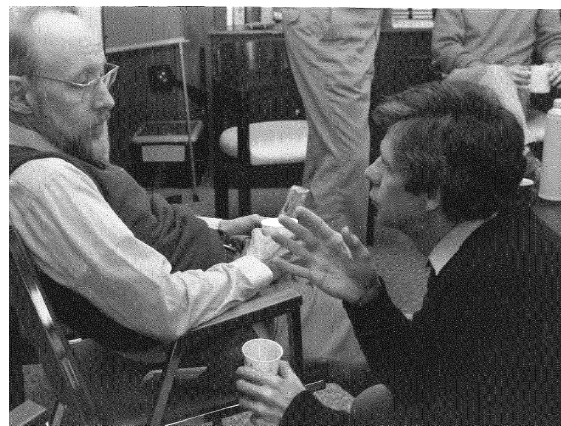


Roy Woodruff

## Holy Smokes, Did I Need Help!

David Howell

With tears running down her cheeks, the woman sitting in my office cried out, "The world is coming to an end, and I am going to die." As a two-week old, baby pastor (just out of seminary), I quickly began to reassure her that I had watched the morning news, and the world was not coming to an end. That didn't help. She went on to describe how she could not sleep at night, had loss of appetite, and cried a lot (all answers to diagnostic questions that I would later learn to ask). I think I helped her some that day but probably only due to the reassurance she felt from going to talk to her pastor.



Donald Stemp & Vic Maloy

A few days later, I received a phone call from Betty's (not her real name) psychiatrist. After identifying himself and thanking me for giving support to his patient, he shared with me what he thought I should know about Betty. As a child, she was sexually abused by an uncle who came into her bedroom in the dark of night. Betty, according to her psychiatrist, was suffering from panic attacks, intense but subdued rage, and near psychotic breaks. "Angry enough to kill her abuser," he said, "but turned the anger in on herself." Like a child at "Disney World" for the first time, I was amazed at his insights and colorful explanations that shed so much light on this woman's intense pain and suffering. From that day forward, I was determined to learn how to understand people who came to see me in my office.

About this same time, I invited an African-American family to church. On Monday morning I was welcomed to my office by a long line of pickup trucks (this was southside Virginia). I was told how unacceptable this was and how it would not be tolerated. Saying "well that is what they taught me to do in seminary," I tried to side-step their hostility. That didn't work either... for later that morning when I was driving to Richmond for a hospital visit... the local sheriff got on my bumper and escorted me to the county line.

Holy smokes, did I need help!

So I joined a pastors' support group at VIPCare that was very helpful. I soon found out about the part-time certificate program in pastoral counseling. It was a slippery-slope. The program only partially satisfied my hunger for the diagnostic ability the above psychiatrist had demonstrated. Soon, I applied to the full-time, 2 year residency program in pastoral counseling.

However, I was told that I needed more "clinical experience" (apparently stopping the end of the world and starting a racial crisis was not enough). Consequently, I volunteered at a local mental health clinic, and my first client there (an elderly man) sat down in his chair and said, "I need your help... I've lost my nature", but that's another story.

Soon, I qualified for the residency program, and leave it to say that VIPCare training stretched me emotionally, personally, and intellectually. It was easily one of the major formative events in my life. Studying DSM-III (that dates me), the theology of pastoral counseling, and receiving intense, direct supervision of my interaction with clients was exactly what I needed (although sometimes I thought "the world was coming to an end").

Often, it was with great anxiety that I pushed the Play button for that recorded session with a client that my supervisor would scrutinize like a scientist peering through a microscope. But over time it was so, so helpful.

In the end the residency was a powerful experience and one that I will forever cherish. I owe a lot to VIPCare and VIPCare staff. ♦

*(Ed. Note: David went on to serve on the part-time staff at VIPCare for over 15 years while developing a journal for clergy and conferences for clergy. The Festival of Homiletics became the world's largest preaching conference. Presently, David is a consultant for Luther Seminary, St Paul, MN)*

## A deluge of data and hope

Jason Whitehead

It's been a dozen years since I regularly walked the hallways at VIPCare; a dozen years since I nervously awaited my first client meeting and supervisory sessions. And yet, in those 12 years of living in Colorado, VIPCare has never seemed too far away. Every time I sit with a student discerning their vocational path to ministry and leadership, the lessons I learned at VIPCare come rushing forward.

In midst of a deluge of data, experiences, and hopes, I am reminded to see

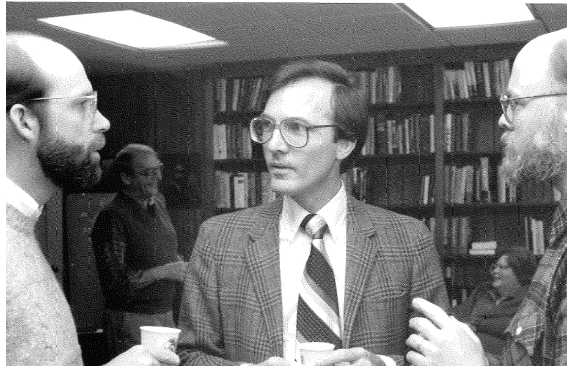
and stand with the person amidst these swirling complexities. My formation at VIPCare taught me to look beyond diagnosis and seek the still small voices of individuals seeking to be heard, to be seen, and to be remembered. For that, I will be ever grateful for their continued presence and voice in my own life and work.

Dr. Whitehead is the Director of Consultation and Formation at the John Wesley Iliff School of Theology. He is the Senior Adjunct Lecturer in Pastoral Care (Ed.) ♦



## Substance Abuse Ministry in the Opioid Epidemic Donald Denton

I remember Chris Bowers when he was in our two-year Resident program. It began our friendship which has lasted over now thirty years. A quiet man with a sardonic sense of humor and a love of baseball games, Chris has gone on to have a significant ministry in the field of substance abuse. He entered the field in 1991 just after the field had developed its credentialing standards. He worked in both non-profit and for-profit programs, intensive outpatient and inpatient programs and now in Virginia's Health Practitioners Monitoring Program.



*David Howell, Chris Bowers & Donald Denton*

Chris has held state and national offices in the field. National service in certification boards and adolescent specialty boards have been complimented by a stint as the president of the Virginia Association of Addiction Professionals as well as editing its newsletter VAP Views. He also is the developer of a game (*Use, Relapse and Recovery Journey*) and was the curriculum developer for Spiritual Caregiving to Help Addicted Persons and Families with C. Roy Woodruff, Ph.D. A more focused self-guided course, (*Studies in the Twelve Core Competencies for Churches and Pastoral Counselors*) rounds out his service beyond VIPCare.

Chris rejoined the VIPCare staff and provides substance abuse assessments, counseling for both substance-dependent individuals and couples as well as relapse-prevention counseling. He routinely sends staff members relevant articles related to the entire field. With the current rise in opioid dependence and the death of three Virginians a day to opioid overdose, Chris is still on the front-line of efforts by both the Commonwealth and by non-profit care agencies like VIPCare to assist people ensnared in this life-ending habit.

On a much less serious but no less important note, Chris and I have been friends over these years. There have been a number of baseball games watched, some in the cold days of late March. He even snagged what I was certain was going to be a foul ball heading straight for my outstretched Mickey Mantle fielder's glove! He still regales me with photos of his granddaughters on Maryland's eastern shore. As I wrote this article, he made one last attempt to draft me into helping him paint some walls in his house. *Selah!*

## Baseball and Blizzards

Donald Denton

"Tell me again why you're going to Chicago in July and in January?" my brother said. Having recently moved to Virginia where summer brings magnolias and tomatoes while for a Yankee transplant I was then still in search of winter, his question reeked of a fraternal threat to commit me. By July all that brick and steel worked like a kiln, amplifying the heat that makes the corn grow out on the Illinois prairie. January always brought genuine blizzards, think 36 inches of snow over a 24 hour time period. Parkas and a balaklava would be the order of the day.

"It's for a non-resident doctoral degree program," I volunteered. "I go there for three weeks at a time for classes while reading books and writing papers in the off season. Besides, the school is in Evanston on the Northwestern University Campus. I can hang out at the Great Expectations philosophy bookstore."

"But there are no bars in Evanston," he continued. "The WCTU has its headquarters there. That seminary is Methodist, isn't it?" That last sentence wasn't really a question. It was a reminder that we both grew up in a church that frowned on adult beverages, jewelry on women and movies unless they were 'films' from the National Geographic or Walt Disney.

Beginning in 1981, VIPCare formed a partnership with Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary as the clinical training center for their Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Counseling. Over the next decade a number of VIPCare Residents would make the twice-a-year trek to the Evanston campus. We met colleagues from across the nation as well as from several other countries. We also formed lasting relationships with a number of the faculty and staff, Dr. James Ashbrook, Dr. John Hinkle and Dr. Laleen Rector among them. Our executive director at that time, Dr. W. Victor Maloy, eventually inherited teaching Dr. Ashbrook's class in the history of the pastoral counseling movement.

I used the opportunity to bid some fond farewells to Midwestern friends as well as sit through one of the Cubs many losing games at Wrigley Field. I still relish a good blizzard, but not enough to move back to anywhere that a snow blower is actually mandatory equipment. ♦

## The Third Decade Current Events

**1987 - 1992** – George H. W. Bush is the 41st President.

**1993 - 2001** - William J. Clinton is the 42nd President.

**1990** – Iraq invades Kuwait (August 2).

**1990** – L. Douglas Wilder is elected Governor of Virginia. The first African-American to be elected to the office of governor in any state.

**1991** – Operation Desert Storm commences (January 12).

Miller & Rhodes Department Store is defunct; no longer in Richmond.

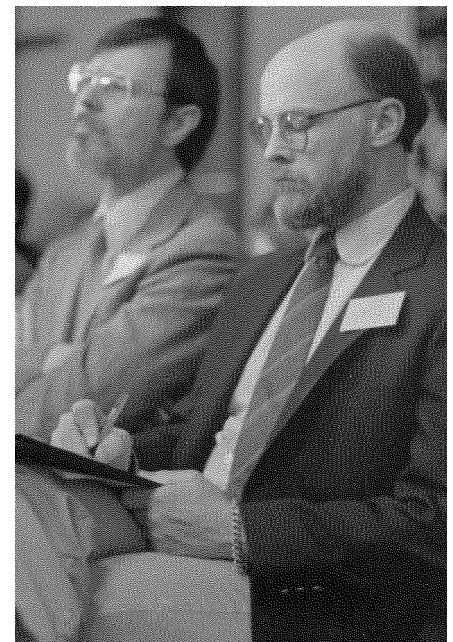
**1992** – Thalhimers Department Store vacates downtown Richmond.

**1994** – The World Series is cancelled due to a strike by players.

**1995** – Murrah Federal Building, Oklahoma City, is bombed (April 19).

Atlantis Space Shuttle docks with the Mir Space Station (June 29).

The Korean War Veterans Memorial is dedicated (July 27).



*Malcolm Turnbull & Donald Denton*

**1999** - Chewning Distinguished Service Award established.

Awardees include Dennett Slemp, Alice Harris, Barbara King,

William B. Probert, Mary Fran Hughes-McIntyre and Pat Prest.

**2001** - Direct clinical service surpasses 9,000 hours.

Donald Denton publishes *Religious Diagnosis in a Secular Society*

Majority of referrals still come from religious leaders

**2002** - W. Victor Maloy publishes *Night Musings: Spiritual Vignettes of Life*

**2005** - Goodykoontz Library established

**2007** - W. Victor Maloy publishes *Reflections on the Journey: Glimpses of the Holy*

**2008** - Naming the Pain and Guiding the Care: the Central Tasks of Diagnosis published by Donald Denton.

**2008** - Donald Denton appointed adjunct faculty in the Graduate School at University of Maryland University College.

**2009** - Donald Denton receives Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Homeland Security and Emergency Management from the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs, Virginia Commonwealth University.

**2014** - Donald Denton appointed Director of Education.

## Journey to the African Counseling Center

Dennett Slemp

Jean-Emile Ngue had come to the United States to learn to better minister to his people in Cameroon, West Africa. He had finished his D.Min. in pastoral counseling at Virginia Union University and his training at VIPCare. His dream had become to start the first pastoral counseling center in Cameroon. He knew it would be difficult. The culture was so different. In addition to several Christian denominations, there were traditional Cameroonian religions which supported ways far different from core Christian values and practices. Also, he had no money. Nonetheless he had returned to Cameroon and started the African Pastoral Counseling Center. Then, a year or so later, he asked VIPCare supervisors and teachers to come to the new Center and provide basic pastoral counseling training for his staff.

In 2002, several of us went. It was a cultural shock in many ways. First, there was the financial poverty of Cameroon, including the African Pastoral Counseling Center staff. Nevertheless they had started the center, and it was up, running and providing pastoral counseling. In addition, part of their ministry had become to give practical care and support for children who had lost both parents to the AIDS epidemic and who were parenting their own younger sisters and brothers.

In the midst of all of this poverty, our hosts treated us as though they were living in great abundance. They fed us luxuriously – even though that meant that their own families would go hungry so we could eat well. This was particularly difficult for me because I was the oldest – and in their culture the oldest always eats first. During one of our meetings with their counseling staff, I asked one member what we Americans most need to learn from them. He answered very simply: “Generosity.” I thought he was so right. I could only sit in silence and think about what he had said.

Our training sessions were in a very large room. It was always completely filled with people craving to learn pastoral counseling. Not only were the staff present, but the news of the pastoral counseling training at gotten into the press and TV. Many other counselors and trainees were also there to learn. Some of them had drums and other African instruments poked under their chairs. Sometimes during one of our presentations the staff and others attending would get up, sing and dance, pull out their instruments and play. Joy bounced around the room like something we could physically touch.

VIPCare's executive director was among these present and teaching. During a break, a reporter asked him, “Will pastoral counseling be the salvation of Cameroon?” He answered sadly, “No.” ♦



Virginia & Charles Chewning

## Our Partner Center in Africa: Growth Comes Through Difference

Jean-Emile Ngue

VIPCare's partner pastoral counseling center in Cameroon, West Africa is celebrating its 15th year of counseling through mutual professional and spiritual support.

As a graduate of VIPCare and founder of the African Counseling Center (ACC), Rev. Dr. Jean-Emile Ngue writes, “I am adopted by the entire community of VIPCare, and ... this community also learned through me the challenges of cultural differences and the challenges of the developed countries at large. VIPCare Staff have been twice in Cameroon, my native country.

The heart of many Cameroonian ministers, children, especially those who are HIV/AIDS orphans, families and communities is beating in the rhythm of unconditional love that links VIPCare and the African Counseling Center, a Center that I created when I returned home after the wonderful experience that I had at VIPCare as a student. The two communities became so close that we are eating African and American food together, wearing African and American clothes, playing piano and African drums and instruments in signs of cultural celebration in God's Glory. The same Spirit unites us, and the future generations will benefit from it. Indeed, after my transformation, I can claim that this is a journey of GRACE in ACTION where GROWTH comes through DIFFERENCE!” Africans affirm that “I am because I belong,” and now WE belong because we have grown through difference.

After the death of Dr. Sandy Hamilton, the Center's champion in America, ACC was renamed “The Sandy and Mary Fran Foundation” and continues to give emotional, psychological and spiritual support to individuals, families and communities in situational crisis. Our companions in hope grow strong through affirming their African identity with traditional values like community, solidarity and hospitality. The Center has its own building thanks to the vision of its African staff and board, VIPCare and the generosity of Trinity United Methodist Church's Mission Advance funding. ♦



Benson Thomas & Donald Denton



## An Introvert Leading an Extroverted Life

W. Victor Maloy

My trip began almost five years ago as I returned a phone message on my way to the airport to fly to Chicago. The voice on the other end said, "We would like for you to consider being nominated for vice-president of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors."

I had been involved in the life of the association long enough to know the implications of such a decision. It would mean two years as vice president and then two more years as president. It would mean a significant commitment of time and energy for the next four years of my life.

In the moment there in the car on the way to the airport, what I mostly remember feeling was a sense of irritation that the invitation was complicating an already complicated life.

Ironically, my trip to Chicago was a retirement dinner for a professional colleague. My assignment was to give an after dinner speech, in which I summarized my colleague's contributions to the professional organization that I had just received an invitation to serve. I sought the counsel of a former president, my wife and my daughter.

As I pondered the responses of others as well as my own, I became aware that the opportunity before me was not something that I was either seeking or had a particular need for. I was not even sure that I wanted to do it. Yet what eventually emerged for me was that the invitation seemed like a calling in the religious sense. And thus it was on that basis that I returned the original call and said, "yes" to the invitation.

Now as my term as both vice president and president concludes, it strikes me that it has been hard at times. I am an introvert living an extroverted life! People have been kind to ask what the experience has been like. I've told them that 75 percent of the time it has been like flying at 35,000 feet, sipping a fine wine while gazing out on great fluffy clouds. And that 25 percent of the time, it has been like lying on my back underneath an old car that is dripping oil in my face. The imagery has seemed to communicate!

I read once that when Africans are on a long walk, they stop once in a while and sit down and wait literally for their souls to catch up. Three months ago, I presided over my final annual meeting of the association in San Francisco. Two days later I boarded the California Zephyr and spent the next five days slowly traveling by rail across this magnificent country. I did no work. I did not even read. I just looked out the window and allowed my soul to catch up. It was a gorgeous and nurturing experience. It was exactly what I needed.

At VipCare the calendar posted on the bulletin board two months before the San Francisco trip was labeled "Presidential Countdown." The next month was labeled "Vic Returns To VipCare." When Vic did return to VipCare there was a dethroning ceremony, attended by colleagues that I care so much about and whose work and loyalty permitted my peripatetic wanderings for these past four years.

I never did get back to my daughter regarding what I was going to give up. What is more important is what I have received. It has been a singular honor to be the 20th president of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. It is a dream that I never had, but it was a calling that I am so glad that I answered. These months later, it seems like a dream from which I am just now waking. ♦

*(Ed. Note: The above reflection is an abbreviation of a much longer article written by Dr. Maloy upon concluding his term as the 20th president of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors).*

## What A Difference One Person Can Make!

Sandy Hamilton

*—(edited from 2007 InTouch)*

Rich in traditional wisdom and culture, Africa is a continent of contrasts. War and political turmoil have displaced millions. One in three persons is undernourished. 24.5 million live with HIV/AIDS. Crime, alcoholism, unemployment, and poverty take a high toll. You have heard statistics like these so often that they may barely make an impact any more. It's tragic, after all, but what can one person do?

This is a remarkable story of what one person by God's grace accomplished. The American Association of Pastoral Counselors and our Atlantic Region joined with one man to make a difference, bringing hope, knowledge, and professional clinical training to Africans who face these threats every day.

The story begins in Cameroon, West Africa. A group of churches selected one pastor, Rev. Jean-Emile Ngue, and provided the means for him to do graduate seminary training in the United States for one year. Supporting a student in America demands sacrificial giving in a country where the average pastor makes only \$100 a month. For the first time Rev. Ngue learned about pastoral care and counseling, an unknown field in Africa. He realized that pastoral care training would be a tremendous help to his fellow pastors and their congregations. Without guaranteed support, he began three years of doctoral work with a focus on pastoral counseling at The School of Theology at Virginia Union University, in Richmond, Virginia, in partnership with the Virginia Institute of Pastoral Care. His doctoral project adapted Western pastoral care and counseling to the African context.

He wrote, "My desire is for an African Counseling Center to be a healing place where people can learn to trust God, to trust their 'Africaness' and to trust them again." ♦

## Fourth Decade Current Events

**1999** – Euro introduced as currency in European Union

Highest wind speed recorded on earth's surface at 318 mph in an F-5 tornado (May 3).

**2000** – Metro Richmond population is 996,512.

**2001** – The World Trade Center & Pentagon are attacked by terrorists linked to al-Qaeda. A fourth flight, destined either for the White House or Capitol Building, American Airlines Flight 93, was thwarted by passengers. It crashed in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

VipCare staff gathered in the library to pray at the suggestion of Bookkeeper Betty Wiley.

Ukrops first Monument Ave. 10K race.

**2002** – Department of Homeland Security established.

Virginia Commonwealth University makes the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 1996.

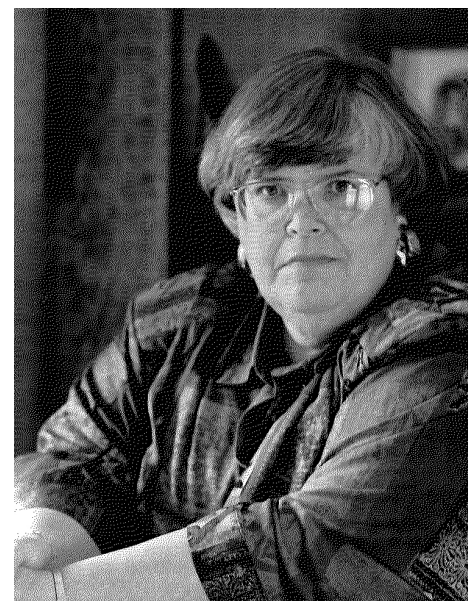
**2003** – Vancouver B. C. selected to host XXI Winter Olympics.

**2004** – Hurricane Gaston strikes Central Virginia.

**2005** – Hurricane Katrina makes landfall (August 29).

**2005 – 2009** – L. Douglas Wilder serves as Mayor of Richmond.

**2006** – American Civil War Center opens at Historic Tredegar site.



*Dodie Rossell, clinical staff in 1990's.*

**2007 – 2016** New clinical staff added.

Douglas Thorpe, Sudie Althisar, Larry Wholly, Kristin Long Francisco, Malcolm Turnbull, Gladys Joyner Hubbard, Paul Simmrell, Amy Lenow, Susan Luck, Charles Bates, Ted Dougherty.

**2011** – Roanoke Valley Satellite Center opens in Green Memorial United Methodist Church

**2014** – Douglas Thorpe becomes Executive Director

Pastoral Education Scholarship Fund is established.

Goodykoontz-Crutchfield Education Resource Center is dedicated.

Sandra K. Hamilton dies.

**2015** – Darla Rowley begins Internship in marriage and family counseling. She is a graduate student with an emphasis in equine therapy at Prescott College.

**2016** – Current Board of Directors

Daniel Bagby

Cora Marie Billings, RSM

Francis Broaddus Crutchfield

(President)

Audrey Harris

Gwen Lingerfelt

Carol Bliley Markow

Anne Peck

Melinda South (Immediate Past President)

**2016** – Charlottesville Satellite Center opens in Christ Episcopal Church

## Keeping a Core Value in a Changing World

Dennett Slemp

What's all this stuff about pastoral counseling? What's it about – really?

I'll tell you what I think it's about. I think it's about becoming more real.

What do I mean?

I've told you something about what I mean already – in my accompanying article about how I started my ministry at VIPCare some forty-eight years ago. It's about helping people become more real and comfortable in their own skin and in their relationships with one another. It's not a simple thing. It's part of life's journey. Of course pastoral counseling helps people deal with specific life problems such as marital concerns, family problems, vocational problems, faith issues, depression, anxiety, grieving, death and countless other painful matters. But at bottom it involves more basically helping people become more who they are.

Sometimes I tell this story in a counseling session. It's about an old Jewish man named Yasha. Yasha died and found himself standing before Heaven's Gate. He was looking at God just on the other side of the gate. God was also looking back at him. Eye to eye. God appeared to Yasha to be concerned – perhaps about letting him in. But finally God smiled and God opened the gate and welcomed him into heaven. Much relieved but puzzled, the old man asked God, "Why did you let me in? I'm not Abraham or Moses or David or any of those important holy people like them!" Then God caringly and in a gentle voice said, "Yasha, it's not because you were not Abraham or Moses or David or any people like that. It's because I was concerned for you – that you were not Yasha."

We live in a culture that values appearance over reality. "I'm o.k., how are you." "I'm o.k. too." Not always. We live in a culture that encourages valuing people on externals: income, job type, organization membership, social status. This in turn affects how we see and value ourselves on a deeper level. These are simply cultural illusions. They make it hard for us to be real – with ourselves and with one another. Instead, our true identity grows out of our created being and our relationship with Being Itself – however defined. Christians recognize this by our experiential awareness of being "Children of God." Buddhists and others recognize this when they bow to each other and say "Namaste," which means "the holiness in me recognizes the holiness in you." Experiencing this personally and deeply in the pastoral counseling relationship lies at the heart of becoming more real.

I think pastoral counseling at VIPCare is about this. It has been about this since it's very beginning in 1967. As the decades have rolled by, as wars have come and sometimes gone, as economic crises have arisen and partly passed, as racial issues have risen and changed, as profound technological discoveries have changed our and all the world's cultures – VIPCare has maintained this central core value.

It is significant that VIPCare identifies itself explicitly as a pastoral counseling center – and not some other kind of counseling center. This is inherently part of its very nature.

This is the reason I've remained at VIPCare for the past 48 years. For me, my relationships with the staff and this approach to our pastoral counseling work with people in deep pain has felt like a green oasis. In the midst of a desert. And so I'm still here. ♦

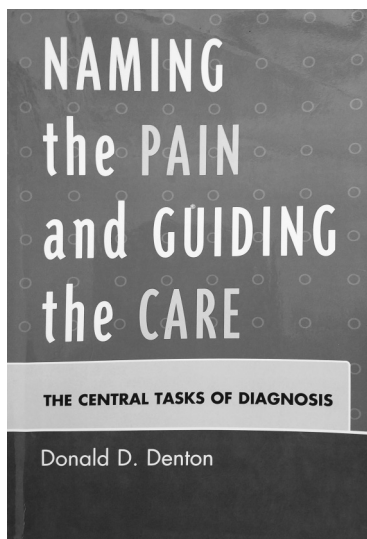
## Blessing the Space

Darla Rowley

I was a Counseling Psychology practicum and internship student with the Virginia Institute of Pastoral Care (VIPCare) for three semesters. Now in my third year, I am serving as an extern while I complete my Master degree in Clinical Mental Health with a specialty in Couples and Family Therapy through Prescott College. I will also have a post graduate concentration in Equine-assisted Mental Health. I plan to assist individuals, couples, and families, who have experienced traumatic events in their lives with building resiliency and lifelong coping skills.

As a counseling student one of my priorities was to find an internship site that held spirituality sacred and central to the heart of its therapeutic practice. VIPCare's professional and administrative staff are exemplary models of holding spirituality sacred and central in caring for those who are experiencing pain, brokenness, and suffering in their lives, and who are seeking healing through the compassionate, loving witness of their life stories. In John O'Donohue's, *To Bless the Space Between Us*, he wrote, "And all through the Old Testament God is interested only in the heart – not sacrifices, rituals, or rules – only the heart. Indeed, the mystical tradition would suggest the heart is beautiful precisely because it is where God dwells: the heart is divine sanctuary."

VIPCare's staff carries the mystical tradition of the heart as divine sanctuary in being the living word of God through His infinite unconditional love and grace for its clients. I am blessed to serve with VIPCare. ♦



Published in 2008



## We Can Write our Own Future

Gladys Hubbard

As a member of the VIPCare staff, I have understood the meaning of life at a deeper level. I have developed relationships, peer camaraderie and shared experience with a caring and highly trained professional staff of varied backgrounds. My focus as a pastoral psychotherapist has paralleled with that of VIPCare's belief statements: (1) that we believe that a caring relationship is basic for healing; (2) that we work in conjunction with medical, psychological and psychiatric consultants; (3) and that healing involves questions of meaning and value as well as symptom relief.

I resonate with the belief that healing involves both attention to meaning and values as well as symptom relief. I recalled a book I read years ago and continue to read and refer to it written by Victor Frankl. The book was entitled, *Man's Search for Meaning*. Frankl's reasoning is that even in the most terrible circumstances, each person makes the decision and choose how they see the circumstances and find meaning out of them. In other words, we have the right to choose the outcome of our future around those circumstances. We have can write our future of the worst of our circumstances. Victor Frankl also quoted Nietzsche's belief that, "He who has a 'why' to live can bear with almost any 'how'."

As a staff member at VIPCare, I see individuals, couples and families leave the center as anxiety turns to peace and hope, mourning to comfort, and brokenness to wholeness. I am grateful to witness that our clients experience our center as a safe place for healing and hope. Their healing results because we walk with them as they tell their narratives.

We help them to find the meaning and value in their lives that leads to find hope and healing. ♦

## The Medium is the Message

Doug Thorpe

Make a short sound and a long sound and you have Morse Code. Send those shorts and longs to someone else and you can communicate across vast distances.

At heart, VIPCare is in the communication business. Our clients tell us about their lives; their trials and triumphs, their fears and hopes, their strengths and weaknesses, their joys and their sufferings. Our counselors communicate understanding, hope, support and advice.

For most of its 50 years VIPCare has built up a library of resources for pastoral counseling.

In the 21st century, though, the Internet has become the primary repository of the world's knowledge and print has struggled to hold its own. It became clear that VIPCare needed to enhance its electronic communication abilities in order to stay up with emerging trends and technologies. Fortunately, a grant from the Robert G. Cabell III and Maude Morgan Cabell Foundation enabled us to transform our library. The new Education Center, named after beloved VIPCare Board members George Crutchfield and Alf Goodykontz, features state-of-the-art technology. In place of bookshelves and tape players we got a powerful computer with a ceiling-mounted high-definition projector and "smart" screen. Moveable tables and chairs can be configured in many different patterns or even cleared away to open up the room.

Now we regularly access online resources as part of staff continuing education or classroom instruction. We can stream video from a consulting room into the education center so a supervisor can watch a student work in real time. We videoconference to interview candidates for short-term and career missionary service around the globe. When we get braver we will produce our own webinars to share our expertise with others. No matter the technology, though, the aim of our communication remains the same: hope and healing through relationship. ♦

## \$50,000 Challenge Grant

Nadja Gutkowski

Board President Frances Broaddus Crutchfield recently gave the Virginia Institute of Pastoral Care a \$50,000 gift in support of counseling outreach and care. Asked her reason for making the largest one-time gift in VIPCare history, Ms. Crutchfield stated,

"I wanted to celebrate the 50th birthday of this organization whose entire existence has been devoted to listening to troubled people and helping them mend the broken pieces of their lives."

The gift is a challenge to Friends of VIPCare to raise another \$50,000 (for \$100,000 total) in honor of VIPCare's 50th Anniversary.

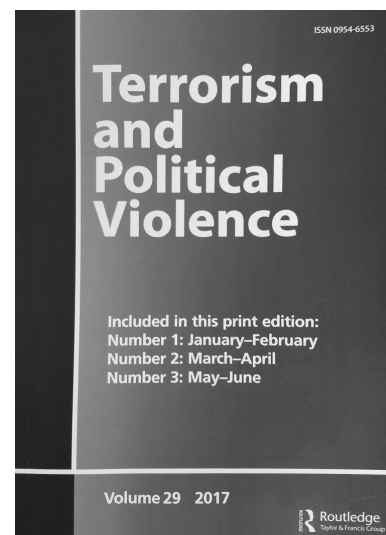
If you would like to make a gift to match the \$50,000, please contact the Development Office at (804) 282-8332 or [development@vipcare.org](mailto:development@vipcare.org)

Founded in 1967, VIPCare celebrates 50 years of offering hope and healing to more than 100,000 counseling clients in Central Virginia. We still turn no one away who desires our services.

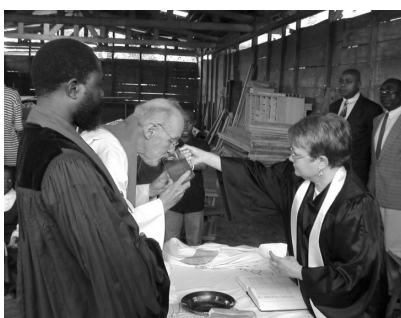
Visit us at [www.vipcare.org](http://www.vipcare.org) ♦

## Fifth Decade Current Events

- 2007** - Apple debuts the iPhone  
Amazon releases the Kindle  
  
Global economic downturn begins, the greatest since Great Depression of '29.
- 2008** - Beijing hosts the Summer Olympics  
  
Scientists extract images direct from the brain.  
  
Oil prices reach a record high of \$147 in July and drop to \$33 in December.
- 2009** - Barack Hussein Obama becomes the 44th President of the United States.  
  
Water is discovered on the Moon.  
  
The tallest building is constructed, reaching 163 floors, rising to a height of 828m (2,717 ft),
- 2010** - Suicide bombings continue throughout the Middle East.  
  
HIV is officially removed from the list of communicable diseases by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- 2011** - Massive earthquake/tsunami strikes Japan.  
  
Average price of gas in America is \$3.52  
  
Occupy Wall Street protests create damage in New York City.
- 2013 (October 1)** - Voyager 1 leaves the Solar System.  
  
Nelson Mandela / Margaret Thatcher die.
- 2015** - Relations with Cuba begin normalization.



2017 edition



VIPCare's staff at founding of the African Counseling Center, Younde, Cameroon in 2002.

## Call and the Promise of Pastoral Counseling

Maria Clark Fleshood

Twenty-four years ago I found myself sitting with Mary Fran Hughes-McIntyre, a stranger to me at that time, discussing the possibility of entering the Certification Pastoral Counseling Program at VIPCare. Prior to our conversation I had little knowledge of what a Pastoral Counselor involved, much less of the journey this decision would take me on. What I was clear about was the internal knowing that I was in the right place, stepping onto the right path.

In her poem, *The Journey*, words of Mary Oliver speaks clearly to the struggle, both internally and externally, I knew this choice would invite me to befriend.

*One day you finally knew what you had to do, and began,  
though the voices around you kept shouting their bad advice...  
Though the whole house began to tremble  
and you felt the old tug at your ankles.  
"Mend my life!" each voice cried.  
But you didn't stop.  
You knew what you had to do...  
The only thing you could do..  
Determined to save the only life you could save.*

Prior to entering VIPCare I had served as a missionary for ten years in Europe. Before returning to the United States decisions lingered that later resolved in the termination of my career as a missionary and a difficult choice to leave my marriage.

Crossing into this unknown territory of pastoral counseling did not come without insecurities, I had so neatly tucked away, being unveiled and challenged. This training offered a new lens through which I could recognize these insecurities with more compassion and understanding. My years at VIPCare, as student, pastoral counselor and adjunct teacher, were the womb from which I mobilized parts of my Self that were essential to the development of my work as a psychotherapist and writer.

It is with deep appreciation for Mary Fran, who during that first interview at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, saw potential and possibility within me that had long been a stranger to myself. I offer gratitude to the community of VIPCare who were a stairway of mentorship to the work I accomplished while serving with them and continues to influence the work I do today. It is an honor to identify with you as you mark half of a century of being a spiritual and clinical foundation upon which hope and healing is offered through counseling and education.

Dr. Fleshood is one of several Residents who went on to acquire her Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Counseling from Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond and also gain licensure in Virginia as a Professional Counselor as a part of her training (Ed.) ♦

## Changing Faces of VIPCare's Story

Mary Fran Hughes-McIntyre

"The very act of storytelling, of arranging memory and invention according to the structure of the narrative, is by definition... holy.

*"We tell stories because we love to entertain and hope to edify.*

*"We tell stories because they fill the silence death imposes.*

*"We tell stories because they save us."*

*-James Carroll*

VIPCare's pastoral counselors are privileged to hear thousands of true stories told by our changing clients. Counselors' faces have changed more slowly over the five decades.

When Mary Fran Hughes joined VIPCare's pastoral counseling staff in 1976, the only other women were the clients and the secretaries. Except for her, the pastoral counselors were white Protestant clergymen.

Eager for other women and minorities on staff, she offered welcome and encouragement as women (lay, religious and ordained) increasingly joined the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. Some came to VIPCare as pastoral counselors in training, then as staff counselors. By the 1990's half of the counselors were women, with a few pastoral counselors of color. At an AAPC conference, African American psychologist Edwin Nichols explained that Black culture was "not better, not worse, just different," and he invited white dryness to be restored by Black juiciness.

In recent years the faces have changed to include new and younger counselors, as well as familiar seasoned faces. A dream is for faces of VIPCare's counselors to reflect the population which we serve. May we be blessed with increasing diversity and deeper hospitality.

One face has remained constant: Dennett Slemp has been a VIPCare pastoral counselor for 48 years. Alert with discovery, the twinkle in his eyes has warmed hearts of colleagues and clients alike. "Welcome," he greets each client, eager to hear in depth another true story. ♦



## The Mary Morton Parsons Foundation *Nadja Gutkowski*

In May, The Mary Morton Parsons Foundation granted VIPCare \$28,000 for client accessibility improvements. The improvements include the redesign of VIPCare's client waiting and group rooms and technology upgrades to assist client-counselor communications. VIPCare is extremely grateful to The Mary Morton Parsons Foundation and their Executive Director, Amy P. Nisenson, for this grant, which will increase VIPCare's ability to work with clients.

Counseling office upgrades are in the design phase. The design committee includes Board member Gwen Lingerfelt and Counselor Sudie Althisar. Gwen and Alan Lingerfelt recommended designer RoseMarie Bundy, of the firm, Wendel-Evolve, to work on the waiting and group room design plans. Ms. Bundy has graciously donated her time to redesign VIPCare's public spaces. ♦



*Board President Frances Crutchfield & Douglas Thorpe display Foundation Gift*

## Grounded in Compassion

*Donald Denton*

As I anticipated attending Marjorie Thompson's lecture on May 5, 2017, I was looking forward to more than hearing a perceptive lecture by an expert on spiritual formation. But I was also looking forward to catching up with a classmate from McCormick Theological Seminary. We graduated in 1978. Thirty days later I made my way into the rural parish of Cutler, Indiana. Later that summer, Marjorie made her way to Yale Divinity School. She spent a year under the tutelage of Henri Nouwen.

In an e-mail exchange, she commented that the year provided the foundation for her ministry in spiritual formation. That concept was in its infancy at the time. Within both the church and in the private business sector, the issues of spiritual and professional formation as well as leadership development are now part of the core curriculums at the graduate school level.

## Clergy Effectiveness Research

*W. Victor Maloy*

For several decades I have been a member of a national United Methodist advisory committee on psychological assessment of clergy and candidates for the ministry. In 1999 that committee engaged an organizational psychologist to help us begin a study of what constitutes effectiveness in ministry.

Very careful and thorough research has now been concluded and it is the first empirical based research to identify the factors that go into effectiveness in ministry. The research is now being used to pilot an assessment instrument that will identify those factors in clergy and candidates for the ministry.

What we now know from the research is that clergy who are effective are good at the following tasks and in the following order of importance: communication; preaching & public worship; self-development; care giving; management; development of others; evangelism; creating fellowship; administration; relationship building; rituals & sacraments; denominational connection; facilitation of building construction.

We also know from the research that clergy who are effective have many of the following characteristics in the following order of importance: a relationship with and trust in God; integrity; authenticity; good oral communication; solid knowledge of theology and scripture; dependability; a strong sense of being called to ministry; good time management; good reading comprehension; high intelligence; the practice of spiritual disciplines; administrative skills; knowledge of solid management principles.

We know that not every effective clergyperson will possess all of these are in equal measure, but we also know that effective clergy possess many of these and do some of them exceptionally well.

As mentioned, an assessment instrument has now been developed and is being used in a pilot study to measure for the tasks and personal characteristics that are highly correlated with effectiveness in ministry. The primary benefit of the assessment instrument is that it will identify strengths the clergyperson has in these important areas of effectiveness and to point to areas in which the clergyperson may need a development strategy to increase capacity in weaker areas.

Throughout its history VIPCare has been involved in the assessment of clergy prior to ordination. We currently provide this service to nine denominations and several judicatories within those denominations. ♦

## VIPCare's Vision

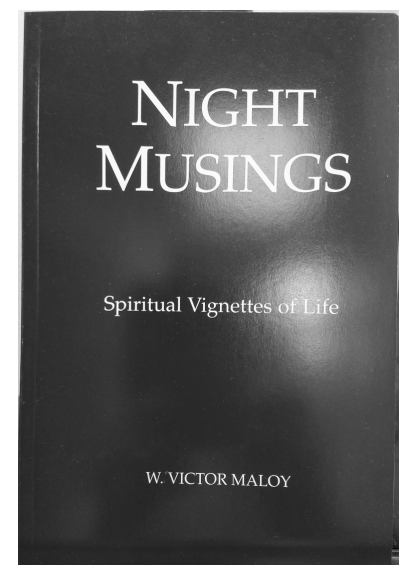
Here is where we want to be:

VIPCare strives to be a premier source in Central Virginia for:

- Compassionate counseling for all regardless of ability to pay
- Education and training for clergy and students in counseling
- Psychological assessments of candidates for ordination and mission service
- Consultations, coaching and workshops for faith communities and the general public



*Marjorie Thompson lectured in May, 2017, "Grounded in Compassion."*



*Published in 2002*

## Key Dates and People

### VIPCare's Mission:

The mission of the Virginia Institute of Pastoral Care is to restore healing and hope through spiritually integrated counseling and education.

### VIPCare's Founding:

Founded in 1967, VIPCare is an interfaith, not-for-profit counseling and educational institute, and one of the leading pastoral counseling centers in the nation. VIPCare is accredited by the American Association of Pastoral Counseling as a counseling and training center and is a recipient of the Distinguished Program Leadership Award.

### 2017 – New Board members

Jessica Young Brown

Sean Hamon

Christopher Jones

Phoebe Roaf

### New Clinical staff

Peggy Newman

### Current Centers

Richmond – Central Office on Bremono Road

Bon Air – St. Matthias' Episcopal Church

Chester - Chester Baptist Church

West End - St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Charlottesville – Christ Episcopal Church

Roanoke – Greene Memorial United Methodist Church

Williamsburg – Bruton Parish Church

## Flagships and Friends

*Doug Thorpe*

When I graduated from seminary I joined the pastoral staff of a church in Chicago. At 26 I was book smart but life ignorant, full of theory but woefully short on experience.

Soon people began coming to talk about the struggles in their lives. A wife grieved her recent miscarriage while her husband tried to convince her she would feel better as soon as she got pregnant again. A young man was sure he had found the woman he wanted to marry, but he was afraid to ask her. A mother, distracted by the kids in the back seat, took her eye off the road for the brief, fatal moment that a pedestrian stepped into the path of her SUV.

I was in over my head and I knew it. The one trained pastoral counselor nearby was swamped. Then a parishioner introduced me to a woman who was looking for a church to host her counseling practice. We soon had her set up in the Sunday School office two days a week, offering counseling rooted in faith and sharpened by psychology. By Providence more than planning we had become a counseling center host congregation.

VIPCare would not be what it is today without the partnership of local congregations in the ministry of pastoral counseling. Congregations that host satellite centers do more than provide spaces where counseling can occur. They send powerful messages to their parishioners and to the communities where they are located that they value pastoral counseling, that they are committed to bringing hope and healing to people in distress, that they practice stewardship of their buildings and that they know how to ask for assistance when the needs are great.

To our partners, thank you from all of us and from all the people you have helped us to serve. ♦

## VIPCare's Satellite Office in Charlottesville

*Sudie Althisar*

In partnership with Christ Episcopal Church, VIPCare opened a satellite office in Charlottesville in January 2016. Christ Church provides the space where I meet with folks on Mondays and Fridays. The way this satellite came into being is an interesting story. After completing an internship at VIPCare as part of my MS in Marriage and Family Therapy degree, I currently serve as an associate staff member.

During my internship and my daily drives to Richmond from Charlottesville, I often pondered and prayed about what my next steps in counseling might be. I began to wonder what it would be like to have a VIPCare satellite in Charlottesville, and from the outset, I saw that happening at Christ Church. After discussing my idea with Doug Thorpe, our executive director, we agreed I would reach out to Christ Church to gauge their interest. I emailed Marilu Thomas, their rector, told her what I was thinking about and asked to set up a meeting to discuss the idea. Immediately I heard back from her that she and Paul Walker, the Associate Rector, would like to meet with me.

Our meeting was encouraging, where Paul said that Christ Church was very interested and had long had a desire to offer counseling to their congregation and the community. When Paul asked me why I chose Christ Church, I answered that I didn't know, it was always the place where I saw this partnership happening. I'll never forget Marilu's comment in response: "Sounds like the way the Holy Spirit works to me." We agreed to spend several months in prayer and discernment, to see if this was God's plan. At our next meeting, and after meeting with the Vestry, we decided to go forward.

A year and a half later, my caseload has been full, and I continue to feel grateful to be a part of the ministry team at Christ Church and to participate with them in offering hope and healing to hurting folks both in their congregation and in the community. ♦



*Current VIPCare clinical staff.*



## Facebook and Beyond – VIPCare's Social Media *Donald Denton*

We entered the world of social media on February 11, 2015. The move to this new way of reaching into the world coincided with the rebranding of our traditional caring hands logo into what you now see on our website and all of our stationary. The original caring hands logo was designed by William Probert of Byrd Press. The present logo is colorful and the Facebook page and our E-Newsletter has now fully replaced the printed edition of InTouch.

Social media provides VIPCare with a number of advantages. The foremost advantage is that of timeliness followed closely by the platform's global reach. Facebook allows us to inform you of important developments, including the addition of staff members and any changes in policies that would sometimes take upwards of six months to produce in traditional print media. As for global reach, there is no way that our 2,000 member mailing list can compete with the world-wide reach of the Internet.

Like every other agency, the policies which we developed for our print media have transferred nicely to our Facebook page. Confidentiality of those who use our services continues to be of the utmost importance. In print media this meant disguising someone's identity in any story and certainly not publishing their photograph. This same rigorous attention to confidentiality carries over into our Facebook and other social media. We also had to address the issue of "who can post content articles?" Our Director of Development and our Executive Director are the two individuals with authority to post material, along with consultation with the Coordinator of Publications. If your place of business uses social media, these principles and practices probably sound very familiar.

What we find is that articles that profile our staff or board members get more "Likes" or "Clicks" than other items, especially if there is a photograph attached to the article. Since we now have staff photographs in an file that is easy to upload, we are able to present ourselves much more humanely than when InTouch was done on a mimeograph machine (circa 1967).

Having the Donate button on our webpage and showing where our satellite centers are on both the webpage and our

Facebook page makes us more accessible to both donors and clients. Linking our donation with major retailers such as Amazon allows our donors to have more user-friendly ways to donate in addition to the more conventional Annual Appeal which is standard for all non-profit agencies. ♦



*Current VIPCare Board - 2017*

## Roanoke Valley Center

*Dave Mucha*

Nestled in the beautiful Roanoke Valley of Southwest Virginia, in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is VIPCare's farthest satellite center from its Richmond headquarters. The center was established in 2011 by invitation from the senior pastor, and congregational leadership, of Greene Memorial United Methodist Church located in downtown Roanoke, Virginia.

Having just celebrated their first 150 years of ministry, the congregation was ready to expand its outreach programs to a growing downtown population. Lofts, apartments, restaurants and shopping were revitalizing the blocks around Greene Memorial, and the church made ready to respond with a renovation project designed to accommodate the changing needs of a younger population. Included in their vision was a desire to provide a variety of resources for the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of persons moving into the area.

In keeping with the church's vision, the center's current coordinator and senior pastor began a conversation about the possibility of hosting a satellite office. The pastor knew about VIPCare's long established history in pastoral counseling support and felt committed to help translate that presence to the growing needs of urban western Virginia. Thus the relationship began and continues today providing a sacred space for people to discover a path towards healing and wholeness.

The center is open five days a week by appointment through VIPCare's main office (804-282-8332). ♦

## Entering our Sixth Decade Current Events

Forward in hope:

**2017 –**

- Donald J. Trump inaugurated as the 45th President of the United States
- The Most Rev. Frances X. DiLorenzo, Bishop of Richmond dies
- Richmond inaugurates a commission to study the role of Civil War monuments within the city.
- Charlottesville, Virginia, is the site of a riot involving protestors and counter-protestors regarding the movement of Civil War monuments and the re-naming of a park named for Robert E. Lee.
- North Korea continues to launch ICBM missiles
- Hurricane Harvey makes landfall along the Gulf Coast
- Donald Denton continues to publish for peer reviewed journals.
- Peggy Newman deploys to assist First Responders in debriefing from duty in hazardous events.

## Values Statement of Virginia Institute of Pastoral Care

VIPCare makes its services available to persons of every age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious belief, cultural heritage or ability to pay, based on the following values:

- God invites all to healing and wholeness.
- A caring relationship is basic to healing and learning.
- Healing addresses issues of meaning and values as well as symptoms.
- Personal wholeness includes healthy relationships with oneself, God, other people, and the world at large.
- Commitment to the highest ethical standards helps trust to flourish.
- Partnership with faith communities and community organizations strengthens the entire community.
- Being is more important than doing, so personal formation must accompany gaining knowledge and acquiring skills.
- A dynamic, collaborative community provides the context for excellence in practice and a model for healthy living.

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To make an appointment call our Main Office -  
804-282-8332

**Visit our website:** [www.vipcare.org](http://www.vipcare.org)

**Follow up on Facebook:**

Virginia Institute of Pastoral Care

## From Newsprint to Power Points and Skype

Donald Denton

So we come to the back page of the 50th Anniversary issue of InTouch. Not only has our medium of mass communication changed since 1967, so has the medium of education. Preparation for school now includes BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) in addition to new clothes and car that your editor took to his first year in college in 1969. Only the science geeks could sign up for time on the one computer terminal in the school. It wasn't until an all-day seminar at a Chicago church that I saw newsprint taped up on the walls as a way of the presenter making her points and also tracking the discussion. VIPCare was still using that model when I joined the staff in 1985.

By that time there were local networks and what we know as the Internet was close at hand. Arriving at Garrett-Evangelical Seminary with a 'luggable' dual-drive Panasonic computer, complete with a built in thermal printer, I was something of an oddity. At forty pounds, it is probably in a landfill somewhere now. Slowly at first and as recently as this month, VIPCare's embrace with and by technology continues to grow. Bag-phones and flip-phones have been joined and then surpassed by laptops and tablets that all have more memory storage and computing power than any of us could comprehend. I still remember how much space it took to warehouse 8k of computing ability in 1967 - that machine could beat me at chess even then.

It was possible to get the unfortunate news of 9/11/01 on those ancient Palm Pilots with the external antenna or catch the news feed on those cumbersome Blackberries that were only two years old on that horrific date. At about the same time we began making announcements at public gatherings and lectures that people turn off or silence these mobile devices. It is still necessary to make this announcement.

The first educational use of Power Points at VIPCare was in 2001. As near as I can determine, the presentation Mentoring Marriages was presented in May of that year to a group of couples. Dozens have followed, including those which will be rotating automatically at our 50th Anniversary Reception later in September at the Virginia Historical Society Museum. The audio-taped lectures on cassettes that we used to purchase in hard-bound booklets after national conferences have joined that luggable computer of the 1980's. Now attendees receive a DVD / CD of the lecture as well as a thumb drive which contains the presenter's lecture in toto.

A couple of years ago we down-sized our library in favor of the now-standard media room. It features an overhead projector that can be connected to both the Internet and also via video camera to an in-house intranet. This enables clinicians, educators and students to utilize Skype for both presenting case material from distant venues as well as using Skype to interview the candidate's for one denomination's International Mission Fellowship program from anywhere they can find access to the Internet. A recent grant from The Mary Morton Parsons Foundation, detailed elsewhere on this page, has allowed VIPCare to upgrade our telephone technology.

One thing remains constant amidst all this technology and change: it is still the warmth generated between two people through the human voice and touch which communicates the care necessary for the salving - and sometimes the saving - of souls that come in need of care. *Selah!*



# VIPCare

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