Our volunteers tell the story...

The Pardons: 30 years of giving back

Frankie Pardon thinks that even “ordinary” people can make a difference. But Frankie Pardon is anything but ordinary. As a volunteer at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, she’s had a positive impact on many, many patients. Frankie and her husband, Donald, have collectively logged almost 17,000 hours of volunteer work at the hospital. It’s a commitment that began three decades ago. When Frankie was diagnosed with leukemia 30 years ago, she chose Charlotte Hungerford for treatment. “I love it here,” she said. “I didn’t want to go to a big hospital.” Frankie’s chemotherapy was successful, and she’s still in remission. “She came in the back door and went out the front,” Donald said with a smile.

From the moment she finished her treatment, Frankie believed she owed a debt of gratitude for the quality of care she received. She’s been a volunteer ever since. When Donald retired, he also joined the ranks of Charlotte Hungerford volunteers.

Frankie helps out around the hospital by transporting patients from one location to another. She also offers massage, or reflexology of the fingers and toes, to patients who qualify for the treatment. Donald is part of the volunteer transport team, too. Drawing on his professional training as a metallurgist, he repairs worn or broken wheelchairs.

“I like to volunteer,” said Frankie. “It’s a chance to give back and be friendly with people. I think you make a difference just as an ordinary caring person.”

Frankie and Donald find ways to help patients every time they volunteer. “There are many opportunities to quiet people’s nerves,” said Donald. “You can take the time to chat with them and make them feel more comfortable.”

John Lavieri: Committed to healthcare

John N. Lavieri, President of Sterling Engineering in Barkhamsted, is “committed to quality, compassionate and affordable healthcare in northwestern Connecticut.” That’s why he has served on the Board of Governors of Charlotte Hungerford Hospital since 1998, and, for approximately 25 years prior to that, on the Board of Directors of the former Winsted Memorial Hospital.

“I learned from my father, who served as President of the Winsted Memorial Hospital board, to participate in civic activities,” Lavieri said. “I learned from my parents the importance and value of civic participation.”

Now in his third year as Chairman of the Board of Governors, Lavieri said, “It is my privilege to serve and work with such a great board. The board and entire hospital family are committed to quality of patient care. We invest much of our time and energy working on quality issues for both the short- and long-term benefit of patients in Greater Torrington.”

“We have stood independent throughout our history, and our plan continued on page 3

Shhh...Silent Hospitals Help Healing campaign debuts

Charlotte has recently launched a new initiative to remind its staff, patients and visitors of the importance of maintaining a quiet facility that is conducive to healing and recovery.

Worldwide, noise levels at hospitals and healthcare centers are on the rise with many institutions looking for ways to reduce unnecessary noise generated by overhead pages, cell phones, beeps, noisy supply carts, and busy work stations. Studies show that environments that have higher decibel levels of noise affect some patients and may cause sleep deprivation, anxiety, increased blood pressure and an increased heart rates.

To ensure that CHH is doing everything it can to

Continued on page 3

If you encounter a new “Quiet Zone” yield shaped sign, it indicates that you are entering an area designated as a place where quiet is especially important for patients.

In a “Quiet Zone” area, please:
- Speak quietly
- Turn phone and pagers to silent or vibrate
- Limit foot traffic through clinical areas
- Report noise issues to patient care staff
- Be an advocate for a quiet environment in patients’ rooms
Charlotte creates Multi-Specialty Group

In its continuing efforts to provide the best possible care to patients and improve overall efficiencies, Charlotte Hungerford Hospital has formed the Charlotte Hungerford Multi-Specialty Group, a local network of physicians, surgeons and specialists.

Currently consisting of two dozen physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners, the multi-specialty group brings together cardiology, family medicine, infectious disease, neurology, surgery and urology practices under a single umbrella. An orthopaedic joint surgery practice will become part of the multi-specialty group in August.

“For patients, this means coordinated care among our specialty healthcare providers,” said Mark Prete, M.D., Vice President of Medical Affairs for Charlotte Hungerford Hospital.

“Through the Charlotte Hungerford Multi-Specialty Group, patients are connected through the hospital’s wider healthcare system, where its award-winning services, access to advanced technologies and a full complement of specialists are available to meet the medical needs of patients.”

The practices are in the process of implementing electronic medical records, which will result in improved quality of care, patient safety and efficiencies. Further improvements will result from a health information exchange, which will facilitate access to clinical information at the hospital and enable sharing of pertinent patient health records through a secure electronic system.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Elected on December 21, 2011, for a two-year term:

- Edwin G. Booth Jr.
- Frank Buonocore Jr.
- Stephanie Fowler, M.D.

PHYSICIAN NEWS

- Peter Rudzinskiy, M.D.
  Neurologist
  Has relocated his office to 780 Litchfield Street, Torrington (860) 489-8232

- Robert Kahan, M.D.
  Cardiologist
  Has been appointed Director of the CHH Cardiac Rehabilitation Program

What is osteopathy?

Dr. Genese is the newest member of the Primary Care group. Osteopathic medicine emphasizes the internal relationships of the body’s structure and function, as well as the body’s innate capacity to heal itself.

Osteopathic physicians employ all conventional methods of diagnosing and treating disease while placing additional emphasis on restoring a patient’s normal body mechanics through osteopathic manipulative therapy (OMT). With wide applications as a therapeutic modality, OMT can be particularly effective in treating patients with neuromuscular disorders. Doctors of osteopathic medicine also emphasize holistic treatments, focusing on the entire patient, not simply the disease.

Specializing In Osteopathy
Available For Talks

Maria Patino, M.D.
Stacy Taylor, M.D.
Josephine Genese, D.O.
Kayleen Bastiaanse, A.P.R.N.

Charlotte Hungerford Multi-Specialty Group

PRIMARY CARE

780 Litchfield Street, Torrington • (860) 496-6884
Office Hours: Monday through Friday • 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Supportive Care Unit opens

There is more to hospital care than curing a disease and restoring physical health. There is also relieving pain, providing comfort, supporting families and meeting the physical, psychological and spiritual needs of patients who face life-limiting illness. Charlotte’s new Supportive Care Unit aims to do just that by providing more specialized care and comfort to patients facing severely life-limiting or terminal illness. Located in the renovated wing of the hospital’s fifth floor, the area consists of four patient rooms, a family lounge, quiet room and kitchen area.

Supportive care focuses on improving quality of life for patients with severely life-limiting or terminal illness and their families. Caregivers help reduce physical and emotional burdens of illness through symptom management, supportive counseling, advance care planning and enhanced knowledge and compassion.

Supportive care attributes

The Supportive Care Unit seeks to provide patients and their families a pleasant, home-like environment with amenities like coffee, snacks, a computer, a TV and a phone. The unit includes an additional quiet room for private conferencing, meditation and conversation, limited overnight sleeping availability and access to integrative therapies including massage, reflexology and music. The unit’s healthcare team is specially trained to provide emotional and mental support and intervention for family members, medication and nutritional support, with a sensitivity toward the patient’s spiritual, religious and cultural preferences.

A staff with special expertise

Patients and their families receive care from an interdisciplinary team specifically trained on palliative (support) care. The team specializes in relieving pain, improving quality of life, providing comfort, handling grief, honoring patient and family wishes and more. The team includes a physician, registered nurses, patient care technician and representatives from the hospital’s dietary, physical therapy, case management, social work and spiritual care departments.

Patients and family always in control

Choosing supportive care rather than aggressive treatment is often difficult. To the patient and family it means accepting a poor prognosis. But it also means providing a special kind of care to a loved one. All major decisions about a patient’s supportive care are made by the patient and loved ones.

For more information about the hospital’s Supportive Care Unit, call (860) 490-6544.

ThermoSuit® improves patient outcomes

During an emergency, time equals heart and brain function. In order to save both, Charlotte Hungerford Hospital has begun a new treatment option to cool down patients after cardiac arrest that will help improve patient outcomes.

The ThermoSuit®, a water circulating system that lowers a patient’s inner core temperature, is being used in the hospital’s emergency department in the time of stemming brain damage resulting from the loss of blood flow and oxygen to the brain after a heart attack.

“Therapeutic hypothermia after cardiac arrest,” said Heidi Aleman, MSNc, R.N., Charlotte Hungerford Hospital Clinical Educator. “Research has shown that once a patient has been resuscitated, lowering the body temperature to about 91 degrees will slow down metabolism, reduce inflammation and halt the demise of brain cells. This will make a significant impact in the neurological recovery and quality of life after a patient suffers cardiac arrest. The ThermoSuit is the fastest body surface cooling method available today.”

Use of the ThermoSuit is a team effort, with up to six staff members including physicians, nurses and technicians working together to complete the 30- to 40-minute cooling process. Once the therapy is completed, the patient is removed from the suit and prepared to be transported by the Lifesaver emergency transport helicopter service to Hartford Hospital for additional treatment. The patient’s body stays cool for hours after removal of the ThermoSuit and is gradually warmed after 12 to 24 hours. “This treatment can be one of the first critical steps taken at Charlotte for patients resuscitated after cardiac arrest,” said Aleman. “It is an important element in our coordination of care with Hartford Hospital.”

The ThermoSuit, manufactured by Life Support Systems of New Jersey, resembles an inflatable bathtub that cools patients with a continuous flow of ice water that circulates directly over the skin. The continuous flow of water circulates through a cradle-like suit that the patient is placed in and draws heat away from the body. ThermoSuit technology senses when the patient’s body reaches the desired temperature and signals to the caregivers to move to the next phase of treatment. Once the patient reaches the target temperature, the water is drawn off the patient, and the ThermoSuit is discarded. The cooling system is used each time the process is undertaken. The suit is portable and is used on a conventional gurney, and the patient is full accessible to caregivers during the cooling process.

The hospital staff has performed several clinical training sessions with the ThermoSuit and plans to conduct regular drills to practice the time it takes to prepare the equipment for treatment.

A portion of the proceeds from the Charlotte Hungerford Hospital 2012 annual appeal, which kicks off in April, will be used to support this new therapy.

The lounge in the hospital’s Supportive Care Unit

WHAT CAN A PATIENT EXPECT?

Symptom management

Expertise in treating one or more symptoms, including pain, fatigue, weight loss, weakness, shortness of breath and difficulty sleeping. The unit also treats psychological and emotional symptoms, including confusion, depression and anxiety.

Supportive counseling

Supportive care specialists communicate clearly and compassionately. Social workers, case managers and chaplains support the physicians and nurses in providing counseling services.

Advance care planning

The unit provides information on coping with issues that arise as disease takes its toll. The staff is available to help patients and families make informed preparations and offers in-depth knowledge on end-of-life resources and provides assistance in finding and coordinating care with community services.

An experienced, knowledgeable and compassionate staff throughout any illness

Whether patients seek a cure or focus on improving the quality of life, the Supportive Care Unit offers continual physical and emotional support to both patients and families at every stage of the illness.
Charlotte Hungerford hospital oak tree lives on

One of the many casualties of the October 29, 2011, snowstorm was the hospital’s 120-year-old white oak tree that split in several pieces under the weight of the snow and had to be removed. Standing more than five stories tall, it was believed to have been planted well before the hospital was built when the land was used for sheep farming.

But thanks to an outpouring of interest and a desire to continue the tree’s legacy from staff, board members and the community, the hospital’s iconic tree will be back in many forms for all to enjoy once again. The hospital has assembled a front circle beautification task force to share ideas moving forward on recycling the tree, conducting public outreach and education and reforming the existing landscape.

“Although we were heartbroken at the loss of our oak tree, it has given us a unique opportunity to engage in an inclusive and creative process for our front circle redevelopment that will allow us to emphasize the importance of our campus, its history and our sense of community.” said Dan.

McIntyre, CHH President and Executive Director.

Hospital staff helped salvage as much of the original tree as possible and brought aboard Joseph Brien of Goshen-based Lost Arts Workshop to assist with its preservation and reuse. Brien, an artist, woodworker and certified master teaching artist through the Connecticut Commission on culture and tourism, assisted the Housatonic Valley Regional High School create pens and other mementos from a 70-foot tall oak that fell on its campus. He has been working with the hospital in developing pens made from the tree with the assistance of local students through community outreach initiatives.

In addition to overseeing the reuse of the tree, CHH is working on a new multi-phase landscaping plan to enhance the central area that will emphasize history, way finding, quiet reflection and shade. Plans include the consideration of planting a new white oak tree with memorial plaque, grading the existing area flat, expanding garden to include four-season plantings and incorporating new upgrades to the sidewalks, benches and signage.

New CHH website debuts

Charlotte Hungerford Hospital has revamped its website to offer an enhanced online experience and wider array of options to better meet the needs of the hospital patients and the public. The new site offers improved site navigation, enhanced service line descriptions, expanded directions, a media archive and new sections for news, programs and events, strategic planning, quality, accreditations and patient satisfaction.

“With the ability to make instant updates and photo uploads from anywhere to our news and events section, we will be able to keep our site current with all the new happenings in real time,” said Tim LeBouthillier, Director of Public and Community Relations at CHH.

Job seekers will now have increased ways to search for current opportunities and fill out an online application and attach a resume. CHH also plans to implement additional social media applications in the future. The site also has improved the process for making online donations and bill payments, and offers the opportunity to sign up to receive periodic e-mail notifications on current and upcoming news, events and service programs.

Moments in time...

In 2016, Charlotte Hungerford Hospital will celebrate its 100th anniversary, having opened its doors to the public for the first time on October 12, 1916. As it is never too early to think about ways to celebrate this important milestone, the hospital has begun reviewing images from the past and has discovered some gems that illustrate the changing faces of the healthcare environment of a community hospital.

In order to share some of these amazing moments in time, CHH recently installed newly enlarged prints of photos and original postcards from its archives and the Torrington Historical Society in the first floor hallway of its Memorial Building at 540 Litchfield Street. Stop by anytime and take a look!

If you have a photograph or piece of memorabilia from a past experience at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital that you would like to share with us, please contact the Community Relations Department at (860) 496-6544.