Striking out colon cancer

Jim Martin had always led a healthy life. Not having to visit the doctor’s office for anything outside of normal care, Jim was shocked when he went in for his second colonoscopy and learned he had cancerous lesions. Jim’s story begins back in 2007 when he had his first routine colonoscopy at the age of 50. Michael Henry, MD, Jim’s gastroenterologist at Gundersen Health System, performed Jim’s colonoscopy and found a few polyps lining his large intestine. Without cancerous cells found, Dr. Henry scheduled Jim to have another colonoscopy five years later. In August 2012, Jim went in for his next colonoscopy. This time, lesions were found. A biopsy was sent to the lab and tested positive for cancer. Jim didn’t want to believe it; but being an optimist, he trusted in a positive outcome. Jim met with his doctors to discuss options. Ultimately, he vowed to undergo surgery. During the surgery, his cancerous lesions were taken out and a sample of lymph cells removed before they become cancerous.

With his last treatment in April of 2013, scans were ordered to see if the cancer had spread. Jim’s scans came back clear. Jim could not be more grateful that Dr. Henry caught the cancer in its early stages, giving him a second chance at life. “My care team at Gundersen has been amazing. My doctors, surgeons and all of the staff there are exceptional people. It allowed me to have a lot of confidence in my treatment plan,” says Jim. Jim’s takeaway from his experience with cancer is to be optimistic throughout the journey. When asked about sharing his story, Jim replied, “If my story helps one person, even if it is only one person, then sharing my story was worth it.”

                  Strike Out Colon Cancer with the Loggers June 26

                  When: Sunday, June 26
                  Where: Copeland Park, La Crosse.
                  Time: Gates open at 4 p.m. Game starts at 5:05 p.m.
                  Tickets: $5 each. Go to gundersenhealth.org/strike-out; call ext. 54204 or email strikeoutcoloncancer@gundersenhealth.org.

Sunday, June 26, is Strike Out Colon Cancer Night presented by Gundersen Health System at the La Crosse Loggers baseball game. The evening will include messages from survivors about their battles with colorectal cancer, educational materials for fans on the importance of getting screened and an opportunity for survivors to be honored during the first pitch ceremony.

All survivors who participate will receive a free T-shirt and two game tickets. T-shirts and tickets will be available to pick up at the information desk in the Legacy Building June 26-24 or at the game.

• Every nine minutes someone in the United States dies of colorectal cancer.
• Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths.
• Colorectal cancer is one of the most easily prevented cancers because it develops from polyps that can be removed before they become cancerous.

That’s why the La Crosse Loggers are once again teaming up with Gundersen Health System to get the message out that we can’t strike out colorectal cancer through preventive screening.

A screening too important to forget

Did you know colonoscopy not only detects colon cancer but can identify polyps and remove them before they become cancerous? That’s why colonoscopy is the preferred screening method for colon cancer.

Beginning at age 50, both men and women should have a screening test every 10 years. People with a family history of colorectal cancer, or who have inflammatory bowel disease, should have earlier and more frequent screenings.

Here are four additional ways to lower your risk:
• Eat a high fiber diet.
• Exercise at least 20 minutes three to four days each week.
• Maintain a healthy weight—obesity increases the risk for colon cancer.
• Avoid excessive alcohol use.

Talk to your primary care provider to schedule a colonoscopy or to learn more. You have the power to do something about this cancer—get your colon checked.
Celebrating years-of-service milestones
Cheers to the following Gundersen Health System staff who celebrated noteworthy service anniversaries in June

45 years
Karen Gustill, RN
Judy Peterson, RN

35 years
Mary Borgen, RN
Ann DeVries, RN, lactation consultant
Ruth Dignan, nurse educator
Renee Jerus, RN
Laurie Johnston, RN
Ann Lang, clinical performance improvement nurse
Ronda Lettrin, RN, MS, CSAC
Alice Moes, BucksKnad, RN
Ingrid Paes, MA
Lorena Plagge, HUC

30 years
Jayne Alland, RN
Sheri Baurg, MA
Kari Fox, program coordinator
Kerry Kowahl, RN
Vana Miller, accounts receivable representative
Carolyn Slezunow, RN

25 years
Marcia Helgerson, ophthalmic technician
Kristin Johnson, RN
Joan Krainp, clinical data analyst
Dawn Lueck, lead hospital coding specialist
Steven Manson, MD
Jared Milliren, invasive cardiac technician
Kay Nyberg, quality control technician
Janet Olmstead, program manager
Kathleen Stuempges, senior office assistant

20 years
Jennifer Allbee, certified hemodialysis technician
Jennifer Bedward, RN
Heather Briske, clinical informaticist
Mary Campbell, DDS
Dolly Dovray, utilization management specialist
Joan Fila, MD
Susan Guikra, office assistant
Linda Groon, MD
Barbara Hansen, medical laboratory scientist
Jessica Miller, program manager
 Roxanne Nehring, MA
Joan Paddgett, RN
Christine Roraff, RN, clinical research coordinator
Rhonda Sallaway, MD
Jill Wentele, RD

15 years
Teresa Anderson, RN
Kristen Berge, nurse educator
Kalina Bozadzeva, certified surgical technician
Shannon Bragger, medical laboratory scientist
Angela Connelly, CNN
Kristin Ducharme, RN
Melissa Eisen, senior office assistant
Cristin Feuerheinl, RN
Brenda Franca, coding specialist
Jule Flaveley, RN
Kari Hillstedt, ultrasonographer
Linsey Howe, scheduling specialist
Shannon Huettel, informatics nurse
Kimberly Klug, MA
Jennifer Martens, clinical informaticist
Sarah Mathison, trauma registrar
Diana Nelson, PA-C
Karla Overhouse, diet aide
Mason Quackenbush, director
Jennifer Scow, RN
Kristine Seger, payment & charge posting specialist
Julie Sonsalla, NP
Heidi Stevenson, RN
Matthew Waltz, RN
Stephen Wissink, MD

10 years
Joseph Besl, RN
Diana Brown, RN
Leah Bushman, RN
Abby Christopher, radiologic technologist
Deanna Engen, prior authorization specialist
Shawn Gibbs, RN
Sarah Holcomb, MD
Amber Kildahl, RN
Jonathan Klock, legal counsel
Jamie Kotromith, RN
Molly Mader, pharmacist
Lisa Mahoney, pharmacist
Andrea Modlin, lead professional coding specialist
Patricia Omoth, PT
Loraee Pechacock, regional business office coordinator
Jacob Peterson, anesthesiologist assistant-certified
Suzanne Peterson, RN
Kelli Roberts, dental hygienist
Mandy Rutta, audiologist
Laurie Sahslikky, PT/PT
Brooke Schultz, HUC

5 years
Angela Appel, MD
Bernard Bakkestuen, environmental specialist
Genna Bollman, admitting counselor/registration clerk
Dawn Caplin, clinical informaticist
Deana Caron, accountant
Stacie Christensen, clinical manager
Emily Erikson, RT
Candice Furrman, release of information specialist
Sharon Gonyo, CNA
Michael Hammel, RN
Eric Johnson, pharmacist
Kelli Kalvoda, RN
Lillian Kellicutt, RN
Emily Larson, MA
Benjamin Latham, RT
Jennifer Longmore, certified surgical technician
Jolene Miller, MA
Rhonda Nagel, critical care technician
Michelle Norsman, MA
Jane Noon, environmental assistant
Jacob Schaeffer, MD
Abraham Tigrison, MD
Justine Vanderlan, MS
Mee Vang, critical care technician
Mitchell Vetter, EMT
Joshua Whittson, DO
Hong Yang, MA
Hannah Young, LPN

Thank you for your years of service
We wish you the best in retirement!

Carol Banse, health unit coordinator
Health Unit Coordinator Services
45 years of service
Contributions: “Carol always went above and beyond to serve our community. Her warm smile, stories and laughter will be greatly missed. We thank her for her dedication to our organization and congratulate her on this milestone achievement. Thank you for your service Carol.” – Melissa Waller, clinical manager, HUC Services

Fondest memories: “Meeting such a great team of nurses and doctors. All departments were a joy to work with. Learning Epic was the biggest challenge, but with great assistance we did it. I always took great pride in my job. Gundersen is a great place to work.”

Retirement plans: “Enjoy my family, especially the grandkids, who are a real joy. Continue to play in many card groups and also plan on playing in golf couples’ leagues. Travel, of course, I have always been very social with church and our events in town and will come back to Gundersen to volunteer in the fall.”

Computer Security Bytes:
Gundersen Information Systems, with the help of ThreatTrack Security and the SANS Institute, offers these tips to help you avoid common online threats and protect our organization’s computer network. If you have questions, contact Linda Seubert, director, IS/Information Security, or at 55567.

Be aware of malware
Malware is software code developed by cybercriminals that infects PCs, networks and mobile devices and extracts protected data. More than 200,000 new malware threats are created every day, and nearly 70 percent of all data breaches are malware-related.

Gundersen Information Systems has many tools in place to monitor and identify malware, but staff plays an important role in defending the organization’s computer network against these attacks. If you feel an email or file received via email is suspicious, forward it to abuse@gundersenhealth.org, and then immediately delete the file from your email inbox.

To minimize our risk of malware in Gundersen’s network, Information Systems patches work stations and servers routinely. Much of this work goes on after-hours or when work stations are not in use. However, some Gundersen computer users may see a pop-up message alerting them to restart their computer.

Submit news, story ideas or other materials to Neil Stilwell, Corporate Communications, mailstop NCA1-03, by noon Monday before publication.
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Surviving and celebrating
Helping guests at Celebrate Life are Jeanne Johnson, MD, and her son Ian Scott. The picnic, in its 25th year, is a joint effort between Gundersen Health System and Mayo Clinic Health System Franciscan Healthcare that honors cancer survivors.

Welcome new leaders
Please take a moment to congratulate the following new leaders at Gundersen Health System. They have our full support and we wish them well.

Early 4th of July week Bridges deadline
The deadline for Bridges stories for the Thursday, July 7, edition will be noon on Friday, July 1. Keep this early deadline in mind when submitting stories. Thanks and have a great Independence Day.
Impacts of new Overtime Rule being evaluated

Staff in Gundersen Health System’s Compensation department are reviewing regulations and will be participating in education to learn more about a recently-updated Department of Labor rule. The “Overtime Rule” was revised to make it current (the last update occurred in 2004) and prevent abuse of the federal overtime law.

Regulations for the federal rule were published May 23. They:
• Raise the salary threshold for employees who may be exempt from overtime from $23,660 to $47,476 per year, ensuring anyone making less is eligible for overtime pay.
• Ensure an automatic update of the salary threshold every three years, based on wage growth over time.
• Will be effective Dec. 1.

“Right now we’re in the same situation as all other employers,” notes Linda Sullivan, director, Compensation and Benefits. “We’re reviewing the regulations carefully to determine how they will impact Gundersen. We’re also seeking out education from legal experts who provide training for us and can help with interpretation of the revised rule.”

Less than 5 percent of Gundersen employees will be affected.

Whether it’s something you did, a caring act you saw or something someone did for you, submit those Acts of Caring! Visit Gladiator’s home page and look for the logo.

Here are just a few Acts of Caring submitted recently by your Gundersen coworkers:

• While on a morning run, I noticed a man sleeping on the steps of a church in my neighborhood. I returned home, prepared a small meal of sourdough bread, peanut butter and water, and returned to the church, where I left the meal for the man. I don’t have to worry about where I will get my next meal...he shouldn’t have to either. I volunteered at a Relay for Life and then participated in it.
• My trainer has had the most patience with me. He doesn’t make me feel dumb for asking all kinds of questions.
• A security officer helped a visitor find a place at Copeland Park in La Crosse, where I left the meal for the man. I pulled over and picked the bird up and placed it under a bunch of bushes to get a break from the wind and dry off from the rain. This was an act of kindness that I was the lucky recipient of. I was working in my office and I hadn’t gotten a chance to get to lunch. A coworker surprised me with a boxed lunch from Pickermans and it was so appreciated. Thanks, Pam!
• While at the mall, I heard a loud crashing noise and saw a black hair-bound man become stuck in a doorway when the automatic door released. Sadly, others stood and watched, but I went over to him quickly to assist. He ended up getting his arm pinched and needed some medical care. I had a bystander find mall security and returned with them. They checked his arm and reported only minor bruising. I was very happy I did not stand by and was able to assist this man.
• At work I saw a man’s plants when they were on vacation. As an extra good deed, I also watered their garden before they returned.

Friday Improvement Recognition Event for June 10

Title: Regional Patient and Family Advisory Council — The Patient’s Voice
Presenters: Ellen Gianoli and Renee Mikkelson
Purpose Statement: Expand the Patient and Family Advisory Council process in the regional and partner sites to support the efforts of Patient and Family Centered Care

Title: Gundersen’s improvements in healing environments: 10-year overview
Presenters: Sue La Crosse
Purpose statement: The organization wanted to create a healing environment for our patients and families.

Spend a day with the Loggers

Mark your calendar for Saturday, July 23, and plan to attend “A Day with the Loggers.” Gundersen Health System’s 2016 all employee event will be in the mail soon, so don’t want to miss.

Invitations for A Day with the Loggers will be in the mail soon, so watch your home mailbox. If you have questions about A Day with the Loggers, contact Ellen Schmidt at ext. 56748 or email her at emschmidt@gundersenhealth.org.

Keep your skin looking younger longer with cosmetic peels

Peels are one of the most popular nonsurgical cosmetic procedures in Plastic Surgery and Aesthetics at Gundersen. People of all ages use peels to keep their skin looking smoother, youthful looking longer, and more radiant.

Now you can look fabulous and save 25 percent on peels booked in June and July 2016 with services complete by the Aug. 31, 2016. No other discounts apply. For best results, three to five treatments are recommended.

This special offer is good on:
• Lactic peels: As the lightest of the peels, it’s an ideal choice for a first-time peel or for people with sensitive skin. There’s minimal irritation, redness and recovery, so in most cases you can get right back to your normal routine.
• Chocolate peels: This is a medium peel. In most cases, it doesn’t leave skin irritated and red like more intense chemical peels so you can get back to your routine with little or no down time.
• Jessner peels: This is a deeper, medium to aggressive peel determined by the layers applied.
• Microdermabrasion: This is a safe, gentle and rapid process to exfoliate the skin’s outer layer. Peels help to rejuvenate and improve:
• Sun-damaged skin which can lead to underlying hyperpigmentation, loss of elasticity and premature aging
• Freckles, age spots and other uneven skin pigmentation
• Wrinkles and fine lines
• Acne blemishes and minor scarring
• The look and feel of rough, puffy, flaky skin
• Moisture loss, elasticity and skin tone

At home peels generally cannot give you the deeper, longer lasting results that you can get back to your surgeon’s office. For best results, consider peels at Gundersen Plastic Surgery and Aesthetics.

To learn more about cosmetic peels, visit gundersenhealth.org/peels. To schedule your appointment(s) and receive your 25 percent savings, call ext. 51943.

Sympathy

Gundersen Health System friends and co-workers express their deepest sympathies to:
• Cortney A. Manke, Pulmonary, on the death of her grandfather, Harvey Manke.
• Sherry L. Trudo, Cardiotoxicologist Lab-H, on the death of her step mother-in-law, Patricia Trudo.
• Rebecca L. Hamit, Operations, on the death of her grandmother, Therese Peterson.
• Amy E. Loos, Clinical Systems, on the death of her father-in-law, Darrell Edwin Loos.
• Amy K. Knapmiller, Patient Access/Pre-Registration, Customer Service, on the death of her grandmother, Roberta Schwandt.
• Susan Miller, Onalaska Administration, on the death of her father, Howard Kiss.

Summer Special: Save 20% on laser treatment for varicose veins

Say goodbye to unsightly varicose veins and step into summer with smoother, clearer, more youthful looking legs. checked his Sclera ClearScan is a laser treatment for minimizing or eliminating small varicose veins called spider veins. Safe, fast and effective, you can resume most activities right away. Now save 20% on Sclera treatments you book in June and July.

Book today and give your legs a great look for summer. Call the Gundersen Vein Clinic at ext. 52237. gundersenhealth.org/veins

*Service marked as redeemed by August 31, 2016. Cannot be combined with any other offers.

June 23, 2016
Dear colleagues,

Innovation is more than just a word in our strategic plan describing a core value. It is alive and well all over Gundersen Health System.

I recently had the pleasure of visiting our La Crosse Campus. I left with a sense of wonder regarding both operations. While I won’t attempt to explain the complexity of how tons of linen are rendered clean, sorted and folded, or how glass-coated heat, air, and wood chips are converted to heat, cool air, and electricity, the sense of wonder comes from the engagement of the staff. They are not mere operators of machinery. They are thinkers, constantly looking for ways to accomplish their goals more efficiently, more reliably, and safer. Countless innovations from their minds have spawned remarkable results. If you’re looking for a dose of wonder and inspiration for your team, get in touch with George Huber in Laundry and Alan Eber or Daryl Brye in Facility Operations to learn more or schedule a tour.

Why do they do it? I cannot answer for them, but I do know they enjoy it.

First, each employee is enriched by the work. You can see in the pride they demonstrate, all the way down to the cleanliness of the floors. Their work makes patient care possible and of wonder and inspiration for your team, get in touch with George Huber in Laundry and Alan Eber or Daryl Brye in Facility Operations.

Second, they enrich the lives of our patients. I recently had the pleasure of visiting our

Wood chip waste pile at the biomass boiler had now-hatched ducklings safely found their way recently to the Mississippi River.

No one forced the staff to think of these innovations. They embraced the spirit of innovation, thus advancing care in hundreds of ways. It is inspiring to witness. Similar stories abound throughout our system. I encourage you all to embrace innovation and offer your unique perspective to enhance the health of our communities. Become a tinkerer in your area of care.

You never know what life you will enrich. Just ask the mother duck.

Take care.

Scott Rathgeber, MD
Chief Executive Officer
Gundersen Health System

Tribute to Outstanding Women nominations wanted

The YWCA’s Tribute to Outstanding Women Awards are presented to women in the Coulee Region whose community impact demonstrates leadership and a commitment to improve the quality of life and the core values of the YWCA. Over the past 30 years the YWCA has honored hundreds of women and students, including many from Gundersen Health System.

Nominations are now being accepted for 2016 awards. Applications and supporting documents must be submitted no later than Aug. 18 at 4 p.m.:

• By mail or in person at YWCA La Crosse, Attention: Rose, 3129 Commerce St., La Crosse, WI 54603
• By email at reintern@ywcalax.org

The awards will be presented at the tribute celebration Nov. 10 at 5:30 p.m. at the La Crosse Center Ballroom. For additional information or a nomination packet visit ywcalax.org or call Rose Reinert, (608) 781-2783, ext. 226.

Continuous Readiness Tip:... Emergency Preparedness Plans

Between now and end of the 2016, Gundersen Health System can anticipate an unannounced visit from the Joint Commission—the nation’s predominant standard setting and accrediting body in healthcare.

Surveys will run for services provided in our La Crosse Hospital (Inpatient and Outpatient), Hospice and Behavioral Health programs, and Onalaska-based outpatient hospital departments. Since they can arrive at any time, it is critical for all staff to be “continuously ready.”

It can be difficult to predict the full extent of an emergency or just when one will occur. It is a goal of Gundersen Health System to be adequately prepared to provide a safe and functional environment for our patients, employees and visitors. To accomplish this goal, specific organizational emergency plans are available. Each department/patient care area should also have specific action evacuation plans where appropriate. It is essential these plans be readily accessible for staff to act quickly.

Do you know the location of your Emergency Preparedness Plan and what department-specific actions to follow in the event of an emergency? Please take a moment to locate/update your department’s Emergency Preparedness Plan (“the red binder”) and familiarize yourself with its contents. Emergency Plans are also accessible on Gladiator under Top Corporate Resources—Emergency Plans.

If you have any questions please contact Tom Wright, Emergency Medical Services Manager at ext. 55466. Additional Joint Commission resources are available to you on the Continuous Readiness Website/Manager & Staff Resources, including videos, presentations and handouts.

Content is added biweekly so check back often! For questions, feel free to contact Continuous Readiness at ext. 56495.