



Ready for the Fourth

The radiology scheduling department at Methodist Charlton regularly decorates for each holiday. Above, **Doreene Sharp** and **Jill Phillips** show off some of the department's Fourth of July decorations.

Learn about Palliative Care for African Americans at APPEAL Conference

Generous Scholarships Available

Make plans now to attend the APPEAL conference at Methodist Charlton July 11 and 12. APPEAL (A Progressive Palliative Care Educational Curriculum for the Care of African Americans at Life's End) is an educational event offered by The Duke Institute on Care at the End of Life, based at Duke Divinity School. Participants will learn about death and dying in African American communities, culturally appropriate communication, and pain treatment and racial disparities, as well as patient evaluation, hospice care, patient-centered decision making, and spirituality and end-of-life care. Physicians, nurses, social workers, pharmacists, chaplains and other clergy, psychologists, counselors, hospital and hospice caregivers and family caregivers are encouraged to attend. The registration fee is \$250 for physicians; \$175 for all other health care and clergy-based providers; \$50 for students/trainees and caregivers; and \$450 for teams of three including a physician and any other service provider (a savings of \$150). Registration is limited to 150 participants. Scholarships are available. Contact Dr. Robert Fine at RobertF@BaylorHealth.edu for more information.

For more information on this conference, call Palliative Care Manager **Kristi Griffith** at 7-7656.

Cardiology Director Loses Weight, Gains Heart Health through Diet and Exercise

Almost two years ago, **Deb Taylor** looked at herself and said, "I'm a nurse and director of cardiology services at a hospital, and I'm walking around carrying over 300 pounds." Deb, who is cardiology services director at Methodist Charlton, decided to take control of her life and lose weight.



Deb Taylor before and after her weight loss.

"One day in September 2006, very soon after my birthday, the light bulb finally came on," says Deb. She realized she was using her weight as a security blanket and she no longer wanted to be its victim. "I still had a whole life ahead of me and it was 100 percent up to me to live it," she says.

She began her weight loss with a trial run, dabbling in calorie counting. For the next three months, she followed a 1,500 calories a day diet and lost 20 pounds. Even though she regained half the weight during the holidays, she never lost sight of her goal.

In January 2007, Deb hired a personal trainer to work with her twice weekly. "Even though it seemed like an expensive endeavor, I've still spent less than I would have spent on health care had I not shed the weight," she says. Her trainer set a goal for her of 150 pounds. "I started out doing 20 minutes on a treadmill at a very slow pace," says Deb. "But at 300 pounds, working out wasn't always comfortable. My toes were blistered, my back ached, and even the top of my feet hurt. But I put my heart into each workout and gradually began to see my body change."

Deb says a strong support base is critical when making such a monumental change, and she received incredible support from her family, co-workers and staff. "There wasn't a day that I didn't receive some sort of positive comment from someone at work about how I looked or about my strong willpower," she says. "They'll never know the magnitude of the impact they had on my life."

Deb reached her goal in one year. "I lost a total of 170 pounds, all through diet and exercise, and I feel like the old Deb is back!" She is thankful God gave her the incredible strength and willpower to change within. "I want to help inspire others to take charge and fight for the health and happiness they deserve," says Deb. "If I can help touch just one person and positively affect them with what I've gone through, it will all be worth it."