

# Landscapes and Portraits In Health

## The Many Faces of Our Hospital

A hospital is more than just a place you go when you are ill or to visit someone who is a patient. Certainly, a hospital exists for these purposes, but an accurate description of a hospital goes far beyond the obvious.

McCurtain Memorial Hospital is a safety net or provider of last resort for many citizens in our community. Without the hospital, they simply would not receive any medical care. I'm talking about the 11% of our patients who are self-pay or have no insurance. These are the people who end up in our emergency room late at night because they have not gone to see a doctor because they can't afford it. Their illness has worsened because they have received no care and consequently their condition is now serious. Most likely, they will spend a few days at McCurtain Memorial Hospital under the care of our legions of professionals whose job it is to make people well regardless of the patient's economic status.

McCurtain Memorial Hospital is also an economic force in our community. Last year our payroll was \$8.9 million. We are one of the few places of employment that your children can come back to work in their home town after finishing college.

We generated an economic boost to the community through our \$3.6 million construction project and we spend hundreds of thousands of dollars for local purchases such as supplies and equipment.

McCurtain Memorial Hospital is also a proud corporate citizen of our community. We support local activities through donations of money and time. We encourage physical fitness and wellness. We provide many services to disadvantaged children. We encourage a culture of fairness and honesty at work and in our daily lives. We encourage tolerance of diversity and understanding of those who are different than us.

McCurtain Memorial Hospital is a strong proponent of economic develop-

ment and growth in our community. We play a very important role in the future development and growth of our county. Healthcare, just like schools, government, churches and other organizations is a necessary component for growth or even survival of any community. Growth cannot occur unless the conditions are right. This is a basic law of nature. Healthcare is a necessary ingredient for growth just like water, sunshine, and good soil is for the farmer.

I feel the conditions for growth in our county are ripe. I feel the watershed changes that have occurred and are occurring in our economic system will favor us in the future. We must be ready to take advantage of this opportunity.

Now what is my point of reminding you of all the things we provide to our community ; of reminding you of our many faces? Because McCurtain Memorial Hospital is at a crucial point in its history. We are at a point where we must

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"This project will allow the hospital to provide better care to our patients and will make our hospital more competitive. Most of all it will allow the hospital to be around for years to come to serve all the functions that we have discussed for your children and grandchildren; to be there in their time of need."

Brit Messer



*Working for a Healthier Community*

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## The Many Faces of Our Hospital (continued)

do some major remodeling of our facility in order to survive and grow.

Very little if any upgrading has been done to our patient rooms in over 30 years. We now have many rooms that don't have air conditioning or heat. Our infrastructure is over 30 years old and is very inefficient.

The Management Board who operates the facility on a day to day basis is willing to step up to the plate and borrow \$20 million for the purpose of bringing the entire facility into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This project will allow the hospital to provide better care to our patients and will make our hospital more competitive. Most of all it will allow the hospital to be around for years to come to serve all the functions that we have discussed for your children and grandchildren; to be there in their time of need.

The hospital is just like your own house. If you did no repairs for over 30 years to your home, it would probably become uninhabitable.

The \$20 million is all well and good and will not cost the taxpayer a cent. It will be paid for from operations of the hospital. The only issue we face is that the \$20 million will all go for construction. It does not include the purchase of needed equipment and we can't borrow more money. For that reason, we are asking the voters of the county to extend the existing 1/2 cent sales tax for another seven years.... A very small price to pay for the existence and continuation of quality healthcare. Remember this is not a new tax; you have been paying it for the last five years and I doubt that you have barely noticed.

The election is scheduled for Tuesday, March 3, 2009. Between now and then, the hospital personnel will be speaking to various organizations in our community and will be hosting "town hall" meetings to explain what we are doing and to answer questions. I encourage you to attend a town hall meeting near you and to get involved for this important cause. Your support will be essential.

~ Brit Messer

## Question of the Day.... Responses from November

The November question of the day was: Is it appropriate for a physician to prescribe a placebo to their patient without their knowledge?

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I feel this is not a question that can be answered with a yes or no answer. It would be with much consideration that I think a placebo may be considered. This would mean that the attending physician needs to know his patient quite well and/or have given serious consideration and time to the patients medical portfolio. Perhaps this person is a hypochondriac, but maybe not. This patient could be in dire need of some serious medical attention, maybe even to the point of calling in a specialist. I would not want to know, if I were a physician that I made a misdiagnosis and my patient suffered more from my "non answer" to his/her

condition by giving them a placebo. I had much rather my physician admit defeat or ignorance in the diagnosis than play with my health. On the other hand, when a physician, with hopefully carefully discussing this with other family members think a placebo will appease the mind of the patient without causing the patient more problems, then, yes, a placebo could offer as much relief as a high dollar drug. BUT then, how much will this patient or our government be charged for a sugar pill???

Lila Voss

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I feel it is totally inappropriate for a doctor to 'prescribe' a placebo-type medication, just to placate the patient. Should the patient have a reaction, or worse, an unrelated episode of symptoms, the placebo is

just going to confuse the issue and open the medical provider to potential law suits.

Joyce Deen

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I am not sure about the way placebo is used here! I was taught that a placebo is an inert substance, like a sugar pill. Medicines that are used for a condition they are not designed for are often used, and patients are often not told. For instance, Cytotec is a drug used to reduce the risks of non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, specifically to reduce causing ulcers. However, it is also used to induce labor in pregnant women.

Should you, as a patient be told? Yes, if it is a medication not normally used for your condition. No, if it is truly a placebo!

Pam Johnson

## Hospital Christmas Party

The annual Hospital Christmas Party was held on Friday, December 12, 2008 from 6 pm to 8 pm in the Great Hall at the Kiamichi Technology Center. This year's Christmas Party focused mainly on the children of our employees and many of the door prizes that were drawn included Bicycles, Hot Wheels Cars, Dolls, Board Games and many other toys and prizes. Approximately 181 people attended including 86 children. There was plenty of snack food and treats available for all to enjoy.

Of course, Christmas would not be the same without a special visit by Santa Claus to all present. Kid's games were held for the young at heart.

The Grand Prize for the evening was a Digital Camera with a printer dock and extra memory card. The "Lucky Winner" of this wonderful prize was Joe Coble,

Radiology. Other prizes included a Digital Picture Frame, Electric Drill, Back Massager, Duffel Bag Set and Slow Cooker.

A special thanks goes out to everyone who participated in helping make the Hospital Christmas Party successful for 2008.

Happy Holidays!



Santa's Arrival!

## December Quality Merit Award Winner

### — Debbie Shaffer, LPN Surgical Tech., Surgery Dept.

Debbie has been employed at MMH since 1978. After working in the Recovery Room as an LPN for one year she decided to develop her skills as a Surgical Technician. Debbie displays strong knowledge of our surgical procedures, instrumentation, and surgeon preferences. In addition, she does an excellent job maintaining our instrument trays, our Laparoscopic equipment and our instrument processors. Debbie has established a mutual respect among her co-workers who often turn to her as a resource person. Debbie shows poise under pressure. The surgeons are well aware that her assistance offers them the opportu-

nity to attain the best possible outcome for each patient.

Debbie is preceptor whenever students rotate through the surgical arena. She promotes a positive learning environment for our students and at the same time maintains peak performance. Debbie is enthusiastic, conveys a positive personal image and genuineness in dealing with others. Debbie accepts new concepts with an open mind. Her ability to display flexibility in adapting to change has a positive impact on the entire surgical team. She displays pride in her work, promotes team spirit and consistently strives for excellence.



Debbie Shaffer  
December  
Quality Merit Award Winner

## Business Office Employees Performed at Christmas Party



JoAnna Voss, Tonya Kretzer, Shae Tubbs (and daughter, Rainey), Vicki Lewis, Carolyn Garrison, and Cathy Milam performed an entertaining version of The Twelve Days of Christmas at the Annual McCurtain Memorial Hospital Christmas Party.

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## Median Health Insurance Deductible Doubles

The median individual deductible for health insurance coverage required by employers offering PPO's jumped to \$1,000 in 2008 from \$500 last year according to a survey conducted by Mercer's National Survey of Employer-Sponsored Health Plans. This increase in the median deductible has occurred after median deductibles have held steady at \$500 for seven years in a row. These plans apply to workers covered by preferred -provider organizations and are the most common type of health insurance offered by employers. Preferred-Provider Organizations (PPO's) allow patients the opportunity to choose doctors and hospitals from wide networks. Deductibles are the health costs patients must bear before insurance kicks in and pays the claims according to the plan percentage.

In our attempt to ease the cost of health care for our

employees, McCurtain Memorial Hospital continues to offer a \$500 deductible for patients who use our facility and facility providers for their health care needs. In addition, the hospital continues to offer a generous and enhanced Wellness Program for our employees, spouses and immediate family members, 18 years of age and older. They have biometric testing done free of charge as well as access to Healthy Frontiers, a wellness assessment, through Great West Healthcare.

In addition, certain financial incentives are still offered for our employees and their participating spouses to receive discounts on their premiums and discounts off the deductible and co-insurance in the event of in-patient hospital care at McCurtain Memorial Hospital. Anyone wishing to know more about these benefits should contact their department manager or Frank Drobil in Human Resources.

## Health in the U.S.A.

Vermont's largest city, Burlington, is the healthiest city in the nation according to the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention). It has the largest proportion of people, 92%, who say they are in good or great health. Burlington also ranked among the lowest numbers of residents with diabetes and obesity according to the study.

The dubious honor of being named the unhealthiest city in America went to Huntington, West Virginia according to the CDC. The report was issued Monday, November 17, 2008.

Also, in a report issued December 4, 2008, by the United Health Foundation, Louisiana was listed as the unhealthiest state in the nation, (Mississippi had this distinction last year), while Mississippi (49), South Carolina (48), Tennessee (47), and Texas (46) remain in the bottom five. Vermont was listed as the healthiest state to live in the nation followed by Hawaii (2), New Hampshire(3), Minnesota(4), and Utah(5).

Oklahoma ranked 43 out of 50. Last year Oklahoma ranked 47 out of 50.

## People and Places

McCurtain Memorial Hospital has received recognition as an Oklahoma Certified Healthy Business. We received this award in recognition of our efforts to promote wellness among our employees and community through our Employee Wellness Program, The Garden Meadows Trail, 100% Tobacco-Free Property, On-Site Tobacco Cessation Program, On-Site Weight and Exercise Program, sponsoring blood donor programs, and conducting Free Health Screenings at the Men's and Women's Health Fairs.

The awards presentation will take place at a special luncheon January 13, 2009, 11:30am to 1:30pm, at the Phillips Pavilion on the grounds of the Governor's mansion.

Kathryn Tidwell, daughter of Chris Tidwell graduated from the University of Central Arkansas on 12/13/08.

### Births:

Easton Edgeman was born to Tori Edgeman (Home Health) on Nov. 11th. Easton weighed 7 lbs 1 oz & was 19 inches long.

### Anniversaries:

Henry (Respiratory) and Peggy (Dr. Veltri Surgical Clinic) Satterfield, 25 years on December 25th.

Vicki (IT) and Curtis Lewis, 27 years on December 23rd.

McCurtain Memorial Hospital won first place in the First Annual Christmas Tree Festival at the Museum of the Red River. The tree was decorated with flowers made from gauze, ornaments made from medicine cups and reindeer made from tongue depressors. Congratulations to all who participated in the event.



Martha Anderson, Payroll, and Brenda Porton, CDO set up McCurtain Memorial Hospital's Entry in the Contest

The Editorial Board and Staff of Landscapes and Portraits wishes everyone a very Merry Christmas



Landscapes and Portraits in Health  
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## McCurtain Memorial Hospital Foundation, Inc.

### Welcomes New Board Members

The McCurtain Memorial Hospital Foundation, Inc. is pleased to welcome three new board members, Bhavisha Patel, Jia Johnson, and Tom Bagwell, to its board. These dedicated community volunteers will be serving along with current board members, Wayne Warren and Melvin Cavender.

Created in 1994, The McCurtain Memorial Hospital Foundation, Inc., is a 501c3 non-profit organization whose purpose is to benefit and support the charitable, benevolent, educational, and scientific health-care services and related activities for McCurtain Memorial Hospital.

The Foundation was very active during the construction of the Medical Office buildings on campus and was also heavily involved in the new

Emergency Room addition. Since that time, the foundation has been idle.

The Foundation is now being revitalized and will be a permanent ongoing partner of McCurtain Memorial Hospital. Brenda Porton, Chief Development Officer, will work closely with the foundation on fundraising activities and charitable giving. Through the Foundation, Brenda and the foundation's board members will develop and manage philanthropic support for the hospital including annual giving programs, planned giving, and capital campaigns. We hope to plan exciting events for our hospital foundation such as an annual gala, a benefit golf tournament, and other charitable projects. We also plan to establish a charitable giv-

ing program to provide area residents the opportunity to make contributions to the hospital foundation in honor of a caregiver or in memory of a loved one. Funds raised through charitable donations will be used for many different purposes such as to update hospital facilities, to purchase new equipment, and to offer new services in an effort to further meet the future healthcare needs of our community.



New board Members, Bhavisha Patel, Tom Bagwell, and Jia Johnson

### MMH Respiratory Care Services...

Respiratory problems can affect your quality of life. Breathing easily is something most of us take for granted. Yet, breathing is an essential task we perform millions of times each day. When something goes wrong with your breathing and you need help, we are there for you.

Under the direction of Julia Stansbury, RRT, McCurtain Memorial Hospital Respiratory Department is located in on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor in Room 212. Staff includes Henry Satterfield, EMT-P, Jennifer McCoy, LPN, Heather England, LPN, Erin Hudson, LPN and Gail Phillipps, LPN. They provide services

to a full range of patients from neonate to geriatric, with an emphasis on acute and critical care. Some of the services they provide include: HHN (breathing treatments), measuring oxygen saturation, measuring lung functions (Peak Flow), pulmonary function tests, EKG (electrocardiogram), EEG (electroencephalogram) incentive spirometry for the post-operative patient, assisting with intubation of the critically ill patient, as well as managing the ventilator. Our respiratory therapists are highly skilled professionals who work to evaluate,

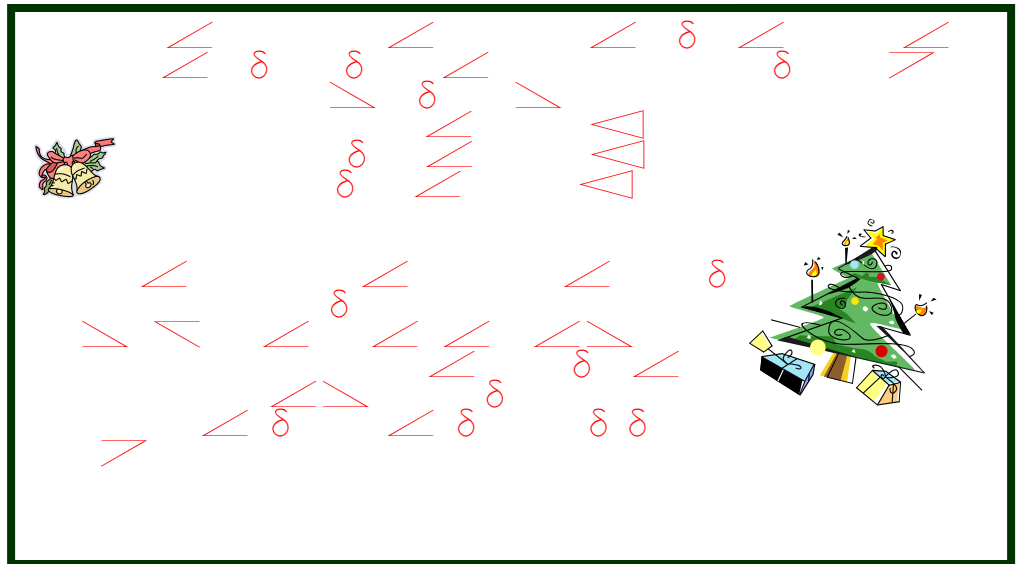
treat, and care for patients with breathing disorders caused by many diseases and conditions.

Respiratory Care is more than just a breathing treatment twice a day. Respiratory employees work closely with the physicians and nurses caring for the patient. They not only treat, they evaluate the patient each time they walk into the room. Our technicians are trained in Advanced Cardiac Life Support and Pediatric Advanced Life Support. They are ultimately responsible for every breathing person in the building, patients, visitors and staff!

## Current and Upcoming Events



Chris Pierce, winner of the 100 Piece Mega Blocks Prize at the Christmas Party



## IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Richard Perkins

Dick Perkins, retired pastor of Friendship Baptist Church is a familiar sight around the hospital. But then, he has always been a familiar sight. He retired from McCurtain Memorial Hospital after working 23 years as a medical Technician in our laboratory.

Dick moved to Idabel in 1968 to work for the hospital and also to continue his love of ministering to others. He attended the University of Alabama in the 1940's as a pre-med student. While at the university he knew he wanted to be a minister and not a doctor. In fact, when he asked his wife of 60 years to marry him, he told her he always thought he would ask her to marry a doctor, but instead asked her to marry a preacher. Dick said he was glad she didn't object.

Finally, in 1953, Dick received his Bachelor of Divinity Degree

from Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina. Prior to graduating from Bob Jones, Dick served as a sailor in the Navy.

Dick's father was a WWI veteran and was discharged three years before Dick was born on August 11, 1920. He recalls that his father traveled a lot looking for work during the great Depression in the 20's and 30's and wore out several pairs of shoes walking. When asked what it was like living during the depression, Dick said, "It wasn't so bad. You just couldn't have everything you wanted. We learned to economize."

When Dick was asked to compare conditions today with our economic downturn with the great depression he said there is no comparison. But he

also added he thought the "character of the people is not the same and I think the character will be the problem." People want more and expect more today he said.

Dick and Doris have raised three sons in Idabel, Timothy, Jonathan, and Andrew, and Dick continues to minister to the patients at McCurtain Memorial Hospital.



Rev. Dick Perkins  
In the Spotlight

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



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