

McCarty Center offers free mobile screening program to reach more families

The McCarty Center has started a new program to reach more families in Oklahoma. Instead of families traveling to Norman for a screening, the hospital will come to them.

The hospital's new mobile screening program will give families an opportunity to meet with a screening team to determine if their child with special needs qualifies for inpatient evaluation and rehabilitative services at the hospital, which specializes in the care and treatment of children with developmental disabilities.

The screenings are free.

Typically, a family must travel to Norman for a screening. Now, the mobile program will bring that service to them, along with information about the hospital's other services. The program kicked off April 21 in Holdenville.

"We want to create opportunities for more of Oklahoma's children with special needs to be reached and served by the staff of the McCarty Center," said Vicki Kuesterstephen, director and CEO.

Kuesterstephen said the goal with the pilot program is to reach out to families who live in counties that are underserved by the hospital. Last year, the McCarty Center provided services to children from 57 of Oklahoma's 77 counties.

"We're trying to eliminate that distance barrier by going to them," she said. "We're bringing our staff and their expertise to them."

The screening team members who traveled to Holdenville were Darcie Miller, a social worker;

Juliann Mann, a registered nurse; and Sandra Myers-Johnson, a psychological clinician and program coordinator.

The team met with two children, and the screenings involved interviews with the families about the child's medical, social and behavioral history. The team also shared information about the hospital's comprehensive inpatient evaluations,

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The mobile screening team making the trip to Holdenville were (l-r) social worker Darcie Miller, Juliann Mann, RN, and psychological clinician Sandra Myers-Johnson.

inpatient respite care, outpatient services and other services available to families through related state and federal programs.

Holdenville resident June Oliphant brought her grandson to the screening because she wanted to learn about services that can help him with his speech. Oliphant also is familiar with the McCarty Center because her oldest daughter was a former patient. "We had a very good experience at the McCarty Center," she said.

Holdenville was selected as a mobile screening site because it's located in Hughes County, which is one of the counties identified as being underserved by the hospital. Employees looked at places that have not received hospital services within the last year. The majority of those counties are along the state's borders.

Kuestersteffen said plans are to do the mobile screenings two to four times a year to help reach families in the targeted counties. It also gives employees the opportunity to talk with families about the McCarty Center's programs that can benefit them where they live, such as the teletherapy program that uses interactive video to provide therapeutic and follow-up services to children.

The mobile screening program was proposed two years ago by the hospital's administrators as a way to serve more children. A team of employees then worked to develop the program.

Kuestersteffen said she believes the mobile program will help the hospital build relationships with more families and connect them to services and programs that will benefit their children.

"It was important enough to the McCarty Center's leaders to invest the time into this program," she said. "Hopefully, the impact will be as great as all of us anticipate that it will be."

Bracelet fundraiser

McCarty Center employees snapped up some stylish bracelets during a recent fundraiser to benefit the Camp ClapHans scholarship fund.

The fundraiser was organized by students Kinsey Koeltzow, 11; her sister, Kaylin, 13; their cousin, Halle Fischer, 11; and friend, Dalanee Base, 12. The girls made the "JDM Friendship Bracelets: out of ribbon and soda tabs and sold them at the hospital to employees, families of patients and visitors.

The fundraiser brought in

more than \$300 for the Camp ClapHans scholarship fund. The camp is a residential summer camp for children with special needs. It is being built on the McCarty Center's property and will open in June 2013.

The students said they have fun making the bracelets and they wanted to do a project that would help children. They chose to benefit the McCarty Center after learning more about the hospital from Kinsey and Kaylin's grandmother, Patti Koeltzow, who is the hospital's health information director.

During the bracelet sale, customers could choose pre-made pieces or pick their own color combination from various styles of ribbon.

Many employees said they were impressed with the creativity of the bracelets and that the students would take the time to help others.

Dennise Townsend, a direct care specialist, was one of many satisfied customers. She bought four bracelets that day. "You all are doing an amazing job," she told the girls as they were busy filling orders.



From left to right, Kaylin Koeltzow, Halle Fischer, Dalanee Base and Kinsey Koeltzow sold custom-made "JDM Friendship Bracelets" in May. The bracelets are made with ribbon and soda tabs.

The Building Block

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Moorad selected as guest instructor in recent yoga workshop

Angela Moorad's passion for children's yoga led to her involvement in a recent workshop on teaching yoga to kids with special needs.

Moorad, a speech-language pathologist at the McCarty Center, was invited to serve as a guest instructor for the March workshop in Edmond. Yoga teacher Ann Robideaux led the workshop, which included strategies for working with children with special needs, adapting yoga poses to accommodate a child's ability level and using safe techniques during sessions.

Moorad leads a weekly therapeutic yoga group for inpatients at the McCarty Center. She is also a member of the International Association of Yoga Therapists; is certified in the Radiant Child Yoga Program, Levels 1 and 2; and founded OMazing Kids Yoga LLC to promote inclusive yoga for kids and teens of all abilities in Oklahoma.

Robideaux is director and founder of Asana Alphabet, which provides yoga teachings for youth and teacher training for qualified instructors. Asana Alphabet is based in New York City.

Robideaux connected with Moorad through Facebook after reading about Moorad's involvement in yoga for kids with disabilities. Moorad also shares resources about kids yoga on her

blog at www.omazingkidsyoga.com and through a YouTube channel. She also volunteers once a month to teach yoga to kids at Educare in Oklahoma City.

Robideaux asked Moorad to be a guest teacher for the workshop given her training and full-time work with kids with special needs.

"I just thought Angela would be a good fit," she said.

Moorad and Robideaux believe that yoga offers a variety of benefits for children.

Moorad started the therapeutic yoga group at the McCarty Center in 2010 and has seen positive results. She said some of the kids who have participated have become more confident and willing to try new things. Others have improved their social skills and their ability to stay calm and focused.

Robideaux, an Oklahoma City native, has practiced yoga for almost 20 years and considers it "a safe, full-body exercise regime for kids that increases their strength and flexibility."

"It is about improving oneself, rather than competing with others, which makes it a fabulous type of class about developing self-esteem," she said. "It can also deepen the breath which, in turn, creates calmer thought patterns and, ideally, a stress-free mind."

Moorad said she was thrilled

about the opportunity to receive additional training at the workshop and to meet other people who share her interest in yoga for children and youth.

Robideaux said her hope is that the workshop gave participants more confidence in their abilities and the motivation "to start trying something out" when it comes to offering yoga for kids with special needs.



Angela Moorad (left) strikes a yoga pose with McCarty Center patient Tashiana Wade.

Shower organized for JDM cooking group

Each week, a group of children at the McCarty Center meet to cook, create and chow down.

The kids are involved in a cooking group, which is a therapy group offered at the hospital for children with developmental disabilities. Recently, the community had a chance to learn more about the group and help them with some needed supplies during a come-and-go kitchen shower.

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See cooking group

Cooking group

The shower on April 24 in the hospital's therapy gym and the public was invited to attend.

Some of the gifts the group received included mini muffin pans, a blender, cookie sheets, an ice cream maker, pot holders, aprons, spatulas, measuring cups and gift cards.

The supplies will help update the kitchen that the group uses, said Beth Morton, a physical therapist at the McCarty Center who also helps lead the group.

Morton said the cooking group gives kids at the hospital the opportunity to improve their cooking skills by making simple recipes. They come together as a team to make different dishes and get to eat their tasty creations, such as salads, casseroles, smoothies, individual pizzas and breakfast burritos.

Morton said she enjoys her involvement with the group and watching the patients learn how to work together in the kitchen.

"I just really like cooking and I think it's a valuable skill set to have," she said.

The group also learns other skills that relate to the therapies offered at the hospital, which includes physical, occupational and speech and language therapy.

For example, children in the group use fine motor skills, physical movements in the kitchen and learn how to read directions, said Reni Hanley, the McCarty Center's director of speech-language

pathology who also helps lead the cooking group.

Morton said the group also welcomes volunteers who are interested in cooking with the children.

The cooking group is one of many therapy groups offered to inpatients at the hospital. Others include animal therapy, aquatics, dance, crafts, life skills, social skills, yoga and wheelchair mobility.

Hanley said a goal is to expand some of the therapy groups to outpatients.

For more information, contact Hanley at 405.307.2870 or by e-mail at rhanley@jdmc.org.



Patient Tyler Thomas (left) places Easter eggs in a carton to dry during a recent cooking activity, while patient Twyla Bell, (center) works on coloring eggs with Katy Paxton, a physical therapy student from Des Moines University in Iowa.



Patient Twyla Bell opens some of the gifts presented to the McCarty Center's cooking group during a kitchen-shower held April 24 to help resupply the kitchen used by the group.

McCarty Center offered free storytime program

Children in the Norman community were invited to attend a free storytime program on May 19 that featured music, a craft project and children's yoga.

The program was open to kids in pre-kindergarten to second grade.

The featured book was "Rain Talk" and activities were geared toward themes in the book, including having participants make rainsticks. Snacks were also served.

The hospital's speech-language pathology department hosted the program to celebrate "Better Speech and Hearing Month," which is recognized each May.



Connor and Ryan Sullivan work on making rainsticks. The Sullivan brothers were at the McCarty Center for the free storytime program on May 19. The featured book was "Rain Talk."



These speech-language pathologists hosted a free storytime program as a part of Better Speech and Hearing Month activities at the hospital.

McCarty Center volunteers honored

Individuals and groups who volunteer at the McCarty Center received the star treatment when they were honored at a banquet on April 10.

The Hollywood-themed event at the hospital's conference center included dinner, awards and a video presentation.

Jennifer Giamelle, the hospital's volunteer coordinator, said the banquet was a way to celebrate volunteers and the vital service they offer to the McCarty Center.

"We are so grateful for our volunteers and the commitment that they give to us," Giamelle said. "We hope this celebration shows them how much we appreciate the time they devote to the hospital and to the children we serve."

Volunteers take on a variety of tasks at the hospital. Some work with the therapists and administrative staff, while others spend time with the patients and play games or work on craft projects with them.

Other volunteers host holiday parties, organize clothing donations and sew pillowcases and Christmas stockings for the children. The hospital also has volunteers who perform for the kids, such as choirs and bands from area schools.

Ande Williams is a volunteer at the hospital and said the work is fun and fulfilling. "Volunteering makes everyone feel good, but I love the McCarty Center specifically because it is



Joshua Williams, (left) spends time with his sister, Ande, at the McCarty Center volunteer banquet on April 10. Joshua receives outpatient services at the hospital, while his sister serves as a volunteer in the occupational therapy department. Ande Williams said she loves volunteering at the hospital because "it is a place that is doing good things for kids with developmental disabilities."

a place that is doing good things for kids with developmental disabilities. They are typically a really underserved group of the population, so I am glad that the center is there for them," Williams said.

She volunteers in the occupational therapy department and her duties include making copies of test materials and activity pages, helping with craft projects, organizing the craft and therapy rooms and assisting with the hospital's animal therapy group.

The University of Oklahoma student started volunteering a year ago. She wanted to get involved because her brother receives outpatient services at the McCarty Center and because she wants to become an occupational therapist. Williams also loves the people she works with at the center.

"The staff is such a welcoming group. They are all really passionate about what they do, and it's nice to be in an environment filled with people who care so much," she said. "I just feel good after volunteering, not just because I know I made a difference but because I got to see everyone else make a difference, too."



Volunteer Coordinator Jennifer Giamelle presents a certificate of appreciation to Chad Eaton, who volunteered his graphic design skills to the hospital to design a new volunteer handbook and a McCarty Center calendar for a fundraiser.



Teen Heroes from the Norman Regional Hospital also volunteer at the McCarty Center. Representing this group are (l-r) Liana Argo, volunteer services coordinator with NRH, Destiny Putman, Josie Thayer and Susan Thayer.



Camp ClapHans scholarship fund gets a bump from Gutter Dancers

Participants in the ninth annual Gutter Dance charity bowling event, presented by the Hal Smith Restaurant Group and benefiting the Camp ClapHans scholarship fund, gave it an \$8,200 boost on May 10. Twenty teams from around the metro area congregated at the Sooner Bowling Center in Norman to support this event with good food, good fun and a chance to win a 2012 Chevrolet Cruze.

"We're very pleased with the net results of this year's Gutter Dance," said Greg Gaston, director of marketing for the McCarty Center. "We had several new teams participating, as well as several returning teams who have supported this event from the beginning. The best thing about this event is that you don't have to be a bowler to enjoy it."

Bowlers started the evening with dinner provided by Johnny Carino's Country Italian Restaurant and quickly moved to the lanes to begin the night's action.

After two lines of bowling, scores were tallied and the winning teams were announced. In first place was the Tiffany's Restaurant team from Noble with a pin count of 1,346. The Tiffany's team is a repeat champion having won Gutter Dance 7.

In second place was the Maxwell Supply Strike Force I team with 1,242 pins.

Third place went to a new team to the Gutter Dance, the Moose on the Loose team with a total pin count of 1,096.

The last-place team which received bobble head bowling trophies, was the OrthoCare Swashbuckling Braceneers with a pin count of 608.

"Recognizing the last-place team for their spirit and effort has been a tradition since Gutter Dance One," Gaston said. "It's why we call it the Gutter Dance. You don't have to be good to have a good time."

Prizes were awarded during the evening to bowlers who made strikes with a color pin appearing in their rack and to the team with the most creative bowling shirts. This year's winner was the Swashbuckling Braceneers. The team dressed in a "Pirates of the Caribbean" motif. They won gift certificates from Firestone Autocare.



Donnie Hicks is the head chef at Tiffany's Restaurant in Noble and team captain of the Gutter Dance 9 first place team. The Tiffany's team consistently places in the top three in the event.



This year's third-place team was a new entry into the Gutter Dance. The Moose on the Loose team represents the Ladies of the Moose Lodge.

The event that caps off the evening is the 7-10 split roll off. The top 10 individual bowlers get one shot at making the hardest shot in bowling, the 7-10 split. The winner of this event could take home a 2012 Chevrolet Cruze from Marc Heitz Chevrolet or \$15,000.

The car is still safe. None of these salty bowlers came close, but when these bowlers are making their try, a hush falls over the lanes and spectators hold their breath in anticipation of someone making the shot.

The Gutter Dance was not only sponsored by the teams that participated and the businesses that provided door prizes and contest prizes, but also community corporate sponsors Marc Heitz Chevrolet, Johnny Carino's Country Italian Restaurant, Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Republic Bank & Trust, Norman Family Dentistry, attorney Blake Virgin and the presenting sponsor Hal Smith Restaurant Group.



17th annual Norman Conquest set for Saturday, July 14

The Bicycle League of Norman has set Saturday, July 14 as the 17th annual Norman Conquest bicycle tour. Proceeds from the Norman Conquest will go to the Camp ClapHans scholarship fund. Camp ClapHans is a residential summer camp project of the McCarty Center.

The Norman Conquest begins and ends at the McCarty Center, 2002 East Robinson Street, Norman.

There are four ways to register for the Norman Conquest. The first is to go online at www.active.com. The second way to register is by picking up a Norman Conquest registration form from your local bike shop. Registration forms will be available in bike shops all over the state. The third is to register Friday, July 13 from 5-9 p.m. at O'Connell's Irish Pub & Grille, Campus Corner, 769 Asp Avenue. The fourth way is to register the day of the tour at the McCarty Center from 6-7:15 a.m.



Registration fees for the Norman Conquest are \$30 if the entry is postmarked by July 7. It's \$35 after July 7. The town tour registration is \$15. Registration fees include a hot lunch and lots of air conditioning to cool down in after the ride. Rocky Chen and Associates will be on hand to provide free post-ride massages.

"Last year we had a record number 650 riders from all over Oklahoma and six states," said Michelle Carr, Norman Conquest committee chair, "and that was with



Karen Rieger, a member of the Cerebral Palsy Commission, rode the town tour in last year's Norman Conquest.

unusually hot temperatures. This year, we hope to add riders with what looks to be more normal temps for this time of year. This ride is great preparation for the 'Hotter than Hell' in Wichita Falls, Texas, later this summer."

Three new features have been added to this year's Norman Conquest.

Riders in the Norman Conquest can carbo-load Friday



New this year will be a staggered start time for the ride. The staggered time will be based on the ride distance of the riders. The ride groups will leave in three-to-five minute intervals.

from 5-9 p.m. Jeff Stewart, owner of O'Connell's and a longtime supporter of the Norman Conquest, will host a free pasta dinner. Dinner will include spaghetti with a robust meat sauce, shredded Parmesan cheese, garlic bread, a fresh salad and a cold glass of domestic or imported beer.

Non participants may eat for \$5.

The ride, which begins at 7:30 a.m., will feature a staggered start this year. The staggered start will be by route distance in three-to-five minute intervals. The routes are a 10-mile town tour that features an entirely new route through Norman. This is a flat route and is a great ride for kids and families.

Next is the 22-mile route that introduces some hills to the tour. The 46-mile route is very hilly, and the 64-mile route is seriously hilly proving once again that Oklahoma is not flat.

The third new feature added to the Norman Conquest is the addition of a rest stop on the 64-mile route bringing the