

Happy Valentine's Day, Memorial!



Feb. 8, 2019

New Direction

Memorial Hospital board taps Gary Stokes as our new interim leader

There has been a lot of excitement, media coverage and positive buzz generated with the recent appointment of Gary Stokes as Memorial Hospital's new interim CEO. Gary has more than 40 years experience in the healthcare arena, most notably as the CEO of Nacogdoches Medical Center from 2005 to 2015. The Nacogdoches County Hospital District Board of Directors tapped him to step into our interim administrator spot during a special meeting earlier this week.

Gary is a native of Colorado and his healthcare career started after he earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Southern Nazarene University and a master's in health care administration from Washington University School of Medicine. With an itch to get back to work after his original retirement in 2015, Gary ventured into interim work last year and was very interested in the top spot at Memorial. "When I retired from NMC, I filled my time with community service, but there was something missing," he said. "I'm a very structured person and not working was totally an issue for me."

Gary's enthusiasm for healthcare work has taken him to many different locations, including California, Arkansas, Ohio, New Jersey and Texas. It also sent him to Okinawa, Japan, as well as Bethesda, MD and San Diego, CA in service to his country through the Navy Medical Service Corps. He served as director of administrative services for a combat-zone hospital in Saudi Arabia during Desert Storm.

His length of service has taught him many lessons about healthcare, but one thing rings true no matter where the journey has taken him. "This job is all about relationships and people, and when you look at a hospital it's basically the quality of care and patient safety first, and then you have to take care of your people," he explained. "I break that into three groups, which are your employees, your physicians and your patients. If you've got happy employees and happy physicians, you'll have HAPPY patients."

Along with his own years of industry experience, Gary plans to seek insight from those who have been fighting for the cause here at Memorial. "I like to get input, I like to have people buy into what's going on. I'm a good listener; I want to draw people out and see what their feelings are and I want them to make recommendations," he says.

A more personal reason for accepting this position was his and his family's strong feelings for the Nacogdoches community. His wife Cassandra owns three Newk's restaurants, including the Nacogdoches location, and four of his kids are NISD graduates. A fifth is currently a freshman at Nacogdoches High School.

"We love this community. We've been here for fourteen years now, and the idea of giving back and helping people has always been important to me," he said. "I thought that maybe I could make a difference at Memorial."



Interested in a career at NMH?

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Cath Lab director newly certified

This week we recognize Lauri Omsberg, cath lab director, for passing the Critical Care Registered Nurse (CCRN) exam. She is now certified in this area through the American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACCN), an organization dedicated to certifying nurses in established standards of excellence in caring for critically ill patients and their families. According to the AACCN, this certification adds value to the work of a nurse, as well as the hospital and patients that nurse is affiliated with.

To Lauri, these were all equally important benefits. "The positive benefit is a personal achievement," she said. "This board certification keeps me up to date on current evidence-based practices, which positively affects the quality and safety of care delivered."

There's no question that additional certification adds value to your abilities in any field, but in professions where new information is always unfolding, it's crucial to stay as current as possible.

"Advancement in education and in professional development is important to the nursing profession," Lauri noted. "This certification validates that a registered nurse has achieved an up-to-date and higher level of knowledge in their area of expertise."

For Lauri, a lot of studying and preparation went into taking the exam, but that's something she's used to managing. She passed the also-intensive Registered Cardiovascular Invasive Specialist (RCIS) exam, and will be graduating in May with her master's in nursing.

Certifications like this reaffirm the nurse's abilities and knowledge in his/her specialty, and also provide patients with validation that the nurse caring for them has demonstrated experience and knowledge in the complex specialty of critical care.



Diaper Derby kicks off tomorrow

Let the cutie crawling chaos begin!

If you're heading out to watch the SFA Lumberjacks on Saturday, brace yourself for some cute chaos! The Nacogdoches Memorial Health Diaper Derby kicks off tomorrow during halftime, when five babies will compete to win the rights to advance to the championship round on March 9.

The last qualifying round is Feb. 23 at 4:30 p.m. If you know a crawler who was born at Memorial last year, tell the parents to look for registration forms online at www.nacmem.org/diaper-derby/. Contact the community relations department at ext. 4124 for more information or to help with this event.



Cardiac rehab rewarded with burgers

This week, cardiac rehab crew collected their reward for winning our United Way video competition. The group's Don't Stop Believin' video garnered the most reach on the Memorial Facebook page, so they got to enjoy a free luncheon of burgers, chips, sodas and cupcakes provided by the United Way committee. The close knit cardiac rehab team also commemorated co-worker Lois Harkey's birthday.

