

## CALENDAR

**Dec. 27 CPR Certification**  
9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.  
Agee  
Call 4401 or 4402 to register

**Jan. 7 NEO**

**Jan. 8 RNES: Holistic Medicine**  
Nan Nathenson, RRT  
7:30-8:30 a.m., 10-11 a.m.,  
1:30-2:30 p.m., 5:30-6:30 p.m.,  
7:30-8:30 p.m.  
Frontier

**Jan. 9 RES Telehealth**

Clearing the Air on Secretion Management  
Ron Hosp, MS, RRT  
4:30-5:30 p.m.  
Sheridans  
Contact 4401, 4402 or 4409  
to register  
1 CH

Theory and Application of High Frequency Chest Wall Oscillation  
Kelly Dockins, MBA, RRT  
Sheridans  
5:30-6:30 p.m.  
1 CH

**Jan. 14 Exceptional Families Part 1 & 2**

Lori Terryberry- Spohr, PhD  
3:30-5:30 p.m.  
Sheridans  
Contact your supervisor to register  
4401, 4402 or 4409  
Deadline 1/9  
1 CH each session

**Jan. 17 CPR Recertification**

9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or 5-8 p.m.  
Agee  
Please call 4401 or 4402  
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. 23 Christmas Service**

**Dec. 30 Jeri Gibson**

### Special Holiday Services

**Dec. 24 Christmas Eve** at 4 p.m.

**Dec. 25 Christmas Day** at 10:30 a.m.

**Dec. 31 New Years Eve** at 4 p.m.

**Jan. 1 New Years Day** at 10:30 a.m.

Do you belong to a group or congregation that hasn't performed at Madonna? We welcome new talent. Contact Steve Werner at ext. 4803 or swerner@madonna.org.

## WAY TO GO

Special thanks to the **Marketing and PR Department** for donating 30 Madonna calendars to the Carmelites in Agnew, Neb. They will be absolutely thrilled! The nuns love the calendars for their "cells," what they call their individual rooms. They don't have television or radio and appreciate keeping track of time via our calendar. The nuns pray for the people featured and for the Madonna staff that take care of all our patients.

Since the nuns have no income or money, it is a blessing that you graciously donate to them. Thank you!

— Jody Luzum  
Employee Health and Safety Services

For the first time in Madonna's history, there were no employee injuries requiring medical care for the entire month of November. This is a remarkable feat for an organization of this size (1500 employees) and complexity. The focus on our Culture of Safety is showing great results. Thank you to **all employees** for keeping safety at the forefront and providing outstanding care to our patients and residents.

— Sandy Stutzman  
Employee Health and Safety Services

## Be a ROCK STAR at the Madonna Chili Cookoff!

Teams are forming for the 2013 Chili Cookoff and we want you! Teams can include Madonna coworkers, spouses, significant others and friends. The theme for the 2013 edition is Musical Groups, so whether you lean toward The Beatles or Lady Gaga, there are plenty of options to shake your groove thing and raise money for the St. Benedict Fund.

During past events, we've had more than 500 attendees and raised more than \$10,000 for the St. Benedict Fund. The goal is to have 10 teams competing for the coveted soup/chili trophy and a prize for most creative booth.

We know that teams spend a lot of time and energy, so this year we will reimburse you for up to \$100 of any expenses for food and/or booth supplies. The event will again feature auction items and door prizes.

**WHEN:** Saturday, March 2, 2013

**WHERE:** Pius X High School, old gym, 60th & A Streets.

**We are looking for teams, as well as volunteers to assist in planning and helping during the event. If interested, please contact Mark Hake (ext. 6444)**

Claussen Award continued from front page

The award is named for Georgann Claussen, a patient at Madonna following a stroke in 1998. Claussen's sons, Rich and Bill, designated Madonna as the beneficiary of Georgann's memorials following her death in 1999. They asked that an award be created to honor the caring staff.

The Claussens were unable to attend the ceremony, but offered these comments via email. "It is with heartfelt thanks that we proudly recognize the commitment and compassion of Cheryl Wagoner. Thanks to everyone at Madonna who daily performs the work of angels on earth."

## Madonna tournament is a slam dunk

Congratulations to the talented Madonna Magic wheelchair basketball team who placed second in the Madonna Invitational tournament held Dec. 8-9 at Madonna ProActive. They also won the coveted All Tournament Team trophy. Teammate Natalie Schneider, a paralympic gold medalist, received the Most Valuable Player award.

Rick Haith, recreation therapist, coordinated the event that was featured on Lincoln's Channels 10/11 evening newscast. Participating teams included the Southwest Minnesota State University, the Kansas Wheelhawks, and the Oklahoma State Spokes, who all spoke highly of the event.

Thank you to the members of the Adaptive Sports and Rec team whose volunteer efforts led to a successful competition. A special thank you to the Madonna Foundation staff, who secured sponsorships to help defray tournament costs.



Madonna Magic team placed second in the Madonna Invitational Tournament. Team members include (L to R) Doug Bargman, Natalie Schneider, Scott Zessin, Dave Humm, Jeromy Domingus, Mark Yuen and Coach Dennis Nelsen.

## Oops – we got it wrong and want to make it right!

We regret that Jean Kops' name mistakenly ran as Jean Wagner in the Dec. 7 Independent. Jean generously donates her musical talent on LTACH playing the piano every Wednesday. Thank you, Jean, for brightening the day for our patients and please accept our apologies!

# the INDEPENDENT

A Newsletter for Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital

www.madonna.org

December 21, 2013

402.413.4292

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 402-413-4292 or trudder@madonna.org.

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. 28.

The Independent can be viewed online at [www.Madonna.org](http://www.Madonna.org)

Paying it forward with toy donation



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Sec new pediatric program manager



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## Young Nebraskan regains mobility from spinal cord injury to celebrate holidays with family

Cars have fascinated Joel Meisinger ever since he was a little boy. "He's just always liked any kind of car," said his mother, Jodi. Over the years, cars became a passion for the 19-year-old from Weeping Water, Neb.

Joel's talents won him first place honors at the high school state Skills USA competition for automotive refinishing his junior and senior years. He received scholarships to WyoTech, in Laramie, Wyo., where he planned to study auto mechanics. Joel had bought and sold 14 cars by the time he graduated. It's ironic that it was a car that drastically altered his life last fall.

On Sept. 15, Joel and his brother, Travis, were en route home after attending a Husker football game. As Travis rounded a corner in Manley, Neb., he lost control of the vehicle. The Mustang GT rolled over and came to rest on its top on the railroad tracks. Travis was ejected from the car and Joel was pinned inside. Emergency responders used the Jaws of Life to free Joel and he was lifeflighted to Creighton University Medical Center in Omaha.

Travis suffered minor injuries, but Joel broke his C5-C6 vertebrae — an incomplete spinal cord injury. Following surgery, doctors cautioned his parents the likelihood of their son regaining his mobility was slim. "They gave me a one in a million chance I would ever walk again," said Joel, who began rehabilitation at Madonna on Sept. 24.

Joel was barely mobile when he began therapy, but his Madonna team created an individualized plan to address his goal to walk independently. Initially, Joel practiced being upright in the standing frame. "I only lasted three minutes, but it felt good," said Joel. He quickly learned

to perfect slideboard transfers from his wheelchair and to stand and pivot.

Relearning daily selfcares, like brushing his teeth and feeding himself, was important for the confident young man. "I struggled

with having to let others do things for me," said Joel. His occupational therapists introduced helpful devices like an adaptive cuff that accommodates eating utensils.

It was in Aqua Therapy where Joel's feet took their first steps. "It was really exciting to watch!" said Jodi, who cheered her son's accomplishments.

Sessions on the Lokomat® helped Joel refine his gait. "It was really weird the first time, but I started to challenge myself," said Joel.

During his rehabilitation, encouragement came from Joel's family, friends and Madonna staff. Through personal visits with Margo Marino, a spinal cord peer support team member, Joel shared concerns about his injury. "Margo gave me someone to talk to that had been through this before," said Joel. He also developed friendships with two other patients on the spinal cord unit. "Those guys are great and made my stay here a lot better."

On Dec. 18, Joel got an early Christmas present when he rejoined his family at home. He is independent in all his selfcares and walks 200 feet with a walker. Joel is transitioning to Quality Living, Inc., in Omaha after the holidays to hone his everyday living skills.

"I never thought I'd get hurt," said Joel, who said he's more cautious now. "But I had good support and most importantly, I never gave up."

## Wagoner receives the Claussen award



(L to R) Cheryl Wagoner, MS, CCC-SLP and Marsha Lommel, president and CEO

Upbeat, positive and motivating were the adjectives used to describe Cheryl Wagoner, MS, CCC-SLP, this year's Georgann Claussen Award. Wagoner, a speech language pathologist (SLP) at Madonna since 2000, was awarded the honor at the annual Employee Christmas Party on Dec. 11.

Jessie Kohn, a fellow SLP, nominated Wagoner and included these comments: "Cheryl is always upbeat, encouraging and motivating. Families easily attach to her and find comfort in her professional knowledge and skills. Cheryl is also nationally recognized for her expertise in pulmonary related effects on communication."

Wagoner was humbled by the award and said she witnesses staff providing daily encouragement and passion for their work and patients' improvement. "I work with a group of individuals who consistently go beyond to provide excellent personal patient care, so it was truly an honor to be nominated and win this award."

The Claussen Memorial Award, including a certificate and \$250, is given annually to an outstanding Madonna caregiver who demonstrates dedication to compassion and excellence in helping children and adults with disabilities rebuild their lives.

(continued on page 4)

## Employees climb ICAN ladder

Madonna's Interdisciplinary Clinical Advancement Navigator (ICAN) program provides a uniform mechanism to recognize and reward the direct care clinician in clinical, competence, interdisciplinary collaboration, knowledge advancement and leadership. ICAN aims to increase retention of team members while enhancing national recognition and reputation.

The four levels of engagement an employee must complete include:

**Level I:** Department Focused

**Level II:** Interdisciplinary and Facility Focused

**Level III:** State and Regional Focused

**Level IV:** National Focus

Each discipline has specific criteria for each behavior and level. Congratulations to the following ICAN graduates for this quarter:

**Level II**

Sharon Cohagen, RN	Bethany Arnold, OT
Rachel Fleecs, RN	Ian Thompson, PTA
McKenzie Randel, RN	

**Level III**

Cody Kohles, RN	Tim Bausch, PT
Jody Luzum, LPN	Dana Jackson, RT

**Applications are reviewed quarterly and the next application deadline is Friday, Feb. 3, 2013.** Applications and criteria are available on the Intranet under Forms. Clinicians should submit their completed applications to Chris Lee, director of rehabilitation operations.

## Patient pays it forward with toy donation

The holiday spirit is alive and well at Madonna thanks to a generous donation from one patient to another. "I had extra money and wanted to make a child's Christmas a little brighter," said the donor, who wishes to remain anonymous. "I just wanted to pay it forward."

The donor asked the Alexis Verzal Children's Rehabilitation Hospital staff for help in identifying a young recipient for his gifts that included "I Can Be a Doctor" Barbie dolls. "Something about helping a child is very heartwarming," he said. "When you give a gift, it's all about the other person."

Rylee Spears was delighted to receive the early Christmas present that arrived with a note from Santa. The second grader promptly wrote a thank you note that the donor is cherishing. "I'm keeping that as a reminder," he said. "It made me feel so good I could help someone."



Rylee Spears was surprised with an early Christmas present from Santa delivered to her at the Alexis Verzal Children's Rehabilitation Hospital at Madonna. The special gift included Barbie and Ken "I Can Be a Doctor" dolls. "I really like playing with them!" said Rylee, who is recovering from a car accident. Santa received help from an anonymous patient at Madonna who "just wanted to pay it forward."

## Madonna welcomes Stec as new Pediatric Program Manager

Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital has named Jeffrey Stec, MS CCC/SLP, as Pediatric Program Manager. Stec is responsible



for program outcomes, quality, and referral development for the Alexis Verzal Children's Rehabilitation Hospital. Stec plays an integral role in increasing patient referrals to the hospital through marketing of the pediatric program across the continuum of care at Madonna.

In 1995, Stec earned his Master of Science degree in Communication Disorders from the University of Nebraska at Kearney and has completed post graduate hours at the University of Cincinnati in Communication Sciences and Disorders. He is a member of the American Speech and Hearing Association and the Nebraska Speech Language and Hearing Association. Additionally, Stec is a clinical supervisor at the University of Nebraska Omaha.

Stec appreciates the opportunity to support a family's desire to seek the expertise to improve the quality of life for their loved one. "The benefit of a successful outcome is a patient returning to their life roles," said Stec.

## Hippen celebrates 25 years at Madonna

Linda Hippen celebrated her 25th anniversary at Madonna with a surprise party on Dec. 4, organized by her coworkers in Telecommunications. In 1987, Linda was hired as a nursing assistant, a role she held for eight months before moving to the Staffing department for nearly four years. Linda was named supervisor for Telecommunications in 1993. "The only thing I knew how to do at that point was answer a telephone!" said Linda. She took classes at Windstream and attended College of St. Mary's where she earned a certificate for Telecommunications System Management. In 2004, Linda was promoted to her current role as Manager of Telecommunications.



"I never dreamed I would be working at Madonna this long back," said Linda. "But I cannot imagine ever going anywhere else to work." Linda says she feels truly blessed. "I want to express my sincere gratitude to everyone involved in my anniversary party."

## Reflecting back on a year of Madonna memories...

This special section celebrates the dedication, commitment and passion that Madonna employees bring to their jobs. It is apparent how much employees are valued and the many lives they touch every day.



I remember New Year's Eve, 2008. We were negotiating with Eclipsys to purchase the electronic medical record (EMR). Information system companies always want to bring big sales to closure by the end of the year, so we were prepared to negotiate until midnight. The negotiations got hotter and hotter as the day went on. I was in New York with my daughter. David Rolfe, Paul Dongilli and Roberta Steinhauser were at Madonna most of the day. We were in constant contact via phone with Mike Munro, Victor Witkowitz and with the Eclipsys people, three of them in different parts of the country. We were holding out for a better price and more concessions. We closed the deal at 11:55 p.m. We got everything we wanted. We were all too exhausted to celebrate the New Year. But we all knew it was the beginning of something exciting for Madonna. And it has been.

— Marsha Lommel, President and Chief Executive Officer

I have tons of memories, but one that stands out is helping a fellow Madonna employee go from learning to walk again following Guillain Barre Syndrome then seeing him return to work as a nurse on LTACH.

— Kristi Britten, Physical Therapist

One of my favorite memories was watching a stroke patient and her husband participate in a photo shoot with professional photographer, Mark Kresl. After getting pampered by the hair and makeup artists, she just beamed! Her husband was visibly moved and struggled to maintain his composure after seeing his wife's reaction. He couldn't believe the photographer donated his services to Madonna. He thanked me multiple times and said how uplifting it was for his wife.

— Tami Rudder, Marketing and PR

I was rewarded this year by helping a young man named Joe. He came to me for his first session never having driven and with a disability. He was very much a teenager with an attitude. I thought – how will I ever spend hours in a vehicle with this kid and have a decent conversation? About 10 hours later, with training in our adapted vehicle, he learned to drive with equipment and we were actually laughing and joking around. He became a lot of fun to work with. He was a great success and now able to drive himself to school with his own vehicle.

— Lisa Andersen, Clinical Supervisor OP Occupational Therapy

I hit my first IV on 7/4/2012. It was so amazing fireworks went off!

— Amy Haycock, RN, Acute Rehab

2012 marks the 10th anniversary of the Madonna Laboratory and what an exciting and fulfilling adventure that was! A fully renovated, newly implemented, and staffed clinical laboratory from the ground up in less than six weeks! It was a huge team effort and another success story shared by many at Madonna. Thanks to all who visited the lab during our 10th anniversary celebration and don't forget – you can visit us anytime for all of your outpatient laboratory needs.

— Patty Eschliman, Clinical Laboratory Manager

Special thanks are extended to Kelli Anderson, Terasa Farlin, Donna Haney, Marilyn Dongilli, Tonia Sohrweid, Jim Pelton, Joe Rush, Curt, LeeAnn, Sue Koerber, the Hospital Applications and Technical Services Teams for the leadership and work enabling the 2012 Sunrise accomplishments! Major 2012 Sunrise Implementations: Barcode Medication Administration

implementation for VAU, ECN, AR, PEDs and LTACH for Nursing, Pharmacy and RT, Plan of Care implementation for RT, Nutrition, Inpatient Therapy and Nursing, the 5.5 FPI Sunrise Upgrade and the Team Composite for Case Management.

— Roberta Steinhauser, Director Hospital Applications

Over the months of November and December, I became aware of a young man recovering here at Madonna following a car accident. During this time, I occasionally visited with his family and followed their reports on his Caring Bridge site. They wrote of hope - hope of a Madonna miracle and the hope he would return home to Kansas in time for Christmas. They wrote of their initial disappointment with his slow progress. They wrote of gratitude; gratitude for the availability of Madonna housing; gratitude for Madonna's caring staff; gratitude for the support of their community, including a benefit held on their behalf on Dec. 8.

A few days later, the following entry was made on the family's Caring Bridge site:

"I don't know if it's coincidence, irony or a miracle – I think it is how you see things from your own perspective, but we witnessed a vast improvement the same weekend that the benefit was held. It was almost as if all the good works, prayers and generosity of so many people was just what it took to make something in his brain "click" and he started remembering things. The way that people from so many different communities came together that night, working together, and having a great time doing it, seemed to me to be divinely inspired.

One dear friend told me that she could "feel" Jesus' presence that night, and I had that same feeling as I observed the benefit with awe – Christ's love was everywhere! On a personal note – something I personally think was divinely inspired was the fact that the benefit was held on a day that Catholics remember the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the Mother of Jesus (December 8) while we were at a rehab hospital that was named for her, "Madonna."

Wow! As I read this entry, I, too, was in awe. The Madonna miracle occurred and they left for home on December 12.

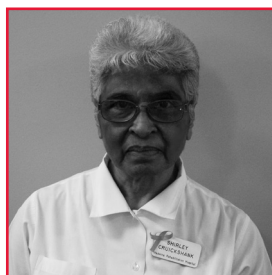
As I reflect on this family, I can't help but think of the Nativity story. Like the Holy Family, they traveled to an unfamiliar area at a time of great stress. Like the Holy Family, they had no place to stay, but great faith that God would provide shelter for them. Like the three Wise Men, their community came bearing gifts to help them sustain during their time of need. Finally, the shining star – the Madonna staff – provided hope, light and guidance in a time of great darkness and uncertainty.

This Christmas, I want to, once again, thank Madonna employees for the gifts of hope, healing and support they willingly give to those we serve each and every day.

Merry Christmas to you and your families.

— Paul Dongilli, Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer

## Employee Focus: Fun factoids about Shirley



Shirley Cruickshank, CNA  
Extended Care North  
MRH employee for 16 years

1. I love to visit old monasteries and churches.
2. I love to take long walks with my rosary and enjoy God's creations – sky, clouds, trees, birds and the wind.
3. I love people, myself and everything!
4. Most of all, I love taking care of the sick and dying. This is my gift in life.

I loved my work when I started at Madonna and even more so, now. This is all thanks to God. Madonna is a blessed place.