

Mid-York grant to benefit laboratory

Community Memorial Hospital has received a \$20,000 grant from the Mid-York Foundation. The funding will be used to help computerize the hospital's laboratory.

"The Board of Directors, the Medical Staff, everyone connected with Community Memorial Hospital is pleased with this significant grant from the Mid-York Foundation," said Hospital President David W. Felton. "We certainly appreciate Mid-York Foundation's continued commitment to healthcare and the well-being of the people of this area."

Community Memorial is working with Omnitech of Quebec, Canada, to install a customized computer system that will link the laboratory with all hospital departments, the five Family Health Centers and physicians' offices. The network will mean that test results will be available as soon as they are processed, including the partial results of multi-test orders.

The laboratory at Community Memorial Hospital is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is staffed continuously. Lab Director and Pathologist Rachel Elder, MD, Lab Manager Diane Harrington, BS, ASCP and Assistant Lab Manager Dawn Monette BS, ASCP oversee operations. Monette, who has conducted extensive research for the project and will be instrumental in the implementation of the new software and hardware, sums up computerization of the lab simply, "We will be able to provide a better quality of care."

The laboratory staff of 25 includes phlebotomists and New York State licensed clinical laboratory technologists and technicians. The lab performs approximately 350,000 tests annually in the areas of chemistry, hematology, urinalysis, serology, microbiology, blood gases and blood banking and is able to handle 90 percent of the ordered tests on site.

"The new system will allow us to follow the progression of tests," said Family

Practice Specialist Dr. Robert Delorme. "It will eliminate the necessity for repeating tests and provide us with more information. In many situations, this could shorten patients' length of stay."

The laboratory was surveyed this summer by the Joint Commission of Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and was found to be in compliance. In addition to the overwhelmingly positive report, special mention was made of the knowledge level of the technologists and technicians and the efficient use of space in the laboratory.

With the exception of an antiquated computer system, laboratory equipment represents the most innovative technology. Currently, staff has to fax results and there is no direct linkage to the floors or offices. With the new

system, physicians will be able to access reports throughout the hospital, even partial reports can be sent. The savings in time and the greater accuracy of a direct linkage between the laboratory and the healthcare providers can be critical. Additionally, the technology allows for complete past testing records to be available and provides accurate tracking for every test.

"The Mid-York Foundation is pleased to be of assistance to such an invaluable asset to the community as Community Memorial Hospital," said acting Mid-York President Terry Murphy. "The Mid-York Foundation was formed to improve the quality of life in the Central New York area and providing support to healthcare providers has traditionally played a large role." ♦



Community Memorial Hospital Medical Technologist Yanyun Lu runs a test in the laboratory that will soon be computerized, meaning the analyzer's results will be instantaneously available at several work stations in the hospital and on computers in physicians' offices.

We are dedicated to patient satisfaction

All of us who work at Community Memorial Hospital have favorite stories about patients who have gone out of their way to express their gratitude. This thankfulness is both humbling and encouraging; we are after all doing our jobs but in addition to providing quality healthcare close to home we strive everyday, in every interaction, to do our work with an extra measure of concern and compassion.

Our employees are dedicated to the idea of treating everyone at the hospital — patients, families and each other — the way we would want a loved one treated. Community Memorial is participating in a Hospital-Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems survey organized by the federal government's Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. We are calling half of all the inpatients after their discharge and 98.6 percent of those contacted report they would recommend the hospital to their families and friends.

The overwhelmingly positive result is no surprise to me. As Vice President of Medical Affairs Dr. Mike Jastremski put it at a recent Professional Activities Committee meeting, these assessments are "a great reflection



THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

on the people we have working here in all areas."

It is especially gratifying to me that our newest additions to the staff were all initially attracted to the atmosphere at Community Memorial and now help perpetuate that caring and supportive spirit. Dr. Sunny Nelson is a fine example. Aptly named, Sunny is already establishing herself as a terrific addition to the Morrisville Family Health Center. She comes to us by way of Texas, Utah and Oregon with a wealth of experience, including international work, wide ranging interests and a strong belief in making medical care accessible.

Dr. Martin Ernits and Dr. Wade Bollinger, both general surgeons, have quickly ramped up their practices. Both of these personable physicians are well-re-

garded by their patients and highly-respected by their colleagues. It is terrific to see a renaissance of general surgery at Community Memorial, one of the hospital's traditional strengths.

This summer we will be welcoming the hospital's first pediatrician to the Medical Staff. While I can't be too specific right now, I will say we have found someone in an academic practice at the University of Michigan who will be another positive addition to our communities.

This new physician will be located in the Hamilton Family Health Center, which should be open by the time this report is published. Dr. Ken Werner, Family Nurse Practitioner Anne Bennett and their staff are in the new facility too. We have also moved the billing office for all the family health centers into the 50,000 square foot building.

The Hospital Auxiliary has made a three-year pledge of \$60,000 to furnish the Hamilton Family Health Center. It is a terrific commitment and the kind of support that is so important as Community Memorial keeps pace in a healthcare environment with no shortage of obstacles.

The Community Memorial Hospital Foundation was established to raise funds to support building projects and to acquire new equipment. We are focusing on funding for the Family Health Center and the addition of a 16-slice CT scanner. The people of the heart of Central New York built Community Memorial and they

have sustained it for more than 50 years. Please join us in continuing to make sure quality healthcare is close to home.

Technology has had a profound impact on healthcare but the progress is expensive and a major challenge for hospitals nationwide. At Community Memorial we are making cautious advancements. Computerization of the laboratory is underway, helped in part by a grant from the Mid-York Foundation (See page 1). We are also updating the telemetry system in the Special Care Unit to better monitor critical patients. We are attempting to secure funds to begin the process of computerizing medical records.

May 6 marks the beginning of National Hospital Week and just like healthcare facilities across the country, Community Memorial is marking the occasion. The focus of our recognition is our employees — "People you can trust, care you can count on" reads this year's slogan, and it's true. Patient satisfaction is the responsibility of everyone who works at the hospital and it because of the dedication our employees exhibit every day that Community Memorial receives the ratings it does. We care and that's worth celebrating.

David W. Felton
President/CEO

Hospital leads the way in eye donation consent

For two years in a row, Community Memorial has had a greater percentage of families consent to eye donation than any other hospital served by the Central New York Eye and Tissue Bank.

In 2006, Community Memorial Hospital had two eye donors that helped five transplant recipients and provided one medical research or training opportunity. At the beginning of March and National Eye Donor Month, eye and tissue bank officials expressed their gratitude to the Community Memorial Hospital staff for its commitment to donation.

"Donation can allow people to move from grief to feeling some good may come from a tragic ending," said Nurse Man-

ager Diana VanAlthuis of the Special Care Unit. "Donors give the gift of life, the gift of healing, the gift of sight."

The cornea, clear tissue covering the pupil, is the most commonly donated eye tissue. Approximately ten percent of people who are totally blind, and many with limited vision, could have their eyesight restored with cornea transplant, one of the most common and successful transplant surgeries.

The sclera, white part of the eye, is used in glaucoma surgery, eyelid repair, and periodontal surgery for gum disease. Eye tissue is also used for medical research and training.

One eye donor may help up to six transplant recipients. ♦

Dr. Sunny Nelson is accepting patients at Community Memorial's Morrisville Family Health Center. A highly-trained physician, she graduated from Brigham Young University, then went on to the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center for her M.D. She completed her three-year residency training at Oregon Health Science University, gaining experience with pediatric and adult patients, prenatal care and rural health care.



Around the hospital

Planted, 25 lodgepole pine and Douglas fir, in honor of the Emergency Room staff. The trees are now part of Gallatin National Forest in Montana's Northern Rockies, thanks to a gift from Physicians Assistant Michael J. Feeney, who left the hospital in December to be closer to home, honoring his former colleagues in the ER.

Feted, with a special breakfast in the Skilled Nursing Facility, Ruth Rogers of Social Services and JoAnn Buell LPN, who have both retired. JoAnn was recognized for her more than 30 years of service to Community Memorial and the SNF. "It's been quite a ride," she said. Ruth Rogers, who advocated for patients and residents and their families throughout her 18-year tenure, helped to establish Social Services as an important department at the hospital. Her warm and caring spirit can still be felt in SNF, where she volunteers frequently.

Appointed, to the Central New York Chapter of the Clinical Laboratory Management Association (CLMA) Board of Directors, Assistant Lab Manager Dawn Monette. CLMA is involved in a wide range of issues facing laboratories, from political action and issues to inservice programs. Says Monette of her appointment, "It is a good networking opportunity."

Introduced, as a member of the Editorial Advisory Board for *Alliance*, a magazine published six times a year by VHA, Vice President for Nursing Lisa Hoyle, MS, RN, CNA, BC. VHA is dedicated to the success of not-for-profit, community-based healthcare. As a healthcare provider alliance, it delivers industry-leading supply chain management services and facilitates the development of networks that bring members together to solve key clinical and operational challenges.

Earned, a doctorate degree in physical therapy from Utica College, Christina Johnson. The interactive program included classes in diagnostic imaging, pharmacology and wellness and required in-depth research, extensive reading and writing several papers. Johnson, who gained clinical experience during a rotation at Community Memorial while working on her masters in 2004, returned to the hospital as a full time staff member last October.

Presented, by the Hamilton Business Alliance (HBA), a panel discussion entitled, *Who Wants It and Who Has It?*, the purchasing directors from Community Memorial, Colgate University and Morrisville State College and interested local merchants and business owners. The major topic was where there might be opportunities for the institutions to involve local merchants.

Medaled, taking bronze in all four snowshoe racing sprints at the 27th Empire State Winter Games, Dr. Rachel Elder. Competing in the Master III division, Dr. Elder, Laboratory Director, was third in the 100m, 200m, 400m and 1,500m races held on the campus of Paul Smith's College in February.



A new sign by artist David Grace of Earthworks in Hamilton greets hospital visitors who arrive at the main entrance. Scott Ogden and Frank Paul (from left), of the West Ed Cabinet Shop in Earlville, and sign maker David Grace, installed the red oak sign in February.



To honor one of its longest-serving, hardest-working and most highly-regarded employees, Community Memorial dedicated the Lee Wisnoski Memorial X-Ray Room Monday, March 26. The room houses the hospital's new digital fluoroscopic machine that provides general imaging and barium studies. Members of the Radiology Department gather round the equipment, (from left) Sarah Stewart, Paul Pounds, Krista Spooner, Marcia Head, Donna Von Dauber, Rindy Dean, Bonnie Engelbrecht, Ann Lee Petak, Eileen Buell and Director of Radiology Bob Lattrell. On the table are the shoes Lee wore only in the hospital.

Community Memorial Hospital board member to be honored by Colgate

Morrisville State College President and Community Memorial Hospital Board of Directors member Raymond Cross will be awarded an honorary degree from Colgate University at the college's 186th commencement exercises Sunday, May 20. Also receiving honorary degrees

from Colgate will be baccalaureate speaker David Ellenson, President and I.H. and Anna Grancell professor of Jewish religious thought at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR); Carrie Mae Weems, award-winning photographer; and

John Golden '66, outgoing Chairman of Colgate's Board of Trustees, founder of the financial advisory firm John A. Golden Associates Colgate graduates Bob Woodruff '83, former co-anchor of ABC News's World News Tonight program, and his wife, journalist Lee McConaughy Woodruff '82, who will together deliver the keynote address.

Cross joined Morrisville State College, a SUNY agricultural and technical college, as its president in April 1998. Previously President and CEO of Northwest Technical College in Minnesota and head of the Department of Engineering Technologies at Ferris State University in Michigan, he has worked for and consulted extensively with the auto industry.

At Morrisville, Cross promotes entrepreneurship in rural communities through the school's Nelson Farms—a one-stop facility for small-scale food processors, farmers, growers, and producers—and advocated the use of New York agricultural feedstocks to develop biofuels. He was born and raised on a small dairy farm in Michigan and received his doctorate from Michigan State, a master's degree from Central Michigan University, and a bachelor's degree from Ferris State. ♦



President Raymond Cross

Visitor education protects patients from infections

Community Memorial Hospital has launched a visitor education program aimed at reducing the spread of infections among patients. Protect Our Patients (POP) provides visitors with information and the simple steps that can help reduce the incidence of infection.

“My goal for this program,” says Heather Bernard, BS, RN, Community Memorial's Infection Control Practitioner, “is to educate people about ways to prevent the spread of hospital-acquired infections as well as community-acquired infections brought in by visitors. There are simple steps we can all take to be successful and benefit everyone.”

Protect Our Patients, a nationwide initiative, is designed to inform hospital visitors about how they can help with infection prevention. POP was established to educate family and friends on how to safely visit patients and was introduced to the staff early this year. There are posters and table tents in the hospital with information. Everyone in the hospital is ready to help visitors follow the guidelines to ensure infection prevention. Staff, who are trained to follow standard precautions at all times, will remind visitors to sanitize hands before and after entering a patient room. Masks are available for any visitor with cold symptoms.

The POP program was designed by the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology with a health education grant from the Clorox Company. ♦



Protecting patients begins with **WE CARE** guidelines

Wash hands.

Expect staff to clean their hands.

Cover your sneeze.

Avoid touching anything used for patient care.

Read any posted instructions.

Eliminate germs even after a patient goes home.

Sisters team up once again to provide radiology testing

Back in the day, sisters Sarah Stewart and Krista Spooner were a powerful combination. In softball, what Sarah was pitching, Krista was catching, in volleyball, when Sarah was setting, Krista was hitting.

Now it turns out that shared past of strikes and spikes in Brookfield was prelude to an even more meaningful chapter for the dynamic duo.

Today, Stewart and Spooner are both radiologic technologists at Community Memorial Hospital, where the sisters have teamed up once again, this time to assist physicians and help patients.

Sarah Stewart, who has been working at Community Memorial since 1998, became interested in radiology during a high school career program. She was able to explore her interest in healthcare by shadowing various providers and had first-hand opportunities to learn about physical therapy, respiratory therapy, nursing and x-ray.

"I liked the patient contact and technological aspects of radiology," she explains. She acted on that interest by enrolling in St. Luke's/Faxton School of Radiography's intensive two-year program that includes class work and hands on clinical experience at 11 facilities.

"There were eight hour days, five days a week," remembers Stewart. "It was like having a job."

Krista Spooner, who graduated from MVCC followed her sister to the St. Luke's seven years later.

Krista joined the staff, and rejoined her sister, at Community Memorial last June. "I like that I've gotten to know everyone well and that the work is fast paced. I need that," she says.

Sarah agrees. "For a small place, we're busy."

The Radiology Department provides all imaging services, from routine x-rays and mammograms to multi-slice CT scans, nuclear medicine and MRI. Working on a rotating system, the staff moves adroitly among the various pieces of equipment. There is a physician from Radiology Associates of New Hartford at the hospital every day and the department is available around the clock. According to Director of Radiology Bob Latrell, the department does approximately 35,000 exams annually.

All of the technologists are certified by a national board and licensed through the New York State Department of Health. They must complete 12 hours of continuing education classes every year. The addition of new equipment also requires on the job training. The latest: a 16-slice CT scanner that takes

remarkably detailed pictures, and a digital radiographic/fluoroscopic scanner that provides standard x-rays as well as live, real time moving images essential for upper GI diagnosis.

Drawn to the constantly evolving technology and a variety of work that differs from day to day, both sisters are nonetheless quick to mention patients as their favorite part of the job.

"You have to be sensitive and treat patients the way you would want your brother or grandmother treated," says Sarah.

"I try to make patients as comfortable as possible," says Krista. It is an important aspect of the job, particularly when a patient has been injured and may be in pain.

"Sarah and Krista work well with people," says Latrell. "They are very professional, reassuring and do a good job of positioning patients to get good images for the radiologists."

From softball diamonds and volleyball courts to good patient care, these sisters get it done. ♦



Krista Spooner, left, and Sarah Stewart in the Radiology Department

FOUNDATION NOTES

The Community Memorial Hospital Foundation was established to provide funds for the hospital's capital needs. This year fundraising efforts have focused on financing the 16-slice CT scanner that Sarah Stewart, Krista Spooner and their colleagues are using to produce detailed images that provide physicians with vital information to better treat their patients. The Foundation is also soliciting funds for the Hamilton Family Health Center, a facility that can accommodate three physicians and will play a key role in ensuring primary care is available in our Central New York communities.

Gifts in support of these efforts are greatly appreciated. For more information, contact John D. Hubbard at 315-824-7036 or at jhubbard@cmhhamilton.com.

I want to support Community Memorial Hospital.

Enclosed is my gift for \$ _____

I'd like to learn how to include Community Memorial in my will.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Mail to: Community Memorial Hospital Foundation
150 Broad St.
Hamilton, NY 13346



Putting patients first

Healthcare workers and Auxiliary members from Community Memorial and Crouse Community Center were among the more than 3,000 New York hospital and nursing home employees who gathered last month on the steps of the Capitol steps in Albany to speak out against Gov. Eliot Spitzer's nearly \$1 billion in proposed healthcare cuts. Healthcare Advocacy Day was sponsored by the Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS) and in addition to the rally, it included remarks by HANYS President Daniel Sisto, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, who told the crowd, "We need to maintain our healthcare delivery system. In this state when people need attention, they get it." Chanted his audience, "Healthcare cuts are not reform!" ♦



Community Memorial Hospital

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