

St. Joseph's Area Health Services

HealthLine

Helping Our Growing Area Grow Healthier

December, 2006



Building project takes form

Architectural renderings from Hammel, Green & Abrahamson, Inc. (HGA) give an indication of what the south entrance will look like as St. Joseph's Area Health Services gears up for a new building and renovation project expected to begin next spring. These are the latest drawings to come from HGA as the planning committee nears final approval in this stage of the project.

The \$26 million project will house St. Joseph's and Dakota Clinic under one roof creating a medical center for the region. St. Joseph's and Dakota will share a main

entrance (above) for patients and guests. A closer look (below right) demonstrates how the valet design shields visitors from the elements upon entering the facility.

The renovation project ultimately will help to improve the way healthcare is delivered to patients by allowing a streamlined service through shared space and close proximity. St. Joseph's Foundation is working to raise \$2 million locally in support of the project. Anyone wishing to contribute or make a five-year pledge can call Cindy Rooney at 237-5711.



We're on our way

St. Joseph's Area Health Services Foundation is pleased to announce that thanks to several generous pledges from area businesses and individuals, fundraising efforts have passed the million dollar mark.

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The President's Perspective



Benjamin Koppelman

Benjamin Koppelman will join St. Joseph's Area Health Services as President/CEO in January. He currently serves as administrator for Albany Area Hospital and Medical Center where he has worked for more than 11 years. He and his wife, Lisa, have two children.

"I am very excited and humbled to have been chosen for this position. In visiting the organization

and community, it felt like a great fit for me and my family.

The Park Rapids area is very beautiful and the people that we met were so welcoming.

The organization has had great leadership, and one can sense the commitment and dedication staff have to their work and to the patients they serve. I look forward to working with staff and being part of the Park Rapids community."

Building and renovation plans designed for the healing process

I am pleased to announce that Benjamin Koppelman, has been hired to succeed me as President/CEO of St. Joseph's Area Health Services. He will assume that role in January when he and his family arrive to the Park Rapids area.

The search committee, including board and physician representatives, did a wonderful job in finding a talented, dedicated candidate to lead St. Joseph's Area Health Services as it faces exciting opportunities into the future.

In reviewing the latest plans brought forward by architects, I have to say how optimistic I am regarding the future of St. Joseph's and what that means in regard to improved healthcare for residents in Park Rapids and its surrounding communities.

Several components have come together to make this happen. First, you take a combination of a growing community and desirable place to live. Add to that a team of talented and dedicated medical staff that remains committed to quality healthcare and service. Then, when you bring excellent facilities to that equation, those components add up to a successful healthcare delivery system.

I feel very good about the new building and renovation plans that have been developed. Staff and physicians from Dakota and St. Joseph's have done an

excellent job of working with the architects to design a blended structure which incorporates a building that has 60 years of use and undergone a multitude of updates and additions. They've created what appears to be a new facility.

In particular, they've really done a nice job in keeping key functions close enough to each other for patient, physician, and staff efficiency.

They've also managed to come up with a building that will be complimentary to the community and, in my estimation, is aesthetically pleasing. The design creates an environment that augments the healing process.

Construction remains on schedule to begin this coming spring. The new building should be open by late summer, 2008, with the hospital renovation complete by the end of 2009.

As I prepare to assume the role of CEO at Lake Region Healthcare in Fergus Falls, I have to say it's been a pleasure and a blessing to be able to work with the tremendous staff at St. Joseph's and be a part of the Park Rapids community.

Thank you, as always, for the continued trust that you place in us, for allowing us to serve you and your family's health care needs.



Peter Jacobson
President/CEO



Joint Commission
Gold Seal of Approval

"Helping our growing area grow healthier"

St. Joseph's Area Health Services
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American Society for Bariatric
Surgery Center of Excellence

Newsletter contact: Cynthia Rooney, Communications/Development Manager

Visit us at www.sjahs.org

Cummins credits Fragassi for lifesaving technique

RoJean Cummins, a nurse at St. Joseph's Area Health Services, didn't know Physical Therapy's Mike Fragassi moonlighted as a waiter at the Velvet Antler Restaurant until the evening of June 24. That's the night she credits him for saving her life.

RoJean and a friend were dining out when she recognized Mike. The place was busy, so she didn't get a chance to say, "hi." Instead the two ordered dinner.

"We were visiting and laughing," RoJean says, "I wasn't really paying attention to what I was doing."

That was when a piece of barbecued rib lodged in RoJean's throat. "The meat stuck in my throat. I couldn't swallow, and I couldn't spit it out."

RoJean could communicate to her friend by pointing to her throat. She also stood to lean over the back of her chair (an alternate method to the Heimlich Maneuver to save oneself from choking).

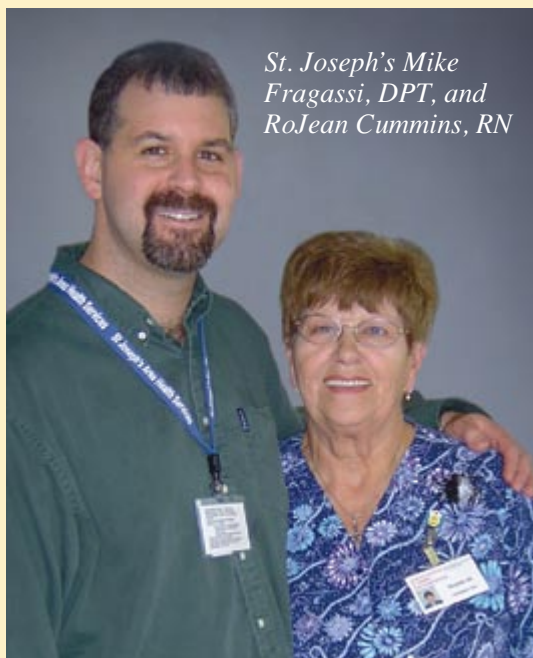
"I felt myself passing out, ready to go down," she recalls. It was as though she was "on my way out." Before she could press her abdomen against the chair's edge, Mike was there to assist.

"Thank God he was there and knew what to do," RoJean praises her rescuer.

Mike says it was the commotion that caught his attention.

"RoJean was silent and was trying to position herself on a chair. There was no decision that had to be made, she was clearly choking" he says.

Because of his training in the medical field as well as first aid CPR training through St. Joseph's, Mike reacted instinctively by administering the



St. Joseph's Mike Fragassi, DPT, and RoJean Cummins, RN

"Mike was so awesome. I wouldn't be here to tell you about it if he wasn't at that restaurant."

RoJean Cummins
Choking survivor

Heimlich Maneuver.

He said it took about four thrusts to dislodge the rib meat from RoJean's throat.

"Oh, God, Mike! You saved my life."

RoJean couldn't thank him enough. The whole scenario played out in about 20 seconds, Mike says.

Before long RoJean had gotten her bearings back and started to feel better.

She realized, still shaking, that she had practically "scared my poor friend

to death."

RoJean feels fortunate to be able to tell her story and appreciates the training Mike underwent in addition to his ability to keep a cool head under stress.

Mike, on the other hand, says he just did what the situation required. It was a no-brainer.

To RoJean, Mike is her hero: "He was so sweet. God put him there that night to save me."

What to do...

A choking victim can't speak or breathe and needs your help immediately. Follow these steps to help an adult choking victim:

1) From behind, wrap your arms around the victim's waist.

2) Make fist and place the thumb side of your fist against the victim's upper abdomen, below the ribcage, and above the navel.

3) Grasp your fist with your other hand and press into their upper abdomen with a quick upward thrust. Don't squeeze the ribcage; confine the force of the thrust to your hands.

4) Repeat until the object is expelled.

SOURCE: HEIMLICH INSTITUTE

St. Joseph's earns national honors as customer satisfaction top performer

For the second consecutive year, St. Joseph's Area Health Services has been named one of Catholic Health Initiative's (CHI) 2006 Top Performers in Customer Satisfaction.

The national honor comes after St. Joseph's once again was placed in the top 25 percent of all hospitals in the CHI net-

work for its outstanding efforts in the area of customer service and patient satisfaction.

Peter Jacobson, St. Joseph's President/CEO, says the earned recognition is indicative of the hard-working team of professionals and staff at St. Joseph's.

"We've worked hard and have intentionally taken a look

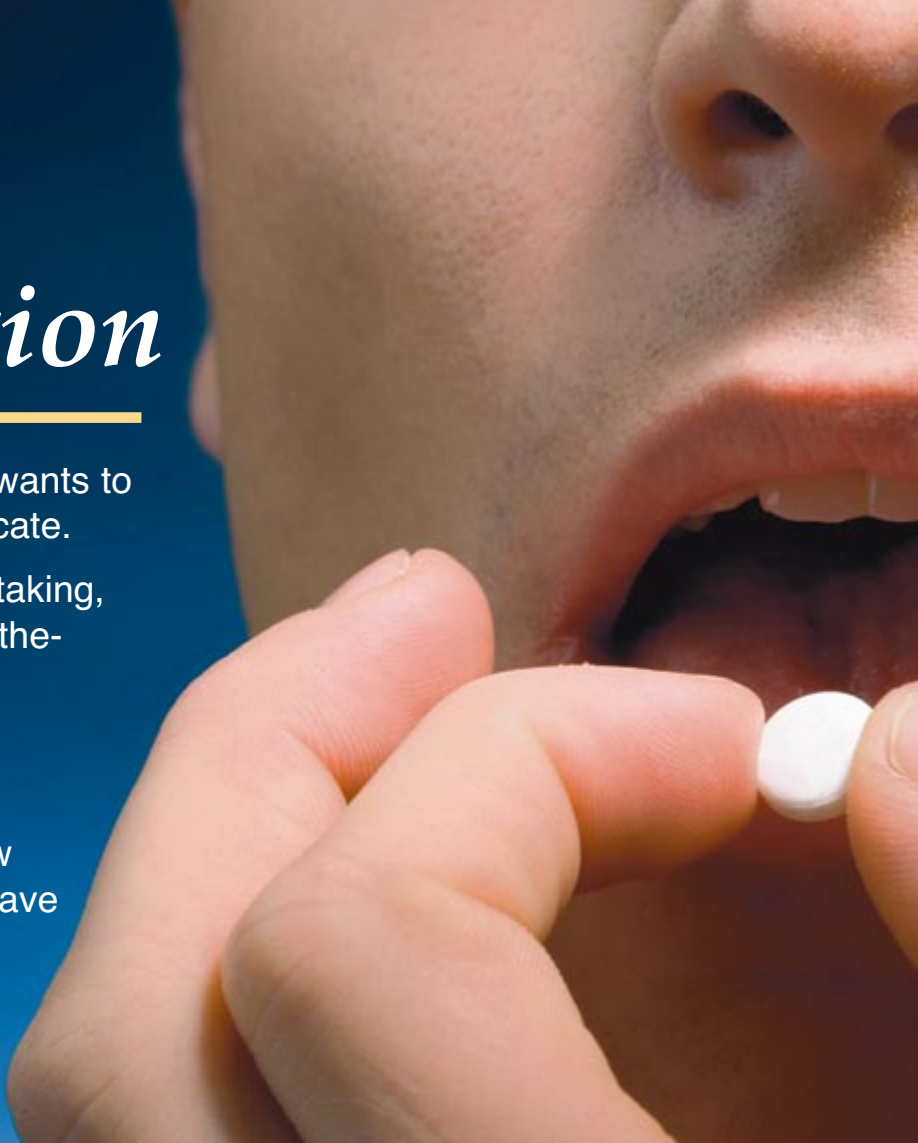
at how we do things and how those things can be strengthened to improve service to our patients," Jacobson says. "It's always nice to see the work our staff has put into something has been recognized, first, by our patients, and then ultimately by CHI national."



Medication Reconciliation

St. Joseph's Area Health Services wants to help you to be your own best advocate.

- Know what medications you are taking, including prescriptions and over-the-counter drugs.
- Make a list and carry it with you at all times.
- Let your health professional know what allergies or reactions you have to medications.
- Ask for information about your medicines in terms you understand.



Patients can play an important role in helping to prevent adverse drug events

In an extreme incident, an Emergency Department (ED) patient brought a grocery store bag filled with prescription bottles with her to St. Joseph's Area Health Services.

The good thing was that she brought them so staff would know what her physician had prescribed for her. Difficulties arose, however, when she didn't know exactly what medicines she was taking or how often.

Brenda Huwe, RN, ED manager says it's important for everyone who is taking medication to jot those prescriptions and allergies down on paper and keep it with you at all times. Don't forget to update the list as needed.

That prescription list is something staff looks for when a patient arrives at St. Joseph's, whether they are being admitted to the hospital for services or come into the ED by ambulance and are unable to communicate.

Include on your prescription list any over-the-

counter medicines or dietary supplements such as vitamins or herbs. As an example, many patients seen in St. Joseph's have a heart-related condition for which their doctor may have put them on an aspirin regime. Physicians would need to know that information when treating patients, Huwe says.

It's also important to let your health professional know what allergies or side effects you have experienced when taking medications.

Medication Reconciliation: a definition

Sonda Tolle, RN, St. Joseph's Med/Surg Manager, says medication reconciliation is simply a process by which staff obtain a patient's at-home medication list, then compare that list to the patient's new medication orders in the hospital setting.

"If something doesn't seem right, or if there are questions, we need to discuss that with

See 5

Reconciliation / from 4

physicians,” Tolle says.

When patients come to the hospital, whether they come from ED, the nursing home, or clinic, if they can bring a prescription list or bring their bottles with them, that really is helpful, she adds.

For patients who take no prescriptions, the process is easy, but Tolle estimates those who do take them can average about 13 different prescriptions. That can be complicating.

Medication reconciliation is a safety protocol from the “100,000 Lives Saved” campaign (see right) in which St. Joseph’s participates to help prevent errors or adverse drug interactions.

This collaborative effort between nurses, physicians, and pharmacy staff ensures that patients receive all intended medications from the time they arrive at the hospital until they are discharged (and potentially beyond). If there is the potential for any unwanted interactions in medicines, staff can intervene and call attention to any discrepancy immediately.

Medication reconciliation means patients get the correct medication at all transition points during their hospital stay and leave with accurate, complete lists.

Quality assurance

Behind the scenes, pharmacy staff rely on expertise, safeguards, automation, and technology to make patients safer. What medication reconciliation means for the pharmacy department is to follow each patient from the time they get a medication history and track that information throughout the patient’s hospital stay.

If a patient is transferred to another floor, hospital, or nursing home, reconciliation remains in place.

Scott Kosel, RPh, Pharmacy Manager says his department is working to ensure this process becomes seamless.

“We’re looking at getting accurate lists of medications patients are on so they can continue taking that medication during their hospital stay,” Kosel says.

The pharmacy’s main focus is continuity of care, to make sure patients get what they have been prescribed and to see that any changes in prescriptions are medication-appropriate for the patient. Upon discharge they make sure patients go home with a new list.

“Ultimately, then, as they go to other various medical facilities, continuity of care is maintained,” he says.

The goal is to have clinics, drug stores, nursing homes, assisted living homes, and whomever has contact with that patient to have access to the latest records. To that end, progress is evolving and continues to be a work in progress.

Patient education

Upon discharge, nursing staff work with patients on education as to any changes they should make with their prescriptions. It’s important patients are clear about their new, updated medication list (if there are changes) and that they are taking the right dosage.

Patients are invited to become a part of the process and are encouraged to ask questions. They should be fully educated about their medicines in terms they can understand and are encouraged to question anything which doesn’t seem right.



100K Lives Saved Campaign surpasses goal

St. Joseph’s Area Health Services learned that its participation in the 100,000 Lives Campaign contributed to the 122,300 lives saved across the nation. The Institute for Healthcare Improvement initiated the campaign in hopes of saving 100,000 lives by implementing proven healthcare safety standards.

St. Joseph’s was among an excess of 3,000 hospitals nationwide to join the challenge by focusing on interventions including medication reconciliation. (See article left)

100K areas of focus at St. Joseph’s include:

- Medication Reconciliation
- Rapid Response Team
- Prevention of Central Line Infections
- Prevention of Surgical site infections
- Prevention of Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia.

100k lives

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Winter Education Calendar

▶ **Bariatric “Y-Weight” Support Group:** Meeting to be held at 4:30-5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 14 in St. Joseph’s All-Purpose Room.

▶ **Back on Track Class:** For those struggling with weight regain after surgery. A six week course, Thursdays beginning Jan. 11 at 5:30-7:00 p.m. in the St. Joseph’s Basement Conference Room. To register, call Ilene 237-5707, Arlys 237-5588 or Center for Weight Loss Management 237-5575.

▶ **Childbirth Preparation Classes:** Thursdays, Jan. 11, 18, 25, Feb. 1 from 6:30-9:30 p.m. in St. Joseph’s Area Health Services Basement Conference Room. Register with Janine 237-5730.

▶ **Health Assessment Clinics:** Tuesday, Jan. 2 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Hubbard Methodist Church.

Wednesday, Jan. 3 from 12:30-3:00 p.m. at Park Villa.

Tuesday, Jan. 9 from 1:30-3:30 p.m. at Court Apartments.

Wednesday, Jan. 10 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at St. Joseph’s Care Essentials.

Wednesday, Jan. 17 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. at Lake George Senior Center.

▶ **“Look Good, Feel Better” for cancer patients:** Jan. 2. Meetings held at 10 a.m. Trained cosmetologists help women look and feel their best. Free. Call Cindy at 237-5711 or 1-800-566-3311, ext. 711 for scheduling.

Physicians retire in principal, continue to practice medicine on full and part-time basis

Dr. Fredell joins staff at White Earth

It’s rather ironic that 19 years ago when Dr. John Fredell first joined the team of physicians at St. Joseph’s Area Health Services and Dakota Clinic in 1987, he was named to a long-range planning committee to study facility needs. Space at the clinic was tight, and in 1988 they drafted plans for an expansion project.



Dr. John Fredell

Oddly enough, it was practically the same month he spent his last day practicing medicine in Park Rapids when plans for a new building and renovation deal became final: St. Joseph’s and Dakota Clinic would team up to create a new medical center with the two entities locating under one roof.

“This is a partnership that should work well,” Dr. Fredell says. He gives credit to some of his veteran peers such as Dr. Paul Grimes, Dr. Jane Churchill, and Dr. Maurice Spangler and others who worked to maintain a good working relationship with the hospital throughout the years. He can think of

several instances in the region in which that hasn’t been the case.

Dr. Fredell believes services will be enhanced, duplication of services will be reduced, and he envisions a record system which will allow physician access to updated files from one entity to the other.

Officially, Dr. Fredell’s last day was Sept. 30 due to vacation time, although he left June 30 to take a position at White Earth Health Center.

During his years in Park Rapids (in addition to his duties in Family Medicine), Dr. Fredell served as St. Joseph’s Chief of Staff for six years, and was elected Hubbard County Coroner for 14 years.

Work at the White Earth federal health service clinic allows him to continue his healing mission in a clinic-only setting. No more late night, middle-of-the-night or weekend calls. It was Dr. Carson Gardner, a former Dakota Clinic peer who recruited him. (Dr. Gardner currently serves as Medical Director at White Earth.)

Dr. Fredell and his wife, Jan, plan to return to their home in Park Rapids once retirement becomes officially official.

Dr. Douglas keeps pulse on technology

Dr. Donald Douglas retired from his role as radiologist at St. Joseph’s Area Health Service this past summer, yet on Nov. 14 he could be found in his office, scrolling through a patient’s torso via CAT Scan imaging technology. As busy as ever, he was on hand to fill in for Dr. Florian Weilke, his successor, and does so on a part-time basis when back-up is needed.



Dr. Donald Douglas

The arrangement suits Dr. Douglas because it helps him to keep his skills

up and remain current in the evolving field of radiology, especially in regard to technology.

Dr. Douglas worked in radiology for 33 years, and spent the last 11 years with St. Joseph’s.

He, too, is excited by the prospects of the new building and remodel project which connects St. Joseph’s with Dakota Clinic.

The two buildings being “conjoined” physically will really enhance the medical experience for patients, practicing physicians, and staff, he says. Personal availability for physicians will also improve.

“This will make a good addition to the community,” Dr. Douglas adds.