



**VETERANS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
& CLINICS**

**Fall  
2024**

# **FOUNTAINS OF HEALTH**

## **New Pain Management Clinic!**

We began offering a Pain Management Clinic just last month, thanks to our new provider, Shawn Blake, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist. Originally of Dorchester, Shawn has returned home to offer these needed services.

"I am excited to be joining the VMH team. Bringing a new service to VMH is a full-circle moment for me and my career," he adds. "I look forward to making a profound positive impact in the community."

Those who have attempted other therapies for chronic pain, such as massage, chiropractic care, and physical/occupational therapy, without long-term relief, can be referred to this clinic.

Shawn provides epidural steroid injections, joint injections (including shoulder, knee, hip, and facets), and treatment of Complex Regional Pain Syndromes (CRPS). He also offers medication management when appropriate without the use of narcotics.



Shawn Blake, CRNA

"The goal of our new Pain Management Clinic is to focus on the diagnosis and management of chronic pain using a variety of methods," explains Abby Dornath,

*Pain Clinic ... Continued on Page 12*

**33rd Annual**

## *Christmas Fantasy*



## **Gnome for the Holidays**

Another spectacular Christmas Fantasy is planned for Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, November 15, 16, 17, and 18, at the Allamakee Fairgrounds Pavilion.

Enjoy the numerous breathtaking Christmas trees, each decorated and sponsored by area individuals, organizations and businesses, plus the on-site silent auction with centerpieces, gift baskets, wreaths, swags, chairs, mini-trees, quilts, toys, wall hangings, antiques and a wide variety of other decorative items. These are all available for purchase through a silent auction, with the highest bidder

*Christmas Fantasy ... Continued on Page 7*



*From the  
Administrator...*



**Michael Coyle, CEO**

Veterans Memorial Hospital and Clinics continues to enhance services to meet the growing needs of our patients. VMH is extremely excited to partner with the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics to vastly improve our electronic medical records (EMR) system by offering an EMR called Epic. This program is known for its scalability and versatility, along with its widespread use across a variety of healthcare settings. Epic also includes a patient portal called MyChart, which allows patients to access their health records, schedule appointments, and more. Healthcare providers can also use MyChart to offer patients self-service scheduling, online refill requests, and virtual visits. VMH will go live with Epic in the Spring of 2025.

Along with the addition of Epic, VMH has recruited several new providers that will start offering services in Waukon and Postville. Dr. John Swords, D.O., will be starting to see patients in the Waukon Medical Clinic in the spring of 2025. Dr. Swords and his family are extremely excited to be a part of the Waukon community and starting his Family Medicine Practice in Northeast Iowa.

Along with Dr. Swords, VMH has started offering pain management services by Shawn Blake, CRNA, who grew up and graduated from Waukon High School. Using a variety of therapeutic, pharmacological and interventional modalities, Shawn provides comprehensive management of chronic pain right here at VMH.

We want to offer as many services as possible at VMH, but in those instances when we can't do a procedure here, you can always ask your provider if you can have your testing, laboratory work, MRI, CT or physicals done at VMH. It's simple for your provider to order those tests at VMH and quickly get the results back. We can also do infusion treatments, chemotherapy treatments, and a host of other outpatient treatments, no matter where you get your care. At VMH, "It's our family caring for your family!"

*Michael*

# Expanded Surgery Services!

NOW OFFERING  
**GENERAL SURGERY  
THREE DAYS PER WEEK!**  
*Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays*

**Surgeons Dr. Phillip Yee and  
NEW Surgeon Dr. Chris Winters**

## Providing All General Surgeries, Including:

- Hernia Repairs (Including Laparoscopic if Necessary)
- Gallbladder Removal
- C-Sections
- Vasectomies
- Endoscopies, Colonoscopies & EGDs
- Routine Anorectal Cases Such as Fistulas, Hemorrhoids & Fissures
- Emergency surgeries, Including C-Sections and Appendectomies

Consultations conveniently held at Veterans Memorial Hospital prior to surgery.

Reduced wait time for procedures.

Flexible scheduling that works around your busy calendar.

24/7 emergency services provided by the Gundersen General Surgery department including Dr. Yee, Dr. Winters, Dr. Michael LaBelle and Dr. Elleson Schurtz.



*Dr. Chris Winters, at right, joined Dr. Phillip Yee in providing general surgery, which is now available three days a week, adding an additional day of general surgery in Waukon each week.*

"Everyone and everything at Veterans Memorial Hospital is so nice. I will have more than what I need to take care of lots of folks here," states Dr. Winters. "I am just happy to come home and take care of everyone."

**Met Your Deductible?**  
**Schedule your procedure now before  
the end of the year!**

# Do YOU Have a Tourniquet On Hand to Stop a Life-Threatening Bleed?

If you came upon an accident with severe bleeding, would you know what to do?

Uncontrolled bleeding is the number one cause of preventable death from trauma, according to the "Stop the Bleed" program developed by the American College of Surgeons. With heavy bleeding, an adult could easily lose 40% of their blood volume in 3-4 minutes. It could be even quicker for children. At that point, the body is no longer able to compensate for that amount of blood loss.

A tourniquet is used to stop severe bleeding from an arm or leg by safely squeezing them to stop the heavy flow of blood. Tourniquets are often needed in the case of motor vehicle or motorcycle crashes, farm and industrial incidents, household accidents, trauma from firearms and stabbings, and rural or wilderness incidents.

A tourniquet recently saved the life of Zach Quandahl of Waukon, whose motorcycle wheel began to wobble, pushing him into the side of an oncoming car, nearly severing his leg. Witnesses stopped to help, placing two belts around Zach's leg to try to stop the heavy bleeding.

Tyler Plein, who was currently enrolled in the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) class, was one of the first on the scene. Tyler had just waved at Zach on his way home from work at Veterans Memorial Hospital, then turned back around toward Waukon when he heard the page on his pager.

Tyler was not equipped with a tourniquet, but Sheriff Clark Mellick arrived at the same time, and Tyler asked him for one of his. Tyler placed the tourniquet above the belts and greatly slowed the bleeding. That tourniquet saved Zach's life.

"Being in the EMT class at that time gave me the confidence to know what to do in that situation. We had gone over how to apply tourniquets and completed the "Stop the Bleed" training," remembers Tyler. "We monitored him and waited for the ambulance. The bleeding was mostly under control. The tourniquet was much more permanent than the belts and would not move out of place. It was the first time



*Pictured is Zach with most of his rescue team, including front row, left to right: Callie Thorson, Emergency Room RN; Tyler Plein, Maintenance and EMT; Zach Quandahl; Cheryl Livingston, Paramedic at the scene; Jared Donahue, Emergency Room RN; Sheriff Clark Mellick; Ryan Smith, EMT on the scene (in back left); and Tyler O'Neill, Emergency Room RN (back right).*

I had ever seen anything like it. I was so thankful there were three other people there who did a wonderful job before I arrived."

Tyler drove the ambulance back to Waukon so the two attendants could both work on Zach. He received six units of blood at Veterans Memorial Hospital and was then airlifted to Gundersen Health in La Crosse, where he received a total of five additional units.

"I received my EMT certification a few weeks later and am very glad I took the class," adds Tyler. "It was definitely a challenging class and quite a time commitment with all I have going on, but we have many good teachers here on staff. In fact, there were many EMS staff throughout the county who came to help with the class.

Now I am taking calls during the week. It is really nice to be able to truly help the community when needed."

"I also now have a tourniquet and gloves in my vehicle and around the farm, so I am stocked and ready the next time," concludes Tyler. "It is so great to see Zach walking around now. I'm thankful he's here with us, and it's great to see the sense of humor he has after all of this."

Zach's family wanted to give back to the community after the fantastic outpouring of support they received. They decided the best way to do that was to take the generous \$10,000 raised just a few weeks following Zach's accident by Buddy at Iron Harley-Davidson, members of the Good Fellas Riding Club and close friends and family through "The Blood Stops Here" ride to purchase tourniquets for ALL county emergency workers.

"That tourniquet saved Zach's life. He would be gone without it. Angels were there that day looking over him," stated Julie Quandahl, Zach's mom, at the recent event that the Quandahl family gifted these tourniquets to the area emergency workers. "We quickly knew we wanted to use those funds to give back tourniquets to all of our local first responders in the fire, ambulance, police and sheriff departments.

Zach's dad, Adam, added, "We want to get more of these tourniquets out there so they are in the right spot at the right time."

The tourniquets gifted by the Quandahl family were purchased through Tilson Rescue Supply and Tilson Defense, right in Waukon, who is an authorized dealer of these products.

The greater the number of people who know how to control bleeding, the greater the chances of survival. Any of us can save a life by knowing how to stop bleeding whenever someone is injured, even yourself.



**"The only thing more tragic than a death from bleeding... is a death that could have been prevented."**

*American College of Surgeons*

*Having a tourniquet on hand and knowing how to use one, as pictured here, is essential in saving a life.*

To learn how you can stop a bleed, go to **bleedingcontrol.org** and take their free online course.



# COMPASSIONATE CARE IN THE FINAL DAYS

On March 17, Mary Reiersen of Postville just woke up not feeling well. When she and her husband Bob had gone to bed the night before, she was just fine. That was the start to 81 days in the hospital. Mary never did make it back to her home.

"Mary's pain worsened that day, so I brought her into the hospital's ER, who admitted her right away. Dr. McMullan ordered a CT scan that showed some leakage in her intestines, so Mary was transferred to La Crosse for surgery," explains Bob. "Dr. McMullan knew she was not strong enough to go home right away with a colostomy, so he suggested she come back to Waukon on Swing Bed Skilled Care. Mary and I were both hoping for that and were relieved when she got back to town."

The next two months were a roller-coaster ride for Mary, feeling and doing great one day, then weak the next. She spent most of that time in Veterans Memorial Hospital plus a few days at Northgate Care Center, all in an effort to try to regain strength and get back home.

"Mary had a colostomy in place that should have been reversed, but we never got the chance. One day she would be fine and the next not good, and she would have to return to the hospital for fluids and infusions," adds Bob. "The second time we were in the Infusion Room getting an IV and she said she just couldn't sit there any longer because she wasn't feeling well. She was taken down the hall to the ER, where Provider

John Kelly did a CT scan, revealing a whole infection and blockage of the colon. He consulted with La Crosse and came back and told us there was nothing they could do for her, so she stayed in Waukon through her final days."

"This certainly wasn't the outcome we had hoped for, but we had such good care throughout all of those 81 days, I want to tell people about it," states Bob. "The people in that hospital bent over backwards to help us with whatever we needed. John Kelly is a friend of my grandson, and John had to tell us there was nothing they could do for Mary, but he handled it so well—he did just an excellent job of explaining it to us that he made us feel ok with it. Mary liked all of the gals up there. She received such good care and they did just as good of a job caring for the whole family. It was just a wonderful job."

"Staff would come in if they had a few extra minutes just to visit, sitting on the edge of her bed, just shooting the breeze. Brad from therapy would come in and warn her he would be back in 15 minutes, then 15 minutes later he would throw the covers back and get her up and moving. She was walking faster than I was and could even do the whole loop."

"Some of these staff were complete strangers, but they got to be family by the end, even telling them stories she has never told anyone before. That's how comfortable she was with everyone. Dr. McMullan, who has been our doctor since he came here,



*Pictured is Bob Reiersen of Postville, with his daughter, Becky Meyer, at right. They are surrounded by some of the staff who cared for his wife, Mary, for nearly three months. From left to right: Penny Wheeler, C.N.A.; Hannah Franzen, RN; Tatum Iverson, Social Worker; and Sheryl Miner, Housekeeper.*

would pull up a chair and visit. Dr. Schwartz did the same when Dr. McMullan was gone. The cleaning ladies were so polite, asking if it was ok to clean now or later. The lunch ladies brought food in and I would eat here too to try to get Mary to eat better. They would even cut up her meat and help her to be sure she ate. It was just unbelievable."

Becky Meyer, Mary and Bob's daughter, was right there for her mom during these 81 days.

"We never had to worry about Mom when she was at this hospital. We always felt good leaving her there at night. The staff got to be like a second family and the hospital, a second home. They always took care of us, too, and they didn't have to.

The grandkids would come to visit and the staff would have chairs there in a minute for everyone to sit down. On Mother's Day, before we knew it, they had the Healing Center room all set up for us so we could celebrate Mother's Day all together."

At the age of 84 and weeks away from 66 years of marriage to Bob, Mary passed away peacefully at Veterans Memorial Hospital, surrounded by her family and her second family—the staff.

"We just don't know from day to day about our health. We need to appreciate what we've got and this hospital. I hope people in Northeast Iowa realize the hospital facilities they have here right at home—we are all so lucky."



# Local Breast Cancer Survivor Urges Prevention! Prevention! Prevention!

Kathy Hager of Waukon became a mammographer in 2016 and in 2024 is now a breast cancer survivor. She believes that preventative screenings, in all areas of health, are the key to longevity.

"This was my second mammogram since turning 40 years old. When I received the results in my 'My Chart' report, I was shocked. I knew the facts that approximately 80% of breast cancer patients have no family history, like me, but you never think it will happen to you," explains Kathy.

Kathy quickly had additional images taken and a biopsy as well as an MRI because she had been diagnosed with two different areas of breast cancer in her right breast. The results showed two clusters of calcifications (DCIS or ductal carcinoma in situ) instead of just one lump. With that information, she elected to remove both breasts.

"I have taken care of a lot of patients who have been diagnosed with breast cancer, and I've talked them through it, reassuring them they will quickly get to the next step and not fall through the cracks. The waiting can be difficult and stressful. For me, everything truly moved so smoothly and in sync. My screening mammogram was in October, biopsies in November, and my double mastectomy in December of 2023—all completed in just 2 ½ months. Reconstruction started right away. Fortunately, my lymph nodes all tested negative, so no chemotherapy, and because I chose a mastectomy, no radiation was necessary. I healed really, really well with no complications and had my final reconstruction surgery in August, just 10 months after my diagnosis. I feel it couldn't have gone any smoother."

Kathy advises everyone to 'use all the tools in their toolbox' when it comes to preventative testing. "We live in an area where health care is at our fingertips. We are absolutely blessed to have VMH providing screening exams such as mammograms, bone density, lung cancer screening, pap smears, colonoscopies, lab services, annual physicals, and so much more! The best healthcare in the world is in our backyard," adds Kathy.

Since 2010, Kathy has had an annual skin check with a dermatologist. At her check in 2014, a suspicious spot was found on her back that was diagnosed as malignant melanoma, which she feels was probably caused by tanning in tanning beds she used when she was younger.

"Thanks to having my annual skin screenings, that cancer was caught early and successfully removed without any treatments. I am faithful to wearing sunblock now. I wish I had comprehended that importance as a teenager, but I can't go back. We learn from our mistakes, and that makes our future brighter!"



*Breast cancer survivor Kathy Hager believes in prevention for all types of cancer and advises 'using all the tools in your toolbox' when it comes to your own health. Pictured next to the mammogram machine at Veterans Memorial Hospital are mammographers, left to right: Audrey Fahey, Kelly Baxter, Kathy Hager and Amanda Leiran.*

"I deeply feel that all screenings are the key to longevity... skin screenings, mammograms, colonoscopies, annual physicals, labs, etc. I have seen too many patients go too long without these screenings who have a much more difficult road with their treatments. I am a huge advocate of annual labs as well. Blood tests can help your doctor identify a variety of health conditions before the condition shows up physically. Genetics play a large part in many health issues, and without these tests, you may not find out as early as you would have hoped for."

"Prevention truly is the key, along with nutrition and exercise! We are fortunate to have all of these 'tools in our toolbox!' We need to remember to use them!" concludes Kathy. "Breast and skin cancer can be a journey with a thousand paths. I feel amazing and am very thankful every day for the support of this community and our accessible health care."



# Local 'Be the Match' Donor SAVES A LIFE!

In the spring of 2023, our Lab Technologist, Robin Gray, contacted the 'Be the Match' Foundation to inquire if we could collect samples here at VMH. They were thrilled we wanted to help and sent us 200 swab collection kits that were used on willing adults ages 18-40 at all public events we visited.

Quinton Houg of Clermont visited our table at the Postville Farmer's Market last summer, along with his girlfriend, Tomi. When they were asked if they would like to swab for 'Be the Match,' Tomi stated she already had been and was in the database, so she turned and encouraged Quinton, and he stepped right up! After the quick registration to 'Be The Match' on his phone, his mouth was swabbed and his sample was collected in just a few minutes.

Then, just nine months later, in April of 2024, Quinton received an email that he was a potential match! Here is Quinton's life-saving story, in his own words...

"I called 'Be the Match' back and started the process right away to see if I was the best donor for this patient who needed a life-saving donation. I answered the questionnaires that would rule out any reason that I could not donate. They continually did a good job making it known that I could back out of this at any time if I wished. But I wanted to help if I could, so the process continued."

"Blood testing was the next step and 'Be the Match' set up everything for me. The closest high-level lab for me to travel to was in Cedar Falls, where they drew blood and went through extensive testing. There were three rounds of blood tests—two at the local clinic in Postville and one in Cedar Falls for the extensive exam. Had they found any diseases or issues, they would have shared the results with me, but the testing showed I was the best match to donate!"



*Above is Quinton just following his donation, holding that precious bag of stem cells before it is flown off to Sweden. Below is Quinton today, at the Postville Farmer's Market, proud of his choice to follow through with the entire donation process!*



"In June, it was time for the actual donation of stem cells. I was given shots of Filgrastim, which is used to stimulate white blood cell and stem cell growth, which my body really responded well to. My stem cell level was roughly three times stronger than the target, which actually caused me some bone pain and achiness, kind of like growing pains. The importance of the donation made the temporary discomfort well worth it."

"My girlfriend and I drove to the City of Hope Hospital in Zion, IL, to be ready for the donation the next day. 'Be the Match' had reserved us a wonderful hotel and paid all of our expenses. The donation process took only two hours for me and was only as painful as a regular blood donation. My stem cells were immediately driven to O'Hare Airport and flown to Sweden, where this 42-year-old female was waiting for her life-saving transplant."

"This experience was truly one of the coolest things I have ever been able to do! It was 100% worth it! When I signed up that night in Postville, I wasn't aware anything like this even existed, and if they hadn't been there swabbing, I still wouldn't know about it. Finding a potential match can be uncommon, and only one in 11 potential matches can actually donate. I still don't know the outcome, but I was able to send her an anonymous letter. After a year, if we both consent, we can share our names with each other. 'Be the Match' has taken me off of the registry for the next year just in case she would need a second stem cell transplant. It was such a cool opportunity; I would do it all again."

"'Be the Match' takes great care of their donors, having me come back for a one-week, a one-month and a one-year recheck just to be sure all is fine with me. In fact, I have never worked with any organization as organized, detailed and accommodating as 'Be the Match.' They worked completely around my schedule and my boss at Norplex was also very accommodating."

"My message to others is if you sign up for this, be committed to it if you are chosen. Just imagine the emotional highs and lows for the patients when their match is found, then that match backs out. This process was far more rewarding than I ever thought it could have been and I hope others will do the same."



*"I'm proud that the VMH Lab has partnered with 'Be the Match,' which is a wonderful organization truly doing life-saving work. Stop by our lab anytime if you are between the ages of 18 and 40, and we can swab you to find out if you could 'Be the Match!'"*



# Christmas Fantasy



Christmas Fantasy ... Continued from Page 1

winning the purchase of the item when the auction ends at 6:00 p.m. Monday evening, November 18. (Please note the auction will close one hour earlier this year!) Until that closing time, bidders can return, free of charge, to the Fantasy and raise their bid.

## 2024 FANTASY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### "TINGLE 'N MINGLE" HAPPY HOUR

This event is a special opportunity to meet socially with friends and co-workers. Many hearty hors d'oeuvres, desserts, candies, breads and spirits will be served among the trees from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Friday night. The cost is \$20.00 per person in advance and \$25.00 at the door. Advance tickets are available at Veterans Memorial Hospital and local banks.

### WINE, CHEESE AND DESSERT EVENT

Saturday evening, November 16, will host a special wine, cheese and dessert event sponsored by Eagle's Landing Winery of Marquette, Empty Nest Winery of Waukon, and Madigan Winery of Lansing. The event will begin at 7:00 p.m. Reservations are required for this event as seats are limited. Please call 563-568-4177 to make a reservation. The cost for each ticket is \$20 per person, which includes wine, cheese, meats, cheese curds and spreads, crackers, dessert, viewing of the decorations and entertainment.

### NEW! BRUNCH WITH SANTA

New this year, brunch will be offered Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to noon, serving a full brunch with a cash Mimosa and Bloody Mary bar. Families are welcome to attend! Adults are \$12, ages 12 and under are \$8, and preschool age and younger are free. Please make a reservation by calling 563-568-4177. Santa will also be available for visits and photos. This event is sponsored by the Allamakee County Pork Producers.

### MONDAY LUNCHEON

One luncheon will be held this year on Monday, November 18 at noon. Please call 563-568-4177 to make a reservation. The cost is \$20 per person. This event is sponsored by the Allamakee County Cattlemen.

### VISITS AND PHOTOS WITH SANTA CLAUS

NEW this year, Santa will be available for a visit on Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and again on Sunday, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Be ready with your cameras for a great photo opportunity!

### GENERAL VIEWING

The 2024 Christmas Fantasy event will be open to the public Saturday, November 16, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., on Sunday, November 17, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and Monday, November 18, from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. Complimentary Christmas treats and hot chocolate will be available during all these public showings. Tickets are just \$5 each and \$2 for children ages 12 and under, and preschool is free.

*The 33rd Annual Christmas Fantasy is planned and sponsored by the Veterans Memorial Health Care Foundation, including Rose Beardmore, Sue Blagsvedt, Vicki Bloxham, Kris Cote, Chris Engstrom-Fosaaen, Patty Goltz, Kevin Hanson, Dan Headington, Judy Herman, Ardie Kuhse, Craig Lensing, Reid Mahoney, Jay Mathis, Becky Mitchell, Barb Shull, Sue Stamper, Jeremy Strub, Kim Sylvester and Matt Teslow.*



2024 CHRISTMAS FANTASY THEME:

# Gnome for the Holidays

**FRIDAY, NOV. 15**

## TINGLE 'N MINGLE HAPPY HOUR

- 5:00-8:00 pm
- \$20 Per Person In Advance at VMH or Local Banks (\$25 at the Door)

**SATURDAY, NOV. 16**

## CHRISTMAS TREATS & COCOA

- 10:00 am-2:00 pm
- \$5 Per Adult, Ages 12 & Under \$2, Preschool Age & Younger Free
- Visits & Photos with Santa

## WINE, CHEESE & DESSERT

*Sponsored by Eagles Landing Winery, Empty Nest Winery & Madigan Winery*

- 7:00-9:00 pm
- \$20 Per Person
- Call 563-568-4177 for Reservations

**SUNDAY, NOV. 17**

## BRUNCH WITH SANTA

*Sponsored by Allamakee County Pork Producers*

- 9:00 am-12:00 pm
- \$12 Per Adult, Ages 12 & Under \$8, Preschool Age & Younger Free
- Call 563-568-4177 for Reservations

## CHRISTMAS TREATS & COCOA

- 9:00 am-3:00 pm
- \$5 Per Adult, Ages 12 & Under \$2, Preschool Age & Younger Free
- Visits & Photos with Santa

**MONDAY, NOV. 18**

## NOON FANTASY LUNCHEON

*Sponsored by Allamakee County Cattlemen*

- \$20 Per Person
- Call 563-568-4177 for Reservations

## CHRISTMAS TREATS & COCOA

- 2:00-6:00 pm
- \$5 Per Adult, Ages 12 & Under \$2, Preschool Age & Younger Free



# Gifts

The following generously responded with a monetary gift to the Foundation's 2023 Winter mail request. The funds raised upgraded the lighting system in our surgery suite.

IMO = In Memory of  
IHO = In Honor of

Michael & Cari A'Hearn	Randy Burke	Mark & Lori Egan	Marcella Hale	Kermit & Ann Klees
Ron & Nancy Adam	IMO Debra "Debbie" Burke	IHO VMH Nursing Staff	IMO John C. Hale	Larry & Nancy Klocke
IMO Gary Pufahl	Dale Byrnes	Gordon & Louise Ellingson	Don & DiAnne Haler	IHO Eaton & Barb Cote
Ted Ager	IHO VMH Therapy Department	Mary Jo Engstrom	Mary Susan Hall	Eunice Kolsrud
Donald Aldrich	Dennis & Judy Byrnes	IMO Marilyn Armentrout	IMO Charles Hall	IMO Robert Kolsrud
IMO Lois A. Aldrich	Roger & Rita Byrnes	John & Rita Erickson	Bill & Carol Hancock	Kris & Jennifer Kovarik
Gladwin & Darlene Anderson	Rupert & Martha Caballero	Roger Ericson	Robert & Joy Hansmeier	IHO Katie Fahey
Marilyn Anderson	Kathy Campbell	IMO Faith Ericson	Anonymous	Ken & Gloria Krambeer
Mary Ann Andregg	IMO Bill Campbell	Harvey & Betty Estebo	Anonymous	Diane Kraus
IMO Charles Andregg	Anonymous	Lois Evans	IMO Jerre Henthorn	Gary Kubitz
Cindy Barness	Kay Carter	Mary Fink	Cyril Hawes	Ardie Kuhse
Jan Barrett	Carl & Betty Christianson	IMO Rodney Fink, Dakota	Kay Hawes	Jane Lamborn
IMO Garry Barrett	Sheila Clair	Ness & Makaela Ness	Dan & Denise Headington	Mervin & Sara Lambright
Dr. Larry Barthel	IMO Dr. William P. Clair	Dolores Fish	IMO Wayne Headington	Cyril & Shirley Larkin
Don & Cathy Baxter	Marilyn Clark	Ann Fossum	Tom & Bev Heim	Emmett Larkin
Sherry Bechtel	IMO Bill Clark	IMO Jeremy Johnson	Theresa Helgeson	Larre & Brenda Leiran
Randy & Marty Beneke	Renee Clauson	Patrick Friar	IMO Joanne Lier	Marlys Leiran
Anonymous	Anonymous	Charles & Marcie Fritz	Scott Henkes	IMO Willard E. Leiran
Dean & Linda Bernhard	Lowell Corlett	Bill & Susan Fuelling	IMO Marilyn Lamker	Richard & Joan Leiran
Nancy Berns	IHO VMH Therapy Department	Beverly Gavle	& Roger Henkes	Robert Leppert Sr.
IMO Eugene "Gene" Berns	Charles & Shirley Cota	IMO Ronald Gavle & Donald Gavle	Don & Linda Herman	IMO Barbara R. Leppert
Anonymous	Dave Cota	Nate & Tami Gebel	Melvin & Barb Hersherberger	Richard & Jean Lewey
Joan Bieber	IMO MacKay Mathis	IMO Mary Grace Carole Gerdes	Don Hocker	Tom & Sue Limbach
IMO Richard Bieber	Mary Cunningham	IMO James "Jim" Gerdes	Jeremy & Heather Hogan	Tom & Fran Lindsay
Edith Bloxham	IMO Joseph "Joe" Cunningham	LaVon Germann	Kyle & Mari Holthaus	Randy & Karen Loeb
IMO Floyd E. Mount & Richard Bloxham	Anonymous	David & Angela Gibbs	Randy & Lori Hover	Revelyn Lonning
Craig & JoAnne Bodley	Neal & Nancy Daley	IMO Caryn Weymiller	IMO Eloise, Delbert & Tom Bulman	IHO VMH Staff
Scott & Kim Bollman	Dave Davies	Mike & Cindy Gibbs	Doris Huinker	Dennis & Fran Luck
IMO Everett Bollman Family	Dennis & Sandy Deal	Gary & Jean Gilbertson	IMO Gary Huinker	Dennis & Sherri Lyons
IMO Everett Bollman Family	IMO Otto & Eleanor Thorstenson	IMO Art Berns & Jeff Kelly	Floyd & Arlene Ingles	Theresa Lyons
Gwen Brainard	Karen DeBuhr	Anonymous	Robert Iseli	Anonymous
IMO James M. Brainard	Betty Decker	Mary Jo Goodman	IMO Judith Iseli	Ken & Rose Ann Mark
Jan Brandsmeier	Mary Kay Delphey	Vernell & Sharon Gookin	Steve & Cindy Iverson	Gail Mathis
Ron & Nancy Brandt	Pam Delphey	Darlene Gossman	Ralph & Rosemary Jahnke	IMO Earl Mathis
Dorothy Bratrud	IMO Richard Delphey	Jason & Lorie Hackman	Helen Johnson	Rita Mathis
IMO Orville Bratrud	Jane Dietrich	Jean Hagen	IMO Jim Johnson	IMO Dale Mathis
Sandra Bresnahan	IMO Duane & Noah Dietrich	Rick & Charlene Hagensick	Earl & Ruth Jones	Pat & Deb McGeough
IMO Neil Bresnahan	Anonymous	IMO John "Jack" Hagensick	IMO Diane & Austyn Sietz	Louis & Pat Meeter
Richard & Evelyn Brincks	Lorraine Drew	Donn & Nancy Hager	Dave Kadera	Dennis & Jane Meyer
Brent & Vivian Bruns	IMO Paul Drew	IMO Meryle Honn	Tom & Judy Kemp	IMO Brent Johnson & Loren Looney
Raleigh & JoEllyn Buckmaster	James & Sallie Driscoll	Jack & Denise Hager	Greg & Pam Kerndt	Russ & Mary Jo Meyer
Tim Bulman	Anonymous	Dr. David & Suzanne Hahn	John & Lorna Kerndt	Harold & Linda Miller
IMO Dorie Bulman	Elaine Eadie		Scott & Sherri Kerr	IMO Judy Miller
Jean Buntrock	Loren Lee Eberling		Steve & Deb Kiley	Trent & Becky Mitchell
IMO Jim Ward			IMO Dan Kiley	Laurie Moody & Randy Olson
Pat & Ann Burckart				IHO Shawn Moody
				Rob & Virginia Moore



Lesa Moose  
 Lyle Moose  
 IMO Diane Moose  
 Cici Mueller  
 Donald & Connie Nagel  
 Mary Jo Nordheim  
 Randy & Patty Nordheim  
 Dr. Kenneth & Sharon  
 Olson  
 IMO Joyce & Rudy  
 Olson  
 John & Becky O'Neill  
 Ernie & Donnalee  
 Osland  
 Mary Anne Otting  
 IMO Caryn Weymiller  
 Jacqueline Owen  
 Anonymous  
 Greg & Marlene Palmer  
 JoAnn Peake  
 Scott & Diane Pederson  
 IMO Joanne Lier  
 Dr. Craig & Deb Phipps  
 Greg & Rosie Piggott  
 Sandra Pladsen –  
 Pladsen Farms  
 IMO Roger Pladsen  
 Tess Pladsen  
 IMO Arlyn Pladsen  
 Dave & Gail Prestemon  
 Richard & Melodye  
 Protsman  
 IMO Milbourn &  
 Marcella Johnson  
 Roger & Mary Quandahl  
 Anonymous  
 Henry Ralph  
 James Ranum & Mary  
 Milewsky  
 Diane Regan  
 IMO Jacob Regan  
 Shari Reicks  
 IMO James "Jim"  
 Reicks  
 Kevin & Tara Reinhardt  
 Elaine Reiser  
 IMO Dale Reiser  
 Anonymous  
 Annette Robbins  
 Ann Roed  
 Rod & Sandy Ronan  
 IMO George &  
 Sharon Wood  
 IMO John & Betty  
 Ronan  
 Lorraine Rud

Roger & Jeanette  
 Ruegnitz  
 IMO Alex Ruegnitz  
 Berle & Diane Sandefur  
 Anonymous  
 Anonymous  
 Wayne & Nona Sawyer  
 Kathy Schacht  
 Meg Schaller  
 IMO Mary Ward  
 Shane & Stephanie  
 Schellsmidt  
 David & Denise  
 Schmelzer  
 Nancy Schoh  
 IMO Leon & Jane  
 Schoh  
 Ruby Schoh  
 Dan & Mary Scholtes  
 Tom & Caroll Schreiber  
 Margie Schulte  
 IMO Michael H.  
 Schulte  
 Anonymous  
 David & Jean  
 Schweinfus  
 Rhonda Seibert  
 IMO Richard Bloxham  
 Keith & Patricia Selberg  
 Jim & Marcia Sewick  
 Jon & Nancy Snitker  
 IMO Chantel Snitker  
 Anonymous  
 Ron & Terese Snitker  
 Ted & Lisa Snitker  
 Cletus & Sandi Sommer  
 IMO Ralph, Ileen &  
 Tim Sweeney  
 Joel & Teresa Sommer  
 IMO Eugene Oesterle  
 Karen Soper  
 Dennis & Chris Soride  
 Anonymous  
 IMO Jerre Jean  
 Henthorn  
 Anonymous  
 IMO Jerre Jean  
 Henthorn  
 Gordon & Shirley  
 Steffenson  
 Ken & Judy Steiber  
 Anonymous  
 Stan & Mary Straate  
 Marvin & Marjorie Strike  
 Jeffrey & Rae Swartz  
 Diane Sweeney

Jerry Sweeney  
 Margo Sweeney  
 IMO James E.  
 Sweeney  
 Bob Tayek  
 Jane Tepesch  
 IMO Bill Tepesch  
 Steve & Marueen Thode  
 Anonymous  
 Tom & Lynn Thomson  
 Anonymous  
 IMO Lawrence "Larry"  
 Gavin  
 Bruce & Sue Torkelson  
 Betty Troendle  
 Anonymous  
 Brandon Urmanski  
 VFW Auxiliary 4117  
 Chuck & Lois Votsmier  
 IMO Agnes Klas  
 Anonymous  
 Waukon State Bank  
 Wayne & Shelley Weber  
 IMO Lawrence &  
 Joyce Weber  
 Anonymous  
 Kevin & Teri Welsh  
 IMO MacKay Mathis  
 & Weston Jones  
 Ken & Charlene West  
 Jackie Westby  
 IMO Lyle Westby  
 Donald Weymiller  
 Frank & Jean Ann  
 Weymiller  
 IMO Caryn Weymiller  
 Ross & Morgan  
 Weymiller  
 Ray Whalen  
 Anonymous  
 Betty White  
 Jean Ann Wild  
 Anonymous  
 IMO MacKay Mathis  
 Barb Wilkes  
 Gary Williams  
 IMO Erma Williams  
 Jim & Mary Winters  
 Les & JoAnn Winters  
 IMO Ronald "Ronnie"  
 Jahnke  
 Chris Wonderlich  
 IMO Nancy  
 Wonderlich  
 Alvin & Betty Yoder  
 Nick & Deb Zuercher

## Surgery Lights Purchased Thanks to Successful 2023 Campaign!



The Veterans Memorial Health Care Foundation thanks all of the numerous donors to the 2023 direct mail campaign, raising over \$35,000. These generous donations purchased the new lighting system in our Surgery Suite. Our Surgery Suite is utilized almost every day of the week with general surgeries, endoscopies, cesarean sections, podiatry surgeries, cataract surgeries and now the addition of pain clinic procedures with Shawn Blake.

The new lighting system has been advantageous for all procedures performed in Surgery. Jessica Jones, Surgery Manager states, "We love our new surgical lights! These lights give us the ability to change settings according to the specific surgery we are performing and are much lighter and easier to maneuver where we need them. Visualization during surgery is key and these lights have enhanced our ability to perform higher-quality surgery. We greatly appreciate all of the generous donations that helped purchase these."

*Surgery staff are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for emergency surgeries. This new lighting system is crucial to all of the services our physicians and staff provide in the surgical suite. Again, we thank you for your generous support!*

DONATE

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TO VMHCF

Veterans Memorial Health Care Foundation  
Welcomes You to Make Your Electronic  
Donations Online through **PAYPAL**.

Go to [www.veteransmemorialhospital.com](http://www.veteransmemorialhospital.com)  
Click on **Donate to the Foundation**





## Birthing Services Testimonial



"As an employee of VMH, I get to see first hand how attentive and knowledgeable our staff are, but I haven't had the opportunity to be the patient until having our daughter in July. I cannot recommend the OB services at VMH enough! From my ultrasounds, my clinic visits, lab tests, to my delivery. We had the best experience all around and especially want to thank our nurses and Dr. Schwartz, our provider, for the exceptional care that we received as we welcomed a new addition to our family."

**HEIDI RYAN**

*Pictured at left: Heidi and Devin Ryan of Waukon with their newborn daughter, Reese*

# Waukon Clinic Earns Patient-Centered Medical Home Accreditation

The Compliance Team Accreditation Organization recently granted our Waukon Clinic the Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) certification. PCMH is a measured continuous quality improvement program that incorporates patient-centered practice guidelines, focusing on day-to-day practice operations and emphasizing health maintenance, preventative screening, multi-specialty medical services, patient experience reporting and bench-marking.

### **The benefits to YOU, the patient, include:**

- Increased level of patient engagement.
- Improved outcomes.
- Better management of chronic care patients.
- Decreased ER and inpatient utilization.
- Improved patient experience and satisfaction.

If you are 65 or older, we are now asking you to fill out a needs assessment form, asking about your health and if you have the resources and all-around support you need.

### **Chronic Care Management**

We are also beginning our Chronic Care management program, helping traditional Medicare patients with two or

more chronic diseases to better manage their care with our new Patient Navigator. The Patient Navigator will help aid in managing your chronic diseases and ensuring you get the care you need when you need it. This preventive care will keep you healthy and out of the hospital and emergency room.

Those with two or more of the following chronic diseases qualify, for example, but are not limited to:

- Diabetes
- Hyperlipidemia
- Heart Disease
- Kidney Failure
- Behavioral Health (including any diagnosis that needs management of medications and frequent medical oversight).

We are passionate about YOU, our patients! These programs give us the stamp of approval that we are doing everything we can for YOU!

**For more information or to make an appointment at the Veterans Memorial Hospital Waukon Clinic, call us at 563-568-5530.**





# BIRTHING SERVICES TEAM

at  
*Veterans  
Memorial  
Hospital*



David Schwartz,  
MD



Halie Ruff,  
NP



Katy Maker, Nurse  
Midwife & Family NP

**CALL VMH**  
Waukon  
Medical Clinic  
(563) 568-5530  
or Postville  
Medical Clinic  
(563) 864-7221



## CHOOSE SWING BED SKILLED CARE!

After a recent hospitalization, Dona Peck of Postville was offered to continue her stay on swing bed skilled care to help her recover and grow stronger before returning home, and she is so glad she did!

"I had suffered from pancreatitis and a hiatal hernia and needed to rebuild my strength and my diet before going back home. Dr. Schwartz suggested I stay in the hospital in swing bed skilled care for therapy so I could get stronger. I had heard the term 'swing bed' but didn't know what the difference was from a regular bed. I found out it is a wonderful service.

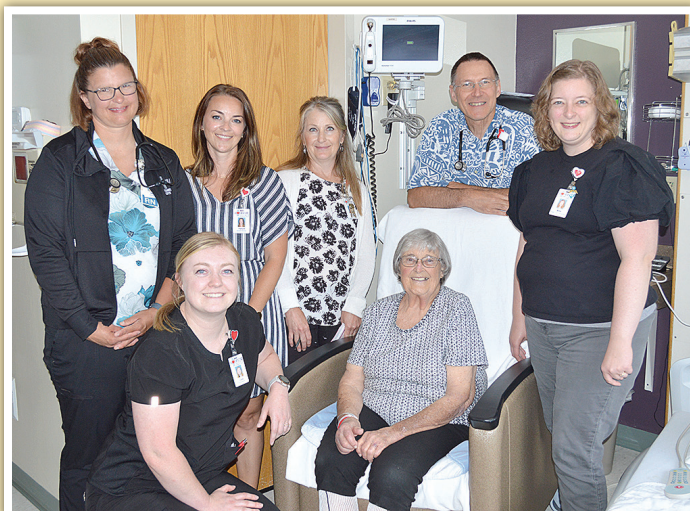
Brad was my therapist and I called him 'The Slave Driver!' He made me work hard and does a very good job.

I met with the dietitian, Brandy, and she has helped me through all of the diet changes I needed to make. Her staff worked hard to make much of my food from scratch to meet all of my diet requirements. You know they are excellent cooks when they can make special foods taste so good!

All the medical people, from doctors to nurses to C.N.A.s to dietitians, all listen to what you say and are ready to help with whatever it is. The feeling of family is so evident.

Even though you want to be home, you are apprehensive about how well you will transition. The swing bed covers all of that, so you know how to handle your own care when you do get home. That takes a big load off your shoulders.

I would encourage anyone offered a swing bed to take advantage of it. It is a step in the right direction and gives you



*Dona Peck of Postville with some of her care team at Veterans Memorial Hospital. Pictured left to right: Deb Zurcher, RN; Lyvia Hosch, Pharmacist (in front); Tatum Iverson, Social Worker; Brandy Strub, Dietitian; Dr. Dave Schwartz; and Erin O'Neill, Health Unit Coordinator.*

confidence.

This hospital is just fantastic! I cannot say enough about the family atmosphere, the great care, excellent meals and cleanliness. Thank you so much, VMH!!"

**Remember to always ASK your provider if Swing Bed Skilled Care could be an option for you!**

Infusion Supervisor at Veterans Memorial Hospital. "Our staff will work with you and your primary care provider to manage your pain. Shawn will help you explore alternative, advanced methods to managing your pain to get you the relief you need."

Shawn has been providing Chronic Pain Management services since 2019. He states, "I enjoy treating patients whose pain has greatly affected their day-to-day activities. Helping those suffering regain their lives back is very fulfilling for me personally and professionally." He explains, "Since I grew up in Allamakee County, I have always wanted to bring a service to my hometown that has been unfortunately lacking for many years. Working with patients at Regional Health Services of Howard County, I am constantly reminded of the burden placed on patients in pain that need to travel to receive these vital services. I am happy to now be doing this locally."

Anyone who has been dealing with chronic pain and would like to set up an appointment with this new Pain Management Clinic, please talk with your primary care provider, physical or occupational therapist, or chiropractor, and ask for a referral to be sent to Veterans Memorial Hospital. Once we receive your referral information, our Infusion Supervisor will reach out to you and get you scheduled!



Shawn Blake, CRNA, pictured with Abby Dornath, Infusion Supervisor and Pat Daigle, RN of the Infusion and Outpatient Clinic.



Shawn Blake, CRNA, inside the surgery suite where many of these procedures will take place, pictured with surgery RN, Robyn Hirth.

When non-invasive methods of improving your pain are not giving you adequate relief, there are more advanced options our team can use. These advanced options include:

#### ● TRIGGER POINT INJECTIONS:

This procedure is based on targeting painful areas of the muscle that contain trigger points, or knots, that form when muscles do not relax. During this procedure, the provider uses small needles to inject a local numbing medication into a trigger point. Sometimes a steroid medication is also injected into the trigger point(s). By injecting medication into that trigger point, it is made inactive, and pain is alleviated. Sometimes repeat treatments are needed in order to gain a longer period of relief.

#### ● FLUOROSCOPIC JOINT INJECTIONS:

This procedure uses contrast and a special imaging device to help provide a more direct look at your joints or muscles and aid the provider in delivering the medication directly into the source of your pain. Be sure to talk with the pain management team if you have an allergy to contrast dye, as this procedure does require the use of contrast.

#### ● IMAGE-GUIDED NERVE BLOCKS:

This therapy uses contrast and a special imaging device called a C-arm to allow for direct administration of pain medications around the spine where nerves might be compressed or aggravated.

#### ● FACET INJECTIONS:

Injections of pain medication or steroids that are given in the facet joints of the spine to help reduce or alleviate back or neck pain.

Veterans  
Memorial Hospital  
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Be Using  
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All of our departments are currently working hard to transfer our electronic health records to the **EPIC system**, thanks to the assistance of the University of Iowa Hospital and Health Systems. This new system will go live 2025! Now, if you are seen by a provider outside of VMH, they will be able to easily access all of your local records. **Be watching for detailed information explaining how to sign in to your new MyCart account for immediate access to your health and billing information, anytime!**



# ***ASK* to have your FOOT CARE LOCALLY!**

"Dr. Sullivan of the Gundersen Clinic stated I needed foot surgery and asked where I would like to have it. I said, 'How about Waukon?' and he said, 'That works for me!'" explains Arlen Wonderlich of Lansing following his foot surgery at Veterans Memorial Hospital this summer. "We got it all scheduled and everything was on time. Surgery was scheduled for 9am, so we arrived at 8am, and it went like clockwork. The discharge later that day was perfect, too."

"My instructions as his caregiver were to watch the amount of bleeding and if there was a lot, I was to call," explains Arlen's wife, Karlene. "Well, about 8pm, I saw a large amount of blood, so I called and the surgical nurse called me right back. She offered to meet me at the hospital right away, but Arlen said he didn't think it was that bad, and we would come in tomorrow. So I took a photo of the spot on his foot, sent it to her, and she confirmed it could wait until we came back in the next morning, so we did. She came in on that Saturday, her day off, and took great care of him."

"I was supposed to go back and see him two weeks later for a follow-up and get the pin removed. Again, Dr. Sullivan met me in Waukon for that procedure, fitting it into his schedule before he left on vacation," adds Arlen. "The hospital made it possible to have it done in surgery, under anesthesia, even with our tight schedule, and it healed up very well."

"The surgery staff was outstanding. I shared with them that Dr. Sullivan told us he loved to come to Waukon and the surgery staff all said they loved to have Dr. Sullivan come here as well," adds Karlene. "Veterans Memorial Hospital is always so accommodating. Also this



*Arlen & Karlene Wonderlich*

summer I had a cartilage tear in my knee and our local Lansing Gundersen Clinic provider said she was going to get me in that same afternoon for an MRI in Waukon. I thought, 'Yeah, right. It always takes weeks to get those scheduled.' But an hour later, I was having my MRI at Veterans Memorial Hospital. When I got there, they were waiting for me at the door."

## *Podiatrist* **Dr. Kristina Thompson**

Dr. Thompson is available every Monday and Wednesday for podiatric medicine and wound care right here at Veterans Memorial Hospital. She also provides minor surgeries and has a special interest in the treatment of diabetes and preventing diabetes-related complications in the feet.

Dr. Thompson also provides nail care to those who qualify. Patients who have systemic diseases such as diabetes, vascular disease, chronic kidney disease, or neuropathy qualify for nail care under Medicare. Those who have nail fungus, which causes pain, also qualify for toe nail care. For patients who don't qualify, Dr. Thompson offers a cash payment service of \$75.

Dr. Thompson works collaboratively with the Gundersen Podiatry physicians, including Dr. Greg Valkosky and Dr. Craig Sullivan of Gundersen Health, who also visit Waukon performing podiatry surgical procedures at the hospital.

"It is extremely satisfying to help a patient heal so they can have an improved quality of life. We have a great team of professionals here at VMH to help a patient succeed. Together we can offer a wide range of podiatric care and surgery right here at home!"

**To make an appointment with Dr. Thompson, please call the Veterans Memorial Hospital Surgical Coordinator at 563-568-3411.**



*"It is extremely satisfying to help a patient heal so they can have an improved quality of life. We have a great team of professionals here at VMH to help a patient succeed. Together we can offer a wide range of podiatric care and surgery right here at home!"*



# Be Your Own Advocate...

## ASK FOR LOCAL TREATMENTS!

Nancy Leiran of Waukon learned she needed to be her own advocate and ask, sometimes numerous times, to have many of her treatments right here at Veterans Memorial Hospital, close to home. Thanks to her persistence, permission was granted, which has saved her many miles and a lot of precious time.

Nancy was diagnosed with breast cancer in April of 2023 and is a breast cancer survivor. Her chemotherapy treatments required her to receive a shot the day after each one of her treatments and she did not want to spend the time or energy traveling all the way back to La Crosse for only a 15-minute appointment. So she ASKED if it could be given in Waukon.

"Whenever I had a chemo treatment, I had to have this shot the day after. I asked if it could be done here because no one wants to drive over an hour away again the next day just for a quick shot. So I asked if I could use our hospital. They did check into it for me and found out I could use VMH! I had all of those shots administered here, and it was really nice and convenient."

Nancy also needed regular labs prior to all of her oncology appointments and also inquired about having those locally instead. "I found out I could have them all done



*Nancy Leiran seated with her Infusion Team.  
At left is Abby Dornath, Infusion Supervisor, with Callie Thorson, RN,  
and Carly O'Neill, RN, at right.*

through my local hospital, which was awesome! I could just run over to the hospital during my lunch break or before or after work, and they were always great to work with my schedule. They always made it fit. They were so accommodating."

After finishing up with her chemotherapy treatments, Nancy was placed on a maintenance drug to help reduce her risk of future cancer. With that comes an infusion medication every 24 weeks and once again she had to inquire about receiving that locally. This time she had to ask three different times to get the answer. The first of these infusions had to be given in La Crosse so they could watch for any possible reactions.

"I had called them to see if I could have these infusions in Waukon. Then, following this first infusion, I asked my scheduler if I could get this done in Waukon from then on. She said no, that they have never scheduled anyone down here for it, so she didn't think I could. I asked her to please check or to give me my procedure number, and I would be happy to check into it myself. But then, when my oncology nurse called to check on me and ask if there was anything else she could do for me, I said, Yes! I explained I wanted to have this infusion done in my hometown of Waukon. She checked for me and connected with the hospital's pharmacy, who said, Yes, I could have it given in Waukon!"

"I had already missed so much time from work that I asked Abby, the Infusion Supervisor, if I could have this infusion on a Saturday so I would have a couple days to recover before going back to work. Abby talked to the pharmacist to make sure that would work and they made the accommodations. I came in on a Saturday and nurses Carly O'Neill and Callie Thorson helped me and got it administered. From now on, I will be able to do this on a Friday afternoon during their regular infusion hours."

"They were very helpful and easy to talk to. I just appreciated it so much. It is just so much nicer to stay local. Doing the labs and these things in your own backyard instead of driving so far, especially during the winter months, is priceless. Parking is so much more convenient and quick, plus we like to support our local hospital. You want it there when you need it!"

"I had great community support, including driving me to my many appointments, but it was so nice to not have to ask anyone to take me to my shot and infusion appointments, too. I learned you have to be your own advocate for your health care—if you're not, no one else will be. That is what is best for you. And it is so much easier to do it locally!"

### POPULAR INFUSION SERVICES AT VMH INCLUDE:

**IV Antibiotic Therapy, Anti-Inflammatory and Steroid Therapy, Blood Transfusions, Iron Therapy, Hydration and Electrolyte Replacement, Medication Injections, Port Care, PICC Line Care, Etc.**

All are Administered by Skilled Registered Nurses.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

on receiving infusion services locally,  
please contact the  
**Infusion Center at Veterans Memorial  
Hospital 563-568-3411, Ext. 155.**



# Veterans Memorial Hospital

Founded 1950

## HOSPITAL HISTORY - Betty Hogan



*Pictured is Betty, seated, with an electrical brain stimulation hat on during nursing training.*

Betty Hogan, RN, remembers sitting for her two-day nursing exam in the month of May, then harassing her mail man, Don Easley, at the mail box for the next three months until her license finally arrived! When she learned she had passed her Registered Nurse certification, she first worked at the Prairie du Chien hospital. A few years later, when she called Veterans Memorial Hospital to apply, she was hired on the spot.

She explains, "There was a new law in 1981 that stated intensive care units had to be manned by an RN, so VMH was hiring them. I don't even think I interviewed; I just called and they said 'YES!' Intensive Care was a relatively new service and they had designated rooms 209 and 211 for it. I loved it, and along with working in the emergency room—they were my two favorite places to work. It was just a joy! I was so fortunate I could be a nurse.

The Intensive Care Unit was all hands-on. The nurse did a tremendous amount because there was no doctor there on hand... you had to keep that patient alive until they got there. I soon became the Intensive Care Supervisor.

CPR was mouth-to-mouth back then. I can remember the ambulance bringing in a patient who had coded, so we started CPR. He had obviously just put a chew of tobacco in his mouth before he coded, and it spit right back out at me. So I spit it out and kept going! CPR brought so many people back. I am still a strong believer in it.

A few years later, I became House Supervisor. Jackie Wennes was our Director of Nursing at the time. She kept things lively and knew her stuff! We had a fantastic ambulance crew who were so dedicated—Bob Burrett and Chuck Pettingill are two I remember well—they really gave so much more to the job. One day we had three codes in the same day. Chuck was bringing in the second code when he actually coded himself, but he survived! Things always happened in threes.

We were all good friends, even with the police, sheriffs, and highway patrol departments. They would bring a patient in or stop in after a traffic accident and stick around to help. They always made sure we were safe before they left.

I remember you could eat off our floors! Shirley O'Hara and her housekeeping staff kept that place so clean. The food was

always excellent. Cookies were always a special treat.

When I became the Director of Nursing, it was just a fluke. When Jackie resigned, the Administrator, Kip Ewen, put me in as interim director. Well, I never thought I was going to be the director, but it turned out it was the best job I ever had! I loved doing budget and supporting my staff. I loved all of them. If they had a hard IV to put in or needed an extra hand on the floor, they called me to help. But they only called me when they really needed me because they knew once they called I would hang around since I just loved working with the patients so much.

Our physicians were all good. When we were first in nursing school, we were told to open the door for the doctor, to get up and let them sit down in our chairs, and if they said something we didn't agree with, we were to never argue with them. Our way to get around that was to just talk to another doctor about the problem!

I can remember one very colorful surgeon who called me B.H. He had quite a tendency to swear at my girls! I would tell him I had to have a talk with him, and he would say, 'Oh, B.H., what did I do now?' We did not tolerate him being abusive. He was a traveling surgeon, and we did not put up with that, but he had great expertise and always came whenever needed.

Initially, when I became the Director, all nursing uniforms were white. I thought a nurse deserved to wear white as their badge so patients knew who they were. If they had a wrinkle or a run in their hose, I let them know. When they came to me and asked to wear scrubs, I said 'no' because I thought scrubs looked like an unmade bed—always wrinkled. We played with the idea for about six months until I finally gave in, as long as there were no wrinkles, they kept them ironed, and they only wore darker colors. I warned if I saw a wrinkle, it was done, but I was a nurse at a different time.

After I left the Director of Nursing position in the late '90s, I went to work at the Mayo Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit in Rochester. Whenever we would get a patient transferred in from Waukon, I knew they would be well cared for with great IVs in place. VMH was the best at properly transferring patients.

I then finished my career as the Mayo Clinic Manager in Waukon and Prairie du Chien. It was not as fun as the hospital work because it was not hands-on, but I could still do my budgeting and support a great staff. I thought the world of every one of them!

Nursing is the BEST occupation in the world! I worked with the best of the best and I was blessed to do something I thoroughly loved. I would still be a nurse today if my body allowed!"



*Betty's nursing graduation photo.*



# MEDICAL STAFF

Dave Schwartz, MD  
Thomas McMullan, MD  
Susan McMillan, ARNP  
Halie Ruff, ARNP  
Minji Na, ARNP  
Alex Berns, ARNP  
Katy Maker, ARNP, CNM  
Tara Fink, PMHNP  
William Specht, ARNP (ER)  
Becky Krambeer, ARNP (ER)  
Robert Giese, PA (ER)  
John Kelly, ARNP (ER)  
Raquel Ristau, PA  
Chelsey Sherburne, ARNP  
Laura Keatley, ARNP  
Katy Grangaard, ARNP  
Mathew Snitker, ARNP  
Sherri Schilling, MD  
Catherine Nelson, MD

#### Ophthalmology

Robert Funk, MD

#### Optometry

Morgan Smerud, OD

#### Pain Clinic

Shawn Blake, CRNA

#### Cardiology

Gundersen Cardiologists

#### Pathology

Gundersen Pathologists

#### Radiology

Gundersen Radiologists

#### Surgery

Phillip Yee, MD  
Chris Winters, MD  
Michael LaBelle, MD  
Elleson Shurtz, MD

#### Dentistry

Jessica Wilke, DDS

#### Podiatry

Kristina Thompson, DPM  
Greg Valkosky, DPM  
Craig Sullivan, DPM  
Brooke Tappe, DPM

#### Anesthesiology

Mark Bishop, CRNA  
Skip Loebig, CRNA  
Shawn Blake, CRNA

#### Sleep Study

Courtney Whitney, DO  
Adriana Escandon Sandino, MD

#### Telemedicine Services

ER Telehealth  
Telepsyche  
Telestroke  
NeoNet  
Pediatric Critical Care

Veterans Memorial Hospital  
40 First St. SE  
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Practitioner**  
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*"Minji was ABSOLUTELY incredible. My daughter has severe anxiety about her ears and Minji was incredibly understanding, walking through every step of what she thought would work. My daughter left there with complete ease. She has fully earned her trust."*

### Clinic Hours

#### WAUKON CLINIC

563-568-5530

105 E. MAIN ST.

MON. 7AM-7PM

TUE. 8AM-7PM

WED. 8AM-7PM

THU. 7:30AM-7PM

FRI. 8AM-5PM

#### POSTVILLE CLINIC

563-864-7221

124 W. GREENE ST.

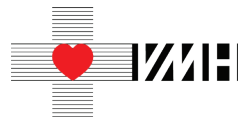
MON. 8AM-4:30PM

TUE. 8AM-4:30PM

WED. 8AM-4:30PM

THU. 8AM-4:30PM

FRI. 8AM-4:30PM



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**MISSION:** VMH enhances the lives of those we serve by providing an exceptional healthcare experience with compassion.

**VISION:** VMH will be a premier health facility and a leader in fostering a healthy community through innovation, excellence, stewardship, and commitment to the people we serve throughout their lifetime.



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