



# Landscapes and Portraits In Health

## AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

A topic of frequent discussion today is the high cost of health insurance for consumers and the fact that we spend almost 20% of our total GNP as a nation on healthcare. Most experts say this rate of spending on healthcare is not sustainable and that the growth in spending on Medicare is already at unsustainable levels. However, like most social and political problems today, there is a lot of talk and no action.

The high cost of health coverage for employees at McCurtain Memorial Hospital was addressed in 2005 after spending almost \$1 million on claims for our employees in 2004. Since we are self-insured, the \$1 million came right out of our bank account to pay doctors, hospital and other providers that our employees used. There was no third party paying the bill. We signed the front of every check drawn on

our account. During 2005, that amount increased to \$1.2 million while our solution was put in place. However, since then we have reduced our annual expenditure on claims by almost 40%. 2008 is projected to be at \$730,000.00 or a \$480,000.00 saving over 2005 levels. Is there something that perhaps the Federal Government could learn here? We believe there is.

As a part of our Health and Wellness program at McCurtain Memorial Hospital, employees who elect to participate are required to take part in our 'wellness testing' every three months. The tests are free of charge and conducted during the employees working hours at the hospital. The testing is open to all employees but only those who are

involved in our health plan are eligible to receive financial rewards.

The 'wellness testing' is designed to give feedback to employees regarding their lifestyle habits and changes they need to focus on for better health. There are a total of six criteria used to assess



**WELLNESS TESTING**  
Tom Williston,  
Environmental Services &  
Redeana Barcus, Laboratory

the wellness of our employees as follows: (1) must be tobacco free; (2) must have a Body Mass Index (BMI) within the normal range for their height and weight; (3) must have a lipid profile panel measuring cholesterol equal to or less than 200; (4) must have triglycerides level less than or equal to 200; (5) must have a glucose level less than or equal to 110; (6) must have

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"Our wellness program pays dividends not only in reducing our out-of-pocket costs, since we are self-insured, it also increases our productivity. Further, employees who feel better project a better image to our customers and do a much better job with their customer relations." said Brit Messer, CEO, McCurtain Memorial Hospital



*Working for a Healthier Community*

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## HERE WE GO AGAIN

A recent congressional hearing by the House Energy and Commerce investigations subcommittee looking at the rapidly growing flow of pharmaceutical ingredients and drugs from China and India found that safety is a concern. We face the same risk with drug ingredients and pills as we do from imported consumer goods and contaminated food the subcommittee found.

The Government Accounting Office (GAO) reports that in 2001, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) inspected just 13 of China's 714 drug makers and only 65 out of India's 410 facilities who were supplying the U.S. with drugs.

Well, the Subcommittie's predictions came true. We now have a contamination case involving China's largest and most prominent drug company, Shanghai Pharmaceutical Group. In June of 2007 a 5 year old with leukemia from Shanghai, received a shot of the anticancer medication methotrexate. The drug did nothing for the leukemia but left her incontinent and unable to walk on her own. Possibly dozens of patients across China who took the drug from the same Chinese factory had similar problems according to the Wall Street Journal, (Corporate Focus, January 31, 2008). Upon investigation it was found that for years the drug manufacturer had been recycling left-over materials from methotrexate's production process to "cut costs". It was also found that a technician mistakenly added another anticancer compound, vincristine sulfate to the mix claiming it was an accident. However, the factory is still making drug ingredients according to the Wall

Street Journal.

Now, why do I consider all of this important? There are two reasons that prompted me to write about this issue. First, most major drug companies are quickly moving to conduct research and some manufacturing in China, as costs in the U.S. rise and they face hurdles in bringing new drugs to market and defending existing block busters against generic competition. AstraZeneca PLC, Glaxo-SmithKline PLC, Pfizer Inc., and Bristol-Myers Squibb Co., have all recently announced plans to outsource some of their manufacturing. This is in spite of little or no inspection of the plants that will be manufacturing pills or ingredients. Secondly, the pharmaceutical industry and those opposed to governmental interference have used the argument that exporting cheaper medicines from Canada (which is illegal) would expose Americans to counterfeits and other risky medicines. Yet the same people who argue this point feel it is perfectly all right to ship our jobs to China and truly jeopardize our safety and wellbeing in the name of 'profit'. Here we go again.

The pharmaceutical industry is facing increased scrutiny and may face a rough future on capital hill depending on the outcome of the general election. It is vitally important to not only the economy of the U.S. but also to our health and wellbeing. We have some of the best medicines on earth. However, it looks like the industry has lost its way; I sincerely hope it gets back on track. ~ by Brit Messer

## AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION Continued

blood pressure less than 139/89. Discounts off the premium are granted for each criteria separately. Employees who meet or exceed all these criteria receive their health insurance free of charge which is a saving of over \$2000 a year.

"Our wellness program pays dividends

not only in reducing our out-of-pocket costs, since we are self-insured, it also increases our productivity. We are able to do more with less. We believe a healthy workforce is a productive workforce. Further, employees who feel better project a better image to our customers and do a

much better job with their customer relations", said Brit Messer, CEO.

What can be learned from our experience? It's simple and you don't have to be a Harvard MBA to understand it. - An ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure - It works.

## Annual Employee Chili Cook Off

The hospital held our yearly chili cook-off on Friday, February 15, 2008 in the private dining room. Employees were asked to prepare their special chili recipe at home and bring it to the event for judging. Local community leaders judged the chili on taste and name. After the judging contest, the chili was served to all at lunch for \$2.00 per bowl and the hospital provided crackers, cookies, coffee and tea. Desserts such as cake and other pastries were available for sale for

\$1.00 per item. All who attended enjoyed the cook-off and the opportunity to share time with others during this event.

We raised \$145 at this event which went to the American Cancer Society. This event was a fundraiser for the hospital Relay for Life Team.

First place went to New Directions; Second Place went to Radiology; Third Place went to Registration. The chili was judged by Tina Foshee, City Clerk, Johnny Tadlock, County Sheriff and

Scott Smith, Independent Contractor.

Thank you to all who participated and a special thank you to the judges.



H2O Stat, a sample of the culinary arts displayed at the Chili Cook-off



Cathy Martinez, Laura Turner, Michelle Holbert, Bobbie Howell & Jamie Tadlock enjoying the Chili Cook-off



Judges Scott Smith, Tina Foshee, and Johnny Tadlock

## Quality Merit Award Winner – Martha Anderson

Martha Anderson came to work at McCurtain Memorial Hospital in September 1957 to relieve someone so they could take a two-week vacation. The person who took the vacation never came back to work, but Martha has stayed every since; for over 50 years.

Martha was hired by the first Administrator for McCurtain Memorial Hospital, Mr. Jack Rue and has worked in the payroll, personnel, and accounting areas throughout her employment.

It is rare that anyone works for

the same organization for 50 years; today's average length of service is more like 4 years. But Martha is a rare individual. She is dedicated to her job and does it well. She is concerned about the hospital and the people we care for. She looks forward to coming to work every day.

Thank you, Martha, for your steady hand, sound judgment, and the many contributions you have made to McCurtain Memorial Hospital. We all wish you a happy 50<sup>th</sup> employment anniversary.

Martha will receive \$100 for receiving the Quality Merit Award for February.



**Martha Anderson**  
Quality Merit Award Winner  
February, 2008

## Did You Know?

The Autism Spectrum Disorders support group meets in the private dining room the 2nd Monday of each month at 6 pm.

The Alzheimer Support Group meets in the private dining room the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7 pm.

Congratulations to Rhonda Parker who passed her Radiology exam. Rhonda is now a Registered Radiology Technologist.

Deanna Campbell, Quality Control is to attend a workshop

on Psychiatric Diagnosis in this month.

Betty Beaman, Outreach Coordinator of ND will be attending the 6th Annual Symposium, Caring for Older Adults at Texarkana College on 1/26/08

Jay Johnson, RN, Home Health will be attending a conference hosted by the Oklahoma Foundation for Medical Quality in OKC on Feb 28th.

Laura Turner, LCSW and Jamie Tadlock, MSW will be facilitating an In-Service at Lane Frost to discuss the benefits of a Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment.

## GET YOUR SNEAKERS OUT! IT'S TIME TO RELAY!!!!

Kickoff for Relay for life was a huge success! It was held January 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Museum of the Red River. We ate, planned, schemed and even cried a few times. The beginning of Relay is always energetic and a time of great hope! So far this year, we have 25 teams signed up. This year the theme is "Dancing for a Cure." Relay will be held June 6, 2008 at George E. Coffman Field in Idabel, Oklahoma.

Dr. Gordy Klatt began the Relay for Life in 1985. Hoping to bolster the income of the local American Cancer Society he decided to personally raise money by doing something he enjoyed, running marathons. In May of 1985, Dr. Klatt spent 24 hours on the track at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma Washington. His friends paid \$25.00 to run or walk for 30 minutes with him. By the next morning, he had raised over \$27, 000! Relay for Life was born of that one walk!

Relay for Life is the signature activity of the American Cancer Society. The walk starts at dusk and ends the next morning. The light and darkness of day and night parallel the experiences of the cancer patient undergoing treatment. The beginning of Relay, sunset, symbolizes the time when a person is diagnosed. As the evening progresses, becoming colder and darker, it represents the struggles as they endure the emotions of being a cancer patient. Between 1 and 2 a.m. represents the beginning of treatment, exhausted, sick, wanting to just give up and not go on. The time from 4 to 5 a.m. symbolizes the completion of treatment; the patient is tired but knows they can make it now. Sunrise represents the end of treatment, a bright new beginning to a new day!

McCurtain Memorial Hospital is a proud sponsor and participant of Relay for Life. In 2006, our team won 1<sup>st</sup> place honors by raising over \$10,000. It's a lot of hard work, but it is also a time of remembrance, honor, hope and plain old fun!

Why do we walk?? We walk to honor our friends and family who suffer from or have died of cancer. We walk in hopes our children and grandchildren will never face the devastation of cancer. We walk to remember the struggle our friends have gone through. But most of all, we walk because we care.

If you would like to participate in the Relay for Life, contact Pam Johnson RN, Chief Nursing Officer at McCurtain Memorial Hospital at 580-208-3241 or email: [cno@mmhok.com](mailto:cno@mmhok.com). We would love to have you on our team!



Relay Teams from a previous years

## People and Places

### Anniversaries:

Tommy (Imaging Services) & Kena (Accounting) Allen—  
January 19th — 12 years

Paula (Med/Surg RN) and Mike Knox, January 3rd—3 yrs

Jennifer (RN ICU) and Lonnie Watson, Feb. 12th 9 yrs

Susan (Med/Surg) and Benny Elliott, Feb. 22nd— 23 yrs

Rose (Home Health) and Harold Strange Feb 14th— 30 yrs

### New Hires:

Women's Services

Kathy Blake, RN

Health Information Management

Michelle Holbert

Respiratory

Erin Hudson, Respiratory Tech

Imaging Services said goodbye to their 31 year old GE Portable X-Ray machine and welcomed a new GE AMX-4 into their department.

## Educational Opportunities

Short seminars are being planned on Communication Techniques & Meeting the Emotional Needs of Patients. The seminars will be open to all hospital employees.

Two skills days were held in December for Women's Services. The L & D period was taught by Rachel Williamson, LPN and attended by Heather Hemm, LPN, Carri Taylor, LPN, Angie Cambel, LPN and Pam Johnson, RN. The next was a skills day in the nursery taught by Tammy Lee, LPN and attended by Heather Hemm and Carrie Taylor.

Watch for SKILLS DAY in Post Partum—coming soon.

ACLS Refresher course will be offered February 22nd at 10 am by Heidi McLain, RN

NRP certification class February 23rd @ 9 am to 3 pm instructed by Julie Stansbury and Leslie King, RN

PALS will be offered March 10th & 11th, Instructor James Smith EMT-P

Don't forget—there are PowerPoints to view in the CNO office for education credit!

ACLS Full class & recertification will be offered March 4th & 5th

### Births:

Kim Pond, Ward Clerk, ND welcomed her new grandson on 1/23 at 7:51 am.

Mackylan Lazar Dixon weighted 8 lbs 1 oz and was 21 inches long.

Betty Beaman welcomed a granddaughter, Lily Elizabeth Lane, 8 lbs 2 oz on 1/15/08. Proud parents are Dr. Arron & Angela Lane

Judy Duke, LPN, Med Surg has a new great grandbaby, Peyton Riley Powers, Born Jan. 28th 6 lbs 12 oz, 18 inches

Stephanie Dillen, our speech pathologist, gave birth to a baby boy Jan. 21st. His name is Jason Dane Dillen. 9 lbs 4 oz, 21 1/2" long. They are both doing great!

Rick Causey, Grounds Maintenance, is the proud father of a baby boy, Dylan Causey, born Feb. 11th, 7lbs 13 oz.

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friends of McCurtain Memorial Hospital.

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## To Your Health- Cardiac Rehab

February 10<sup>th</sup> through February 16<sup>th</sup> is National Cardiac Rehabilitation Week!

We are proud to say this is the 13<sup>th</sup> year we have offered cardiac rehab services at McCurtain Memorial Hospital. Originally started in 1995 the program is under the direction of Dr. Jeffrey Gladden. Assisting Dr. Gladden and our cardiac clients is Danette Wood, RN.

McCurtain Memorial Hospital offers cardiac rehabilitation services for individuals who have had a cardiac event such as a myocardial infarction (heart attack), stint placement, valve repair, coronary artery bypass graft or those who have stable angina pectoris. In order to participate in cardiac rehabilitation, you must be medically stable and have the desire and ability to participate.

The program is designed to decrease further complications and mortality, decrease depression associated with

coronary disease and improve the "overall quality of life."

Our 36 visit program consists of a "continuous heart monitoring" progressive exercise regime on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for 12

weeks. For those who want to continue after 36 visits, we offer a "Wellness Program."

One person who has taken advantage of the Wellness Program is Mary Alice Sipes. Mrs. Sipes began her cardiac rehab after March 21, 1997 after having her upper heart valves replaced with a pig valve and her lower heart valves re-



Mary Alice Sipes and Danette Woods, RN

paired. She remembers being short of breath and not feeling right. She came to McCurtain Memorial Hospital and was seen by her primary care physician; he consulted a cardiologist. She ended up in Dallas with a cardiac

surgeon. When asked why she is still participating, she replied, "It took about six weeks to recuperate and get over all that. Since then, I have been exercising, dieting and taking my medicine. I come here on Monday, Wednesday and Friday to do

my exercises. It is better for me to have something organized and planned than to try to do something myself." Mrs. Sipes attributes her continued health to the Wellness Program.

## PRESCRIPTION FOR DANGER

By now most of you have heard of actor Heath Ledger's death due to a combination of prescription painkillers and sedatives. He was only 28 years old. This incident underscores the potential dangers of mixing medications at a time when medication use is rampant in the U.S.

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), more teens abuse prescription drugs than

any other illicit drug, except marijuana; more than cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine combined. Every day 2,500 kids age 12-17 abuse a prescription painkiller for the first time and more people are getting addicted to prescription drugs. Drug treatment admissions for prescription painkillers increased more than 300 % from 1995 to 2005.

OK, what can we do about this problem? Don't sweep it under the rug. We

need to think about what is in our home. What prescription and over-the-counter drugs do you have? Would you know if some were missing? Also, talk to your teen about the dangers of abusing prescriptions and over-the-counter drugs. These are powerful drugs that when misused are just as dangerous as illegal street drugs. Tell your loved ones it is not worth the risk. It is a prescription for danger.

## Current and Upcoming Events

Service Award Banquet will be held on Thursday, February 28th at 6:30 pm.

Essential Functions of Management, a Management Class offered by McCurtain Memorial Hospital will begin February 21st and meet each Thursday evening for 11 weeks

Betty Beaman, New Directions, Laura Ross Wallis, District Attorney and Drug Task Force will be facilitating Bingo on

1/31/08 at 11 am at the Choctaw Nation Senior Nutrition Center. Betty Beaman will also be providing a Range of Motion exercise class at Hills Nursing Home, McCurtain Manor, and Broken Bow Nursing Home.

Laura Turner, New Directions, & Betty Beaman, New Directions, attended the quarterly Little Dixie RSVP Advisory Council Meeting on 1/24/08. Both employees are members of the Advisory Council.

### Consumer Safety?

With all the scare about tainted toys, contaminated food and impure drugs from third world countries and in particular China, the legislature finally passed a country-of-origin meat labeling law. That's good. However, it is attached to the new farm bill that we have covered previously in this newsletter. That's bad. Why? Because the President has threatened to veto it. President Bush has threatened to veto the five year farm bill due to its significant cost running into the billions, which we may have trouble funding given his 3.1 trillion budget proposal and because he feels the farm bill needs to be reformed and deny subsidies to families that make \$1 million a year.

The Senate and the House have each approved farm bills and both contain provisions to require that the retail meat consumers buy be labeled with the country of origin. However, there is no unified bill proposed due to the veto threat. It may be as late as 2009 before the meat labeling law can go into effect.

Is this an example of politics interfering with progress?

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

### Pat Dean, Environmental Services

Patricia Dean began her employment with McCurtain Memorial Hospital 28 years ago as a nurse aide. Throughout her years, she helped mold young nurses into strong leaders. Those of us who have been here a few years know that Pat used to outwork most of the nurses on the 3-11 shift on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor!

She transferred to environmental services in the laundry department in September of 1992 and is happy with her decision. She has been married to Jimmy for 37 years and has four children; Teresa, Robert, Perry, and Jimmie Lynn.

Pat always has a smile and kind word for everyone regardless of where she is and believes we can get through any obstacle in life as long as we have faith and hope.

Pat says she has enjoyed her 28 years at McCurtain Memorial Hospital and is thankful for the opportunity she has had to get to know so many wonderful people. "Pat is a dedicated, hardworking employee who inspires others with her kind and caring attitude," said Frances Pollard, Director of Food and Environmental Services. "We are proud to have her on our team," she said.



Pat Dean

[www.MMHok.com](http://www.MMHok.com)



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