



# Pocahontas Community Hospital

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Pocahontas Community Hospital

# HEALTH LINE



[www.pocahontashospital.org](http://www.pocahontashospital.org)

Spring 2008

## News and Notes from the Administrator



*James Roetman, Administrator*

I have to admit, that I am usually glad to begin writing my article for the spring newsletter, and this year was no exception. In my mind and I am sure in most of yours, it feels like this past winter has lasted forever. If you look back, starting with our first snowfall up to our last snowfall, which occurred on March 31<sup>st</sup>,

winter was pretty close to being six months long! I know that most of us live in Iowa because we really enjoy the change of seasons, however, let's all hope that the seasons continue to change a little more often! Speaking of change, we have experienced a few changes at the Pocahontas Community Hospital since our last newsletter was published.

In January, the hospital's Board of Trustees decided to pursue the possibility of providing 24 hour a day 7 days a week coverage in our emergency room. At that time, the hospital was paying for full time services on weekends and from 5pm and 7am on weekdays. The local providers were covering the week day shifts at no charge to the hospital. There were three main reasons that caused us to start looking into full time coverage. The first reason was that it was getting almost impossible to find physicians to drive to Pocahontas and cover one 12 hour shift in the middle of the night, the second reason was that with the increased utilization of our emergency room, the physicians were having a hard time meeting their needs in their clinic while at the same time trying to meet our needs in the ER. The third and probably most important reason why a change was needed was because it will act as an incentive as we recruit a physician. Most family practice providers appreciate the ability to practice medicine in their clinic without the added pressure of covering the emergency room in the local hospital. On February 1<sup>st</sup>, the change was made and this facility officially had an ER that was staffed by a physician on a full time basis. Over the last two months this has proven to be a win-win situation for not only the local physicians, but also the hospital. Having physicians present in our facility has without a doubt shortened waiting times but more importantly improved the throughput of the patient to ensure that diagnosis and treatment can be provided in the most efficient manner.

You will also begin to notice over the next few weeks that our specialty clinic will be missing a few physicians who have been

servicing this facility. Dr. Raval, from Fort Dodge, will no longer be holding a Neurology Clinic; he has decided to move his practice to another state. Our Rheumatology Clinic, which was staffed by Dr. Pattanaik, will also be closing; he has decided to move closer to home to care for an ailing family member. The Pulmonology Clinic will also need to close for a while, Dr. Meyer, because of the resignation of one of his partners, will be forced to work out of Fort Dodge office only due to the needs of the hospital in Fort Dodge. Trinity Regional Medical Center is fully committed to filling these vacancies and hopefully sometime soon will be reopening these clinics that you as a patient have come to expect. I would also like to take a minute and remind you that when you travel to Fort Dodge or any other healthcare facility, that you still have the right to get your procedures done at the hospital of your choice. If you are now required to go to Fort Dodge to see one of the specialists who for the time being can not come here, please remind their staff that you would like to have your exams done here in Pocahontas. This will not only save you from making another trip to Fort Dodge, but it will also ensure that you will continue to get the same quality of care that you have come to expect from the Pocahontas Community Hospital. In closing I would like to once again thank you for your overwhelming support of this facility and that if you have any question related to our emergency room, outpatient clinic, or facility in general to please give me a call at 712-335-5224. Have a great summer!!!!

## Relay For Life



Misit Rierson, radiologist tech and Mary Brandt, RN again are readying their team for the annual Relay For Life which will be held Friday, June 6th at Elbert Park in Pocahontas. An omelet breakfast is planned at the Pocahontas elementary gym on Sunday, April 13th from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. as a fund-raiser for this event. If anyone is interested in becoming a committee member or registering a team this year, please contact either Misti or Mary.

## Easter Egg Hunt Basket Donation



Holding the two Easter baskets for the annual Easter Egg hunt are Connie Schachtner - Administrative Assistant and Janet Blankenhagen - Business Office & Health Information Clerk. The Pocahontas Service Club holds an annual Easter egg hunt each year and the hospital was ready to help their cause.

### *Hospital Cookbooks For Sale*

There are still hospital cookbooks for sale at the business office, these would make great shower or graduation gifts at \$12.00 each.

## Calendar of Events

- April**
- 10 9:30 a.m. Five Wishes presented at the Pocahontas Manor
- 16 Noon to 6 p.m. Blood Drive at Expo
- 27 to May 3 Volunteer Appreciation Week
- May**
- 5 & 6 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Volunteer Training/Hospice
- 11- 17 Hospital Week
- June**
- 11 Noon to 6 p.m. Blood Drive at Expo, Noon

## Endowment Receives Donation



The Pocahontas Healthcare Foundation received a \$25,000 check from Jim & Marge Lampe which was used to create an Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund was established to help insure continuation of quality care for the areas that the Pocahontas Hospital serves.

## Employee of the Quarter



Our first quarter of 2008 winner of the "Employee of the Quarter" award went to Dan Paulsen. Dan is the EMS Coordinator and purchasing manager. He was chosen by employees who felt that he is committed to the care of our patients, very positive and friendly, always accommodating and showed excellent standards of behavior. Dan received a "Star Performer" pin, Poky Bucks and a gift certificate for a large pizza from the

Pizza Ranch. His picture will be hung in the hallway by the business office. Congratulations Dan and good luck to the next nominees!

## Little Visitors Come To Hospital

Again this year, the preschool class accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Baade and Mrs. Peterson and several parents, came to the hospital to tour the many departments. Students looked through the microscopes, checked out an x-ray, tried out an ambulance cot, received Band-Aids from the nurses, blue hair nets and treats from the dietary department and asked many questions from the other specialty departments. The staff at the hospital is always excited to receive such special little visitors.



Pictured is Reed Fritz son of Kyra Fritz – lab manager, Taelyn Blankenhagen daughter of Janet Blankenhagen – health information & business office clerk and Madison Bunda daughter of Carrie Bunda – RN in Home Health & Hospice.



Pictured is Preston Spooner grandson of Deb Bevins – business office & health information clerk, Liv Allen daughter of Amanda Allen – radiology tech and Luke Crosgrove son of Mary Crosgrove – dietary & housekeeping manager.

## New employees



**Deb Bevins**  
Business Office &  
Health Information



**Megan Spangler**  
Home Health &  
Hospice Secretary

*Also:*

Dan Brownfield – EMT student & driver

Kendra Walker – Ambulance Driver

## Red Day



To show support for National Wear Red Day, Mary Brandt, RN at Pocahontas Hospital rallied workers to wear something red on Friday, Feb. 1st. Staff members wore either a red item of clothes or adorned a 'red dress' pin that Mary provided to everyone in the hospital and clinic. The day of wearing red was to raise awareness of the fact that heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women, and that it can be often prevented.

## Hospital becomes emergency shelter during winter storm

On Tues., Jan. 29th, Ole' Man Winter came to visit the area and created some serious challenges to travelers. One such challenge was the closure of Hwy 3 east of the city due to multiple traffic accidents that prevented travel into or out of Pocahontas. Several employees of the hospital remained at the facility because they were uncertain if they could make it home, or more importantly, unsure if they could make it back to the hospital the next day. There were also patients and family members that remained at the hospital because traveling home would have been dangerous. Additionally, there were travelers that were attempting to simply pass through our city who ended up needing a safe place to wait out the storm. PCH staff used a team approach to respond to this crisis, everyone pitched in to help make this situation better. The Dietary department provided plenty of hot food and beverages, and all other staff made certain that everyone had a safe, warm and comfortable place to stay.

## EMS Week in May



The Pocahontas Hospital Emergency Medical personnel will celebrate EMS week on May 18 – 24th. The theme for 2008 is "Your Life is Our Mission." This statement was chosen to recognize the commitment that emergency medical personnel make to the communities they serve. This dedication to their mission provides round-the-clock care to communities across the nation. To bring further awareness to the community, the ambulance group will be holding a pancake breakfast with many other entities included sometime in May – please watch your paper or the hospital's website for more information. Pictured, front row: Jamie Kaufman, Missy Zuetlau, Pam Miller, Jamie Ferguson. Back: John Trewyn, Greg Ahlrichs, Dan Paulsen - EMS Director, Jeff Shearer

## New CT scanner



PCH recently added the 16 slice SOMATOM® EMOTION CT scanner to their radiology department. The new CT scanner improves diagnosis and treatment of patients and provides the finest image quality while reducing X-ray dose to the patient. Its innovative design provides optimal patient comfort by eliminating the closed-in feeling that patient's sometime associate with CT scanning. The new scanner provides outstanding diagnostic information by enabling them to perform Multi-slice CT on a routine basis with a scan of geriatric, pediatric and trauma patients in a single breath hold, which results in a more accurate diagnosis while also reducing examination. Pictured above is Deb Roberts, Nicki Bunda, Amanda Allen and Misti Rierson.

## Congratulations!



Dan Paulsen and John Trewyn recently received certification that will enable them to train law enforcement, fire and EMS personnel in EVOC (emergency vehicle operator course). The course they will teach will include 16 hours of class time and a drivers ed class that will certify the participants for proper handling of emergency vehicles.



## Nursing skills update



During March fourteen RN's and one Nurse Practitioner successfully completed the Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) course. In addition the nursing staff attended and participated in an Emergency Skills Review utilizing the training manikin "Bob" that was purchased with a grant from the Pocahontas County Foundation last year. PALS is a course to aid the healthcare providers in developing the knowledge and skills necessary to recognize and prevent cardiopulmonary arrest in infants and children to efficiently and effectively manage critically ill infants and children, resulting in improved outcomes. The staff is required to repeat the course every 2 years to update and maintain their skills. The staff completing the PALS course for the first time were: Joan Reicks, Susie Aden, Jenny Benna, Tera Vogel, Mary Brandt and Angie Hansen. Donna Stall, Erin Peterson, Peg Jensen, Laurie Point, Holly Bindel, Peg Sones, Tracey Buenting and Deb Ripperger and Nurse Practitioner Tonja Anderson completed the recertification requirement.

## Outpatient Satisfaction Survey – Striving for Excellence

PCH has been tracking our outpatient satisfaction scores since Sept 2005. Below is a chart that shows how well we are doing. The percentile ranking tells us the proportion of scores in the data base which fall below our individual facility's score. For example, a percentile rank of 96 means we scored higher than 96% of the facilities in the data base and scored lower than 4% of the facilities in the data base. The number of facilities in the data base has continued to grow from 675 in 2005 to 844 in 2008. The survey information is very helpful to the staff by letting us know opportunities for improvement.

