

# BenchMarks

A publication of Marshfield Clinic

Summer 2015



**Family Business:  
Giving back**



**Marshfield  
Clinic®**



**12** *Called to Action*

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## BenchMarks – Summer 2015

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#### Chief Development Officer

*Teri Wilczek, M.S., CFRE*

#### Development Officers

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*Jill Kurszewski*

*Karen Piel, J.D., C.P.A., CFRE*

*Matt Schneider, CFRE*

*Rikki Starich*

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*Tiffany Halan*

#### Operations Support

*Tracy Faber*

*Sarah Hollatz*

*Sandy Thoma*

*Gidget Tobin*

*Stephanie Williams*

#### Donor Relations Coordinator

*Brooke Wolff*

#### Grant Writer

*Bobbie Kolehouse*

#### Summer Interns

*Katie Schmitz*

*Taylor Hoffman*

### Production & Graphics

#### Editorial Staff

*Janet Stewart*

*Brooke Wolff*

#### Designer

*Erik Borreson*

#### Photographers

*Mac Bailey*

BenchMarks is a publication of Marshfield Clinic. Please send address changes to:

#### Marshfield Clinic

#### Development Department

1000 North Oak Avenue, 1R1

Marshfield, WI 54449-5790

Or call 715-387-9249

or 1-800-858-5220

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**Cover photo: Jeff & Michelle Hamus**

*A message from:*

**Teri M. Wilczek, M.S., CFRE**  
**Chief Development Officer**

On June 13, I attended a summer party at my dear friends' home. As I drove up, there was a bounce house, party games, food and balloons. To the passerby, it looked like just a kid's birthday party or neighborhood cookout, but it wasn't. It was so much more.

The party was a celebration of a 38 month cancer journey; it was a tribute to a family's courage to fight after hearing "your child has cancer." It was an act of gratitude to the many that supported them along with way. And it was most importantly, a celebration of life.

William Krause beat cancer.

Will's grandparents, Werner and Sue Krause, partnered with Marshfield Clinic to create the Krause Family Pediatric Angel Fund. They are teaching their grandchildren values about helping those in need. Recently, Werner and Sue launched a second matching challenge to create an endowment to sustain the angel fund. You'll read more about the Krause family, and their desire to help others in this issue.

When Will or other patients visit our pediatric cancer care team, they are instantly at ease thanks to the beautiful space created by supporters like Jeff and Michelle Hamus. Their story of giving back to the community and honoring their family's legacy of philanthropy will warm your heart.

Enjoy another wonderful issue of BenchMarks magazine, celebrating giving back and wonderful stories of hope and healing.

I hope your summer has been filled with opportunities to celebrate what's meaningful to you.

Sincerely,



Teri



*Teri Wilczek and William Krause  
at a cancer awareness event.*

# Family Business: Giving Back



Ask the friends, family and employees of Jeff and Michelle Hamus to describe them, and you'll likely hear the same phrases again and again.

"They are caring; they are friends to many; they are wonderful business owners and they generously support the community."

Ask Jeff and Michelle to describe their giving philosophy, and they'll humbly say they're just continuing a family tradition.

The couple purchased V&H Automotive Inc. from Jeff's parents, Floyd and Pat Hamus. Under Jeff's leadership, the more than 50-year-old company continues to thrive with a solid business philosophy that includes giving back, something Jeff learned from his parents early on.

"We value our customers, our employees and our community," Jeff said.

"We try to keep it personal, and make everyone feel like we're doing this together."

Jeff and his wife, Michelle, have been active Clinic donors and volunteers for two decades.

When invited to be part of the recent transformation of Pediatric Oncology, they rose to the occasion. Inspired by Treyden's Cabin, Jeff and Michelle joined six other families who named spaces in the department.

A section of hallway linking treatment rooms and exam rooms with Treyden's Cabin is now known as Hamus Trail.

Children who come in for their cancer treatment experience a custom, hand-painted mural designed to evoke nature and a stress-reducing mood in the clinical setting to support healing. The mural echoes images from Jeff and Michelle's Marshfield-area home with subtle references to their family, including their adult children, Jake and Jenna, and grandson, Mason. The family dog, Harley, is there, too.

Over the years the Hamus family and V&H Automotive, have supported many Clinic initiatives, including the Laird Center for Medical Research, golf events, volunteer committees and other Clinic programs. They also support the National Farm Medicine Center and the annual Auction of Champions event.

"Michelle and Jeff were part of a group of volunteers who really reinvigorated Auction of Champions," said Chief Development Officer Teri Wilczek. "They attend many of our major special event fundraisers and give so generously to this community. Michelle also gives graciously of her time, creativity and talent."

V&H employees said the family's tradition of helping the community is a point of pride among the staff.

"The Hamus' have always been involved, whether giving donations of their time or money," said Randy Bluhm, a sales department employee who has worked for the dealership for 28 years. "I find it rewarding to work in an environment that supports its local community."

"The Hamus' treat each employee as an extension of their own family," said Carla Landwehr, who works in the V&H office.

"They welcomed me into the dealership family and continue to help me grow professionally," said manager Tim Frederick. "And it's been humbling for me to see their deep appreciation for the Marshfield community."

For Jeff and Michelle, it's about more than just good business. It's a way of life.

"I think Jake and Jenna have already carried this attitude on in their own lives as they get involved in things and they're always asking how our philanthropic efforts are going," said Jeff. "And that's very gratifying."

Michelle agreed. Those projects have been one of the ties that bind the family together.

Michelle's career as a dental hygienist informed her giving philosophy of promoting wellness and family. The couple has hosted many charity events in their home, aiming for a personal touch that promotes friendships among donors.

Jeff's parents always had a "the more the merrier" attitude toward big celebrations, Michelle said.

For Michelle, it's been a personal calling.

"I loved the nurturing part of my career and have loved being a mom and grandma," she said. Those same qualities extend to giving more broadly.

"I guess our feeling is the house should be full and we should get everybody together for a great cause. I think it's my role in life, in fact. We've just always felt that giving back is one of those things you do." ■



Family of Werner and Sue Krause

*Submitted photo*

## **Krause Family Bootstraps Philanthropy Fruits of Labor**

Werner and Sue Krause wanted to make a gift to Marshfield Clinic in celebration of their grandson Will, a cancer survivor who was diagnosed in 2012 with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Presented with an opportunity to add their names to a newly transformed pediatric oncology department in Marshfield, they instead took the idea in a different direction. They wanted to give in a way that matched their entrepreneurial spirit and resonated on a deeply personal level.

“This is a journey we started nearly 58 years ago,” Werner said.

The newlywed couple was traveling home to Milwaukee in 1958 after a brief honeymoon in the Wisconsin Dells when their 20-year-old car broke down. Sue had to dig the last few coins out of her purse to buy a quart of oil, and that’s when her husband made another vow to his new bride.

“I looked at her and said, ‘This is the bottom. From here we go up,’” said Werner, a first-generation American whose father worked in a box-printing plant. Sue’s dad was a sheet-metal worker. Neither of their fathers graduated high school.

Up, indeed.

The couple worked multiple jobs to earn college degrees and Werner went on to receive a master’s degree in business administration at University of Chicago. He carved out an accounting career with large employers including Arthur Andersen, Miller Brewing Co., and Allis-Chalmers.

But it was a risky venture to remake a Sheboygan plastics company that ignited Werner’s entrepreneurial spirit. He started in finance at Vinyl Plastics Inc. and eventually became one of three equity partners in the company, which made commercial flooring for surgery rooms, computer manufacturing plants, plastic film that wrapped around Oscar Mayer bologna, and testing strips for Eastman Kodak, among other things.

Sue found success running a public relations company. Along the way, the couple had three children – Patricia, Dave, and Steve.

“They had high expectations for us,” said Dave, Will’s dad. “We were expected to get a job in high school and to go to college. There were no high school graduation parties because that was not the end of the journey.”

Those high expectations now carry over to the couple’s giving philosophy, and rightly so, said Teri Wilczek, chief development officer for Marshfield Clinic.

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***“They’re very savvy about philanthropy. They want to maximize the impact of their dollars by issuing challenge grants, and they ultimately want their money to go toward helping people directly, in the moment.”***

**Teri Wilczek**  
Chief development officer

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“They’re very savvy about philanthropy. They want to maximize the impact of their dollars by issuing challenge grants,” said Wilczek. “And they ultimately want their money to go toward helping people directly, in the moment.”

Since Werner retired about 20 years ago after selling his interest in the company, the couple has donated to a variety of causes in Wisconsin, including theater projects in the Milwaukee and Door County areas. Through experiences with their own children, the couple saw the power theater has to draw out kids’ confidence in themselves,

setting them up for independence and success in life, Werner said.

The couple also established the Sue Krause Women’s Scholarship program through an endowment at Shepard of the Bay Lutheran Church in Door County. The fund grants education and training scholarships to women supporting families on their own.

After an initial gift of \$25,000 to establish the Krause Family Pediatric Cancer Angel Fund, Werner and Sue challenged Clinic donors to come up with another \$25,000, pledging to match that for a total of \$75,000. When that challenge was met after only a few months, they pledged another \$50,000 as a matching challenge to establish an endowment for the Angel Fund. To date, over \$50,000 has been raised to meet the goal.

“We are still firming up the model for our family foundation, but essentially our purpose is to aid people in need to help themselves,” Werner said.

Dave and his wife, Becky, said they were overwhelmed by the charitable gifts Dave’s parents made in Will’s honor. They were also touched by the support they received from the community as they went through Will’s treatments at Marshfield Clinic.

“When I think back on things, what makes me the most emotional is how people stepped up in response,” Dave said. A couple of friends flew to Florida to be with them when they got the devastating news of Will’s diagnosis while vacationing there. Both of their employers, Prince Corporation and Forward Financial, gave them plenty of

time off to be present for Will's chemotherapy. Even Will's school classmates put up lemonade stands and brought in their piggy banks to support the Angel Fund.

"They know about giving back at a very young age, and I have no doubt that will continue for the rest of their lives," said Becky, who now organizes care packages that are given to families who have children newly diagnosed with cancer.

Watching Dave and Becky take on such projects while also dealing with their ongoing fears about Will's future has been particularly heartwarming to Sue.

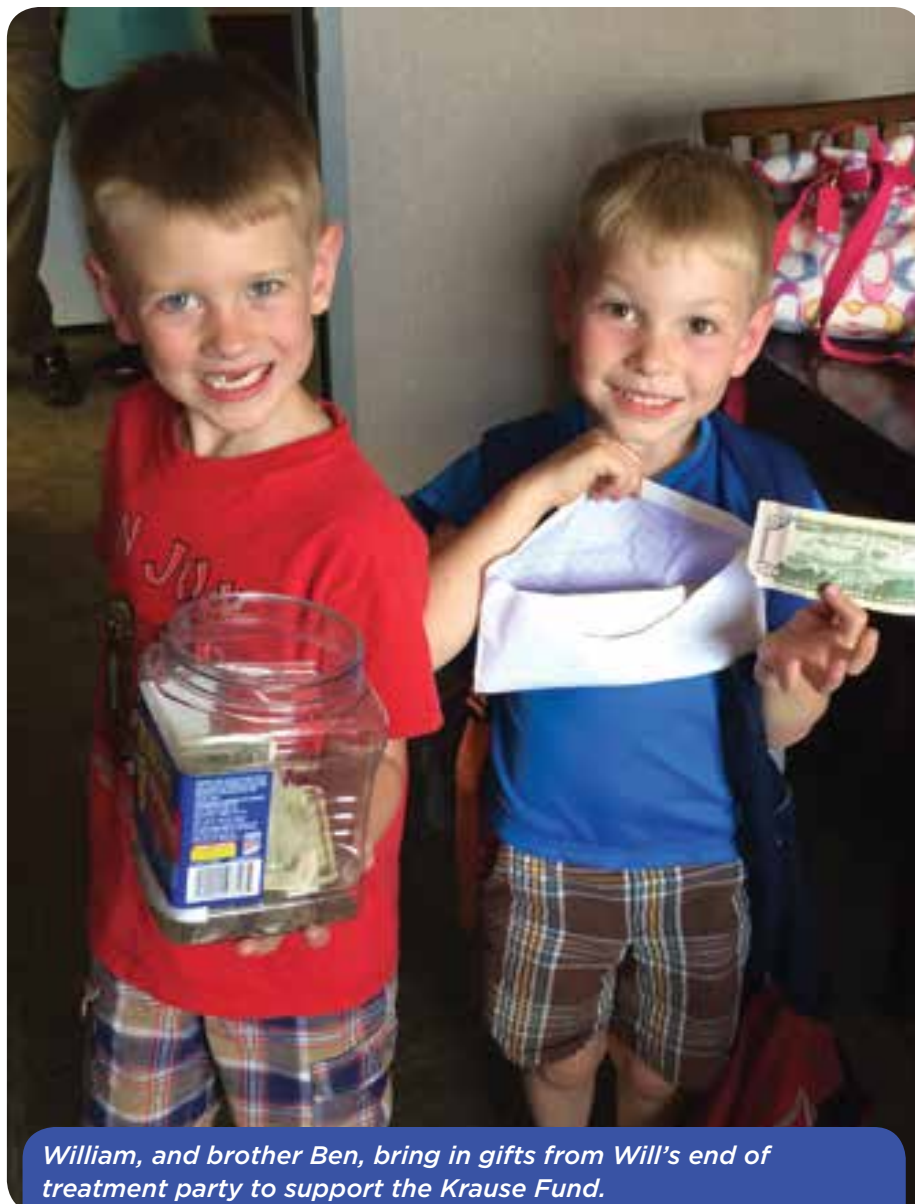
"Their willingness to be out doing fundraisers while coping with all that's been laid upon them with Will's illness has been amazing," she said.

The family also expressed gratitude that they were able to complete the chemotherapy sessions in their hometown.

As the only Central Wisconsin member of the Children's Oncology Group, Marshfield Clinic can offer patients investigational drugs, new protocols and access to the latest treatments, said Dr. Michael McManus, a pediatric hematology-oncology specialist at Marshfield Center.

"We're able to offer these protocols that patients wouldn't be able to access except by driving many more hours," McManus said. "It's a major benefit for families."

Throughout Will's treatment, his medical team was very encouraged by his progress. For his type of leukemia, long-term survival rates are near 90 percent, McManus said.



*William, and brother Ben, bring in gifts from Will's end of treatment party to support the Krause Fund.*

*Submitted photo*

"This is a good outcome because he made it through these three years and is a healthy, energetic boy who is doing great," he said.

Will's treatments concluded successfully over the summer. His parents say no more are scheduled, though he'll continue to be watched closely by his physicians.

For Dave and Becky, like all parents but particularly for parents of cancer patients, the worrying

about a child will never be completely over. They are grateful, nonetheless, for the positives.

"He made it through the chemotherapy without getting really sick and we never had to fear for our jobs because we were taking care of him," Becky said.

"It makes you realize just how fleeting life is," said Dave. "And how generous people can be." ■



## Artwork enhances patient experience

### Stevens Point Center features local artists, commissioned work

Since its opening in October of 2013, visitors to the Marshfield Clinic Stevens Point Center have been enjoying an array of artwork from 14 local artists.

“Bringing great art to the Stevens Point Center was easy, because Stevens Point and Portage County have wonderfully vibrant artists,” said James Machtan, assistant director of New Visions Gallery, based at Marshfield Clinic Marshfield Center. Machtan coordinated the purchase of all of the works and their placements in the facility.

A commissioned piece created by Stevens Point resident Mike Godell is among the artwork featured in the building. Located in the main lobby, the sculpture, “Sincere Resonance,” was inspired by the rings of waves that occur when dropping a pebble into water. Each ring within the sculpture uses different varieties of wood, which after being stained and treated, show differences in grain and color.

“This piece commissioned with Mike and the other Portage County artists’ work within the new facility allowed us to bring artwork that’s meaningful and engaging to the Center’s patients and staff,” noted Machtan.

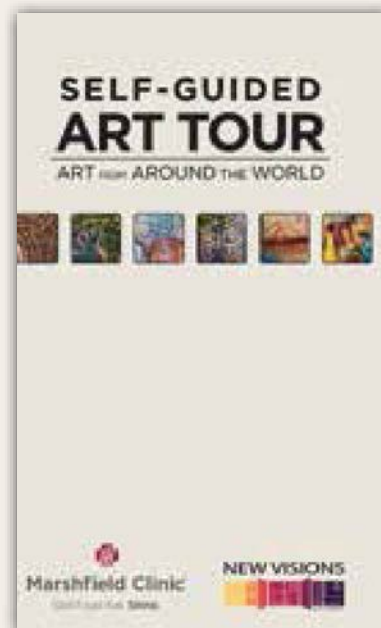
Marshfield Clinic Health System Board members Fritz Wenzel and Charles Nason, along with Nason’s wife, Victoria, who live in the Stevens Point area, provided funding for the art displayed in the Center.

### Marshfield Center art tour brochure available soon

Throughout the Marshfield Clinic’s Marshfield campus many wonderful works of art can be found. In September, a brochure will be available to guide patients and visitors to the various collections around the campus where they can find additional information about the pieces.

“The art collections distributed throughout the Marshfield campus rival many museum holdings in both quantity and quality of work. The art map will be a tool to help make these collections more accessible to patients that may be visiting Marshfield to receive care, and have time in between appointments,” says Machtan.

Brochures will be available in the New Visions Gallery, at the Reception Desk in the Main Lobby, in the Lawton Atrium, the East Wing Lobby and at several check-in desks and other locations throughout the building. All artwork included in the brochure is accessible to patients and visitors during regular Clinic hours. Plans are underway for guided tours after regular Clinic hours for those interested in more in-depth study of the collections. ■



# Renovated Horizons Gardens Unveiling

Rita Mazur and Sandy Bucklew first dreamt about the Horizons Gardens in 1994. What started with a small idea - to give people a place to sit and relax during visits to the Marshfield Clinic Minocqua Center - has since grown into something much larger.

“There was no place to sit, so we thought it would be a good idea to put a tree and a park bench out there,” explains Bucklew. “It has evolved into so much more.”

In the beginning the garden thrived thanks to donations of benches or plantings, rock gardens created at Relay for Life events, and countless hours from volunteers who tended the space during their spare time. Eventually, the garden started falling into disrepair.

Bucklew, Mazur, and Christine Hayes recruited a committee of community members and Marshfield Clinic employees in 2011. They soon began fundraising with the goal of upgrading and

expanding the gardens. After many years and multiple design plans, their dreams have become reality.

Last summer, a pergola, concrete walkway, and new plantings were installed on the site of the old garden. This summer, the garden was in full bloom during a special celebration where donors were invited to see the unveiling of their hard work.

For many of those who participated in the project, the highlight of the redesign is the new pathway. This walkway is lined with bricks honoring or memorializing individuals who battled a life-threatening illness. They stand as a testament to survivorship and an inspiration for others during their own journey.

Even though the Horizons Gardens have seen many changes over the years, two things have remained the same: the sign which welcomes visitors to the space and the goal of creating a place of peace and comfort for patients and families.

The Horizons Gardens sign was donated by Mazur in memory of her late husband. It features a butterfly, which is a symbol of survivorship for oncology patients, and a sunrise, the ultimate symbol of hope for a better day. “We wanted the garden to represent hope and renewal,” said Mazur. “The sign is one way we conveyed that.”

“Now more than ever, the Horizons Gardens are a place for people to come and reflect, find some peace, even find joy and laughter with children when they’re at the Minocqua Center for treatment,” said Mazur. “It’s peaceful, very peaceful.”

The ladies are proud of the enhancements to the garden and don’t plan to stop anytime soon. It’s clear that the Horizons Gardens have quickly become a unique feature at the Minocqua Center.

For more information about how you can support the ongoing needs of the Horizons Gardens, please contact Rikki Starich, annual giving officer, at 715-389-3530. ■



Submitted photo

**Christine Hayes, R.N., O.C.N.**  
**Clinical Coordinator,**  
**Oncology/Hematology**  
**Center: Minocqua Center**  
**Years at Lakeview: 15**

After 15 years of caring for patients at Minocqua Center, Christine Hayes' imprint is just about everywhere.

In addition to administering chemotherapy to patients, she serves as the Oncology/Hematology department clinical coordinator. She's involved in the Horizons Cancer Support Group, coordinates the Minocqua Center's *Look Good, Feel Better* program for the American Cancer Society and has led Tai Chi Easy classes for cancer survivors, among other projects.

"I have a deep passion for integrative medicine," she said. "I believe in the mind-body-spirit aspect of a patient's healing process."

She was also involved in the Center's recent expansion of the Horizons Gardens, a retreat for patients and staff that is dedicated to the memory and honor of patients with life-threatening illness.

"It started in 1994 as one tree and a bench. Today there is a brick pathway leading to a pergola, benches, picnic tables, deer-resistant plants and natural grasses," she said. "It's a place for patients to go when the days are long here because of lab work, seeing the doctor and then getting

treatment. Being in nature reduces stress levels and is beneficial for the well-being and health of both patients and staff."

All those efforts haven't gone unnoticed by patients.

"We have a lot of patients who go away for the winter and when they return they tell us how glad they are to be back in the comforts of our chemotherapy center" Hayes said. "Patients have also said that they have gone to big major medical centers and feel like just a number there. Here, they feel like they are treated like a person, and get the time they need for care in a home-like atmosphere. Our small-town Minocqua oncology team is passionate about providing state-of-the art cancer care with the latest treatments and clinical trials. It's a team approach in everything we do."

"Growing up I always knew I wanted to find a job where I could make a difference in people's lives," she said. "Cancer is a fact of life, and to help people get through this time, to me, is very rewarding. It's gratifying to know you provided the best quality care and that you helped patients not only with the medical aspect but with a personal touch and respect." ■



*Christine Hayes, R.N., O.C.N.*

*Submitted photo*

# Friday Night Lights

## Athletic Trainers Gear Up for Season

In many Wisconsin communities, football stadiums are *the* place to be on a Friday night.

Crisp, fall air carries the scent of fresh popcorn. The band tunes up while players take the field for warm-ups. With a whistle and a kick, the ball sails high, the crowd roars and football season is underway.

Midway through the second half, the rival teams are locked in battle with the clock ticking. Suddenly a player is down.

Every parent of an athlete can identify with those anxious seconds, waiting to see if it will be a simple muscle cramp, a twisted ankle or something more serious.

These are the moments when Marshfield Clinic athletic trainers spring into action.

“Fortunately, true, life-threatening emergencies on the field are rare, but when they happen they can be complicated by the on-field setting or team uniforms,” said Sam Voight, Marshfield Clinic’s licensed athletic trainer said. “In these critical moments athletic trainers, team physicians, coaches and local emergency providers must work together.”

About two-dozen trainers from around the state recently ran a mock drill at Marshfield Center to refresh their emergency cardiac resuscitation skills on the field.

Trainers practiced knowing their roles, building trust with the rest of the care team and improving the speed and efficiency of emergency care.

The Clinic proudly provides skilled athletic trainers to bring advanced sports medicine support to about 40 Central Wisconsin schools throughout the academic year. Emergency care on the field is just one aspect of serving as an athletic trainer, but it is a critical responsibility.

“Cardiac arrest is always very serious, but it becomes more complicated when you have to deal with a helmet and shoulder pads,” said Laurel Rudolph, M.D., Sports Medicine medical director. “The guidelines are changing in regards to emergency management of an athlete in a helmeted sport that requires urgent evaluation and treatment for respiratory distress or sudden cardiac arrest; hence, it is important that we not only understand the management guidelines, but also practice them.”



The athletic trainers, physicians and physical therapists participated in the drills using advanced life support simulators. The simulators are full-body, life-like manikins dressed in football pads and uniforms.

Trainers simulated emergency events that called for getting to the player underneath the uniform and carrying out resuscitation drills, said Voight, who helped coordinate the training event.

The models are the same ones used by physicians to train for advanced life support credentials. They are not only physically more realistic because they are heavier and have arms and legs, but trainers can interact with them in a more realistic way, Voight said. "They can have a pulse, blood pressure and even talk to you."

Previously, training involved separate exercises for practicing CPR, removing the helmet, padding and uniforms and obtaining access to an airway. Now, fully uniformed models let athletic trainers practice all of their skills at the same time in a single mock code, and even practice CPR while walking beside a gurney.

"It allows us to practice how quickly we can perform all these actions if we were to have a cardiac arrest on the field," he said.

Once the critical moments have passed, trainers also discussed the emotional stress of what occurred on the field, and the steps needed to get on with providing care throughout the rest of the event. Voight works with the Wisconsin Athletic Trainers Association to provide stress management support to trainers who have managed a traumatic on-field event.

"Trainers do a lot of work by themselves in the field," he said. "When the emergency is over and you're standing by yourself, it can be difficult to be fully ready to see the next five athletes that

need attention, so we offer a lot of peer support to make sure these trainers remain viable and healthy.

***Donor support is critical to the operation of the Simulation Lab. Most recently, gifts allowed Marshfield Clinic to purchase five new child and infant manikins. The new manikins will enhance the skills of the healthcare professionals who provide care to our youngest patients. Your support is needed to continue to expand training offered to healthcare professionals and community members through simulation. Please contact Marshfield Clinic Development at (800) 858-5220 or [giving@marshfieldclinic.org](mailto:giving@marshfieldclinic.org) to learn how you can help. ■***



# CALLED TO ACTION

## *Volunteer Fundraising for Marshfield Clinic*

### **Ridin' for a Reason**

The 200 bikers rumbling through the Chippewa Valley did more than raise awareness in the fight against breast cancer...they also raised nearly \$15,000 at this 8th annual event. Funds will help support women from across Wisconsin who face access and financial barriers through Marshfield Clinic's mobile mammography service, and the Catherine Fonti Angel Fund. Interested in attending in 2016? The event is planned for Jun 4, 2016...check [www.ridinforareasonrally.com](http://www.ridinforareasonrally.com) for details.

### **Mike's Run**

#### ***Record crowd turns out for Mike's Run 5th Anniversary***

The 5th annual Mike' Run was held Saturday, June 20th at Jack Hackman Field in Marshfield. Despite the rainy weather, 300 participants, 60 volunteers and a number of sponsors came together to raise \$37,000 in support of mental health services at Marshfield Clinic. Proceeds generated at the event provide community conferences, new treatment options for those living with a mental illness, and suicide prevention training.

Marshfield resident Mike Hackman struggled with mental illness for most of the 45 years he was alive. To the outside world, he was a hard-working man, who always had a smile on his face, but only his close friends and relatives knew of the personal struggles he dealt with daily. Mike ended his battle with mental illness on June 23, 2010.

Mike was a great father, friend, son, and brother. In high school, he was a state champion track and cross country runner. Running was one of Mike's passions, which is why his siblings, friends and parents Jack and JoAnne were compelled to team up with Marshfield Clinic to create an event to honor Mike's memory. They strive to raise public awareness and reduce the stigma of mental health.

When you replace "I" with "WE", even Illness becomes WEllness!





### Ho-Chunk Gaming Tribute Concert

On May 15th, 2015, Ho-Chunk Gaming Black River Falls hosted concert featuring Neil Diamond and Bette Midler tributes to benefit the Neurological Disorders and Stroke Research fund at Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation (MCRF).

Tom Sadge, performing as Neil Diamond, and Kathy Thompson, performing as Bette Midler, entertained a crowd of 300 fans and the show was incredible! \$2,000 was raised for this important research program.

The Neurological Disorder and Stroke Research Fund aims to find the cause of some of the most debilitating diseases, including Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, ALS and stroke.

### Let's Tee Off Against Breast Cancer

More than 120 lady golfers hit the links June 18 at Trout Lake Golf Club in Arbor Vitae and raised \$15,000 with proceeds supporting Marshfield Clinic Northwoods Cancer Care fund. The golf event, presented by Trout Lake Ladies Golf League and Trout Lake Golf Club, is an 18-hole scramble.

Breast cancer survivors were invited to participate in a ceremony where golfers raised their clubs in a salute to their cancer fight. A number of cancer survivors also played a round of golf. Prizes also were awarded for best team dressed in pink team and the best decorated golf cart. All around, the day was an amazing celebration of survivorship!

About 150 Northwoods businesses, organizations and residents made donations, sponsored holes or provided items for goodie bags given to participants. The support of the community goes a long way toward making this a successful event.

### Shooting for a Cure Pool Tournament

The annual Shooting for a Cure pool tournament, which raises funds for breast cancer research, continues to grow and impact not just the work of researchers but also all those involved in the event itself.

"When we started the event I never thought we would be here 15 years later, still going actually stronger than ever," said Doris Laskowski, one of the event organizers. "I just wanted to make it through that day in one piece and hope we would raise enough money to make a difference to someone, somewhere."

Now in its 14th year, the event added another \$25,000 to bring the cumulative impact of the event to nearly \$307,000.

"It is more about the relationships we have formed than it is about pool," said Sharon Jacoby.

Sharon, her husband Brandon and Brandon's aunt Doris Laskowski have built hundreds of relationships through the event. Nearly all of the 128 tournament participants and the many volunteers have been involved with the event since its beginning.

The 15th annual Shooting for a Cure pool tournament will be held on April 1-3, 2016 in Wisconsin Rapids.

### Dueling Against Cancer

The 6th annual Dueling Against Cancer attracted nearly 300 guests and raised over \$34,500 to benefit Marshfield Clinic's Stevens Point cancer center and the WINGS cancer survivorship program. The event was hosted at SentryWorld in Stevens Point - a newly renovated event space that elevated the event to the next level.

Dueling Against Cancer once again featured Deuces Wild Dueling Pianos - two comical, improvisational entertainers working without a script, two pianos, and a room full of willing and anxious guests.

As always, Mike Smith and his associates at Ameriprise Financial went above and beyond to make the event great. Each of his employees have been touched by cancer in some way, so being a part of the fight against cancer is meaningful and motivating to the group.

# Sweet Acts of Kindness

George Elliston said, “How beautiful a day can be when kindness touches it.” These words perfectly represent the stories featured below. Whether these volunteers gave of their time, talent, or treasure, each positively impacted the life of a Marshfield Clinic patient through their sweet act of kindness.

Asher Popovich and his mom, Brooke, wanted to do something special to make kids who were undergoing cancer treatment feel a bit better. Asher had just finished up his own cancer treatment, so in celebration, he and his mom brought in toys to share with the other patients.

To celebrate 3 years of being cancer free, Amelia delivered dozens of balloons to put smiles on the faces of other children currently undergoing cancer treatment. As she told us, “I do it because it makes me happy.”

The girls of the Lakeshore Elementary Girls on the Run team in Eau Claire, WI recently donated \$225 to Marshfield Clinic’s CLIMB Support Group. They chose CLIMB to benefit from their Read and Feed popcorn fundraiser because a teammate had used the program and felt it really helped her as her mom went through cancer treatment.

Johanna and Maggie are 8th graders at St. Peter’s Middle School in Stevens Point, WI. The girls created a fundraiser called “Cancer Sucks Lollipops” to raise money for chemo care bags for Marshfield Clinic Oncology. The girls cut out, baked, and decorated 130 cookies to sell for \$1 and color

coded 265 lollipops for a sucker tree chance drawing. Using that money, and items donated to them, the girls were able to create over 75 chemo care bags.

At the “Pay It Forward” Pig Roast Benefit in Neillsville, Kelsey Rueth, Clark Counties Fairest of the Fair and her court, handmade over 50 adorable fleece hats for our Pediatric patients. Kudos to Kelsey!

Knowing that their youth want to be engaged, First Presbyterian Church in Marshfield gives their annual Confirmation Class an opportunity to put their thoughts into action by choosing a service project. This year, they chose to raise money for Cancer Research by accepting donations for a lasagna dinner during Lent. The students also created educational brochures about several different types of cancer to be available during the dinner for guests. Students promoted the event and invited family and friends to come, encouraging donations in Honor or Memory of loved ones; they followed up by writing thank you notes to show their appreciation for donations received. The \$1,800 raised exceeded expectations, proving that when working together, nothing is impossible.

A few years ago, Al Mertes’ children and grandchildren used their Christmas gifts to do something extremely special. Instead of giving him gifts for himself, they gave him things he could then donate to Marshfield Clinic to make a difference for pediatric patients who were undergoing difficult treatments - craft and activity kits, fleece tie

blankets, and indoor mini gardens. When Al passed away last spring, his daughter Julie Appel of Green Bay wanted to continue the tradition in his memory. This year, she used Action Team dollars from Thrivent Financial to purchase tie blanket kits. Many of the blankets were donated to the Child Advocacy Center in Wausau to be given to children who are placed in foster care.

Nine employees from Marshfield’s PreventionGenetics participated in the 200 mile Ragnar relay race from Madison to Chicago. The Gene Joggers took turns running, each runner completing between 16 and 28 miles, to finish the race in just under 32 hours. Leading up to the race the team did various fundraisers including creating a donation page. They selected Marshfield Clinic’s Clinical Registry Investigating Bardet-Biedl Syndrome (CRIBBS) to benefit from their fundraising efforts. As a genetic testing lab, the Gene Joggers know how important good genetics programs and multidisciplinary clinics are to patients. They were proud to support an organization with a program like CRIBBS that focuses on patients with rare genetic disorders. ■





# Tiffany Halan accepts new role in Development

Marshfield Clinic Development is excited to announce that Tiffany Halan has accepted the role of Manager of Operations and Special Events. Halan, a four-year veteran of the department, served first as the Stewardship Coordinator and then as the Special Events Coordinator.

The position of Manager of Operations and Special Events is a newly formed role responsible for overseeing the department's operations team, the overall operations of the department, and the strategic execution of special event fundraisers. Tiffany's experience lent itself perfectly to this position – she was the Director of Operations for six years at the Rochester Athletic

Club in Minnesota before returning to Marshfield with her family in 2011, and has successfully led Development's events for the past two years.

"Tiffany's management and special event experience, along with her dynamic personality, make her the perfect fit for this role," said Teri Wilczek, Chief Development Officer.

"I am driven by new challenges and am very much looking forward to being back in management. I get to work with an amazing Development team and hard-working groups of volunteers every day and I'm excited to take our events to the next level," Tiffany said. ■



*“Marshfield Clinic has always been there for us for our medical and health needs. We are grateful that Marshfield has the Marshfield Clinic serving us and the Wisconsin area and feel blessed to be able to give back to show our appreciation.”*

*– Arlen and Priscilla Ferch*



## Pediatric specialist combines clinical care and

**A** new research article by a Marshfield Clinic physician-researcher explores properties in breast milk that may be linked to healthier premature infants.

Dr. Brian Chow, a pediatric infectious disease specialist who also is on staff at Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation, measured proteins in breast milk of mothers with children who were admitted to the neonatal intensive care unit.

Writing in the *Journal of Human Lactation*, Dr. Chow identified certain properties in the milk that were associated with higher or lower levels of yeast colonization in the infants.

The forthcoming paper, “Host Defense Proteins in Breast Milk and Neonatal Yeast Colonization,” was published online ahead of print in June, 2015.

“It’s the beginning of a shift in how we look at infant nutrition,” Chow said of the research, which found lower levels of lysozyme and dermcidin in breast milk received by infants who had yeast colonizations growing on their bodies. Colonization increases infection risk in neonates. The research suggests that while breast milk is still considered optimal, there are varying properties in the milk that warrant further study, Chow said.

**“Clinicians are on the front lines and are there to notice that one patient is relapsing and another is not.”**

**- Dr. Brian Chow**



Chow was also part of the Marshfield Clinic pediatric team that discovered a rare virus in triplets born last fall to Stacey and Bryan Weichelt of Stratford. Bryan, who works at the National Farm Medicine Center, and Stacey have started a Parechovirus Research & Awareness fund through the Marshfield Area Community Foundation.

Chow collaborated with Children’s Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, where one of his fellowship colleagues now practices and where early cases of the virus had been reported. Early symptoms of the virus can be subtle and difficult to detect, but they can lead to seizures, speech delays, hearing loss, long-term learning disabilities and brain damage. Through this collaboration, better defined procedures will help lead to faster diagnoses, Chow said.

Chow began his research at Brown University while completing an infectious disease clinical fellowship. Earlier, he completed a combined internal medicine-pediatrics residency and his medical degree at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. He did his undergraduate work at Vanderbilt University.

Finding a multi-disciplinary medical center that would support his career goals of both caring for patients in a clinical setting and being an independent investigator was important, Dr. Chow said.

“Clinicians are often the ones who make the initial hypothesis about a research question,” said Chow. “They’re on the front lines and are there to notice that one patient is relapsing and another is not, for example,” he said.

## research

“These types of questions, combined with what the Research Foundation can do, can lead to some incredible insights into how we deliver patient care, so it’s important to study those questions.”

Chow joined the Clinic in August 2014 and hopes to continue his current research and explore new infectious disease questions.

Future plans include collaborating with Brown University located in Providence, RI to explore infectious diseases and how they are influenced by urban versus rural environments, as one example.

“Providence is a refugee city with a lot of ethnic diversity and it was a manufacturing city, so there are a lot of environmental factors” to compare with Central Wisconsin, he said.

“It’s definitely a challenge to do both research and clinical practice, but it’s important to be on the front lines of patient care. The other advantage is being well-suited to know what’s going on in your community, which can always generate new research questions.”

***Dr. Chow’s research is funded by the Infectious Disease Endowment. This endowment was created to help develop and expand biomedical and public health research, education, and clinical care. The endowment remains available for naming. For more information, contact Jill Kurszewski at 715-387-9247 or [kurszewski.jill@marshfieldclinic.org](mailto:kurszewski.jill@marshfieldclinic.org). ■***



*“My late husband Bill and my true passion is helping others by giving back to the community through the Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation to support the research that makes the wonderful patient care at Marshfield Clinic even better.”*

– Pat Allen



*“I love that I can still volunteer with my friends at Marshfield Clinic. I support the research being conducted at the Clinic and Research Foundation because without research, doctors cannot provide the best possible care to patients.”*

– Ruth Wenzel - celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on September 21<sup>st</sup>

## Memorial & Honor Gifts

Every day, friends of Marshfield Clinic and Lakeview Medical Center remember and honor relatives and others by making contributions that support the mission of high-quality health care, research and education.

Gifts received February 2015 to May 2015

### In memory of

Robert T. Ahles  
 Donald J. Albrecht  
 Darlene Alt  
 Scott A. Andersen  
 Edward J. Anderson  
 Joe & Donna Arbelovsky  
 Steven Arendt  
 Michael S. Ariens  
 Willard "Bill" O. Aspeslet  
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 Vernon Baltus  
 Carolyn A. Barker  
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 Zaidyn K. Bender  
 Clark E. Biddle  
 Elizabeth A. Birchler  
 Harold Birling  
 Harold W. Blum  
 Neva Kathleen Bohl  
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 Ranee Bredemann  
 Jeanette Breu  
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 Rena R. Brown  
 Delbert Campbell  
 Elizabeth Canfield  
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 Thelma Craig  
 Thomas H. Crary  
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 Harvey Glamann  
 Kathryn Goers  
 Eugene G. Gohl  
 Robert Graney  
 Bonnie Wendell Green  
 Bonnie Grimm  
 Elmer Grosskopf  
 Gerald Haessly  
 Eric Hamm  
 Vernon K. Hammond  
 Dr. Raymond L. Hansen  
 Melissa Noelle Hanson  
 Jimmy Hartness  
 Elizabeth "Betty" Hayes  
 Bud Hein  
 Fae A. Heller  
 Jane M. Herr

Corey James Hilber  
 James "Jim" E. Hinker  
 Muhammad Hussain  
 Lloyd Hutchinson  
 Elmer & Laura Ingle  
 Selma Jacobsen  
 Dr. Daniel Jacobson  
 Knute & Esther Johnson  
 Patricia Kane  
 Chris Kausch  
 Donald "Donnie" Keeser  
 Raymond C. Kelly  
 Robert C. Kelly  
 Robert Keyes  
 Mary Knuth  
 Barbara A. Knutson  
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 Richard Koenig  
 Mary Kohel  
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 Kuehnhold  
 Brian Kulas  
 Bob & Phoebe Kult  
 Treyden J. Kurtzweil  
 Allan R. LaPlante  
 Alden "Al" Lawrence  
 David J. Lawton  
 Debra Jean (Giere) Leslie  
 Erling G. Lokre  
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 Dee Martz  
 Patricia A. McCarty  
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 Rhonda (Trimberger)  
 McKaig  
 Jeremy D. Meissner  
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 Kurt Miles  
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Floyd Neibacher  
 Delbert "Bill" Neitzel  
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 Gerraine Sturm  
 Arvid Svennes  
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 James Tegtmeier  
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 Walter Young  
 Jan Yount  
 Edward L. Yrios  
 Lillian M. Zeman  
 Elaine E. Zenner  
 Lloyd M. Zimmerman  
 Elsie Zurn  
 John R. Zwiefelhofer

In honor of

Richard "Rosie" &  
 Monica Baierl  
 Lois Bayerle  
 Erv & Mary Binger  
 Sue Buehler  
 Barbara Bugar  
 Margaret A. Decker  
 Ginny Detterbeck  
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 Laura J. Zelinski

# SPIRIT OF GIVING

In a May 6 ceremony on the Marshfield campus, this year's Spirit of Giving celebration honored the life's work and giving legacy of a longtime Marshfield Clinic leader, a novel idea that led to a highly successful fundraiser, and an organization that has supported the Clinic for more than four decades.

"The Spirit of Giving Awards provides us the opportunity to publicly express our appreciation to the individuals and businesses who are treasured friends of Marshfield Clinic," said Dr. Susan Turney, Marshfield Clinic Health System CEO, who led the event. "Those of you in this room impact the lives of Marshfield Clinic patients every day."

## Legacy of Philanthropy

Clinic leaders presented the Legacy of Philanthropy award to Frederick "Fritz" Wenzel, a former Clinic executive director and longtime board member. The award honored both Fritz and his late wife, Mary Ann, who supported many research, science and patient-centered projects since their first gift in 1974.



Presenting the Legacy of Philanthropy award was Chief Development Officer Teri Wilczek. She said Fritz and Mary Ann's longtime support along with Fritz' continuing leadership has been invaluable to Marshfield Clinic.

Among their gifts have been the Fritz Wenzel Science Conference for high school teachers and students, support for the Auction of Champions and Pediatric department renovations.

"Fritz and Mary Ann's consistent support has impacted many that walk through our doors," Wilczek said.

## Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser

After learning both his mother and his wife, Linda, had been diagnosed with breast cancer, Dan Neve felt the need to do something to support their fight. He decided to purchase a Shelby GT500 Mustang - which he named HOPE - and began selling ad space on the car and touring it around car shows across the country during his time off from work. Neve has since raised nearly \$103,000 for Marshfield Clinic mobile health screening units. His Cruise for a Cause event earned this year's Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser award.

"When Dan talks about the people he meets along his journey, how they express gratitude for the work he does to help find a cure for cancer, you can see how they have touched his heart," Dan's friends Dean and Christy Ogurek said in a message shared for the evening. "Dan is already working on ideas for next year. We are so very proud of them both."

Dan and Linda's Cruise for a Cause website has a quote from the couple that sums up their passion: "You don't choose a cause, a cause chooses you."



## Outstanding Philanthropic Organization

BMO Harris Bank has supported Marshfield Clinic's mission annually since 1974. The company's support has included sponsorships of the annual Auction of Champions, Fore the Kids, and Mike's Run. Their generosity, among other things, is the reason they were named the Outstanding Philanthropic Organization for 2015.

Al Nystrom, president of BMO Harris Bank in Marshfield, serves as chair of Mike's Run, benefitting mental health initiatives. The event honors the legacy of Mike Hackman, a childhood friend of Nystrom's who died in 2010 after a long battle with mental illness.

"BMO Harris Bank's community involvement, financial support and loyalty to the local area are just a few reasons why they deserve this award," Wilczek said. "Al Nystrom sets the bar high. He leads the Mike's Run committee with a heart of gold and truly puts his entire self into the planning. And this event is just one of many Al leads. He also chairs the Marshfield Clinic Development Committee and created Rotary Winter Wonderland, among many other projects."

Central Bank and Trust opened in Marshfield in 1937 with \$75,000 in equity and six employees. Forty years later the bank built a new building on Central Avenue and joined M&I Corp. Recently, M&I joined with Harris Bank of Chicago and the company today is known as BMO Harris Bank.

Throughout the changes, the organization has supported countless local projects and its leaders have been involved with Marshfield Clinic for generations.

Summing up these donors' remarkable achievements, Turney said the evening represents a "debt of gratitude" for the donors that make it possible for the Clinic to accomplish its mission. ■



# Q & A

with Dr. Susan Turney  
chief executive officer  
Marshfield Clinic Health System

Marshfield Clinic Health System (MCHS) is changing the way it delivers health care. The goal? Enrich lives through continually focusing on our patients and communities, providing quality health care, innovating and defining the future for how we will deliver that care.

MCHS Chief Executive Officer Susan Turney, M.D., who completes her first full year in that position September 1, is involved in shaping that organizational change. We've asked Dr. Turney to consider questions about the future and they follow, with her answers.



**Q: Why is MCHS changing the way it delivers health care to its patients?**

**A:** Nationally, patient care is moving more from inpatient or hospital settings to outpatient settings, thanks in part to improved technology and medications along with innovative, more efficient care models. We will have four major areas of change initially - construction of comfort and recovery suites as part of ambulatory surgery centers; joining AboutHealth, which was official in May; hospital construction; and partnership with Aspirus.

**Q: Why is a hospital being built in Marshfield?**

**A:** We have much of the technology, equipment, knowledge and skill needed to operate a hospital, but not an optimal space and all the tools. Also, some services can only be offered in a hospital. This cutting-edge care facility will provide services we couldn't before; reduce costs and improve our patients' experience. It will be staffed by our national leading experts in dozens of medical specialties.

**Q: What is AboutHealth?**

**A:** AboutHealth is a partnership of Wisconsin health systems working together to improve communities' health while providing high-quality patient-focused health care and excellent customer service at reduced cost.



**Q: How is MCHS's membership in AboutHealth going to affect patients?**

**A:** AboutHealth members are able to share clinical and financial information with each other to encourage improved care. As a result, health care providers' focus shifts from maximizing volume of services to providing better quality outcomes.

**Q: Why is MCHS partnering with Aspirus?**

**A:** A partnership between MCHS and Aspirus, two strong, independent health systems, will allow us to work together in ways we couldn't before. Aspirus shares our goals and abilities to use technology in state-of-the-art facilities to allow smoother transition of care for patients who need hospital care. This is not a merger.

**Q: Is this partnership happening in every community MCHS serves?**

**A:** No. Wisconsin Rapids and Eau Claire will see this strong partnership. The new hospital in Marshfield will be independent of the Aspirus partnership.

**Q: How will the Aspirus relationship affect patients?**

**A:** Initially, it won't. Patients will be able to see their providers, have the same insurance coverage and receive the same service they're used to. In time, our collaboration with Aspirus will seamlessly combine how we provide high quality care with Aspirus' expertise and efficiency in a hospital setting.

**Q: Why expand ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs) and build comfort and recovery suites?**

**A:** Marshfield Clinic has offered ambulatory surgery care for several decades in Marshfield and more recently in Eau Claire, Minocqua and Wausau. This expansion is the next step in moving that care forward. Again, because of advances in medicine, we are able to expand services and have suites for patients' recovery as part of this new care model. It will allow for a highly positive patient experience in this new setting that's designed for better efficiency and comfort.

**Q: What are comfort and recovery suites?**

**A:** The suites have a small number of beds for patients and provide 24-hour access to medical staff, including physicians and nurses. Patients can recover from surgery and other procedures completed in an ASC in these suites.

**Q: How are these services different from a hospital?**

**A:** The suites fulfill basic health care needs for patients to get them back to health during a short-term stay.

*Do you have a question for Dr. Susan Turney? Submit it to [wolff.brooke@marshfieldclinic.org](mailto:wolff.brooke@marshfieldclinic.org). Watch future issues of *Benchmarks* to see if your question is included.*

## Calendar

Thursday, September 17

*Auction of Champions*  
RiverEdge, Marshfield

Friday-Sunday, October 2-4

*Cruise for a Cause*  
Chula Vista, Wisconsin Dells

Saturday, October 10

*Breast Cancer Awareness Ride-Run*  
The Sports Den, Marshfield

Thursday, January 28

*Comedy Against Cancer*  
Hotel Marshfield

Thursday, February 25

*Duel It Fore the Kids*  
Holiday Inn, Marshfield

Thursday, March 3

*Dueling Against Cancer*  
SentryWorld, Stevens Point

# Rich Seubert Celebrity Trap Shoot

On April 11<sup>th</sup>, a record 213 shooters got fired up at the Eau Claire Rod and Gun Club for the 7<sup>th</sup> Rich Seubert Celebrity Trap Shoot. The trap shoot was started on the heels of the New York Giant's 2008 Super Bowl victory. Since then, the event has raised over \$1.2 million for cardiology research at Marshfield Clinic, adding another \$170,000 to the total this year.

Why cardiology research? Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S. and was the second-leading cause of death in 2013 in Wisconsin, according to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services data.

More than that, there's a personal connection to heart disease for Seubert, the Giant's starting left guard in that Super Bowl XLII

win and a Rozellville native. His grandmother, Celine Seubert, received a heart transplant in 1987 and was one of the country's longest surviving heart transplant patients.

Through the trap shoot, Seubert has created the Celine Seubert Endowed Chair in Cardiology to honor his grandmother's legacy and advance cardiology research at Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation. The Seubert family credits Marshfield Clinic with the long life Celine enjoyed. She lived to watch her grandson play 11 seasons for the New York Giants.

Grandma Celine passed away in 2014 at the age of 85.

"I wanted to do something in my grandmother's honor," Seubert said. "We had six years of [this

event] while she was living.

This is the first year she's not here anymore. She's looking down on us."

For this year's event, Seubert was joined by former teammates Chris Bober and Greg Ruegamer. Former Packers, Tony Fisher and Kevin Barry, also participated in this year's trap shoot. Following the shoot, an evening dinner reception was held at The Florian Gardens in Eau Claire with raffles and auctions including luxurious vacations, rare sports memorabilia, and guns. ■



## Fore the Kids

### 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event

Ten years and \$1.2 million after its founding, the Steven Meissner Memorial Classic "Fore the Kids" continues to promote youth initiatives and keep the memory of a beloved community member alive.

Steven Meissner, who was killed in a car accident in 2005, was passionate about making a difference in the lives of children. In 2006, the Meissner family created Fore the Kids to honor his memory. Their goal for the event was to provide and improve education, health, family and overall well-being of children's lives.

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, more than 140 golfers, sponsors, and volunteers came

together to raise \$117,000 for Marshfield Clinic's Youth Net and Child Life programs.

Golfers participated in contests at each hole to win prizes and gift certificates from local businesses in addition to playing a best-ball format. Elvis Presley and Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz were both sighted on the course due to a new "dress up" hole.

Kim and Roy James of Marshfield were awarded this year's Fore the Kids service award. Kim has helped lead prize acquisition since the inaugural year and Roy is stationed on Hole 11 each year with his grill making brisket for golfers to enjoy.

The success of Fore the Kids relies on the hard work of event organizers Dave and Tammy Meissner, their family, and generous sponsors. They in turn credit more than 50 volunteers who work for months leading up to the event. ■



*Submitted photo*

## Summer research interns get career advice from program alum

For more than 40 years, the Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation has provided an opportunity for college undergraduate and graduate students to explore a career in medical research.

This summer, 9 students arrived in Marshfield to meet the scientists who would be mentoring them and begin their 12-week research experience. Students present their work at the annual Research Symposium before continuing their education or starting careers.

This year the students had the opportunity to hear an alumnus of the program present his research at a scientific seminar, then visit with him in person to seek advice on their career paths.

Dr. Louis J. Ptacek, Jr, was raised in Marshfield, the son of Betty Ptacek and the late Dr. Louis J. Ptacek, Sr., who was a pediatric neurologist at Marshfield Clinic until his retirement in 1991. Dr. Ptacek is a Distinguished Professor of Neurology in the Department of Neurology at the University of California at San Francisco. He conducts research on rare disorders and shared his research on Familial Advanced Sleep Phase (FASP), a condition that causes individuals to have a sleep cycle characterized by extremely early sleep and early morning awakening.

Dr. Ptacek participated in the Summer Student Research Internship Program in 1980. At that time, the participants were primarily family members of Marshfield Clinic physicians and scientists. Today, participants come from across the United



States after being selected from a highly competitive field of candidates.

Dr. Ptacek shared his career path with the students, noting he initially went to medical school because he was not able to identify what he wanted to do with his life. After graduating from medical school and throughout his residency, Dr. Ptacek continued to search for his passion and credits the experience of being turned away from opportunities as helping him to discover his passion and gain the clarity needed to eventually lead him to where he is today.

Today, Dr. Ptacek is a very successful investigator who is considered the world's expert on a number of rare diseases. However, he noted to the students that had he made different choices, such as deciding to obtain a PhD, he would still be successful today, but just in different ways.

“You don't have to be the smartest person to succeed, but you do have to care incredibly deeply about what you are doing,” noted Dr. Ptacek. “Working hard and doing it well is part of my quality of life,” he explained when noting at one time he was working 120 hours in the lab and missing birthdays, holidays and other occasions. He advised the students to continually ask themselves if they are doing what they want to do and if they are making the world better because of it.

As for the summer spent at Marshfield Clinic, Dr. Ptacek encouraged the students to observe their mentors and others in the lab to see if that work is something they want to do in the future, to learn to ask interesting questions and how to find the answers, and to continue to figure out what speaks to them as they complete this summer research experience. ■

## Bike rodeos look to keep communities healthy

Keeping communities healthy is always a goal of Marshfield Clinic providers and staff. Finding a way to keep neighborhoods safe while also putting a smile on the face of a child is an added bonus.

Both objectives are accomplished at bike rodeos put on by Marshfield Clinic centers throughout Wisconsin each year.

The Chippewa Falls Center hosts their annual event in their parking lot each May. Over the last two years, more than 150 families have participated. Children were given healthy snacks and water, along with backpacks. They were then

fitted with a bike helmet and taken through a skills test to learn about bicycle safety.

In recent years, the Chippewa event has been sponsored by a Project Shine Grant. This funding is only available because of the generosity of Marshfield Clinic employees who give during the annual employee campaign. The Project Shine Grant Fund supports employee-driven projects that provide better patient care or education and fulfills small equipment needs.

Many of the other centers rely on other unrestricted donations or the

support of Security Health Plan to make their bike rodeos possible.

The bike rodeos are perfect examples of how employees and philanthropy can work together to make a huge difference in building healthier communities.

“The event would not be possible without the physicians and staff who volunteer their time to teach area kids about bike safety,” said Barb Stevens, Chippewa Center Operations Manager. “Seeing the smiles on kids faces is a clear indication that the gifts made by employees are being put to good use!” ■



*Submitted photos*

## Gamma Knife provides specialized service

Imagine brain surgery without a scalpel or a lengthy hospital stay.

Thanks to a longstanding partnership between Marshfield Clinic and Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital, about 1,200 Marshfield patients have experienced just that.

Since 2000, when Ministry purchased the Leksell Gamma Knife™, teams of Marshfield Clinic neurosurgeons, neurologists and other specialists have used the 40,000-pound radiosurgical machine to deliver highly precise, single-dose radiation to brain lesions.

Patients undergoing the procedure are fitted with a lightweight, titanium helmet-like frame and guided into a machine that delivers the radiation. The process typically takes less than one hour.

"Gamma Knife is a world-class program that allows patients in Central Wisconsin to have a procedure that is unexcelled for treating tumors, in a non-invasive way that is extremely convenient," said Dr. John Neal, the Marshfield Clinic neurosurgeon who was instrumental in bringing Gamma Knife to Marshfield.

"This has been an extremely valuable resource for patients who would otherwise have to drive to the Twin Cities, Chicago or Milwaukee for this procedure," he said. "The technology has been a quiet revolution in how we approach a number of brain disorders."

Recent upgrades to the Gamma Knife have widened the scope



*"The Gamma Knife has been an extremely valuable resource for patients who would otherwise have to drive to the Twin Cities, Chicago or Milwaukee for this procedure."*

*Dr. John Neal*

of patients that can benefit from the procedure, Neal said. Current indications include brain tumors, pituitary tumors, vascular malformations, and functional disorders such as trigeminal neuralgia. Experimental studies are in progress that might extend uses of the Gamma knife to treat epilepsy and other functional disorders such as obsessive-compulsive disorder.

"Gamma Knife is vital for our patients and our numbers of procedures using it have grown substantially in recent years," he said. "It is an extremely important program between the two healthcare organizations." ■

## *Celebrating Legacies*

# The legacy of Marti Nelson

Marti Nelson's children say she had few regrets, even though her life was tragically cut short at the age of 48. During her life, she accomplished so much.

Marti did regret not completing her college degree. However, the same passion and work ethic that drew her into the workforce early led her to a rewarding and successful career in finance. This may be one of the greatest legacies she left her children.

"Keep your head down, work hard, and work for people you trust; you will be rewarded," is a motto Marti's daughter, Stephanie Betz, abides by thanks to the lessons learned from her mother. Marti's son, Evan Nelson, noted their mother had drive and personality. It was evident for him and his sister that with those attributes anyone can accomplish whatever they want.

Stephanie and Evan lost their mother to multiple myeloma November 15, 2012. The next June, Evan and his wife Kate welcomed their daughter into the world. Marti's first grandchild was born one day after what would have been Marti's 49<sup>th</sup> birthday.

When asked what he will tell his children about his mother, Evan smiled and said, "I will tell them she was hard-working, independent, caring, giving, loving, and there when I needed her." He admires his mother's parenting style, noting she allowed her children to make enough mistakes to learn from them, though not too many so as to create any trouble or danger.

Stephanie is proud to say she has her mother's Type A personality and is not surprised she followed

her mother into a career in the financial services industry. "This job is in my genes."

She added, "I learned from my mother that if something is broken, you need to take it apart and figure it out. I learned the importance of taking emotion out of the equation in order to think clearly when making a decision. My mom was extremely good at that."

Stephanie and Evan have many cherished memories of their mother, specifically recalling times spent together with family and friends singing campfire songs on annual trips to South Dakota's Outlaw Ranch and helping improve the quality of life for others on numerous Spring Break mission trips to Jamaica.

Stephanie and Evan learned from their mother to figure out what they value and hang on to those things. Marti valued family, friends,

faith, her dog, commitment, hard work and excellence in everything. Stephanie and Evan both realize they value many of those same things, but need to make sure they maintain a good balance between their careers and their families because the time remaining with your loved ones is unknown.

In gratitude for the care received by Dr. Dean Delmastro and all the staff at the Marshfield Clinic Eau Claire Cancer Care Center, Marti included a gift in her estate to benefit other cancer patients. Stephanie and Evan were not surprised by their mother's gift, as she "had a giving soul" and wanted to help where she saw a need or opportunity.

Marti Nelson's legacy will live on through her children, grandchildren, the many lives she touched and those whose cancer journey will be impacted by her kindness. ■



*Submitted photo*

## Make a gift that reduces taxes

Today, many people rely on their 401(k), 403(b), or individual retirement account (IRA) to provide the income needed in retirement. In fact, retirement accounts represent about 36 percent of the financial assets of United States households today, demonstrating the importance of these funds.

As assets in these tax-advantaged accounts grow, so does the need for smart tax planning when it comes to income distribution during retirement and estate planning.

For those who are charitably inclined, making gifts from a retirement account may be a wise approach:

- **Retirement accounts are subject to income taxation when distributions are made, except when given to a charitable organization.** When still working and saving for retirement, the dollars put into a traditional retirement account are not added to your taxable income. Instead, those dollars are “tax-deferred,” meaning you pay income taxes

on those funds when you retire and begin drawing funds out of your retirement account. Upon your passing, the remaining balance will also be taxed when distributions are made, except for that portion of the balance given to a charitable organization.

- **Taxes can consume a large portion of a retirement account.**

Many people name a child as a beneficiary of a retirement account. If the child is still working, the child may be in a high tax bracket at the time they receive your retirement account. Combining federal and state taxes, your child may lose more than a third of the account to income taxes, though stretching distributions over his or her lifetime can reduce the tax hit.

- **Gifting your retirement account to charity will save taxes.**

Unlike individuals, charitable organizations are not subject to income taxes and, therefore, the distribution to a charitable organization will not be reduced by taxes.

- **Giving your non-retirement assets to your children will save taxes.** Many people give cash assets to charity and their retirement assets to their children. Because assets such as cash and life insurance proceeds are generally not subject to income taxation, they should be given to your children, with the retirement assets given to charity. So, simply rearranging the assets to be distributed to your family and the assets to be distributed to charity will result in a larger portion of your estate going to your family and charity combined.

Leaving a gift to charity from a retirement account is as easy as completing a beneficiary designation form. If your retirement account is being split between charitable organizations and individual family members, consult a professional advisor so that your family members will be able to spread their distribution over their lifetime if they wish to do so.



**For more information about naming Marshfield Clinic as a beneficiary of your retirement account or other planned gifts, please contact:**

*Karen Piel, J.D., C.P.A., CFRE*

*Gift Planning Officer*

*1-800-858-5220*

*piel.karen@marshfieldclinic.org*

Marshfield Clinic  
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# Save the date for these 2015 events



Friday-Sunday, October 2-4

## **Cruise for a Cause**

Chula Vista, Wisconsin Dells



Saturday, October 10

## **Breast Cancer Awareness Ride-Run**

The Sports Den, Marshfield

Register online at [www.marshfieldclinic.org/giving](http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/giving)

 **Marshfield Clinic**  
..... Don't just live. Shine.