



Lifeline



A Mercy Hospital Publication
FALL 2013

A Tale of Two Surgeries

Barbara Lundeen's decision to have a colonoscopy last May turned out to be a very good idea.

A close relative's cancer diagnosis spurred Barbara to schedule a colonoscopy with Dr. Thomas Nelson, a General/Colorectal surgeon whose practice is now based full time at Mercy. When the procedure revealed a growth near her appendix, Dr. Nelson recommended further testing. A follow-up CT scan showed an enlarged appendix with a tumor in it that was moving into the colon, a rare condition. Surgery was necessary, but Barbara negotiated with Dr. Nelson to schedule it after her and her husband's long-planned for and previously booked trip to Norway and Sweden.

In July, Barb became the first patient to have a

Right Surgical Team.
Right Surgery Suites.
Right Here.

Our highly skilled and experienced surgical team members, combined with our state-of-the-art Surgery Center, provide you and your family with access to high quality surgical care when you need it—all right here, close to home.

Surgical services at Mercy include many commonly needed procedures. Our surgical specialties include:

- General Surgery
- Orthopedics/Sports Medicine
- Ophthalmology
- Gynecology/Obstetrics
- Urology
- Podiatry
- Endoscopy

Two of our patients share their surgical experience in accompanying articles.

“I want to walk like everybody else does.”

For Dorothy Chase of Hinckley, walking was no longer a simple or pain-free activity. Fourteen years of working at a nursing home and 12 years of working at Grand Casino Hinckley had taken their toll.

“In February, we bought a Jeep and I could hardly get into it,” she said. “I knew something had to be done.”

That something turned out to be a total hip replacement. Dorothy chose Dr.

Mark Gregerson, Orthopedic Surgeon, and Mercy Hospital for her surgery, an easy decision because Dorothy had a knee arthroscopy procedure done by Dr. Gregerson in 2007. “He’s a good surgeon,” she stated simply.

Certified by the American



Thomas M. Nelson, MD, FACS



Mark Gregerson, MD

GENERAL SURGERY FROM PAGE 1

hemicolectomy (partial removal of one side of the colon) done laparoscopically at Mercy. Laparoscopic surgery is a minimally invasive technique that uses thin, lighted tubes inserted through multiple small incisions in the abdomen. This technique results in fewer complications and infections than traditional open surgeries, with less pain and quicker recovery times for patients. Laparoscopic surgeries are not new to Mercy—Dr. Nelson did Mercy’s first laparoscopic gall bladder removal in the early 1990s. Today, Dr. Nelson does many abdominal surgeries laparoscopically.



Barbara Lundeen

“Our equipment is as good as they have in Duluth,” Dr. Nelson said. “The technology is here, the experience on how to do it is here. The majority of surgeries around the country are still done open, so Mercy is actually ahead of many hospitals.”

Barbara’s surgery proved very successful. The tumor was benign and she felt nearly 100 percent recovered only four weeks after this major surgery. She had very positive things to say about her care at Mercy.

“Dr. Nelson was fabulous,” she commented. “A nurse in Duluth said he was wonderful and she wasn’t lying. I’d recommend him to anybody. I was very pleased with all my care.”

Dr. Nelson has provided surgical services on an outreach basis at Mercy Hospital since 1991. He is now available full time in the community, providing a full range of general surgery and endoscopy services in Mercy’s state-of-the-art surgery center. Certified by the American Board of Surgery and a Fellow in the American College of Surgeons, Dr. Nelson specializes in all forms of general and laparoscopic surgery.

Dr. Nelson’s practice is based at Mercy Hospital. His offices are easily accessed through Mercy’s Outpatient Entrance on Kenwood Avenue. To make an appointment with Dr. Nelson or for referral information, please call Mercy at **218.485.4481**.

ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY FROM PAGE 1

Board of Orthopedic Surgery, Dr. Gregerson has nearly 29 years experience as an orthopedic surgeon. He is a graduate of the University of North Dakota Medical School and completed his orthopedic surgery residency at Blodgett Memorial Medical Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He spent 20 years in an orthopedic practice in the Twin Cities before coming to Mercy in 2006.

“Mercy’s staff and facilities are second to none,” Dr.



Dorothy Chase

Gregerson said. “We do most minimally invasive procedures here. Ankle and knee arthroscopy, arthroscopic carpal tunnels, and minimally invasive hip, knee and shoulder replacements are done here. I started doing the joints and carpal tunnels this way back at the beginnings of the procedures some 15 years ago, so we have more experience with them than anyone in northern Minnesota, including Duluth.”

Dr. Gregerson talked about his preferred approach to hip replacements like the one Dorothy had done. “We do a mini-incision lateral total hip,” he said. “The results last some 20-25 years now, and the studies show they will probably last 30 if not more.”

Dorothy had her total hip procedure done in late May and by early July, she was back at work. “I had excellent care at Mercy,” she commented. “Whenever I would call, the nurses were right there.”

Recovery does take some time and determination, she said, but it is worth it. “Even my coworkers have noticed I take off and walk so fast,” she said with a smile.

Dr. Gregerson sees patients at the Gateway Family Health Clinics in Moose Lake and Sandstone. To make an appointment with Dr. Gregerson, call Gateway Clinic at **218.485.4491**.



Then & Now: A Nurse's View

If you've ever been a patient at Mercy, chances are you would recognize Trish Wagers. She's the RN who wears the nurse's cap.

Mercy's longest serving current employee, Trish started working at Mercy in 1971. Nearly 43 years and several different departments later, you can find Trish in the surgery department, serving as the Patient Educator. So, when we wanted to write one last article about Mercy in the good ol' days in honor of Mercy's 50th anniversary, we didn't have far to go. After all, Trish has outlasted six different administrators and six directors of nursing.

Trish started her nursing career at Mercy on the med/surg nursing unit. At that time, Mercy operated 40 patient beds. Nurses accompanied the three doctors on staff when they made patient rounds twice per day. Patients were admitted to the hospital for tests and procedures that are now done on an outpatient basis. That move towards outpatient services is one of the biggest changes she's experienced over the years.

"The length of stay for patients is different," she commented. "Patients stayed in longer then. They were in the hospital for services that are now done as outpatient procedures."

Trish has seen many other changes over the years. Both the medical staff and hospital staff have grown. The building, itself, has changed. The Emergency



Trish Wagers, RN

Department, where she worked for nine years, moved three times since she's been at Mercy.

"We used to have to call the ambulance ourselves," she remembered about working in the Emergency Department. "We'd often meet the ambulance at the back door with directions to where they were going."

She also talked about

having to move cars in the parking lot to secure the landing zone for the medical helicopter in the days before Mercy had a designated helipad.

She served for a time as a preceptor for nursing students on a rural nursing rotation. "They did not think we did much out here when they first came," she commented. "They just thought we sent people out. It was very interesting to see their opinion of rural nursing change. They were amazed at the services Mercy had and provided to patients.

"For a small hospital, we offer a lot," she said, talking about Mercy today. "Mercy is a good place to work, a good facility and we do good things for the community."

So, back to the nursing cap...why does she wear it?

"First, because I earned it," she said with a smile. "And second, patients like to see it—they know I'm a nurse; it makes patients more at ease."

And that's an aspect of health care that has not changed over the course of Trish's nursing career—her concern for patients.



THE MERCY FOUNDATION

Mercy Foundation's Masked Ball Reveals Community Support!

The Mercy Foundation's first ever Masked Ball was a glittering success! The sellout crowd gathered on October 12 at Holy Angels Social Hall to sip, shop, dine and dance in support of The Foundation's efforts to



raise monies for new surgical equipment for Mercy Hospital's expanded surgery program.

"We had a few butterflies about this year's event, because it was the first time we were going with a "masked" theme," said Foundation Executive Director Cindy Carlson. "But in typical fashion, our guests rose to the occasion,



and about 90% of them arrived in fancy dress with inventive masks; and the vibe was wonderful for the whole evening. We couldn't be more pleased. We cannot say enough how grateful we are for our supportive community." Carlson estimates the event will clear nearly \$16,000.

Carlson added a special thanks to Mercy staff and area high school students who volunteered to serve the three-course dinner catered by Lou's of Barnum. The band "Gramps with Amps" was back by popular demand and kept the dance floor busy until Carlson herself blinked the lights to say good night!



Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 11, 2014—the date of The Mercy Foundation's next Autumn Gala.

Tributes & Memorials

The Mercy Foundation receives gifts from those who wish to honor the memory of their friends and family as well as those who wish to pay tribute to others or to celebrate happy occasions, great or small. Following is a list of tributes and memorials received by The Mercy Foundation from August 21, 2013 through October 21, 2013.

MEMORIALS

In memory of Bob Adamczak
Mr. & Mrs. George Leach

In memory of Dale Gregory Anderson
Mr. Carl Anderson

In memory of Nick Carlson
Ms. Carol Agurkis

In memory of Don Cluett
Mrs. Venice Cluett

In memory of Mary Lisa Cross
Mr. & Mrs. Harold W. Carlson
Mrs. Marie L. Kajer
Mr. & Mrs. Norman F. Will

In memory of Jerry DeRungs
Mrs. Jean DeRungs

In memory of John DeRungs
Mrs. Jean DeRungs

In memory of Lois Greene
Mercy Hospital

In memory of Joyce Hultberg
Mr. & Mrs. Maurice Coughlin

In memory of Fern Isaacson
Ms. Carol Agurkis

In memory of Norma Kirk
Mr. & Mrs. Maurice Coughlin
Mr. Byron Kuster and Ms. Becky Lief-Kuster

In memory of Jennie Mickalson
Mrs. Grace Schjeldahl

In memory of Robert Peterson
Mercy Hospital

In memory of Vivian Rengo
Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Niemela

In memory of Leonard Schmidt
Mr. & Mrs. Doug Skelton
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Arnold

In memory of Bob Youso
Mrs. Lynn Youso

In memory of Eugene Zwickey
Ms. Carol Agurkis
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Arnold

WELL WITHIN
REACH

THE MERCY FOUNDATION CAMPAIGN
For Our Hospital

Keeping Our Momentum

In January of this year, The Mercy Foundation was very pleased to announce that Ernie & Janette Muller had made a lead gift of \$100,000 to help us get our building fund campaign off to a strong start. Recently, Drs. Dan & Sue Benzie, another couple with deep roots in Mercy's service area, made another major gift. Their \$100,000 gift propelled our campaign closer to our overall goal and leaves a meaningful and lasting legacy to our area.

"It is fitting that one of our two acute care wings will be named "The Benzie Wing," explained Foundation Executive Director Cindy Carlson. "Dan & Sue devoted their lives to our area, raising their sons here, building thriving medical practices and participating in nearly every facet of community life. They are certainly not the kind of people who want a monument raised in their honor—but they DO understand the importance of making a public statement of support for continued excellent health care services in our region, and they lead by example."

Many other people have made the important decision to help keep the momentum going. We are proud to report that we have passed the crucial \$500,000 mark in gifts and pledges since January of this year. From individual gifts to donor groups, the WELL WITHIN REACH Campaign for our hospital rolls on. It needs all of us to succeed!

Please consider joining us in this legacy for the health of all. Contact Cindy Timmons Carlson to discuss the many options available to you. Please call 218-485-5586.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

DELIVERY ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

I WISH TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING:

- GIFT
- PLEDGE
- I'D LIKE TO DISCUSS PAYMENT OPTIONS, please call me.

I'D LIKE MY GIFT TO BE LISTED AS

- ANNUAL CAMPAIGN _____
- WELL WITHIN REACH BUILDING FUND _____
- MEMORIAL _____
- TRIBUTE _____



THE MERCY FOUNDATION

710 South Kenwood Avenue • Moose Lake, MN 55767 • 218.485.5586 • FAX 218.485.5855

Darrell Ruhland: It's the Healing Moose Hotel

It was a cool Thursday night on the football field with Moose Lake playing Hermantown. Darrell Ruhland was on the sideline manning the first down marker chain. It was a close game, one that could get anyone excited. For Darrell though, the evening was also bringing some uneasy chest pains and shortness of



Darrell Ruhland

breath. The Rebels won 24 to 20, yet even after the game, Darrell's discomfort intensified. Finally he drove himself to Mercy Hospital. The emergency department quickly assessed his need and he was soon ambulance bound for St. Mary's Hospital in Duluth.

According to Darrell, "I don't remember much after that. They did an angiogram and found my arteries plugged. Since I had already had stents, they decided to do a major heart bypass operation. After five days at St. Mary's, I was to be discharged, but I wasn't yet ready to be on my own. My options were to go to one of my children's home who still work or go to the Augustana Mercy Health Care Center. My son suggested I go to Augustana Mercy's Transitional Care Center (TCU) saying, 'Dad, think of it as a hotel without a swimming pool.'"

Darrell says that started an amazing three-week recovery at the Augustana Mercy TCU. The TCU is for people needing therapy or skilled nursing care to recover. "My private room was as nice as a hotel with a phone and TV," he commented. "The best part was the room service I experienced--the nurses were

wonderful. Each morning they came in early to monitor my blood sugar. When it turned out to be low, they were quick to get me a donut and some juice. They took time to help me understand my medications. The TCU provided a small dining room I shared with people like myself. We had good discussions, made some new

friends and the food was very good. In the TCU therapy center, the Mercy Hospital therapists helped me adjust to new lifting restrictions, adaptive dressing needs and helped me restore my strength."

After his stay Darrell stopped by the TCU to thank the staff with some donuts. He even helped give the TCU a new name, "*The Healing Moose Hotel.*" Like most people that come to the Healing Moose Hotel, Darrell is now back at home doing what he loves, helping others. Beyond helping at the football games, Darrell is a hospice volunteer at Augustana Mercy, a reader to students at the Moose Lake School, a singer at the prison with Holy Angels Church and an active member of the Kiwanis club. From all of us at Augustana Mercy Health Care Center, thank you Darrell Ruhland for being an inspiration and valued member of the community.

To come back to Moose Lake for recovery, just call our admissions RN, Leslie Bakhtiari, at 218-351-9441 and Augustana Mercy will make the necessary arrangements and even offer free transportation from Duluth or Cloquet.

News Notes



CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Construction on Mercy's major expansion and renovation project continues with work underway to enclose the new addition by the end of December.

The Building and Grounds Committee is also looking at landscaping options to mitigate the long-term visual impact of the tree removal required to meet FAA and MnDOT licensure rules for the new location of the helipad. The landscaping plan should be ready by March and spring planting season.

Go to our website at www.mercymooselake.org for more information about our project. Follow the link to the blog and live web cam for construction updates.

LIGHTS OF LOVE



The Mercy Hospital and Augustana Mercy Auxiliary invites you to participate in our Lights of Love Program. The Lights of Love memorial or honor donation is a meaningful way to remember relatives and friends who have a special place in your heart. Gifts are accepted to the program throughout the year.

Your tax-deductible donation allows you to dedicate a light (\$5 each) on the Lights of Love Tree. This year the Lights of Love Tree will be located in Mercy's lobby. Join us for a special program at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, January 6 at Augustana Mercy. Thank you for your support!



NEW YEAR SPECIAL!

Get into gear for the new year. Check out Mercy Wellness Center's New Year Special, available December 1 - January 31.

- Buy a 6-month Individual Membership and get a FREE T-shirt!
- Buy a 6-month Family Membership and get 2 FREE T-shirts!

Call **218.485.5557** for more information.



FREE INJURY OR BALANCE SCREENING

Is a nagging strain or pain bothering you? Are you concerned about your balance and falling? Mercy Physical Therapists can help you answer these questions with a FREE Injury or Balance Screen available by appointment at Mercy Hospital Physical Therapy. Please call **218.485.5597** to schedule your appointment.

Caring for Your Community, One Person at a time

Urgent Care

Monday-Friday: 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Birthing Classes

■ December 7; 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
■ January 18; 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
■ February 8; 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Call **218.485.5572** to register

Caring for Your Newborn

■ January 20; 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Call **218.485.5572** to register

Breastfeeding Education Class

■ February 5; 6:30 to 8 p.m.
Call **218.485.5572** to register

Diabetes Education Program

Moose Lake (Mercy):

■ December 3 & 17; March 4; June 10; 2 to 5 p.m.
■ January 14 & 28; March 4; June 10; 2 to 5 p.m.
Call **218.485.5836** to enroll.

Hinckley (Gateway Clinic):

Call **218.485.5836** to set up individualized sessions.

Diabetes Support Group


Meets the second Monday of every month; 2:30 p.m.;
Conference Room, Mercy Wellness Center.
■ December 9 - Stress and Diabetes

Grief Support

Pre-registration is required: Call 218.485.5508.

■ **Grief Support Group:** Meets the fourth Thursday of every month; 10-11:30 a.m. or 7-8:30 p.m.
■ **Child Loss Grief Support Group:** Meets the first Thursday of each month; 7-8:30 p.m.

Call **218.485.4481** for more information.

www.mercyooselake.org 

Community First Aid/CPR

■ February 20; 6 to 10 p.m.
Call **218.485.5572** to register. Cost: \$50.

CPR for Health Care Providers

■ March 20; 6 to 10 p.m.
Call **218.485.5572** to register. Cost: \$50.

EMT Refresher Course

■ February 1 & 15; 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Call **218.485.5572** to register. Cost: \$275.

Emergency Medical Responder Refresher

■ March 1 & 15; 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Call **218.485.5572** to register. Cost: \$150.

Cancer Support Group

For those with any type of cancer and their caregivers; meets the second Tuesday of every month; 6:30 p.m.; Community Room I. Call **218.485.5599**.

Cardiac Rehabilitation - Phase II

This monitored outpatient program for heart patients is offered on a continuous basis. Call **218.485.5696**.

Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program

An eight-week program of exercise, education, breathing retraining and nutritional counseling. Call **218.485.5677**.

LUNGS R US - A Better Breathers Club

Meets third Wednesday of month; 2 p.m. Call **218.485.5677**.

Women's Health Focus Group

Group meets first Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. at the Mercy Wellness Center, 30 Arrowhead Lane. Call **218.485.5597**.

■ December 4 - Healing Touch - Deb Wolf, RN

Exercise Classes at the Mercy Wellness Center

Check our website for class descriptions and schedules. To register for an exercise class, call **218.485.5557**.

Alzheimer's Group for Family Caregivers

Meets third Thursday of month; 10 a.m.; Hope Lutheran Church. Sponsored by Carlton County Public Health.