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FOR&ABOUT: The Health System Community

## Patients Attest to Excellence in Care

Last Valentine's Day, Bob and Mary Faye Buckles were too distracted to celebrate the love still strong between them after 38 years of marriage. That day they found out why Bob had been bothered by chronic earaches and sore throats: he had squamous cell carcinoma deep in his tongue. The cancer diagnosis didn't shake their strong Christian belief that Bob would make it through this health crisis. And since being referred to the UVa Medical Center—six hours from their Southwest Virginia home of Big Stone Gap—that belief has been reinforced again and again.

The Buckles first came to the Medical Center last February for a second opinion on the best course of treatment and then lived at one of UVa's Hospitality Houses while Bob underwent several weeks of radiation treatments. Throughout their journey, the Buckles say they have been repeatedly encouraged by an efficient health care system and skilled health care professionals. They have been most impressed and deeply moved by the kindness of dozens of strangers—doctors, nurses, recep-



Mr. and Mrs. Bob Buckles relax on the front porch of a UVa Hospitality House, which feels like home for them.

tionists, van drivers, greeters, volunteers and others they've met at UVa. "Everywhere you turn you meet someone who goes out of their way to make you feel special. No matter what you need, there is someone to make sure you get it or to point you in the right direction," says Bob Buckles, a retired construction worker. His wife, a retired high school teacher, adds: "If we had been

the president of the United States we would not have received any better treatment than what we've received already. It has just been incredible." The "royal treatment" they've found at UVa began on the first day they arrived at the ENT Clinic and met Paul A. Levine, M.D., the chair and Robert W. Cantrell Professor

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**Events: Training for Women's Four-Miler begins June 14**

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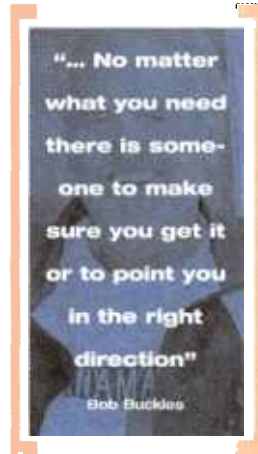
**Gato Laurencin, M.D., Ph.D. is the new Chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery**

# The Buckles

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of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery and director of the Division of Head and Neck Surgical Oncology. The Buckles' referring doctor had told them that Dr. Levine was one of the best in his field.

"The clinic was so incredibly organized. All the imaging tests and biopsies were done like clockwork. Dr. Levine saved us four trips back and forth," Mary Faye explains.



Over the next few months, the Buckles would continue to appreciate the people they met—people like Paul W. Read, M.D., assistant professor of radiation oncology, who planned and oversaw Bob's eight-

week radiation treatment. As of March, tests showed the radiation treatment destroyed the tumor in Bob's tongue and on June 2 he was to undergo surgery to determine whether the surrounding neck area was cancer-free. With his care in such good hands, Bob and his wife remain confident of a good outcome. Mary Faye says: "We know we are where the Lord wants us to be for this." ■