

2011 Employee Recognition Dinner



The 2011 Employee Recognition Dinner recognizes employees with more than 5 years of service at MMC. The following are just a few of the employees Dan Adams, Administration and MMC Board of Trustees Board Chair Matt Anich recognized during dinner for serving more than 20 years. (From left to right, top to bottom): Kelly Schmock, Nutrition Services, 35 years; Kathleen Mortinsen, Laboratory Services, 35 years; Terrie Pingel, Patient Care Unit, 30 years; Robin Brady, OB, 40 years and Steve Harma, Emergency Services, 30 years.



CONGRATULATIONS to all employees recognized for their years of dedication to MMC!

See additional photos inside along with this year's recipients of Awards of Excellence on pages 4-5.

Pay It Forward

Radiology will be the MMC drop off site for this year's Toys for Tots program through the Ashland Fire Department. Pick-up will take place on December 19. Employees can also drop-off non-perishable food items.



president's MESSAGE

December, 2011

Dear Employees:

So here I am back in the office. I expect it will still be a couple of weeks before I am here for the entire day, but it is good to be back even if only on a part time basis. One can sit in the same chair at home for just so many days before things start to get a little old. I am there!

As I promised to keep you all in the loop, I can report that we (Mary, Dr. Normand and I) were all very pleased with the outcome of the surgery. Dr. Normand believes she was able to remove all of the tumor with less muscle damage than we expected. I start rehab here at MMC this week and hope to soon be bearing some weight on the leg. I must confess that having to learn to use crutches for the first time this late in life is a little more cumbersome than I might have thought. But I am getting around quite well and hope to soon be back in the office on a regular, part-time basis.

I have been able to stay in touch with happenings here at MMC throughout the past month. I can report that the electrical equipment needed to finish the addition has now arrived and is being installed in as timely a manner as possible. If all goes per plan (that does not always happen!), we could be occupying the new areas in mid-December. As noted for the past several months, stay tuned to announcements from Kathy T. related to move dates and plans.

As I am still taking things one day at a time, I do not yet know if I will be able to join you this Saturday for the hospital holiday party. It will all depend on how I feel late in the day on Saturday. But I hope the rest of you will be able to once again make it to this annual

event at the Elks Club. You can find full details for the party elsewhere in this newsletter. And if I don't make it, have a great time anyway!

For those of you that are too busy to get to baking for the holiday, I also want to remind you the Partners will be holding their annual holiday bake sale on December 16. For those of you new to the organization, I would warn you that you had better get there early as things seem to disappear quickly at this event. It is a major fundraiser for the Partners group. They appreciate all of the support you all provide through your purchase of their tasty goodies.

As we enter the final month of 2011, I hope all of you get a chance to have some time just for yourself. It has been an interesting year for me. With multiple periods of "recovery" throughout the year, I have had ample time just for me. I used a number of those opportunities to reflect on my life and think about what my priorities have been and will be in the years to come. It has been good for me to do this. I hope all of you take a few minutes to think about all you do and what is truly important to you. I encourage you to focus on those people and/or things that are truly important to you for that is what will fully enrich your life.

Til next time,

Dan Hymans

All in the family

KATHY TUTTLE, Nursing; **NANCY DUFEK**, Patient Information Services and **KAREN HANSEN**, Nursing attended the Care Transitions Connection conference. The conference focused on patient readmissions and strategies to assist patients at all events of care to minimize the need for repeat hospitalization.

THERESA HOYLES, Nutrition Services, attended the Gluten Intolerance Education conference for continuing education credits. The conference focused on Celiac Disease for professionals and patients and provided information on gluten free meals and vendors.

Behavioral Health Unit staff **JAY GIANCOLA**, **KARLA VINCI**, **SANDY BOUTWELL**, **KATIE TUTOR**, **DANA KATCHA** and **KATHY TUTTLE**, Nursing attended a two day conference on Buprenorphine Treatment. The conference focused on how to manage opiate dependence using a combination of medication-assisted treatment (buprenorphine) and AODA Counseling/Mental Health Therapy.

MATHEW WOLTER, RN, Behavioral Health Unit attended a workshop on Psychopharmacology. The workshop focused on use of medications for depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, ADHD and anxiety; using medications to track specific disorders; discussed importance of therapy and limitations of medication including the “placebo effect.”

Employee Holiday Party

The MMC Holiday Party sponsored by the Employee Management Relations Committee will be held **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3** at the Ashland Elks Club. Doors open at 5 pm; food is served from 5:30 to 8 pm.

The evening includes a cash bar, buffet dinner and music and dancing beginning at 8 pm. Employees scheduled to work will receive pizza and soda.

BAHEC Event

Bring your medication list when you visit the hospital. You can't trust everything you read online! These are just a few of the things that may come up on **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6** when regional health care providers gather to share information with the public and to introduce themselves.

“What Doctors Wish Their Patients Knew: Words of Wisdom from our Healthcare Providers” starts with delicious refreshments and a reception at 6 pm in the Conference Center at Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College – Ashland. Immediately following, healthcare providers will share some words of wisdom on what they wish their patients knew. The event is sponsored by the Bay Area Health Education Committee (BAHEC).

Pie Social

Pastoral Care will hold their annual Pie Social on **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8** from 2 to 3 pm in front of the Chapel. This year's social features Very Berry, CranApple, Pecan, Pumpkin and other creative surprise pies by a local baker. Yum!

Cookie and Book Sale

Partners of MMC will host their annual Cookie and Book Sale on **FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16** from 8 am until noon in the Gull/Stockton Island Room. The cookies go quick, so be sure to stop by early!

Books are once again being priced at 25 cents. If you are interested in donating books to the sale or to Partners year-round, you can drop them off in the Partners office or bring them to the sale on the December 16.

Benefit Specialist Visit

Jeanette Hudepohl will be here on **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21**. Please call HR at ext. 5520 if you'd like to make an appointment to meet with her about your retirement account.

2011 Awards of Excellence

Awards of Excellence are presented each year to employees who are nominated by their co-workers for maintaining a consistent level of high performance throughout the year or for going above and beyond in a particular circumstance. Recipients this year include Dena Mika, Sue Halbe, The Nutrition Services Department, Sarah Waby and Kathy Smart. Congratulations on your award. The following are excerpts of why these employees were chosen.



DENA MIKA: This department is facing major changes in its work in the coming year, and one employee in particular has gone the extra mile to help those changes happen smoothly. Dena Mika has performed many functions within her area, and within the last year has assumed many new duties without confusion or fanfare. She is always willing to fill in cheerfully for coworkers while maintaining her own duties, helping to keep the department's work flowing comfortably.

She has put significant effort into implementing the medical records scanning process, a difficult task that is essential in our transition to paperless documentation.

She sets a good example by treating patients and fellow staff members with respect and kindness, and she has a terrific sense of humor. She is a very hardworking and respected member of Health Information Services.



SUE HALBE: This staff member provides outstanding patient care, and her individual patient satisfaction scores are consistently over the 90th percentile. Her commitment to her work and the pride she has in MMC are evident in everything she does and she maintains currency in her clinical knowledge.

Sue Halbe does the provider scheduling for her area, and is always willing to come in when she's needed to fill in or when patient volumes are heavy.

In addition to her work as Nurse Practitioner in MMC's Walk In Clinic, Sue Halbe is always looking for ways to help out. She works with our trauma team, and as a provider in our employee health program. Sue always remains calm, pleasant, and reassuring, and gives her patients the best of care.



NUTRITION SERVICES (see story page 5)



SARAH WABY: It's hard to pin down a definitive job description for this RN. In fact, she does require more than one. Always friendly, patient, and supportive, Sarah Waby is prompt to respond to individuals who have questions, need supervision, or make requests.

She often turns challenges into teaching moments and is an adept problem solver, readily accepting calls day and night when advice or direction is needed. It's not unusual for her to come to the hospital at any time in order to handle complicated situations.

She is a supportive educator and keeps staff updated on changes in procedures and requirements. Enthusiastic about infection control, she consistently works to keep MMC compliant with ever-changing standards. She travels all over the hospital to help folks out in many different ways, even making house calls to departments to give vaccinations. Sarah Waby is a terrific Nurse Supervisor, Infection Prevention Specialist and an asset to MMC.



KATHY SMART: She is a nurse manager who demonstrates 100% commitment to her patients, is equally committed to maintaining high standards in her department, and is always available to serve as a mentor to other staff members. She works diligently to upgrade her skills in computer applications and software programs, and has the ability to patiently guide others through this training.

In 1995 her department underwent a major renovation, and the process is being repeated again now. Throughout this effort her first priority has been to maintain patient safety and a comforting environment and she has given much thought to incorporating innovations that will enhance the quality of patient care.

She gives the credit for the success of her department to her staff, whom she says is "...always committed to caring." Kathy Smart is an ideal manager and a true team member.

NUTRITION SERVICES: Every department is essential in keeping our hospital running smoothly, but Nutrition Services has successfully undergone a particularly challenging and dramatic change this year.

Individual responsibilities increased, shift hours changed and every job description was rewritten for a group of employees that generally have a long tenure. Through all this, the department functioned smoothly, maintaining a direct and important connection with employees, inpatients, outpatients, and visitors while remaining in operation seven days a week.

One year ago, Nutrition Services began to offer room service to our inpatients. As you know, patients aren't always ready to eat at traditional hospital meal times, yet adequate nutrition is important for their recovery. Now our patients individual needs and preferences can be better met, improving their outcomes and their satisfaction with our services.

Our Nutrition Services department has always been respected for the quality of their product and the hardworking and pleasant nature of their staff and their positive image has only been enhanced by this effort.

Family Movie Day



MMC employees and their families enjoy free movies while helping out a good cause. Admission for MMC Family Movie Day, which was a food product per person for the BRICK Food Shelf, totaled 541 pounds this year! A special thank you to AFSCME Local 1155, Lake Superior Professional Nurses Association, the Employee/Management Relations Committee and MMC Administration for making this wonderful family event possible!

Name Our Newsletter

A new year will mark a new “What’s New?” newsletter. The newsletter and update, which will continue to come out on the first and fifteenth, will have a new look and some new features. Once released, we want to hear your feedback.

In the meantime, we’re looking for naming ideas. We’re currently using the working name “FYI” but are open to suggestions. If you have any ideas, please feel free to send them to: bprobst@ashlandmmc.com or kstranberg@ashlandmmc.com. Or, stop by the Public Relations office and let us know what you think.

The newsletter will also include occasional guest columns and features about MMC staff, along with photos taken by MMC staff. If you have any photos you’d like to see in the newsletter, know of an employee who is volunteering in the community, or have an interesting story idea to share, please let Public Relations know. Thanks in advance!

2012 Pension Plan Dollar Limits

The contributions and benefits under qualified retirement plans are subject to certain annual limits. The elective deferral contribution limits have increased for 2012. Effective 1/1/12, the maximum contribution is \$17,000 annually if under age 50, or \$22,500 annually if age 50 or older.

Dental and LTD Update

Delta Dental will remain as MMC’s dental insurance company. There will be an increase of 10% in the dental premium rates. Since we are self-insured for dental coverage, the utilization of our dental plan drives those premiums. The cost for Delta Dental to administer our plan has remained unchanged over the past few years.

Reliance Standard will continue as MMC’s Long-Term-Disability (LTD) carrier. We are pleased to announce that the LTD rates will decrease by about 17% for 2012.

2011 Employee Recognition Dinner



*Carrie Anderson, Radiology
20 years of service*



*Courtney Roush, Physical Therapy
5 years of service*



*Kent Seldal, Pastoral Care
20 years of service*



*Teresa Leary, Public Relations
15 years of service*



*Gerald Seitz, Behavioral Health Unit
10 years of service*



*Robin Croteau, Administration
20 years of service*



Remember this?

BARB RICHARDSON, Patient Business Services captured this magical fall moment at Copper Falls State Park near Mellen. In November, Richardson displayed several of her works at M&I Bank in Ashland. Congratulations!

In upcoming months, we'll reserve this space to share other MMC employees' photos ranging from great shots such as Barb's or cute pics featuring the newest addition to your family or other MMC milestones.

Do you have a photo you'd like to share? If so, please email the photo and brief description to bprobst@ashlandmmc.com. Or, bring a hard copy to Public Relations.

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