the INDEPENDENT

A Newsletter for Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital

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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. **The deadline for the next issue is Friday, December 4.**

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

New robotic-assisted walking therapy device

Wednesday Afternoon Club

Back on her feet

Katie Irons isn't one to sit idle. The active mother and grandmother traveled, renovated her rental units and attended her grandchildren's activities, despite battling a bad knee for five years. She finally consented to surgery after experiencing "drop foot" — the inability to raise her foot at the ankle. "My knee was literally bone on bone," said Katie. "This nagging knee problem also caused my gait to become so uneven," she added.

After successful knee replacement surgery, Katie chose Madonna for inpatient therapy. "My parents were patients here and I felt this was the best place to go," shared the native of Lincoln, Neb.

Katie Irons was delighted with the artwork that Lorinda James drew to welcome her.

Katie admitted therapy was painful initially, but her determination kicked in and the staff provided daily motivation. She logged miles on the revolutionary NuStep T4, a recumbent cross trainer, to improve her range of motion. Lori Holz, physical therapist, said the cross trainer simulates a natural walking motion while eliminating joint stress.

Katie credits her Madonna team for steering her down the road of independence. "The entire staff, from the nurses to therapists, go the extra mile to make you feel comfortable," Katie shared. She mentioned how Lorinda James, medication aide, customized the white board in her room. Instead of just listing Katie's name, Lorinda, a talented artist, drew a characterization of Katie, complete with shopping bag. "I love to shop — it was just beautiful and really captured me!" she exclaimed.

After two weeks of intense physical and occupational therapy, she walked out the door and headed home. "I'll be jumping fences now!" exclaimed Katie.

Lommel to present children's rehabilitation hospital proposal to Board of Directors

At the Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital Board of Directors meeting on Dec. 2, President Marsha Lommel will present a proposal to develop a dedicated 14-bed children's rehabilitation hospital within Madonna. The proposal would expand the current pediatric inpatient unit from 6 to 14 beds. The new self-contained hospital unit would be located in the lower level currently occupied by Acute and Subacute beds by July 1, 2010. If the proposal is approved, the Subacute level of care will move to St. Jane de Chantal and the entire lower level unit will be part of the Acute Rehab level of care.

Hospital leaders are excited about the potential to further Madonna's expertise and national reputation for pediatric rehabilitation — a program area that has grown significantly for Madonna in the past two years.

"In the past 12 months, we've served 308 children under the age of 18, 60 of whom were inpatients. We are one of only seven hospitals in the country accredited for pediatric brain injury rehab and one of only four accredited for pediatric spinal cord injury rehab," said Lommel. "This is a unique opportunity to establish national leadership for pediatric rehabilitation and with board support, we will move ahead quickly."

Employees use artistic talents to welcome patients

When a patient admits to the Subacute unit of Madonna, they are treated to a unique welcome. Medication Aides Lorinda James and Ryan Schweitzer have been customizing the white boards in patients' rooms for several years.

After learning the background of a patient, they transform a generic white board into a work of art that speaks to the patient's individuality. "I initially started doing it and then encouraged Ryan to create some," said Lorinda.

Both Lorinda and Ryan possess creative artistic talent that began at an early age. They stressed how rewarding it is to share their talents with patients.

"Ryan is very creative with people's names," said Lorinda.

"I just really enjoy seeing the patient's reaction," added Ryan.

Using colored markers, the duo often mix humor into their art. One patient, a retired locomotive engineer, found his name on the white board curling out of smoke from an old steam train. Another patient named Violet had her board peppered with intricate violet petals.

The positive feedback from patients found many wanting to take the boards home. Staff began photo copying the artwork to give to patients when they discharged.

Rebecca Seeber, Subacute nurse manager, feels Lorinda and Ryan provide a high level of stewardship by devoting their time and talent to make patients feel welcome. "Their white board artwork makes a difference in each patient's stay," said Rebecca. "We've even had them mentioned in patient satisfaction reviews," she added.

Lorinda says it's a small way of brightening a patient's often lengthy stay at the hospital. "It makes my day to bring a smile to their face," said Lorinda.

Rebecca commends Lorinda and Ryan for going above and beyond for their patients. "They provide a special insight to their patient's souls with their drawings."

New Lokomat technology generates excitement

by Joyce Jaixen, PT, GCS

There's an ominous piece of equipment at the east end of the main therapy gym that's creating quite a buzz among Madonna staff. The Lokomat is a robotic-assisted walking therapy device that is currently being utilized by six of Madonna's physical therapists (PTs) and one rehabilitation associate (RA) following two days of intense training. These individuals must complete many hours of practice time to become "certified" users. The process of certification for the trained PTs will be completed within three months, as the therapists demonstrate to the trainer the skills necessary to provide meaningful intervention to patients with a variety of diagnoses. This certification process will enable them to train other PTs to use the Lokomat with their patients as appropriate. Additional training of RAs has already begun.

The Lokomat is compromised of three machines. The Lokomat portion is a robotic leg orthosis fitted to a patient for gait training on the treadmill. The purpose is to improve tolerance for walking longer periods of time at increased speeds with improved alignment and symmetry. It allows for the step repetition needed to foster neurological recovery because of its task-specificity. This is accomplished by incorporating body weight support (BWS) as needed to off-load weight via the harness assembly, and allowing the patient to maintain appropriate form throughout the gait cycle. The therapists make adjustments through the computer to influence how much and what kind of input the robotic legs provide.

So what is all of the excitement over this machine? In essence, the Lokomat assembly does what three therapists would do manually as "hip trainers" and "leg trainers" on a traditional BWS treadmill. Another advantage of the Lokomat is that it allows for gait training with patients who might otherwise be too difficult to handle manually or might benefit from the cardiovascular training effect that they might not achieve with traditional BWS. Both machines are effective and important tools to use in improving a patient's gait pattern and tolerance. It is the job of the PT to determine for each patient which machine is most appropriate, at any given time, during the rehabilitation process.

When patient recovery is maximized and work-related injury to therapists is minimized, that's something to get excited about!

New unit names for St. Jane de Chantal

Paul Nathenson, vice president of Long Term Care Services, has announced the following unit designations for St. Jane de Chantal Long Term Care Services:

- St. Jane North Residential Care Program
- St. Jane South Residential Care Program
- St. Angela's Ventilator and Special Needs
- St. Anthony Memory Care Program

The Employee Appreciation Team at Madonna is offering a FREE holiday meal to employees working the Thanksgiving holiday.

Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, Nov. 26
Served in the Commons Cafe

- Serving the night shift at 1 a.m.
- Lunch served 10:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
- Dinner served 4-6:30 p.m.

The menu will feature turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes/gravy, green bean casserole, cranberry salad and, of course, pumpkin pie!

Employee Focus: *Fun factoids about Angela*

Angela Leddy
Rehabilitation Associate (RA)
MRH Employee for 1 years

1. I stood on the observation deck (south tower) of the World Trade Center when I was 12.
2. I met Garth Brooks while working in catering for The Garden Café restaurant.
3. I got two tickets and backstage passes to CATS from the director as gratuity for serving him lunch. I took my oldest daughter who was 11 at the time.

I am an extra set of hands for our hard-working therapists. We RAs help with a large range of therapies from assisting with a patient's swallowing assessment to helping ambulate a patient. Each one of us has a specialty area – mine being the maintenance, repair, adjustments and programming of wheelchairs.

The St. Jane de Chantal Holiday Giving Tree Project

Is your office group or unit looking for a way to help make the holiday season a little brighter?

You can participate in the Holiday Giving Tree Project, which provides gifts for St. Jane de Chantal's Long Term Care residents.

- Select an ornament from the Christmas tree in the Commons.
- Each ornament contains a resident's code, unit, and a "wish list."
- Purchase and wrap one to three gifts. Gifts are given anonymously.
- Attach the ornament you selected to the gift(s) and return to Jodi Blowers or Doris Lewis by **December 11.**

Questions? Contact Jodi at ext. 6602 or Doris at ext. 6450.

Winter safety tips

Along with snow, the winter weather can often bring ice that makes for treacherous conditions. If you can feel yourself starting to slip, try to reduce a potential injury by:

- Rolling with the fall. Try to twist and roll backward, rather than forward.
- Relax as you feel yourself begin to fall. Toss the objects you are carrying; protect yourself instead of your load.
- If you note any safety situation, correct it immediately if possible. Be sure to communicate with your manager so further prevention measures can be implemented.
- If there is a particular area that needs ice or snow removal, call ext. 6875 to report it, or use the ice melt buckets located at most Madonna entrances.

W-2s coming soon

W-2's 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.

Protecting Madonna employees: workers' compensation

Madonna has four service standards: safety, courtesy, rehabilitation and efficiency. In addressing the first standard, a task must be safe before all else. Patients, residents and employees must be safe. It is vitally important that Madonna employees are healthy in body, mind and spirit, and that they are safe.

Employers are required by law to provide certain benefits to employees who sustain an injury by accident or contract occupational disease, arising out of, and in the course of their employment and are not willfully negligent at the time of injury. This law is referred to as Workers' Compensation.

Since Nov. 1, 1991, Madonna has been self-insured to provide for the reimbursement of losses with workers' compensation liabilities. Self-insured means that instead of paying an insurance premium to another company, money is set aside in a Madonna workers' compensation account and the cost of employee injuries is paid directly from this account. These dollars are expenses in Madonna's budget and are taken from income, which is received for the care provided to patients and residents. The costs associated with workers' compensation are dollars that could be used for other benefits or resources (e.g., equipment needs).

One of Madonna's strategic goals is to expand and enhance the service standard for safety by continuously improving the safety of the organization and decreasing employee injuries — measured by the incidence of OSHA reportable injuries. This will reduce the cost of workers' compensation.

No one knows the job better than the employee doing that job. Always ask yourself if this task could be done in a better or safer manner. If the task involves patient movement, then bring in one of the Nursing Safety Champions. By doing each task of a job, in the safest possible way, you can protect yourself and the patient.

2,400 pounds and counting!

Madonna's Lifestyle Challenge helped Lincoln shrink by more than 2,400 pounds in 2009. That's more than a ton of weight lost. Are you looking forward to having a healthy start to 2010? Do you want the help of coworkers and friends?

The team aspect of Lifestyle Challenge helps put more power behind your efforts. Each group will include a team of five individuals working together to super charge physical activity minutes and achieve a healthy body weight. Short, tall, slim or curvy, there is a place for all coworkers within the Lifestyle Challenge. The key is support. Start talking now with the people within your work area that would help to bolster your success. Team sign up will begin in December for the competition kicking off in January.

The Madonna Fit for Work crew is excited to help you realize your dreams of being the healthiest version of yourself. Be ready for the best time you've ever had improving your health. Questions? Contact Brittany Baack in Employee Health at ext. 8611.

Madonna's annual holiday party for employees and volunteers

Tuesday, Dec. 8

North Commons
from 7-10 a.m.
and 4-6:30 p.m.

The following letter was received by the Madonna Foundation following the public showing of the "Pathways" documentary at Madonna on Nov. 8.

I want to thank you for the wonderful open house last Sunday. The documentary did a wonderful job in showing the possibilities of recovery and the immense amount of work the therapists put forth and their dedication to each individual.

I was the recipient of all that assistance for several months and am so grateful for all the help they provided for my physical needs and their friendship for my mental well being.

I was very impressed with all the renovations. The colors were beautiful, warm and inviting. The new equipment almost made me want to go through rehab sessions again!

The highlight of the afternoon was seeing Brady Beran. I admired his determination to improve, his friendliness and wonderful personality. I enjoyed the group rehab sessions we had together when we were both in Rehabilitation Day. It was great to see him again.

I appreciated getting the invitation to the open house. I had been following the accounts in the newspaper about the documentary and was hoping to have an opportunity to see it.

Sincerely,

Edee Thinnes

St. Jane de Chantal hosts Wednesday Afternoon Club

John Belschner enjoyed a pina colada with his mother, Ruth, at the Wednesday Afternoon Club Nov. 18 in the Nebraska Room. St. Jane's staff selects a theme for the monthly social hour, complete with hors d' oeuvres and appetizers. Family and friends are encouraged to join in the festivities.

St. Jane de Chantal resident Willa Hassel (front, escorted by Sharon Balters) has fun with the limbo dance as Janet Curry (center, escorted by Carina Smaus) and Vivian Trott-Johnson (back right) wait their turn. Jodi Blowers (far left) stands poised with limbo pole and offers encouragement.

> CALENDAR

Nov 30 **NEO**

Dec 8 **Employee Christmas Party**
7-10 a.m. or 4-6:30 p.m.
Sheridans

Dec 10 **Blood and Medical Assist, Accuchek, Restraints Competency**
Agee
Call 6550, 6476 or 6406 to register for a time

Dec 11 **Grand Rounds: Stress**
Carol Olson, PT, NCS and Rev. Steve Werner BCC
12:10-1:00 p.m.
North Commons
No contact hours provided

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 Sharon Nore

Dec 6 Sue & Dan Morissee

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.

Tips for a greener holiday season

- Add organic and local foods to your feast. Not only does it taste better, you'll be doing your part for the planet too.
- Available at most major retailers like Target and ACE Hardware, LED holiday lights use 90 percent less energy than their conventional counterparts and can save your family up to $50 on energy bills during the holiday season.
- Instead of using mass produced paper that ends up in the landfills, use the holidays as a time to get creative. Wrap gifts with children's artwork, old maps, newspaper or last weekend's funnies section. For an added gift surprise, use a scarf, attractive dish towel, bandana or some other dual use cloth item. If every family wrapped just three gifts this way, it would save enough paper to cover 45,000 football fields!

Real life Real solutions

Michelle Welch
Corporate Wellness Developer,
Madonna Fit for Work

Getting to know Madonna's Fit for Work staff

My Struggles

- As a "soccer mom" with two young, energetic boys, there isn't much left of the day to fit "me time" in the mix. I am a "foodie" and my office looks like a grocery store!
- Between teaching nutrition-focused classes, experimenting with foods, and being surrounded by eating
- opportunities, keeping my weight in check is a key challenge. I also spend quite a bit of time on the computer developing programs, so daily activity isn't what it used to be.

My Solutions

- I try to keep the healthiest foods within reach. I'll often bring in a bag of cucumbers to munch on. I try to keep the "naughty" food samples out of my line of vision or tucked away for safe keeping.
- For my clients, I'm constantly on the lookout for simple recipes that are very low in calories and taste great.
- My family loves to eat out, though we regularly split meals or purchase the entrée and pare it with fruits and veggies at home.
- I'm trying to leave my "mom guilt" behind and take advantage of the fun "dance blast" classes at ProActive more regularly. I try to sneak in a few laps around the track here or there to increase my creative thinking power and energy during the day.
- Never overlook bargain shopping as an opportunity to increase your steps! Shopping is my long-standing, consistent activity plan.
- I love what I do! I thrive from utilizing my crazy creativity to help people live better, healthier lives. Every program is fun as the centerpiece and Fit for Work has embraced my wacky style. Work helps me to "think outside the box" for my choices at home, too.

"With men it is impossible; but to God all things are possible."

Matthew 19:26

Honoring our Veterans

In celebration of Veterans Day, St. Jane de Chantal staff held a special service in the Nebraska Room on Nov. 12 for veterans. Residents from the following units received a certificate of appreciation:

St. Anthony's Memory Care Program: Bill Dobler–Navy, Robert Beggs–Air Force, Jordan Osborn–Merchant Marines, Arthur Herrington–Army, Robert Stuver–Navy and Loren Spiering–Air Force.

Alzheimer's Day Services: Les Mayhew and Roy Churchill-Navy.

St. Jane South: Jack Little–Marines and Robert Carde–Army.

St. Jane North: Elmer Rippe-Army, Maryanna McBride– Army, court reporter for the Coast Guard; Galen Muckendorfer–Army, Sophia Riskus–Women's Army Corp; Gordon Pauley–Navy; Don Carlson–Army and Dick Johnson-Air Force.

St. Angela Ventilator and Special Needs: Richard Woznick-Army; Robert Oler-Navy, John Baker–Army (Project "White Coats"), James Butler–Army, Wilbert Bogus–Army and Joseph Groller-Air Force.

Members of Nebraska's U.S. Army National Guard participated in the annual Veteran's Day celebration at St. Jane de Chantal on Nov. 11. Pictured is Gordon Pauley, a Navy veteran, receiving his commendation from Sgt. Dustin Riblett.

Operation Santa Toy Drive Nov. 25-Dec. 9

Looking for a way to give back and make the holidays brighter for thousands of needy children in Lancaster county? Join Madonna's Operation Santa Toy Drive. 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. This worthy cause is being coordinated by Madonna's Linen Services staff in conjunction with the Lincoln Action Program. Questions? Contact Carol Ann Trapp at ext. 6455.