

The Building Block

An e-newsletter of the J. D. McCarty Center for children with developmental disabilities

Veterans Celebrate Their 60th Annual Christmas Party for the McCarty Center

The 40 et 8 of Oklahoma, an honor society within the American Legion, hosted their 60th annual Christmas party for the inpatients and their families, McCarty Center staff and their families and invited guests on Sunday, December 21. Approximately 200 people were in attendance.

The 40 et 8 are the founders of the J. D. McCarty Center for children with developmental disabilities which was established in 1946 in Norman.

Santa Claus continues to be the headliner for this event as he brings a bag of gifts for each inpatient. Santa's delivery is aided by members of the 40 et 8.

A long-standing tradition at the 40 et 8 party has been to make sure that every child leaves the party with a gift. After Santa has made his delivery to the inpatients, any child 12-years old and younger are invited to go to Santa's workshop and pick out a gift. This year each child received a gift bag, a toy or book of their choice and a stuffed animal. Approximately 70 children were served through the workshop.

"Santa's Workshop is an important element of the 40 et 8's party," said Curt Peters, director and CEO of the McCarty Center. "In some cases this is the only Christmas that some of these children might have."

Toys for Santa's Workshop are made possible through donations from various groups. This year's donors include TCIM Services in

Norman, Eta Phi Beta professional and Business Women's Sorority in Oklahoma City and the McGuire Foundation in Noble.

Though now a state agency, the 40 et 8 continue to help support the McCarty Center. This year they donated \$5,000 to the hospital that will be used to fund next year's party and open house.



Santa's workshop stands ready to open after the 40 et 8's 60th annual Christmas party for the inpatients of the J. D. McCarty Center for children with developmental disabilities. It's been a long-standing tradition at this party that no child attending the party leaves without a gift. Children 12 and under are invited to visit the workshop to select a gift. Approximately 70 children were served by Santa's workshop this year.

OMCA Brings Christmas Cheer to McCarty Center Children

The excitement and anticipation of the moment hung in the air so thick you could spread it like butter. The smiles were so large that you thought their faces might break under the strain...and that was just the members of the Oklahoma Municipal Contractors Association.

In a tradition that may go back almost 50 years, Rudolf the red nosed reindeer, Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus and members of OMCA dressed as Santa's elves brought Christmas cheer to the inpatients here at the McCarty Center.

The OMCA's annual Christmas party for these children was held Tuesday, December 16 in the conference center at the hospital.

While bringing gifts to the children, OMCA also presented a gift to the McCarty Center Foundation. Brian Brewer, president of OMCA, and Rick Moore, executive director of OMCA, presented a check in the amount of \$46,579 to Curt Peters, director and CEO of the McCarty Center. The money will go into the foundation's general fund to grow interest.

The donated money is proceeds from the OMCA's 23rd annual charity golf tournament held in September at the Twin Hills Golf and Country Club in Oklahoma City. This is the third year in a row that OMCA has presented the McCarty Center with a check exceeding \$40,000.



Members of OMCA decorate one of seven themed Christmas trees the organization puts up and decorates each year. The tree above is the Cowboy tree.

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Rick Moore (center), executive director of OMCA, and Brian Brewer (left), president of OMCA, present a check to Curt Peters, director and CEO of the McCarty Center in the amount of \$46,579. The check presentation was made at the start of OMCA's annual Christmas party for inpatients. The donation comes from the proceeds of OMCA's 23rd annual golf tournament benefitting the J. D. McCarty Center.

Nutritional Therapy is a Collaborative Effort for Ashley Brice

"I have always been interested in nutrition and healthy eating," says Ashley Brice, registered and licensed dietitian for the McCarty Center. "Anyone can claim to be a nutritionist, but I wanted to know the science behind the nutrition and healthy eating. That's why I became a medical nutrition therapist."

Brice's role as medical nutrition therapist takes her in a lot of directions. She is responsible for creating a menu for each patient based on an assessment that takes in a lot of factors. Brice consults with occupational and speech-language therapists on feeding issues as well as with families on specific nutritional needs for their child.

Medical nutrition therapy begins with a detailed assessment of the patient. The assessment begins with a look at the child's medical history and then moves on to social and environmental issues. Brice looks at whether the child is overweight or underweight. She takes an inventory of the child's diet history and medication. Knowing the kinds of medications a child is on is an important factor because some medications can block the absorption of nutrients from food. "A child can be a normal weight, but nutritionally deficient," Brice said.

Finally Brice explores the cultural, religious and lifestyle factors in the child's environment that might impact on their nutrition.

"When I develop a diet plan for a patient I have to make sure that it is easy to implement," explains Brice. "It does no good for the patient if the family doesn't accept the plan or it's too difficult for them to implement. I work very hard to make sure the diet plan will not only work for the patient, but will fit nicely into the family environment."



Ashley Brice
Registered Dietitian

There is more to nutritional counseling than meal or food planning. Sometimes she deals with sensory issues like a child not eating foods of certain color or texture. Other times it's physical. A child might have trouble feeding themselves, or have a problem managing the food in their mouth or have difficulty swallowing. "Patients need the right tools to be successful," said Brice. "That's the advantage I have in working in a multidisciplinary setting like the McCarty Center. I have skilled occupational and speech-language pathologists to consult with when I run into these situations.

Between us we can find the best way to resolve the barriers a child might have to getting the most nutrition from their eating experience"

According to Brice there is a lot of misinformation about nutrition out there. Some of it is "old wives tales" and some of it comes from the information highway of the Internet. "It's very important for people to make sure that they get information from reputable sources like www.eatright.org, the American Dietetic Association's web site," Brice said.

Children need to be reassessed regularly, particularly children with developmental disabilities because things can change with them more rapidly. Children that are being tube fed need to be reassessed every three months to make sure they're growing properly, that they're properly hydrated and that any GI track issues are addressed.

Until recently, the McCarty Center limited its medical nutrition therapy services to its inpatients. With the arrival of Brice the McCarty Center has begun expanding its medical nutrition services to outpatients as well. To obtain outpatient nutrition therapy services a patient needs to have a prescription from a physician. Once the prescription is obtained just call the McCarty Center to schedule an appointment with Brice.

Continued on page 4

Nutritional Therapy continued from page 3

Symptoms that indicate a child might need to see a nutritionist include overweight, underweight, failure to thrive, a child that needs to be tube fed and diabetes to name a few.

McCarty Center Going Tobacco Free

The McCarty Center has announced that it will become a tobacco free campus beginning Thursday, January 1, 2009.

“We’re going beyond smoke free,” said employee health/infection control nurse Christa Boren, LPN. “By going tobacco free we are asking employees and visitors to reframe from using any kind of tobacco product while on our campus.”

The Cerebral Palsy Commission, the McCarty Center’s board of directors, made the decision to take the hospital tobacco free in February 2008. Since that time the hospital has been preparing employees, patient families and visitors for the change.

In order to help employees transition into a tobacco free environment the McCarty Center has offered smoking cessation classes to any employee and their immediate family members who were interested in quitting. Smoking cessation classes have been taught by Maria Greenfield, director of occupational therapy, and Uwe von Schamann, director of development. Greenfield and von Schamann underwent certification training from the American Lung

Association to act as facilitators of these classes.

“We’ve had several employees take advantage of these classes,” said Boren, “while we’ve had other employees who have been able to quit entirely on their own or at least go through an eight hour shift without smoking. In order to alert the public about our impending change, we have had signage up in high traffic areas around the building for several months,” Boren added.

“By going tobacco free we believe that we are contributing to the improved health environment of our patients, our employees and the community at large,” Boren concluded.

Tax Deductible Donations

We are a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit hospital. Donation checks may be made out to the J. D. McCarty Center or the J. D. McCarty Center Foundation. The IRS has designated these donations tax deductible.

For questions about supporting the McCarty Center, contact Uwe von Schamann, director of development, at 405.307.2804 or uschamann@jdmc.org.



Direct Care Specialist Garrick Autrey braves the cold, wet, windy weather for a smoke break just days before the McCarty Center campus goes tobacco free. The smoke hut which is located on the far southwest corner of the employees parking lot will come down January 1 as the tobacco free campus policy takes effect. Employees and visitors will no longer be able to smoke, chew or dip while on the McCarty Center grounds.

Sooner AMBUCS Deliver AmTrykes to Special Needs Children

Five central Oklahoma children with developmental disabilities gained a new level of mobility and independence Sunday, October 26, when the Norman chapter of AMBUCS delivered new AmTryke therapeutic tricycles to them at the McCarty Center.

AMBUCS is a national non-profit service organization dedicated to creating mobility and independence for people with disabilities.

Since January 2000, the McCarty Center has been an AmTryke demonstration site. A demonstration site is where a person can come to test ride an AmTryke and be assessed by a certified physical or occupational therapist for appropriateness. The McCarty Center is one of more than 200 demonstration sites around the United States.



Amy Laizure, McCarty Center physical therapist, checks to make sure Elaina Frederickson's AmTryke is adjusted correctly.

AmTrykes can be purchased by the family or donated by a local AMBUCS chapter. Three area AMBUCS chapters pooled their resources to donate AmTrykes to their recipients. The AmTrykes cost between \$400 and \$600 each depending on the size and accessories. These AmTrykes were made possible through the combined efforts of the Sooner AMBUCS, the Norman AMBUCS, the Oklahoma City AMBUCS and two anonymous donors.

Receiving an AmTryke were Logan King of Shawnee, Samuel Wilson of Oklahoma City, Elaina Fredrickson and Dawson Little of Norman and Damian Saunders of Sulphur.

AmTrykes may be purchased from AMBUCS. Parents who are financially unable to purchase one of the tricycles can make application to AMBUCS for a donated AmTryke. Parents who receive the donated trike agree to return the trike to the McCarty Center or AMBUCS when their child outgrows it so that it can be refurbished and used again by another child.

There are 11 different models of AmTryke to accommodate children of different sizes and different physical needs. One model has rotating handlebars and foot pedals that are connected to the same chain drive. This allows the rider to use their arms to help their legs in propelling the trike forward. Other models are propelled by pedals only.



Damian Saunders grins from ear-to-ear as he takes his new AmTryke for its first ride. Watching are Amy Laizure (left) McCarty Center physical therapist, and Maria Greenfield, the McCarty Center's director of occupational therapy.

The AmTryke benefits children with low muscle tone or paralysis in lower extremities (like spina bifida) and children with cerebral palsy who need to build up normal muscle tone and control. The benefits include increased coordination, improved muscle strength and improved balance.

Since 1994, over 9,400 AmTrykes have been distributed around the world. The majority of these trikes are purchased by volunteer members of the AMBUCS organization and donated free of charge to financially needy children. During this same time period the Sooner AMBUCS chapter in Norman has provided more than 50 AmTrykes to area children.