

The Madonna Independent, an employee newspaper of Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, is published every other Friday by the Marketing and Public Relations department. To submit a story idea, news item, announcement or recognition information, contact Tami Rudder, editor, at 486-8606.

All story ideas, news items, announcements or recognition information must be submitted the Friday before the Independent is printed. **The deadline for the next issue is Friday, Jan. 30.**

Madonna is a participating sponsor of brain exhibit



Angel Dog program receives donation



Young player tackles rare spinal cord disorder

Seth Lange lives and breathes football. As a high school defensive/offensive tackle, the 17-year-old was used to hard work and meeting opponents head-on. The 2008 First Team All-Conference player from Fullerton, Neb., was blindsided when he woke up one morning last fall and couldn't walk.

Seth had spent the night at a friend's house on Oct. 19, 2008, and felt sluggish when he returned home Sunday, sleeping most of the day. By Monday, he was nauseated and couldn't stand. Local doctors suspected Seth caught a flu virus. His parents, Mike and Theresa, were instructed to push the electrolytes by providing Gatorade. Seth continued to deteriorate and on Tuesday, his concerned parents transported their son to Boone County Hospital in Albion. Doctors there concluded he was suffering from Guillain-Barre syndrome and transferred him to Children's Hospital in Omaha.

After two weeks of testing, doctors determined Seth had contracted transverse myelitis, a condition resulting from inflammation of the spinal cord. Researchers are uncertain of the exact causes of the disorder, but believe that it often occurs when the body's immune system mistakenly attacks its own tissues, resulting in inflammation and injury to the insulating material that covers nerve cell fibers within the spinal cord.¹ Most patients will only encounter one episode of the disorder in their lifetime. It is estimated that about 1,400 new cases of transverse myelitis are diagnosed each year in the United States, and approximately 33,000 Americans have some type of disability resulting from the disorder.²

"It was kind of a shock how it all happened to me," said Seth. The 245-pound linebacker was devastated that he'd lost 25 pounds and was paralyzed. On Nov. 3, Seth arrived via ambulance to Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, extremely weak and taking

10 different medications. Kristi Britten, physical therapist, did an initial evaluation on Seth and was concerned because he complained of pain in his calves. Tests would reveal blood clots in both legs. Therapy was delayed temporarily as Seth was put on Coumadin, a blood thinner to reduce the formation of blood clots.



Seth Lange masters the art of the Rev1X[®] hockey sled during therapy as Kristin Luethke, CTR (left), Dawny Boutin, RA and Colleen Spellman, OTR look on.

Nursing staff helped to wean Seth off some of his medications and his therapy team devised a plan to meet his number one goal: to walk again. "I just wanted to get back to my normal life," said Seth.

The therapists rotated his regime to keep it interesting for the young teen. Seth's therapy sessions included using the Bowflex[®], a Rev1X[®] hockey sled and

walking with weights in the aqua therapy pool. Seth appreciated the variety of therapies and was determined to master each one. "In his first two weeks, he made a lot of progress," noted Theresa.

Seth was sidelined during Fullerton's football season. "I miss walking and playing football the most," said Seth. Full days of therapy challenged #79 of the Fullerton Warriors. "At times, my therapy sessions have been harder than football practice!" Seth shared. "I think it helps when your personality meshes with the therapist's," Seth added. He noticed his quads and hips

getting stronger and his hamstrings were still tight, but improving.

Seth's determination and the caring support of family, friends and the Madonna staff kept his spirits bright. "Seth was a great patient to work with, he always came to therapy with a positive attitude and accepted any challenge with a smile," said Kristi. Colleen Spellman, occupational therapist, agreed that Seth worked hard, always with a smile. "Seth was especially motivated to learn new techniques, like cooking his own steak on a George Foreman Grill[®] or using the Wii Fit[®] to improve his core strength and balance," said Colleen.

"I just wanted to get back to my normal life." —Seth Lange

(Continued on page 3)

It's back to school for these employees

Three Madonna employees have been busy hitting the books to further their education. Julie Kiner, 42, has an undeclared major at Southeast Community College (SCC), but is considering becoming a registered nurse. Josiah Unger, 26, is enrolled in BryanLGH's nursing program and will graduate in December. Janina Chapin, 31, just completed coursework at SCC and is now a respiratory therapist.

Julie, a 15-year employee currently in admissions, had an opportunity to rethink her career options after she became a divorced empty-nester. "I realized I need to be working with people," said Julie. She began observing the nurses in action at Madonna. Julie has a lot of admiration for the rehabilitation nurses. "I thought 'Wow, I'd like to do that' – to make a difference in someone's life," Julie shared. She plans to finish her degree within five years and become part of Madonna's nursing team.

Josiah has been a medication aide on LTACH for three years. Lacking a career focus, he joined the Nebraska National Guard when he was 17-years-old. Josiah's military service included a tour in Iraq in 2004-05. After completing his tour, Josiah has secured a full-time job and met his wife who encouraged him to return to school. "I like helping people and enjoy medicine," said Josiah. He noted there is always a demand for nurses. "Madonna has been good to me, working with my schedule so I could get my hours in," Josiah said.



Julie Kiner



Josiah Unger



Janina Chapin

(Continued on page 2)

New technology restores independence to patients

Several Madonna patients are embracing the Mini Relax—a cutting-edge technology that allows independent operation of infrared devices. The Mini Relax is often used by patients with spinal cord injury, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and multiple sclerosis, but can be used for anyone that has limited upper body function.

The Mini Relax is a scanning infrared transmitter that controls the TV, VCR or any other device that operates using an infrared signal. The Mini Relax also has X:10 capabilities, meaning it can turn radio frequencies into infrared frequencies to operate lights, fans, etc.

Complete with large and colorful graphics, it provides visual and auditory feedback and features two scan modes. “It’s basically a larger scale remote that is switch-activated,” said Colleen Spellman, occupational therapist.



Jeff Pulley, a Madonna patient, demonstrates the ease of using the Mini Relax. By nudging the switch with the side of his head, Jeff can control the operation of his television.

The user scans through the TV (or other device) functions such as power on/off, channel and volume controls, and mute. The person selects a function by activating a switch when the scanning light is at the desired function. With a mere tap of the head, sip or puff on a straw, a patient can change a channel without having to hit the call light for help.

The assistive technology restores functional activity and independence to the patient. “After learning how to use the Mini Relax, it is amazing to see how a person’s self-esteem begins to grow,” said Colleen. Learning how to use the Mini Relax for TV operation is like a stepping stone to learning additional technology devices that directly impact the person’s ability to interact independently in other environments.

Education story cont. from page 1

He expressed his gratitude for the \$500 nursing scholarship he was awarded from Madonna in Sept. of 2008. Josiah’s future plans include applying to medical school and exploring the anesthesiology field.

After graduating from high school, Janina had a cosmetology license and was working long hours with no benefits. She later was hired as a patient scheduler for TherapyPlus ProActive. “I like interacting with people and providing a service,” said Janina. After job shadowing Jackie Kiritsy in respiratory therapy, Janina found her niche.

“A career in respiratory therapy is so versatile,” said Janina. “Madonna offers good benefits, job security and, again, there’s the service factor,” she added. Janina divides her work schedule between Madonna, St. Elizabeth’s Regional Medical Center and BryanLGH Medical Center.

“An education is an investment you make in yourself—no one can take it away from you.” —Janina Chapin

She has a long-range goal to complete a bachelor’s degree in healthcare management.

All three employees took advantage of the educational reimbursement program available at Madonna to encourage continuing education. “Full-time employees (scheduled for 80 hours per pay period) can access up to \$750 per year to assist with tuition payments,” said Mark Hakel, director of education workforce management systems. Employees scheduled for less than 80 hours per pay period are pro-rated.

An employee must have completed 520 paid hours from the most recent hire date to receive funds, but application may be made during the 520-hour waiting period. Applications are available in the Human Resources office. To read more about the education reimbursement program, refer to OD #380 on the Intranet.

Employee Focus: *Fun factoids about Shirley*



Shirley Hadley
Executive Secretary
MRH employee for 30 years

- 1 Before my father allowed me to get my driver’s license, he insisted I learn to change a tire.
- 2 I’ve worked at Madonna for 30 years. In that time, I’ve worked in six areas, including being part of the very first dynamic duo of medical transcriptionists along side Rose Burling.
- 3 My husband and I have been married for 44 years. His name is LaVerne (Ray); so yes, that makes us LaVerne and Shirley!
- 4 Two weeks before my wedding, I broke my arm and had to wear a cast with my wedding dress. Now that’s a fashion statement!

Saluting Madonna’s Certified Registered Nurses

National CRN Week
Jan. 19-25



Sally Allamby, CRRN, Case Management

Kelli Anderson, CRRN, LTACH

Tricia Bruha, CRRN, ARU/LTACH

Lisa Culbertson, CRRN, VAU MDS Coord.

Michelle Daake, CRRN, LTACH

Bethany Danek, CRRN, ARU

Lisa Decker, CRRN, Admissions

Sharon Duffy, CRRN, ProActive

Heidi Estell, CRRN, Hospital Float Staff

Tarasa Farlin, CRRN, ARU

Kristi Felix, CRRN, Risk Management

Julie Francis, CRRN, Acute Rehab

Sandy Fruhwirth, CRRN, LTACH

Jennifer Hoebelheinrich, CRRN, LTACH

Lori Horner, CRRN, LTACH

Susan Klanecky, CRRN, CCM, Case Mgt.

Jeff Kubik, CRRN, Nursing Administration

Jennifer Marrison, CRRN, ARU

Carol McNeil, CRRN, LTACH

Kim Moore, CRRN, Admissions

Ruth Morrow, CRRN, LTACH

Paul Nathenson, CRRN, Administration

Mary Olsen, CRRN/Med Surg, ARU

Deb Opfer, CRRN, Education

Ginn Parks, CRRN/CCM, Case Mgt.

Mike Quicke, CRRN, ARU

Annette Reith, CRRN, Acute Rehab

Robyn Sejkora, CRRN, SAR

Doug Sessions, CRRN, LTACH

Theresa Shada, CRRN, ARU

Cathy Smith, CRRN, LTACH

Linda Stones, CRN, Administration

**Sandy Stutzman, CCM, COHN-S,
Employee Health**

Ev Sufficool, CRRN, LTACH

Kristy Taylor, CRRN, PRN Staff

Kelly Thelen, CRRN, Physician Services

Jan Vrtiska, Nursing Home Admin., LTACH

Mei-Huey (Su) Wang, CRRN, ARU

Faye Weckle, Gero, ARU

Julie Willnerd, CRRN, VAU/SN

Seth never fell behind with his school work thanks to help from Madonna's Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC). "It's awesome to have a place that keeps him on track with his studies," said Theresa.

At the end of January, Seth transitioned to Madonna's outpatient program and will discharge in approximately two weeks. The high school junior has perfected walking with his walker and is feeling stronger every day. Seth is anxious to reconnect with friends at Fullerton High School, especially the Warriors who have rallied around their teammate.

¹Source: www.mayoclinic.com

²Source: www.ninds.nih.gov

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.”
—Aesop (620 B.C.-560 B.C.)

Madonna on the brain

Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital is pleased to be a participating sponsor of "Brain: The World Inside Your Head" exhibit at the Strategic Air and Space Museum, Jan. 24 – May 2, 2009.

The brain is a fascinating and complex organ that is essential in everything we do, and "who" we are. But what happens when the brain is damaged through injury or illness? Madonna's exhibit will highlight three different types of brain injuries and explain how rehabilitation can help people with brain injury heal and regain their abilities.

Featured injuries:

- Shaken Baby Syndrome
- Brain Injury and Concussion in Youth
- Brain Injury and the Military

Madonna's accredited brain injury rehabilitation program includes a multidisciplinary team of experts who work together with the patient and family to develop a personalized program of recovery. Through intensive therapy, people with brain injury can "rewire" the pathways in their brain to relearn skills and compensate for lost abilities.

Specialized equipment is used in brain injury rehabilitation and technology is used in new, therapeutic ways. For example, Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital uses the Wii™ gaming system to help patients with brain injury improve balance, coordination, cognitive and social skills. Exhibit visitors will have the opportunity to play Wii™ games to learn how the games are used in therapeutic rehabilitation.

Though a brain injury is one of the most devastating disabilities, the brain has a remarkable capacity for healing and with proper medical rehabilitation, dramatic improvements and outcomes can be achieved.

Unveiling Madonna's NEW dress code changes

Madonna's dress code has been updated for 2009. Lou Ann Manske, director of human resources, shared several of the major changes noted below. Please refer to OD #378 to read Madonna's dress code in its entirety. Additional questions may be directed to the Human Resources office at ext. 6450.

Previous requirement	Updated change
1. Socks/hose are required at all times.	Allow bare feet and/or legs (provided appropriate foot attire is worn as outlined in the OD).
2. Sandals are not allowed.	Business employees are allowed to wear sandals except in prohibited areas (i.e. patient care, maintenance, food handling, environmental services, laundry and any other area as determined by the applicable manager). Sandals does NOT include athletic sandals, flip flops, and other similar casual footwear.
3. Cat. I, III and IV employees may wear sweaters.	Sweaters and fleece jackets may be worn. Cat. III employees may wear a scrub jacket. No hooded jackets, "hoodies," or sweatshirts allowed.
4. Cat. IV employees— no athletic footwear allowed.	No athletic foot wear except clinicians working in direct patient care. Closed toe shoes required.
5. Separate Jeans Day vs. Casual Day	One combined provision called Casual Day will be implemented, which, upon approval from the Chief Operating Officer, allows for jeans to be worn and/or capris/skorts.

Holiday highlights from Madonna's Child Development Center

Congratulations to Madonna Child Development Center (CDC) Manager, Liz Helms, and all the CDC staff on another great year! The staff goes to great lengths to provide not only a safe and caring environment, but one that has a creative and educational atmosphere. The Christmas program was a team effort that resulted in a spectacular event.

Thank you to Liz and the CDC staff: Jennifer Bath, Amy Bednar, Dana Brown, Brandi Earley, Diann Gondolfi, Maggie Hall, Sarah Hansen, Amanda Iden, Ashley Koop, Jessica Long, Autumn Mitchell, Traci Omer, Dana Petersen, Lacey Roesler, Joslyn Shandera, Amanda Stake, Melodee Vankekerix and Makaela Wagner for your devotion and sharing your talents with the children. You make a difference every day! Happy New Year to you all.

—Lou Ann Manske, Director Human Resources



New Year's Eve came early at Madonna's Child Development Center, at noon on Dec. 31, to be exact. Children enjoyed a day of fun party games, movies, special treats, crazy dancing, fun hats, blowers and noise makers for the parade. All this fun was done in grand pajama party fashion!



CDC students Nollynn (on Santa's lap) and Emma (with Mrs. Santa) shared their wishes when Santa and Mrs. Claus made a special pre-Christmas visit. CDC student Nollynn McDaniel's parents, Cameron and Julie McDaniel, graciously played the roles of the Christmas duo. Cameron's mother, Micki McDaniel, sewed their beautiful costumes.

> CALENDAR

- Feb 2** **NEO**
Joiner, Session 1
8 a.m.-5 p.m.
Flanagan A/B
Call 6406 to register
- Feb 4** **Effective Meetings I**
9-11 a.m.
Lau
Call 6550, 6406 to register
- Feb 5** **Oz Principle, Part 1**
9-11 a.m.
Sheridans
Call 6406 to register
- Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Pediatric Pulmonary Care**
4:30-8:30 p.m.
North Commons/Sheridans
- Feb 6** **Joiner, Session 2**
8 a.m.-5 p.m.
Flanagan A/B

> WAY TO GOs

Way to go to **Janina Chapin**. You will make a great respiratory therapist! Congratulations on passing both your certification and registry respiratory therapy exams so quickly. We look forward to working with you in your new capacity!

—Jim Pelton, Joe Rush and Dawn Yanks
Respiratory Therapy

Thank you **Cory Behrens** for helping at an outpatient meeting to assist a patient in getting her needs met.

Thank you to **Linda Plummer** for your hard work in assisting a patient with getting her therapy schedule straightened out.

Thank you **Daina Green and Michelle Tieszen** for working with a patient to make sure her therapy needs were met.

—Nancy Hall,
TherapyPlus Main Campus

Way to Go to **Kristi Felix** for the leadership you provided during the recent occurrence of infections. You are well-known for your infection prevention expertise and experience. During this outbreak, you demonstrated exceptional commitment to Madonna with your flexibility of schedule in order to support and coordinate nursing staff, scheduling and patient care practices. The clear and concise daily reports you provided to administration were valuable and appreciated. Way to Go also to the **nursing schedulers, leaders and staff** for the great work in containing this infection so well.

—Davie Shutzer-Hill
Director of Quality and Risk Management

Angel Dog program receives boost from local company

Christmas came early to Volunteer Resources this year. Members of National Research Company (NRC) presented Jo Ann Drueke, Madonna's manager of volunteer resources, with a \$475 contribution to Madonna's Angel Dog program. NRC's Community Involvement team made the donation on Thursday, Dec. 18, 2008, at their home office in Lincoln.

Associates at NRC made the contributions on behalf of their former coworker, Denise Ewing, who retired from the company in December. Denise and her dog, Millie, are active Angel Dog volunteers.

Jo Ann said the monies will help fund the annual Valentine carnation delivery to patients/residents and provide training materials for Angel Dog volunteers.



Jo Ann Drueke, (second from left) manager of volunteer resources at Madonna, is shown with NRC associates (L to R) Mysi Beckstead, Todd Jarchow and Kristi Oltman. Kneeling in front is Angel Dog volunteer Denise Ewing and her dog, Millie.

Gearing up for Heart Month and Cardiac Rehab Week

February is Heart Month, Feb. 6 is Go Red Day, and Feb. 8-14 is National Cardiac Rehabilitation Week. The hospital will be celebrating with fun and educational activities throughout the month of February.

Be on the look out for:

- Jeans day – Feb. 27
- Weekly raffles
- Educational posters in the Commons and at Madonna ProActive



"Ali and I are proud to be part of your volunteer program. I share our accomplishments and mission with many other people. I am beginning to feel what those veteran Angel Dog folks were telling us—how one does get a lot out of it personally. I see something truly amazing every time I'm at Madonna. I feel really good to be a part of the Madonna family, even just as a volunteer. You have a truly incredible program!"

—KT and Ali
New Angel Dog volunteers

Chapel Services

Catholic Mass is offered Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 4 p.m., Wednesday and Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday at 4:30 p.m. The Worship Service is Thursday at 10:30 a.m., Hymn/Music Program is Sunday at 3:30 p.m.

Jan. 25 American Lutheran Praise Team

Feb. 1 St. Michael's Praise Team

Do you belong to a group or congregation that hasn't performed at Madonna? We welcome new talent. Contact Steve Werner at ext. 6831 or swerner@madonna.org.

New year brings change

St. Jane de Chantal Long Term Care Services is the new official title for the areas encompassing Extended Care North and South, St. Anthony's, VAU/Special Needs and the Woods House. The mailing address is 2200 So. 52nd St., Lincoln, NE 68506 and the phone is (402) 483-9602.

St. Jane de Chantal Long Term Care Services is also a 2009 member of the Nebraska Health Care Association and the Nebraska Assisted Living Association. We are proud of this affiliation with the state's nursing and assisted living facility association and look forward to working with them to improve and promote long term services for all Nebraska.

 **St. Jane de Chantal**
Long Term Care Services