

The Madonna Independent, an employee newsletter 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. **Note: The deadline for the next issue is Friday, Dec. 18.**

**The Independent can be viewed online at www.Madonna.org*

Christmas comes to Madonna



ICARE means "I can!"



Project approval equals expansion and change

Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital's board met Wednesday, Dec. 2 and approved a project to create a 14-bed children's rehabilitation hospital located in the lower level presently occupied by the Acute and Subacute rehabilitation programs.

Having gained the board's approval of the project, hospital and long term care staff will begin to develop detailed plans to revamp existing space and open the new area by July 1. It will include 14 private rooms, a family room support area, a pediatric therapy gym and an all-season play area. Several patient care areas and facility departments will experience change in order to make the project a reality. Project details will be communicated as they unfold.

Because of the enormity of the project, changes will be outlined in two sections: patient care area and department/support area. Here is a brief outline of some of the changes currently under development:

Patient care area changes

- Subacute rehabilitation program beds and support space will move over to the St. Joseph Wing.
- The Marketing and PR department will move and share space currently occupied by the Education department. This will allow the construction of a pediatric gym in the space currently occupied by Marketing & PR. This area will open up into an enclosed playground.

Department/support area changes

- The old employee lounge in the lower level of St. Joseph wing is being remodeled into two bathrooms and a storage area for Purchasing. Their current storage space, located next to Health Information Management (HIM), will be moved to this newly created area.
- Employee Health will expand into the space vacated by Purchasing storage and integrated with the area occupied by Risk Management. The combined space will be remodeled to better meet employee needs.

Look to future issues of *The Independent* for detailed descriptions and photos as the
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Teen thrilled to be back in the saddle

Brenda Harris has an affinity with her horse, Squirt. The young stallion, abnormally small at birth, defeated his odds of survival. "He and I make a good pair—we both proved people wrong," said Brenda.

In May, the 18-year-old from Fostoria, Kan., came close to losing her life. Brenda had inherited a condition known as familial adenomatous polyposis, causing polyps to form in her large intestine and colon. Surgery was performed at Stormont Vail Healthcare in Topeka to remove the polyps, but Brenda's body developed a sepsis infection and her organs began shutting down. The infection attacked both her legs, which had to be amputated from the knee down to save her life.

As Brenda emerged from her medically-induced coma, the horse lover and former high school athlete learned of the loss of her limbs. "It was a hard blow," admitted Brenda. The breathing tube was barely out of her mouth when Brenda asked the doctor, "Will I be able to ride again?" Together with her family, Brenda chose Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital to help her regain independence.

When Brenda admitted on Oct. 13, the left side of her body was weak from nerve and

muscle damage caused by the sepsis, and she relied on a catheter. Brenda made goals to wean off the catheter, relearn to walk and return to horseback riding. Within three weeks, the determined teen tackled the first goal and became catheter free.

"It seemed more of a struggle to get control of my bladder than trying to walk," shared Brenda.

Outfitted with her new prosthetics, Brenda began an intense schedule of physical and occupational therapy. Slowly, she adapted to a new style of walking and dreamed of riding. Physical Therapist Linda Ohnoutka, collaborated with Windsong Equitherapy, a local non-profit organization dedicated to providing

high quality therapeutic riding activities. The organization helped assess what resources or adjustments Brenda might need to resume riding. Her therapists scheduled an outing to Windsong for the young horsewoman. The day Brenda was back in the saddle is one she'll never forget. "Honestly, it felt better to be up on a horse again than it did to walk!" exclaimed Brenda.

By Nov. 17, Brenda rejoined her family back in Kansas. She hopes to pursue a degree
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Brenda Harris listens to instructions from a Windsong Equitherapy staff member (right) as Madonna Physical Therapists Linda Ohnoutka (left) and Heidi Beardslee look on.

SOS: Operation Santa Toy Drive needs your help!

The deadline for the Operation Santa Toy Drive has been extended until **Dec. 14 at 10 a.m.** Carol Ann Trapp, the drive's manager, said the situation is critical because donations are significantly down from past years. "I'm challenging every employee to pick up a toy this weekend," said Carol Ann. The drive helps bring holiday joy to thousands of needy children in Lancaster County. "The need this year is overwhelming with the downturn in the economy," added Carol Ann.

- **New, unwrapped toys are requested, and there is a special request for art**

supplies, including construction paper, markers and colored pencils.

- **You may also purchase a gift card to a specific store and include the printed receipt with the card in an envelope.**

Drop off sites are located in the main lobby, the Commons Café and the 52nd Street entrance. **You must have your gift dropped off by Dec. 14 at 10 a.m.** Questions? Contact Carol Ann Trapp at ext. 6455.

Please consider supporting this worthy cause. A single gift can make a difference in brightening a child's holiday.

An update on the capital campaign

The November WHAM provided employees with an update on Madonna's \$8.5 million capital campaign. According to Suzanne Sughroue, Foundation development director, "It's been two years since the capital campaign started, and it's important to update employees on how their funds are being invested at Madonna and how events – planned and unplanned – have impacted the campaign."

Paul Nathenson, Vice President of St. Jane de Chantal, explained that the original campaign process began in 2006 when managers were asked to submit wish list items to take rehabilitation to the next level. The submitted items were prioritized in terms of vision, benefit to patients, equipment involved, associated costs and other issues.

In the meantime, the hospital hired a private company, Community Counseling Service (CCS), to conduct a feasibility study in the community to determine the amount a campaign could raise. CCS recommended that the hospital embark on a \$6.5 million campaign with a stretch goal of \$8.5 million.

By summer 2008, the Madonna Family, which included hospital employees and physicians, had exceeded its goal with pledged gifts of \$406,493. By November of last year, the campaign reached 72 percent of goal with \$6,155,032 raised.

Much Accomplished Despite Economy

Yet, in October 2008, the reality of the nation's economic downturn hit hard. Foundation staff and volunteers were unable to close some significant pending gifts due to the uncertainty of the economy. As the economy improves, Foundation staff and volunteers hope to revisit these requests. According to Suzanne, "The good news is no one has backed out of their pledge, which can often happen during difficult economic times."

Paul shared a series of slides showing what has been accomplished to date with funds including: patient room remodeling, new therapy practice spaces, the Lokomat robotic gait trainer, the family living lounge with the salt water fish tank, front lobby and patient service center renovations, driver re-training simulator and the picture archival and communication services.

Still on the agenda is the full implementation of the new electronic medical records system, an accessible playground, remodeled pediatric outpatient waiting area, updates outside the chapel and more patient room renovations.

What Happened to Vocera?

Employees may wonder what happened to Vocera – the proposed communication system. Paul explained that as staff further investigated Vocera, they learned that there were problems with the technology including privacy issues and dropped calls. Madonna is currently exploring other options with respect to a nurse communication system. The goal is to focus on the electronic medical records implementation and then address enhanced communication technology that will best integrate with our new system, Paul said.

Raising \$2 Million

Although the campaign will officially end this month, Suzanne explained that campaign staff and volunteers will continue into next year seeking out new leads and revisiting requests put aside because of the economy. We must raise an additional \$2 million to ensure that all campaign initiatives can be completed.

Currently, Madonna is in the public phase of the campaign. Community members Dave and Linda Sundberg are serving as public campaign chairs. In addition, honorary campaign chairs are Sgt. Mack Richards; Alexis, Brandon and Tiffany Verzal; and Brady, Tom and Carol Beran.

As part of the public phase, Madonna has placed additional newspaper advertising which has been donated by the *Lincoln Journal Star*. Public service announcements about various Madonna strengths were recorded by Nebraska celebrities such as Joba Chamberlain, Bob Kerrey, former Husker football player Aaron Davis, and retired Gen. Roger Lempke. Two open houses were held in November featuring tours of the renovated spaces as well as a final showing of the "Pathways" documentary before it is submitted to film festivals.

The Madonna Foundation would like to thank all employees who have supported the Capital Campaign. Special thanks to those who have opted to continue their payroll deduction beyond the original gift period.

If you did not have the opportunity to support the campaign during the Madonna Family Phase, please contact the Foundation at ext. 6524 to receive a payroll deduction form.

Be the type that gives

Consider giving the gift of life this holiday season by donating blood. The Community Blood Bank will be on the Madonna campus, Friday, Dec. 18, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. The entire process takes about 30 minutes with free juice and cookies provided.

- There is no substitute for human blood. The Community Blood Bank relies on blood donations from volunteers — people like YOU.
- Every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood.
- You can potentially help three different people with your one donation.

Approximately 18-20 Madonna staff take the time out of their busy day to donate blood. Did you know Madonna compensates employees for their donation time? Here are a few guidelines for donors:

- Be at least 17 years old. (There is no upper age limit.)
- Weigh 115 pounds or more.
- Be in good health.
- No colds, flu, cold sores, or antibiotics 72 hours prior to donating.
- No risk of HIV or hepatitis.

Call Jody Luzum at ext. 6413 to reserve a time slot. Be the type that gives!

W-2s coming soon

W-2s for 2009 will be issued according to the IRS regulation and mailed by Jan. 31, 2010, to employees' home addresses. Check the address on your most recent earnings statement to ensure that it is accurate.

Have you had other changes occur (e.g. marriage, divorce or death of a family member) that impacts your withholding status, emergency contact person or beneficiaries for your life insurance and retirement plans? Even though W-2s are not required by law to be mailed out until Jan. 31, 2010, the process begins much earlier. Don't wait until January to make changes. If you have changes to your name, address, social security number, etc., please take time now to complete the necessary paperwork.

If you need to change any of the above information, please stop by Human Resources and they will be happy to assist you.

Employee Focus: *Fun factoids about Ulonda*



Ulonda Fletcher
Environmental Services Supervisor
MRH Employee for 13 years

- 1 I love cooking in my spare time.
- 2 I enjoy taking care of my grandkids.
- 3 I can read nonstop!
- 4 I love to fly.
- 5 Planting flowers is a way to bring joy into my life.

I just enjoy coming to work, interacting with other departments and taking care of customer's needs.

ICARE means “I can!”

Judith M. Burnfield, PhD, PT, director of the Institute for Rehabilitation Science and Engineering and the Movement and Neurosciences Center at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, is using a \$600,000 grant from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) to develop, refine and field-test an adaptive exercise trainer and therapeutic program. Burnfield said improving walking ability and physical fitness are central goals for many individuals participating in rehabilitation programs, and the need for fitness continues well beyond discharge. However, individuals frequently face barriers, which include lack of affordable and accessible equipment and sufficient staff with appropriate expertise.

The research project, an Intelligently Controlled Assistive Rehabilitation

Elliptical trainer called “ICARE,” is intended to help people who need assistance in starting and/or maintaining motion on an elliptical trainer. The ICARE senses the force needed to propel the elliptical footpads with just enough momentum for someone with a disability to get it moving, while still using their own physical strength to keep it moving. The ICARE adapts the walking-like movement pattern of the elliptical trainer to the unique physical assistance needs of individuals as they relearn to walk and exercise.

It is anticipated that elliptical trainers in many fitness facilities, hospitals and homes could be fitted with the proposed system, thus creating new opportunities for individuals with physical limitations to train and improve their walking ability. The cost of an ICARE is estimated to be about \$5,500 to \$6,500 — just \$1,000 more than a standard professional elliptical trainer.

Kim Brown from Lincoln, Neb., has multiple sclerosis and has volunteered as an

ICARE test subject. “It’s amazing,” said Kim. “It’s the first time I’ve felt like I was walking in years. I felt looser for the rest of the day,” she added.

This work is particularly timely given the increasing emphasis on preventative care. Individuals with physical disabilities are at a higher risk of developing other medical conditions (e.g., heart disease, diabetes, secondary strokes) in part due to the impact of an inactive lifestyle on their bodies. The



ICARE may enable these individuals to avoid costly medical care by providing an accessible form of exercise.

“This work really emerged out of a need faced by patients at Madonna and other leading rehabilitation centers around the country,” said Burnfield. Specifically, Burnfield said the focus is how

to keep improving walking capacity and cardiovascular fitness when formal rehabilitation ends. “We wanted to create an affordable and accessible tool that helped individuals with physical disabilities stay healthier longer and get back to doing the things they love,” added Burnfield. This collaborative effort has drawn together Madonna patients, clinicians and researchers as well as colleagues from University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Creighton University.

The ICARE will begin clinical trials at Madonna in January 2010. Subjects will use the equipment in the type of setting for which it is intended. Institute researchers will collect data during the trial and use the information to make needed revisions to the equipment. The final step in the research project will be to partner with a commercial manufacturer to produce and market the device so that it can be readily available to meet the needs of individuals in healthcare, fitness and home settings.

Team rallies for workplace safety

Finding a solution to preventing falls in Madonna’s kitchen area proved to be a slippery subject after multiple injury reports in early 2009 cited wet floors as a contributing factor.

Jennifer Luhn, food and nutrition services director, said the tile accumulated buildup over years of use and was an employee safety concern. Replacing the tile would be an expensive option that would require leveling the floor and render the dishwashing machine inoperable during the process. Lisa Burns, environmental services manager, joined in the problem solving and arranged to have the tile professionally cleaned in February. It was also treated with a “Stop Slip” treatment that helped, but did not eliminate falls.

Jennifer enlisted the help of Sandy Stutzman, employee health manager, and Shiela Alemzadeh, medical nutrition therapist, to draft a proposal mandating non-slip shoes for kitchen staff. “In fiscal year 2009, the cost of treatment for slip or falls due to wet floors in the food production area was \$13,700,” stated Jennifer. A survey of local and regional food service management companies revealed that most required non-slip shoes as one means of accident prevention.

Once the Employee Safety Committee gave its blessing, the request moved to Human Resources where LouAnn Manske, director, assisted with planning to overcome obstacles. Dan Steinbach, director of facilities management, joined the cause by supporting the purchase of non-slip shoe covers to promote workplace safety. The kitchen staff began wearing the shoe covers in August.

The Employee Safety Committee is proud to report that zero slips or falls have occurred for the first quarter of fiscal year 2010. The enthusiastic response from the System Leaders and Performance Improvement Committee stated, “This was great work by Employee Safety and the Food and Nutrition Services Staff in seeing a problem, analyzing the data, developing a solution outside the box and implementing it with success.”

Decking the halls of Madonna

It’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas at Madonna. Kathy Harrington and Mary Scott, facilities management coworkers, head up the holiday decorating team. The duo

estimate it takes them two days to trim the 31 Christmas trees displayed throughout the hospital. Each tree has a color theme and decorations are recycled yearly. “We try to be good stewards of Madonna when it comes to decorating,” said Mary. Another full day is devoted to hanging the 125 artificial wreaths that adorn the walls.



They also spend two hours decorating at Madonna ProActive.

Madonna has its own team of elves who work behind the scenes. Randy Luebbe, Greg Wenzl, Tony Kirk, Steve Dunse and Marty Sullivan haul everything out of storage and offer assistance whenever needed. Randy also coordinates setting up all the outdoor lighting.

This is Kathy’s third year of creating holiday magic, and the colorful tree in the pediatric unit is her favorite. “We bought those ornaments with the kids in mind — it’s special,” said Kathy. A veteran decorator, Mary is celebrating her 15th year of giving Madonna a seasonal glow. “I like the idea of creating Christmas for the patients and residents,” said Mary. “It’s a good feeling to know we can make a difference,” she added.

The following letter was received by the editor of The Independent from a ProActive member:

Nov. 19, 2009

I just read the Nov. 13 issue of “The Independent” that featured Anthony Sobotka and his award from NHA. What a perfect person for the Caring Kind Award! As a heart attack survivor (Feb. 17, 2007), Anthony guided me through a very difficult time in my life and for that, I am very grateful. Anthony continues to push me during our twice-weekly training session. I can honestly say that Anthony helped save my life.

Sincerely,

Jim Rea

Madonna ProActive member

> CALENDAR

- Dec 14** **NEO**
**LTC Mental Health Series-
Telehealth-LTC**
Anxiety and Sleep Disorders in LTC
3-4 p.m. in the Sheridans
Call 6550, 6476, 6406 to register
1 CH
- Dec 15** **MES**
**Maintaining hope amidst
uncertainty**
Ruth Van Gerpen, RN
5:30-6:30 p.m. in the Sheridans
Call 6550, 6476 or 6406 to
register for a time
- Dec 17** **CPR Re-certification**
9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or 5-9 p.m.
Agee
Call 6550, 6476 or 6406
to register
- Dec 23** **CPR Certification**
9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. in the Agee
Call 6550, 6476 or 6406
to register

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.

- Nov 29** Students of Jo T Karl
Dec 6 Steve Werner

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.

Project approval *(continued from page 1)*

department/support area changes are finalized.

Paul Dongilli, executive vice president and chief operations officer, said the expanded pediatric program is exciting, but creates a sense of uncertainty, too. Many employees may question how the project will affect their jobs and are anxious for project details. Unfortunately, all of the details have not been determined. However, once project decisions are finalized, Paul stressed they will be shared with all employees. "I will ask two things. First, I ask for your patience as we develop and implement specific project details over the next three months," said Paul. "Secondly, I ask for your trust that we are working to position Madonna for continued success and growth," he added.

Paul welcomes employees' questions or concerns at pdongilli@madonna.org, via phone at ext. 6242 or drop him a note through interoffice mail. If desired, your concern can be submitted anonymously. Paul will address questions in future issues of *The Independent* through his Hall Talk column.

Teen back in saddle *(continued from page 1)*

in equine therapy to share her love of horses with people with special needs. "I just want them to experience the freedom of riding," said Brenda. "And I'll tell them how I started over and how it felt getting back on that horse again."

Balters to serve on state board

Sharon Balters, PhD, RD, CSG, LMNT, has been appointed by the State Board of Health to serve as a Medical Nutrition Therapist Member on the Board of Medical Nutrition Therapy. Her term began Dec. 1, 2009, and runs five years.



Balters' responsibilities will fall within the Licensure Unit of the Division of Public Health. Her duties will include administering the licensing and regulation of Licensed Medical Nutrition Therapists in the State of Nebraska. This position may also require test writing in nutrition for applicants for this particular license.

Balters' has been with Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital as the clinical supervisor of medical nutrition therapy for more than 24 years. She is only one of 198 dietitians in the nation who have achieved Board Certification in Gerontological Nutrition.

Lifestyle Challenge

Get ready for Lifestyle Challenge 2010! Check-in on Wednesday, Jan. 6, from 7:30-11:30 a.m. at Main Campus in the Sheridan Room or 1-2 p.m. at Madonna ProActive.

- Join a healthy weight and physical activity competition from January-April
- Teams of five coworkers will support each other
- Designed to meet the needs of people working different shifts
- Registration fee for the entire program is only \$5 per person
- Win fun, monthly incentives

Sign up for teams is underway. Team registrations are available on the Wellness bulletin board by The Commons, in the Employee Lounge, outside Employee Health, and in the ProActive Trainer's Room.

Teams are welcome to sign up via email by contacting Brittany Baack at bbaack@madonna.org. Be sure to include your team name, captain, members' full names and a contact telephone number. Questions? Call Brittany at ext. 8611.



A call to staff: Sharing your Madonna memories

The Dec. 25 Independent will be a special issue featuring staff memories from 2009.

- We need your help in making this a very unique edition.
- Everyone has a "Madonna moment" that stands out in their mind – from a patient reaching a milestone in their recovery to the accomplishment of your team or anything in between!
- Try to limit your memory to 75 words.
- Email them to Tami Rudder at trudder@madonna.org or send them inner office mail
- **The deadline for submissions is Dec. 16.**

Thank you to everyone who submitted entries for the 2009 Madonna Christmas Card. The winning entry was submitted by former patient Vanessa Vanderpool-Johnson. The runner-up entry was submitted by Michael Gray from Telecommunications.

In September 2009, Vanessa suffered a brain aneurysm and debilitating stroke that led her to Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. Unable to speak or use the right side of her body, Vanessa continues to work toward the goal of one day resuming her passion for art.

Radiology digital conversion a success

The Radiology Department is nearing its one year anniversary of conversion to a digital online system. According to Liz Edwards, radiology supervisor, there is much to celebrate. "The availability of viewing the exam is so much faster and convenient for doctors," said Liz. The process of taking an X-ray, downloading it to the computer, reading it and delivering a final report has been significantly improved. In 2007, that process took an average of 49.75 hours and now takes a mere 5.85 hours.

A doctor recently ordered two X-rays at 4 p.m. and wanted to view them before he left the office for the day. Liz was able to get results to the doctor within 30 minutes. Considering Radiology processes nearly 250 X-rays a month, that is cause for celebration!