50th 1958-2008 Anniversary of Hope and Healing

INDEPENDENT

A Newsletter for Madonna Employees and Volunteers

www.madonna.org December 12, 2008 402.489.7102

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.

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NEW pediatric program benefits young patients

Alexis Verzal and Koldin Linner – two young patients who suffered separate traumatic, life-altering events. Their common denominator? They are both participants in Madonna's new pediatric rehabilitation outpatient program, known as Pediatric Rehab Day.

Unique to Nebraska, the program is designed to meet the intense rehabilitation needs of children and adolescents age 18 and younger on an outpatient basis. The ultimate goal is to help these young patients reach their highest functional level and regain the ability to do what's most important in their lives.

Alexis strolls the Madonna hallway with Kilee Oetjen, physical therapist.

The program has grown to expand services to children of younger ages, especially toddlers and pre-school age children. This younger population has unique needs that pertain to therapeutic space. By utilizing a family-centered approach to care, the Madonna care team is able to provide pediatric-specific rehabilitation in an environment conducive to achieving the best possible outcomes.

Holly Schifsky, pediatric program manager, said there was a direct correlation between the volume of pediatric patients coming to Madonna and the onset of the program. "We currently have four children participating in the program, and our goal is to have ten by the end of the fiscal year," said Holly. Future program goals include working with children who may not qualify for inpatient rehabilitation, but who require a short-term intense outpatient program.

> "Koldin could have done outpatient therapy in Kearney, but I'd seen how extensive the program was at Madonna," said Joyce.

At what point is a patient ready for outpatient? The decision to transition a patient to the outpatient program rests with the inpatient team. "We balance the rehabilitation needs and medical needs before recommending them for outpatient," said Holly.

Alexis Verzal, nearly 2, had suffered brain trauma and injuries consistent with Shaken Baby Syndrome in early April at a daycare facility in her hometown of College Station, Texas. The previously healthy, inquisitive toddler endured retinal hemorrhaging and bleeding on the brain. After emergency medical care to relieve brain pressure and swelling, Alexis was on a ventilator and remained in intensive care at the Children's Hospital at Scott & White, in Temple, Texas, for three weeks.

When Alexis arrived at Madonna on April 28, she had damaged vision, could not sit-up, walk, feed herself or talk. For eight weeks, Alexis worked hard to relearn these skills as an inpatient in Madonna's accredited pediatric program. In mid-June, Alexis' hard work was rewarded as she graduated to the outpatient program.

"It was a seamless transition when Alexis began Rehab Day," said Alexis' mom, Tiffany. A full day of therapy for Alexis may include speech therapy sessions, occupational therapy in the pool and physical therapy in the pediatric gym.

"Alexis needed that same intense level of therapy as inpatient; we found that in Rehab Day," noted Tiffany. Alexis' determination and independence has paid off. She now cruises the Madonna hallways in a specially designed walker, putting one foot in front of the other and generating smiles every step of the way.

Another pediatric success story is Koldin Linner from Kearney, Neb. Koldin, at only 20 months, climbed onto a shelf that tipped over, rupturing blood vessels in his head on July 14. The toddler's brain swelled, and he was in a coma at Good Samaritan Hospital in Kearney, Neb., until he arrived at Madonna two weeks later.

Joyce, Koldin's mother, said it was hard to see her active little boy reduced to an infantile state. "He was basically a newborn again," said Joyce. After ten weeks as a pediatric inpatient, Koldin was strong enough to begin the outpatient program. Joyce and the therapy team established goals for Koldin to walk independently and feed himself.

"Koldin could have done outpatient therapy in Kearney, but I'd seen how extensive the program was at Madonna," said Joyce. She said the gains he's made during four intense days per week of therapy are amazing. His tiny hands, once in a closed, tight-grip from the coma, have now opened up. He is walking with a walker and drinks out of a cup. "He's progressed so much since he came to Madonna," Joyce commented.

Aquatic therapy has been a favorite of Koldin's.

April Lieb, occupational therapist, incorporates pool toys into Koldin's aqua therapy session.

Therapists employ a variety of creative techniques, such as incorporating toys and games to make aqua therapy appealing to their young patients. "He just loves being in the pool," said Joyce.

Both Tiffany and Joyce agreed that the open communication between therapists is one of the keys to the success of the pediatric outpatient program. "They want the best for their patients; I think that's invaluable," stressed Tiffany.

FREE holiday meal

The Employee Appreciation Team at Madonna is offering a FREE Christmas dinner to employees working Christmas Day, Thursday, Dec. 25. The holiday meal will be served at lunch (10:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m.), dinner (4-6:30 p.m.). The menu will feature honey-crunch chicken, roasted red garlic mashed potatoes, green bean blend and carrot cake. Be sure to wear your name tag to take advantage of this FREE meal!

RN attends national conference

Cathy Smith, RN, got to experience her first Association of Rehabilitation Nurses (ARN) Educational Conference this fall. Cathy was awarded a conference scholarship from the local ARN chapter to attend the 34th annual conference Oct. 1-4 in San Francisco, Calif.

"It was awesome to be surrounded by almost 900 rehab nurses; I never knew there were so many," said Cathy. She learned that most rehabilitation facilities are located inside acute care hospitals. "I realized how lucky we are to have a free-standing rehabilitation facility. Our focus is all about rehab and patient optimal outcomes," Cathy noted.

"I can really appreciate the education that Madonna makes available to us. My eyes opened wide when I discovered that not all states require CEUs (continuing education units)!" Cathy shared.

Cathy attended several educational sessions, including cultural competency, leadership, spinal cord care and a session on the different generations of nurses. "I learned that I'm somewhere between a Baby Boomer and a Generation X," Cathy said. She discovered new ways to communicate with the various generations.

Cathy gleaned product information and care tips from the conference to share with her Madonna team. She also enjoyed networking with peers from around the country. "I will cherish the friendships that I started at the conference," Cathy said. She's already saving up to attend the 2009 conference in New Mexico.

Holiday green tip

Want to save money, energy and the planet, while still lighting up the house for the holidays? Consider strings of light-emitting diodes (LEDs), which use a fraction of the energy of conventional light bulbs, roughly 15 percent. Help Santa find his way to your house, the green way.

Source: www.thedailygreen.com

Winter safety tips

It's that time of year where slips and falls are on the rise. Madonna's Grounds and Maintenance crews do an excellent job of keeping the sidewalks and steps clear of snow and ice. However, there may be icy patches they haven't reached yet before you walk to your office.

Here are some tips on preventing slips and falls during the winter months:

- Wear the proper foot gear. Wear boots to get from the car to the entrance.
- When entering buildings, remove snow and water from footwear to prevent creating wet, slippery conditions indoors. Avoid inclines and slippery walking surfaces.
- Test potentially slick areas by tapping your foot on them. When exiting your car, use the vehicle for support.
- Take small steps to keep your center of balance under you. Never run on ice!
- Keep both hands free for balance, rather than in your pockets.
- Avoid carrying loads on stairways and only carry loads you can see over.

Look for more tips in the next issue.

W-2s headed to mail boxes soon

The 2008 W-2s will be issued according to IRS regulation and mailed by Jan. 31, 2009. The W-2 will be sent to your home address. Check the address on your most recent earnings statement to ensure that it is accurate.

If you've had a life-changing event (e.g., marriage, divorce, death of a family member) this could affect your

- withholding status
- emergency contact person or
- the beneficiaries for your life insurance and retirement plans

Also, if you've had changes to your name, address or social security number, you'll need to complete paperwork to make the changes official. The W-2 mailing process begins before the Jan. 31 deadline, so please contact Human Resources today with any necessary changes.

Madonna cookbooks ready for press

The official Madonna Cookbook is ready to be printed and is bubbling with more than 500 mouth-watering recipes. The publisher requires a minimum order of 400 books by Dec. 31 in order to get the presses rolling. Complete the order form below today and help us reach the minimum quota!

Cookbooks will be available for purchase in the Gift Shop at a later date. Place your order now, and take advantage of the "pre-sale" price.

All proceeds from the cookbooks are earmarked for the Benedictine Fund, which provides financial assistance to employees, patients and residents.

Madonna Cookbook ORDER FORM

First name_____

Last name_____

Address_____

City_____

State___ ZIP_____

MRH department_____

MRH extension_____

Home phone_____

Cell/alternate phone_____

Number of cookbooks ordered_____

$15.00 per book – tax included

Amount paid_____

Cash_____ Check_____

Make checks payable to:
The Madonna Foundation/Cookbook

All profits from the sale of the cookbooks go to the Benedictine Fund which provides financial assistance to employees and patients.

Estimated delivery date is March 31. Orders may be submitted through December 31.

Order forms may be sent via inter-office mail to:
Kelli Anderson, 2C or Lisa Culbertson, VAU

OR through USPS mail to:
Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital
ATTN: Kelli Anderson, 2C
5401 South St.
Lincoln, NE 68506

Employee Focus: *Fun factoids about Deb*

Deb Rima
Administrative Assistant
MRH employee for 8 years

1. I was on my high school rodeo team.
2. I spent eight years in the Air Force – four in Okinawa, Japan, and four in Wichita Falls, Texas, teaching medical readiness.
3. I'm the oldest of 10 children.
4. I own seven crock pots.
5. I co-owned a tattoo shop in Wichita Falls, Texas.

Burn patient regains independence at Madonna

Dec. 1 was a red-letter day for Galen Schaaf of Omaha, Neb. After surviving a horrific accident and completing 16 months of rehabilitation at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, he was moving on.

On April 5, 2007, the retired commercial wholesaler returned from a Gulf Coast trip and was inside his RV when sparks from a propane tank ignited. The flames engulfed Galen and more than 50 percent of his body sustained third degree burns. He distinctly remembers yelling, "Get out or die!" as he stumbled out of the blazing travel trailer.

In shock, Galen passed out and a passerby called 911. He was stabilized at an Omaha hospital and transferred to St. Elizabeth's Regional Medical Center's burn center in Lincoln. "I felt very fortunate to be alive!" said Galen.

The chemical explosion had blinded Galen and he endured skin grafts to rebuild his eyelids. His severe burns required painful daily wound care, several of his fingers were amputated and his lungs were damaged. But Galen's fighting spirit remained intact.

After nearly four months, he transferred to Madonna for acute rehabilitation. The daily wound care continued, along with aggressive burn rehabilitation.

Robbed of his vision and both hands bandaged, Galen relied heavily on his Madonna team. "I was in total darkness for a week; that was scary," he recalled. The nursing staff became not only Galen's caregivers, but also his friends and confidants. "I could kid around with them, and that made a huge difference in my recovery," Galen said.

On Oct. 23, 2007, Galen transferred to the Special Needs unit, continuing his burn rehabilitation. By Aug. 19, 2008, more than a year after he arrived at Madonna, he transitioned to the Long Term Care (LTC) unit where he continued to heal.

Galen made numerous road trips to the University of Iowa to treat his blindness. Doctors successfully completed a corneal transplant that restored vision to his right eye. Sheri Aguilar, his Madonna nurse and friend, accompanied him, making the exhausting trips more tolerable.

"Galen is a true miracle," said Sheri. She noted he accepted any setbacks in stride, repeatedly claiming he was "the luckiest man alive." Sheri has developed a strong friendship with Galen. "It was an honor to witness the phenomenal success Galen experienced," she said.

Social workers Diana Kluthe and Kara Merchant facilitated Galen's move toward independence and into his new two-bedroom apartment at The Lexington Assisted Living Center. Many other Madonna team members helped make the transition a reality for the patient who'd become their friend. Father Steve Cooney donated all the furniture, Doris Lewis, LTC clinical supervisor, organized an outing to select it, while Scott Fandrich, physical therapist, and Scott Merchant provided "muscle" to move the furnishings. Mary Beth Carlson, case manager, and Peggy Reisher, social worker, assisted with transportation and donations.

Galen Schaff (center) received a Spirit Award from his Madonna team, including (kneeling front L to R) Brian Lothrop, Mary Lou Long, Nicole, Rea, Angie Howard. (Back row L to R) Shiela Alemzadeh, Jayne Tucker, Donna Haney, Mary Goggins, Melody Gagner, Father Steve Cooney, Diana Kluthe, Paul Nathenson, Kara Merchant, Jacque Larson and Suzie Kent.

Galen touched many lives during his stay at Madonna and regards the staff as family. "I really lucked out when I came to Madonna," said Galen. "I've never seen an organization where all the people, from the nurses to the van drivers to the maintenance staff were so friendly," he added.

Currently, Galen is planning to take a computer class to hone his keyboarding skills. He hopes to one day renew his driver's license and travel down that open road he's come to love so much.

*A bowl lot of fun...*2008 Chili and Soup Cook off

Chili, soup, fun and fantastic auction items were on the menu for Madonna's 2008 Chili and Soup Cook off.

Approximately 500 attendees participated in the fifth annual fundraiser on Nov. 22 at Pius X High School.

A silent auction of nearly 200 items raised close to $8,900 for Madonna's Benedictine Fund. The fund was established to assist employees and patients during personal emergencies.

Attendees got to visit 10 booths staffed by more than 100 Madonna employees with help from their families and friends.

The creativity put into the booths and entertainment was outstanding! It showed the camaraderie that is well-known among the Madonna family.

The 2008 Best Chili Award went to the VAU/Special Needs team. 2008 Best Booth Award went to the Extended Care team for their version of the popular Broadway musical and film hit "Grease."

"We appreciate the generosity pledged by the 'chili-lovers' to the St. Benedict Fund, especially given the state of the economy," said Mark Hakel, Chili Cook off Chairman.

Kudos to all the participants, volunteers and the Chili Cook off Planning Committee for making this fundraising event a huge success!

2008 Best Chili Award
VAU/Special Needs–Ya-ba-dab-a-doo Chili

2008 Best Booth Award
Extended Care–Grease

The Chili Cook off offered a silent auction that had many great items for guest to bid on. Nearly 200 items were donated for the auction from employees, local businesses and friends of Madonna.

A neon Pius X Thunderbolts sign was presented to the high school's principal, Tom Korta, and students in appreciation for the school's ongoing support of Madonna's annual chili cook off. The sign, crafted by Nebraska Neon, was purchased at the auction and donated to the school.

> CALENDAR

Dec 15 **NEO Week 1**

Dec 16 **MES: Understanding leads to control-Helping your patients with Diabetes**
1 CH
5:30-6:30 p.m.
Sheridans

Dec 18 **CPR Recertification**
9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or 5-9 p.m.
Agee
Call 6550 or 6476 to register

Word Mail Merge
9-10 a.m.
Call 6507 to register

Dec 22 **NEO Wk 2**

Dec 31 **CPR Certification**
9:30 a.m.
Agee
Call 6550 or 6476 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.

Dec 14 Union College Men's Choir

Dec 21 St. Paul's United Church of Christ Choir

Holiday Services
Dec 23 – 2 p.m.
Non-denominational Christmas service

Dec 24 – 4:30 p.m.
The Feast of Christmas (Anticipatory Mass)

Dec 25 – 10:30 a.m.
Mass-The Feast of Christmas
(No Protestant service or Mass)

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.

Madonna's Operation Santa needs your help

Last chance to be Santa's little elf and brighten the holiday for a child in Lancaster county! New unwrapped toys are requested, and there is an urgent need for new children's shoes. 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. **Donations will be accepted through Dec. 14.**

> WAY TO GOs

Bob Heydon has helped us many times with our specialized computer system for swallowing. We're thankful for his speedy and helpful response to our needs. We rely on his expertise and are very thankful for his assistance.

We are also grateful to have **Mark Hakel** on retainer as our tech support. **Thanks to Bob, Mark and also Vicki Phillipi** for keeping the FEES equipment up and running!

—Inpatient Communication Disorders Department

Lindsey Regnier our RA goes out of her way to do special things for our patients. Way to go and thank you, Lindsey!

—Cathy Hutchison
Unit Secretary VAU/SN

A big thank you to **Fr. Steve Cooney, Spiritual Care, Mary Beth Carlson, Case Management, and Diana Kluthe, Social Work, and her family Dave, Tyler, Kyle, and Dylan,** for helping move a patient's furniture and belongings to an assisted living facility. You helped to make the transition for this resident a smooth one!

—Doris Lewis
Clinical Supervisor, Therapeutic Recreation

A big Way to Go to: **Michaella Kumke, Tami Rudder, Julie Foral, Nancie Ninneman, Suzanne Sughroue, Sue Carraher, Sherry Taylor, Jodi Kiner, Katie Graf and Bob Campbell** for helping with and hosting our first ever Goal Awards Encore Event at the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center on Dec. 4. Everyone who came enjoyed a beautiful evening with inspirational videos and delicious desserts. Thank you all very much for your starring role in the production. Thanks to **Michaella** for her creative spark in thinking of the idea and in managing the many details.

—Molly Nance
Director of Strategic Planning and Marketing

Way to go **Marla Buresh and the employee appreciation team** on planning the employee Christmas celebration. You throw a great party, the food was awesome and staff really enjoyed it.

—Ulonda Fletcher
and the Environmental Services staff

Derek Rea was treated to a visit by Husker football team members (L to R) Beau Davis, Joe Ganz, Nate Swift and Justin Baumgartner. More than 25 Husker players visited Madonna on Nov. 26, spreading holiday cheer to patients and residents as part of their volunteer community outreach.

A huge thank you to everyone who made the 5th Annual Madonna Chili and Soup Cook off a success.

Thank you to all the chili teams, you put a lot of time, energy and creativity in to your booths, costumes and entertainment. Teams included: Lower Level Therapy Team as *Santa and His Twisted Elves*, The Foundation as *The Husker Nation–Runza© Braeda©Style,* VAU/Special Needs as *Ya-ba-dab-a-doo Chili,* 200 Therapy Team as *Hee Haw,* Lab as *St. Sanguinary High School, Founder Dr. San Guinary,* Environmental and Food Services as *Chief Little Priest Presents Crazy Horse Chili,* 100 Therapy team as *Gilligan's Island*, LTAC Nursing as *LTAC Rocks*, Case management as *The Big Red Booth* and Extended Care as *Grease.*

Thank you to all volunteers, Nadine Wiley, Nancy Hall, Betty and Dewey Rupert, Katy Martin, Linda and Tom Storz, Heather Wemhoff, Tracy Bell, Kristi and Marc Felix, Janice Bennetch, Jules Kiner, Richard Merrill, Megan Shada, Heith Wilkinson, Danna Scott, David Rolfe, Teri Feldman, Paul and Marilyn Dongilli, Mary Hunhoff, Pat Morton, Patty Eschliman and GoPo students from Southwest High School.

And finally, a special thank you to the Chili Planning Committee. Several have been involved for five years, and some are new members, but each person is very important in making this event a success. I sincerely appreciate your passion and dedication to this event. When you see these individuals in the hallway, give them a hug: Carrie Stratman, Dan Steinbach, Deb Rima, Ian Thompson, Jennifer Ehmke, Jennifer Hoebelheinrich, Kathy Harrington, Kim Howard, Mark Hakel, Mary Scott, Michaella Kumke, Randy Luebbe, Sara Hakel, Sheila Folsom, Sue Brandl, Tim Bausch and Molly Nance.

—Mark Hakel
Chili Cook off Chairman

Madonna Mail helps friends and family stay in touch

Friends and family members of current Madonna patients can now send email messages via the Madonna Web site at www.Madonna.org. Called "Madonna Mail," this new feature allows Web site visitors to compose and send a message to a patient, which will be printed off and delivered within 24 hours, except on weekends. The "Madonna Mail" icon is located on the right side of the Web site home page. The sender must have the patient's name to assure delivery. Please let patients and family members know about this helpful new resource!

Madonna Mail
Email a patient