

TAHOE FOREST HEALTH SYSTEM MAGAZINE

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1 / 2013

Best OB Award

Presented to Tahoe Forest Health System's Women and Family Center

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Health Care Reform Update

Health care reform in the Tahoe-Truckee region

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Wellness

Teaching students the importance of hand hygiene and foods that are sure to boost your mood

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SAVING LIVES EVERY DAY

Page 4

TAHOE FOREST **HEALTH SYSTEM** NEW DOCTORS

Julie Conyers, MD

General Surgery
10978 Donner Pass Road
Truckee, CA 96161
(530) 587-7698

Melissa Kaime, MD, FACP

Hematologist/Medical
Oncologist
Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe
Forest Cancer Center
10121 Pine Avenue
Truckee, CA 96161
(530) 582-6450

Peter Clark, MD

Robert Quigley, DO

James Sullivan, DO

Nephrologists
10978 Donner Pass Road
Truckee, CA 96161
(530) 582-1212

**Hospital-based physicians providing inpatient
and on-call coverage**

Tahoe Forest Hospital

10121 Pine Avenue
Truckee, CA 96161
Main phone line (530) 587-6011

Jason Hope, MD

Pathology

Crystine Lee, MD

General Surgery

Heidi Standteiner, MD

Internal Medicine

**Incline Village Community
Hospital**

880 Alder Avenue
Incline Village, NV 89451
Main phone line (775) 833-4100

Casey Jowers, MD

Emergency Room

For a complete list of physicians, go to www.tfhd.com



Exceptional 24-Hour Emergency Care

Identified by the local community as a vital service, the Emergency Department at Tahoe Forest Hospital was in need of renovation to improve basic services.

Currently under construction, but still open 24 hours a day to the public, the improvement project includes a dedicated triage area to evaluate each patient on arrival, a new entrance for better patient access, compliant patient registration area, and a new and comfortable waiting room for family and friends. The project also includes an expansion and remodel to the sterile processing area. Work on this Measure C project is scheduled for completion fall 2013.

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ON THE COVER

Gregory Tirdel, MD, Board Certified Internal Medicine, Critical Care, Pulmonary Disease and Sleep Medicine. Dr. Tirdel is part of the team of doctors that has made Tahoe Forest Hospital stand out in rural health care.



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ImPACT TESTING

Youth Sports Concussion Care Program

The Tahoe Center for Health and Sports Performance in collaboration with the Tahoe Institute for Rural Health Research provides free baseline neurocognitive testing with ImPACT tests for all contact sport athletes in the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District. They collaborated with the school district to develop a district-wide concussion care program to increase safety and awareness. This program, with support from Dr. Eddie Mozen and Far West Masters, is also offered to skiers in the Truckee/Tahoe area. Keith Tatsukawa and Dr. Nina Winans, both credentialed impact consultants, have led this program for the past three years, providing education for numerous youth sports organizations and TFHS medical staff. For more information on this program, please contact the office of **Dr. Nina Winans**, Board Certified in Sports Medicine, at (530) 582-7488.



What people are saying...

“ We think Tahoe Forest Hospital is a jewel among hospitals. To all, thank you so very much and congratulations on being such a wonderful team.”

“ The entire staff at Tahoe Forest was so genuinely concerned with my care and comfort. Everyone who ministered to my needs was so professional and knowledgeable. My nurses were wonderful, as were the respiratory therapists. They really worked hard to get me over a very dangerous illness.

What a fabulous team!”



Just a note of thanks from the over-the-top treatment I received yesterday at Incline Village Community Hospital. They were prepared, professional, thorough, accommodating and friendly. I love Incline Village, with your convenient facility and dedicated staff high on the list of good reasons.”

“ To the great nursing staff who took great care of me when I broke my leg far from home, I was so impressed by your care, professionalism, and genuine concern for

my well-being.”

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

BOB SCHAPPER

Welcome to the new Tahoe Forest Health System magazine!

Our goal is to share information with you about local health news and issues. In this edition, you'll learn about some of the exceptional physicians in our community who save lives every day. We hope you enjoy reading these personal profiles, and learn about the superior level of technology and medical care right here in our community.

Another story spotlights the fantastic work of the Incline Village Community Hospital Auxiliary, which helps raise vital dollars to assist the hospital to purchase life-saving equipment for the community of Incline Village. You'll also find health and wellness news and information, news about events and ongoing programs, a health care reform update and much more.

We'd also like to celebrate some recognitions with you... our recent designation as one of America's Best Hospitals



for Obstetrics and the National Rural Health Resource Center Award for Excellence in Innovation and Quality. The Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center also received Accreditation with Commendation from the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons.

If you have questions or comments about the Health System, we'd like to hear from you. And if you'd like more information on a topic, just give us a call or e-mail our Director of Community Development, Ted Owens, at towens@tfhd.com, or (530) 582-6551.

ONLINE RESOURCES

NEWS, EVENTS, BOARD MEETINGS & SERVICES

www.tfhd.com

TAHOE FOREST HEALTH SYSTEM

www.tfhd.com

GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

www.GU63.org

GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL TAHOE FOREST CANCER CENTER

www.tahoecancercenter.com

CANCER CARE ENDOWMENT

www.endowment4cancercare.com

CITIZENS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

www.hospitalcoc.com

BEST OF TAHOE CHEFS

www.bestoftahoechefs.com

MEASURE C

www.measurecprojects.com

CONTACT US



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SAVING LIVES EVERY DAY



Christopher Skaff, MD, Emergency Room Physician and Board Certified in Family Practice and Sports Medicine

PEOPLE + A GREAT HOSPITAL BUILD VITALITY IN OUR RURAL COMMUNITY

When area voters passed Measure C in 2007 to fund upgrades to Tahoe Forest Hospital, they were ensuring that the technology and facilities reflect the medical talent housed within.

As construction workers continue to expand the hospital's emergency department, they are building a workplace for one of the most talented, cohesive set of physicians in rural Northern California.

The goal of the project—identified as a top priority for Measure C—is to create a dedicated triage area for the emergency department to evaluate the acuity of a patient's condition, as well as upgrade the entryway and waiting areas. Currently, there is no private triage area, a major drawback for both patients and physicians in attempts to quickly route patients to the best care possible during a given emergency.

What will change is the quality of the physical operations. What won't change is the quality of the people administering the care—the same people who have helped Tahoe Forest Hospital achieve a Top 100 ranking as a critical access hospital in the United States and Top 20 hospital for patient satisfaction from iVantage Health, endorsed by the National Rural Health Association.

Dr. Christopher Skaff, an emergency physician and board certified in family practice and sports medicine, works in the hospital's emergency department. Although the ER sees its fair share of ski and snowboard-related injuries—it's impossible not to when you're surrounded by world-class resorts—the medical staff's expertise extends far beyond orthopedic care.

“We're known for those types of injuries,” says Skaff, “but we're still your bread-and-butter emergency room.”

Heart attacks, abdominal and bowel-related injuries, or emergency issues are regular ailments that come through the door at Tahoe Forest Hospital, in addition to orthopedic injuries and traumatic injuries from car accidents on the local interstates, even though the hospital is not a designated trauma center.

“We do everything you go to the emergency room for,” says Skaff. “While we don't have interventional cardiology here, we do a very good job to recognize a cardiac emergency and treat it until we can transfer a patient off the hill. We do transfer patients who need that care (interventional cardiology or trauma).” Given Tahoe Forest Hospital's depth of physicians, technology and nurses, most patients can be treated here.

After 11 years of practice in both urban and rural hospital settings, including more than six at Tahoe Forest Hospital, Skaff is aware that Tahoe Forest Hospital stands out among its

rural peers. With skilled surgeons on staff, and investments in infrastructure and technology, the hospital is a step above.

“We attract a high number of quality physicians because of the community and the lifestyle that we have up here,” he says. In addition, he believes that the Measure C upgrades to the facility will aid physicians and nurses with their workflow and help them treat patients more quickly.

Working hand-in-hand with Skaff and the other emergency physicians is Dr. David Kitts, board certified in surgery. Other board certified surgeons in the community include Ellen Cooper, MD, and later this summer, Dr. Julie Conyers, MD. Kitts handles an array of surgical needs, many from patients who enter through the ER doors.

“I think it's critical for patients to have access to surgeons in their community,” says Kitts. “The number one reason is that this is their hospital and it's here for the community. Secondly, when a patient has surgery, it doesn't necessarily end after the operation. Those patients need ongoing care, and I think it's important to have the surgeon who performed the surgery continue to look after those patients. That's not possible if the patient has surgery in a community that's far from home.”

A 25-year veteran surgeon trained as a broad-based general and vascular surgeon with a keen interest in thoracic surgery, Kitts worked previously in a large multi-specialty clinic in Los Angeles before moving here. Surgeons in Truckee perform

NAMED ONE OF AMERICA'S TOP 100 CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITALS

Tahoe Forest Hospital is one of the top 100 critical access hospitals in the United States and one of the top 20 hospitals for patient satisfaction.

Critical access hospitals are recognized as the safety net to communities across America. Only four California hospitals earned this prestigious acknowledgement from iVantage Health, endorsed by the National Rural Health Association.

Results were measured across 56 different performance metrics, including quality, outcomes, patient perspective, affordability and efficiency.



TOP: Dr. Skaff and the emergency room team tend to a patient.

orthopedic procedures, head and neck procedures, and, after the new Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center opened, oncology-related procedures, a focal point for the community.

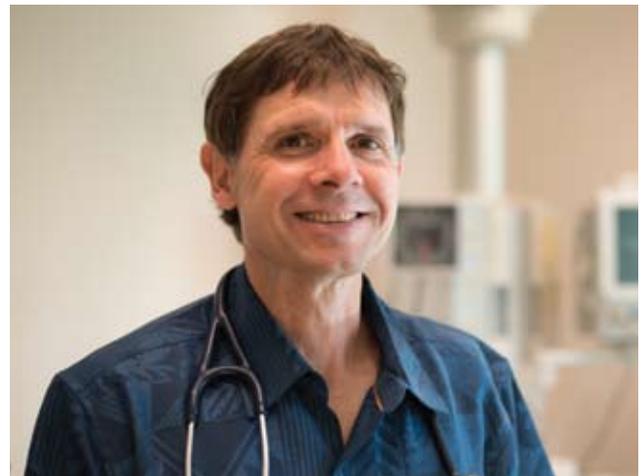
Nearly 90 percent of cancer patients at the Cancer Center can have surgery in Truckee, Kitts estimates. “Cancer surgery is a big part of a general surgeon’s repertoire, whether it be breast, stomach or colon cancer. Anything in the neck, chest or abdomen is just part of what we do.”

He lauds the hospital’s imaging abilities—the result of investments made in recent years. “The technology we have is phenomenal. It’s cutting edge. I haven’t had to refer a patient out of here for an imaging study in five years. It’s the best quality there is.”

“The ability for a small hospital to do as much as possible under one roof results in more individual-centered care,” says Dr. Timothy Lombard, board certified in internal medicine and cardiovascular disease.

“Working in small groups allows us to communicate and coordinate care for patients effectively,” says the 32-year practitioner. Lombard’s clinic specializes in internal medicine and cardiology, with internists Lisanne Burkholder, MD, board certified internal medicine, and Joshua Scholnick, MD, board certified internal medicine and cardiology, with specialized training in congestive heart failure.

“Cardiology has a broad breadth from preventative services to interventional services for acute problems,” he says, “and they



ABOVE: Gregory Tirdel, M.D. – Board Certified in Internal Medicine, Critical Care, Pulmonary Disease, and Sleep Medicine

all have their own challenges and rewards.” While the hospital doesn’t do all cardiology procedures—for example, coronary intervention or heart surgery—Lombard works closely with those who do to ensure patients get the best care available.

“We’re quite familiar with who does what, and how well they do it, so we can talk about options and alternatives and where to go for a variety of procedures,” he says. The internal medicine and cardiology physician’s work spans the hospital, from the intensive care unit to the ER. Lombard earns an enthusiastic nod from his colleague, Dr. Gregory Tirdel, board certified in internal medicine, critical care, pulmonary disease and sleep medicine.

“

I think it's critical for patients to have access to surgeons in their community. The number one reason is that this is their hospital and it's here for the community. Secondly, when a patient has surgery, it doesn't necessarily end after the operation.

— **Dr. David Kitts**

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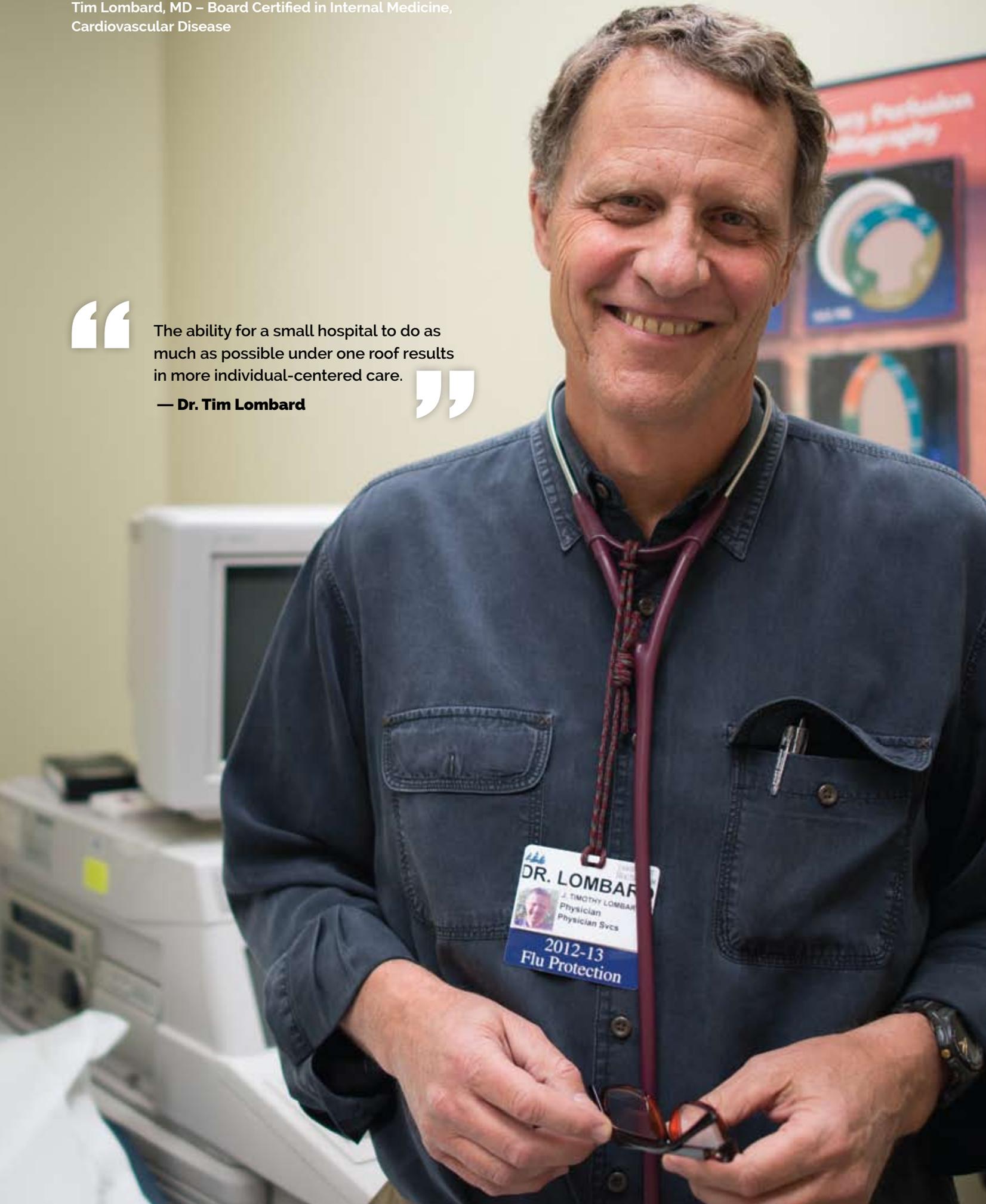
Tim Lombard, MD – Board Certified in Internal Medicine,
Cardiovascular Disease

“

The ability for a small hospital to do as
much as possible under one roof results
in more individual-centered care.

— **Dr. Tim Lombard**

”



“I’ve been here for 18 years and am constantly impressed by the quality of people I get to work with every day,” says Tirdel. “Tim (Lombard) is just a phenomenal cardiologist and a great internist as well, and David’s (Kitts) skill set is unrivaled from anything we’ve ever seen. I wouldn’t practice anywhere else.”

Tirdel’s specialties—pulmonary, critical care, internal medicine and sleep medicine—may seem on the outside to be disparate, but they are interconnected and a key to providing a breadth of services needed by patients.

“With internal medicine you’re creating small changes to make a difference in the long term, while when you’re doing critical care, you’re making huge differences in the short term. It’s very rewarding to grab someone from the jaws of death and return them to their families and then see them a year later out hiking.”

Similarly, pulmonary medicine interacts with sleep medicine, as many patients with respiratory problems—or cardiac problems—also suffer from sleep apnea, Tirdel says. “It’s extremely rare for a rural hospital to provide this depth of medical specialty and such a holistic approach to treating patients.

“The typical approach to medicine at rural hospitals is to put a patient in a helicopter and send them somewhere because you don’t have the resources to take care of these people,” he says. “Fortunately here, because of the support the hospital has and the ancillary services we have in terms of patient care, what we do is unrivaled.”

Tirdel credits Tahoe Forest Hospital’s respiratory therapy department and experienced nursing staff as major components in delivering a high quality of care. “I’d far rather be here, in this ICU, than at a large hospital because of the personal care you get,” he says.

Tahoe Forest Hospital chief executive officer Bob Schapper agrees. “The investments—both in Tahoe Forest’s brick-and-mortar facilities and its people—are a key to keeping the Truckee-Tahoe community lively and growing. I would hope that young people, old people, retired people and investors in our community would look at what we’re doing here and see that we’ve invested in an infrastructure of health care that optimizes the vitality of this community.”

A CLOSER LOOK...

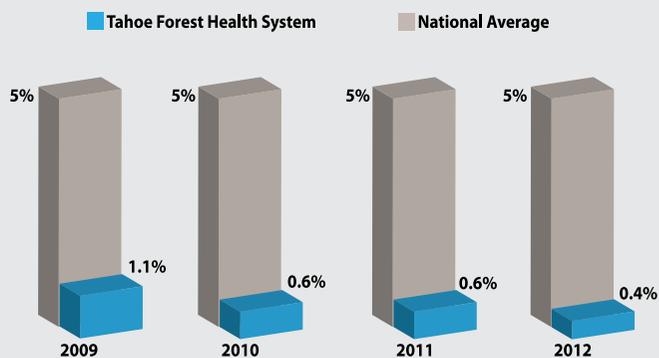
One of the Nation’s Safest Hospitals, Demonstrating the Highest Patient Safety Standards

Quality control for any hospital starts at a basic, microscopic level: controlling bacteria and infection. At Tahoe Forest Health System, secondary infections are very rare because of our rigorous prevention program that includes patient communication and education, thorough pre- and post-op preparation, and follow-up of each patient after discharge.

We follow the Centers for Disease Control monitoring guidelines to track the incidence of hospital acquired infections, and report the results regularly.

Compared with national benchmarks of hospital infection rates throughout the United States, Tahoe Forest Health System ranks among the country’s best. Over the last four years, infection rates have been rated either “very low” or “zero.”

Tahoe Forest Health System Encounters Surgical Site Infection Rates Far Below the National Average



Source: TFHS Internal Data





AUXILIARY BOOSTS INCLINE HOSPITAL, COMMUNITY



With a flurry of spring and summer fundraisers, the dedicated volunteers of the North Lake Tahoe Community Health Care Auxiliary help to ensure that Incline Village Community Hospital (IVCH) has the resources of a much larger facility.

The Auxiliary has contributed \$25,000 toward a new 16-slice CT scanner as part of the IVCH Foundation's diagnostic imaging enhancement campaign, bringing updated technology to a small rural hospital in a time of shrinking budgets. Since 1996, they have raised \$375,000 for direct patient care needs at the 60-plus-year-old facility, as well as more than \$177,000 in scholarships for Incline High School students pursuing degrees in the medical field.

"It's just such a necessary thing to have," says Auxiliary co-president Holly Lefkowitz. An Incline resident since 1983, Lefkowitz's allegiance to the hospital grew out of her elderly mother's ill health, which forced her mother to move in with Lefkowitz and use the hospital's facilities for respiratory emergencies. "It was so much nicer to have her (treated) here as opposed to going down to Reno. It's just a nicer atmosphere—the care is so much more efficient. It's such a comfort to know this is here in our community."

The Auxiliary hosts four fundraisers annually—the "Classy Garage Sale," a hole-in-one competition and golf tournament at Incline's championship course, and a lobster feast that leaves guests licking their fingers, which is now in its 12th year.

“We're a great volunteer organization,” says Nan Healy, the other Auxiliary co-president. “We've been very fortunate to have a lot of people help out for a lot of years.”

TOP: The emergency room entrance of Incline Village Community Hospital. **MIDDLE:** Slit lamp biomicroscope purchased by the Auxiliary at Incline Village Community Hospital. **BOTTOM:** 16-slice CT scanner, purchased with donations from the community and funds raised by the Incline Village Community Hospital Auxiliary.

North Lake Tahoe Community Health Care Auxiliary left to right:
Lorrie Waldman, Svata Trossen, Janice Horran, Nan Healy, Jean Hagy



The Auxiliary has a total of about 80 members, 40 to 50 of whom are active year-round. In a given month, 10 to 15 people help out by taking shifts at the IVCH Gift Shop, which was recently relocated into a much larger space inside the hospital after a \$10,000 donation from the Auxiliary. On weekdays the shop is open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., donating 30 percent of full-priced item sales to the Auxiliary's fundraising efforts. Items range from soups, comfort cards and candles to jewelry and many home decorating items.

“We are very fortunate to have such a dedicated group of people who care about their community hospital,” said Judy Newland, RN, Chief Administrative Officer. “The support they provide benefits everyone who needs these vital services.”

In addition to the big-ticket equipment and high school scholarships, the Auxiliary has also helped fund day-to-day

equipment such as gurneys, IV fluid warmers and surgical instruments. Started in 1994, before the Tahoe Forest Health System purchased the hospital in Incline, the Auxiliary has seen IVCH through iterations as a part-time facility to its current 24/7 format.

Now the Auxiliary volunteers spend their time working on the fundraisers and working in the gift shop or assisting in the emergency room where they change bedding, answer phones and provide other assistance to staff.

“Nan Healy and her team are some of the most impressive folks I've met in my 41-year healthcare career,” says Bob Schapper, CEO of Tahoe Forest Health System. “They provide a level of support that needs to be applauded.”

To learn more about the Auxiliary or how to help, check out: www.tfhd.com/nltchca.asp.



SPECIAL FEATURE

The Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center was awarded the Commercial Award by the Tahoe Quarterly.

The next few pages feature the Tahoe Quarterly's story.

An Aspen tree sculpture helps to tie nature into the cancer center's radiation waiting area, where patients often sit at the table and work on puzzles.

Life-Giving Mission

Truckee's new Cancer Center is a triumph of design, science and compassion

Written by Kyle Magin Photos by Nicholas Rab



Truckee's Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center stands as a testament to its community, namesake, designers, physicians, staff and patients.

For years, Truckee's cancer care program was shoved into a building just across Donner Pass Road. Having hired Dr. Laurence Heifetz, a renowned oncologist from Los Angeles' Cedars-Sinai, in 2006, Tahoe Forest had a robust staff, but facilities were lacking. "You had to take breaks in the hallway," says Eileen Knudson, clinical operations director. "There was one bathroom for the



COMMERCIAL AWARD

ARCHITECT: FreemanWhite
 BUILDER: Geney Gassiot
 INTERIOR DESIGN: FreemanWhite
 YEAR COMPLETED: 2012
 SQUARE FEET: 34,000

physicians, patients and staff?"

Named for the late, legendary Oakland Raiders lineman and completed in June 2012, the building blends with its surroundings—designers carried certain exterior elements, such as the brick, over from the existing hospital campus in Truckee—and includes state-of-the-art features. Far from a clinical interior, the earthy tones, rich

woods and shortened hallways adorned with art are meant to lend a lodge's warmth to an intimidating setting.

Design standards for the, \$33 million-plus Cancer Center, paid for through a public bond and private contributions, were partially laid down by the Cancer Advisory Council—a group of 29 community members and hospital staff—whom set out to tour other cancer centers to assess what they wanted in Truckee.

“Things that were a priority was a design that was beautiful, welcoming and peaceful, inspiring hope for each person who entered the building,” says Pamela Hurt-Hobday, who chaired the council.

To that end, the hospital hired David Wolfe of San Diego-based architecture firm FreemanWhite. In considering an exterior design, Wolfe, who has 40 years of experience designing hospitals, had two objectives. “We were fixated on making it fit in and be unique,” he says. The “earthy” brick veneer and COR-ten dressed up the steel superstructure, and Wolfe opted for flat rooflines that would hold the snow rather than shed onto adjacent sidewalks and parking areas. Construction began on the 34,000 square foot, three-story building in September 2010.

“THINGS THAT WERE A PRIORITY WAS A DESIGN THAT WAS BEAUTIFUL, WELCOMING AND PEACEFUL, INSPIRING HOPE FOR EACH PERSON WHO ENTERED THE BUILDING,”

“There’s a lot of talk now about healing art and a healing environment,” says interior design consultant Joy Meeuwig. “Some of those features

in the Cancer Center draw from nature using wood grain materials, placing lots of windows in the building and the use of natural light in the infusion area and in the lobby.” Earth tones carry through the interior, where steel beams are wrapped with dark woods and mahogany, cherry and maple are present throughout.

Before any of the finishes could be applied inside, though, there was a 7,500-pound, foot-thick door to install on the northwest end of the building in the radiology department. Due to the sensitive nature of radiation—namely, not exposing people to it—the department is recessed below Donner Pass Road and built like a “bank vault,” says project manager Jason Shakespeare of Reno’s Geney/Gassiot General Contractors.

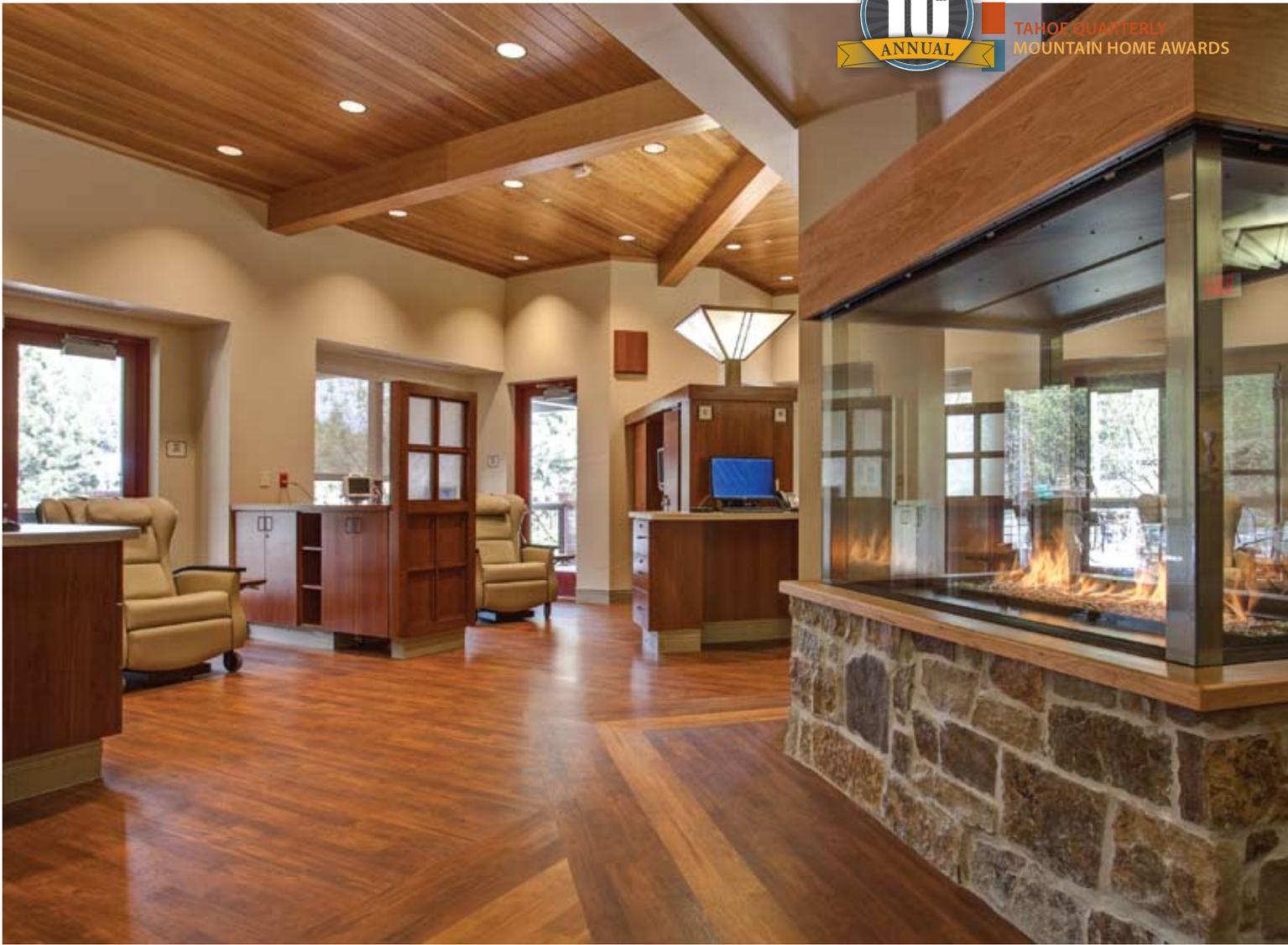
Slab to support heavy radiation equipment is three feet thick, with walls and ceilings made of seven-foot-thick concrete. The door had to be framed and set before any other construction could take place due to its sheer magnitude.

“It’s not the norm to build that thick of concrete walls or roofs,” Shakespeare says. “It’s for dams and bridges usually.”

“That door is really scary,” says Meeuwig. “In taking the hard-hat tours before construction finished, there was such an immediate coldness in passing it.” Tangible efforts were made to soften the walk to radiology. A curving corridor, warm color palette and mandala paintings keep the focus on the walls instead of the looming door.

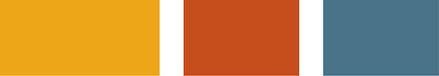
“One of the design ideas was to minimize the length of those corridors, unlike other clinical settings... It’s intended to minimize the trepidation,” says architect Wolfe. Small alcoves meant for artwork break up the length of the walls.

From the well-lit main lobby, a corridor stretches toward an on-site lab—a feature recommended by the council so that patients did not have to leave the building for testing, Knudson



The glass fireplace—cool to the touch—serves as the centerpiece in the infusion room, where patients receive chemotherapy. | The beautiful Circle of Life greets visitors as they enter the lobby; each stone represents a generous donation by members of our community. For more information on giving: TFHS Foundation (530) 582-6329.





Millions of dollars in new imaging equipment—including this PET-CT scanner—make the cancer center state-of-the-art.

says. It's flanked on the left by a small stone-lined alcove featuring a rising bird sculpture created by Dr. Milton Heifetz, a brain surgeon and father of the Cancer Center's lead physician.

"The best thing we ever did was develop an art committee," says Knudson. "The pieces are soothing and distract from why the patients are here."

Local residents may recognize the stylized iron and glass aspens created by Troy Corliss, who created the flow-ers in Truckee's Pioneer Trail roundabout.

The southeast side of the building features the building's showpiece space—the infusion room, where patients receive chemotherapy. Upon entering, the eye is immediately drawn to a glassed-in gas fireplace, giving the room a homey feeling. Positioned in a semi-circle around the fireplace are eight infusion bays, each complete with a reclining chair, personal television and media center and small closet. The floors cover a radiant heating system, essential as patients are more sensitive to cold while undergoing chemotherapy.

Directly behind each bay is a window and small porches. Patients may—if OK'ed by the nursing staff—walk out onto to enjoy a sunny Truckee day.

"We thought the porches added a little bit of whimsy," says Wolfe. "But it had some gravity for most of the patients, because when we asked them 'why do you live here?,' it was because of the outdoors and the environment."

The environment was what drew the hospital's namesake, Gene Upshaw, to the area. The NFL Hall of Famer started visiting Northstar during his Raiders career—one that saw him play in Super Bowls in three different decades, the 1960s, '70s and '80s. His wife, Terri, a Bay Area native, grew up skiing at Lake Tahoe and watched her husband find solace on the tree-lined links of their Sierra getaway, a respite from the grind of his life in Washington D.C. as the leader of the NFL's players' union.

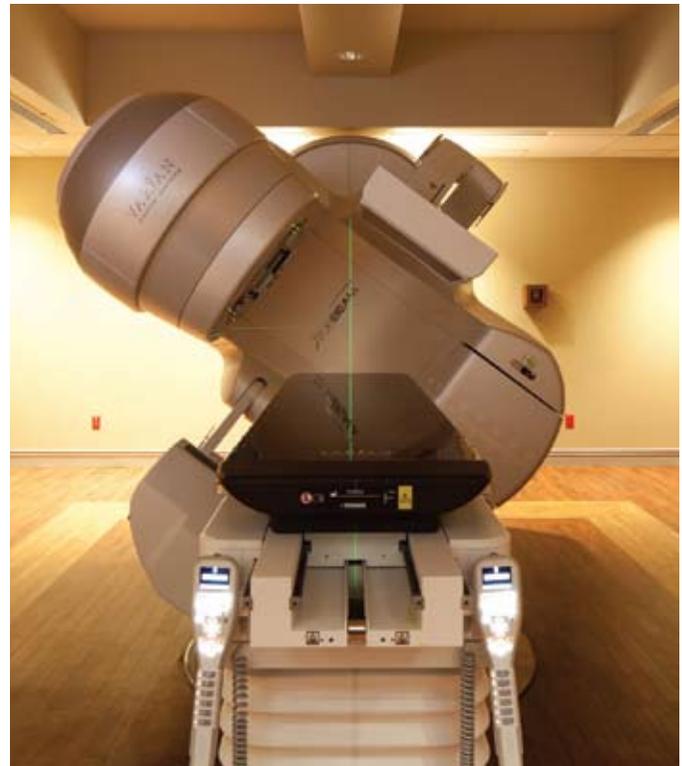
"Gene spent a lot of time on the road traveling, but when we were in Tahoe it was all about family and friends," she says. "He completely shut down in Tahoe; people knew not to call him when he was here."

An avid golfer, Upshaw began feeling sick during a trip to Tahoe in August 2008, when he planned to be on

the links for his 63rd birthday. Sensing a problem, Terri advised her husband to seek testing at Tahoe Forest Hospital, an institution the couple had managed to avoid even while raising their sons, now 22 and 25, as skiers.

Upshaw went in and, on August 17th, received shocking news: He suffered from advanced pancreatic cancer. He died August 20th.

Shortly after Upshaw's death, the family started a Tahoe golf tournament to benefit the hospital in his honor—one that draws leading lights from the NFL such as former San Francisco 49'er Ronnie Lott—and gave an undisclosed monetary gift toward construction of the Cancer Center.



Varian TrueBeam Radiotherapy System

"After he became ill, I really had such respect for the staff at the hospital," says Terri. "Everyone was overwhelmingly nice and supportive, and the quality of care he received for that short time was outstanding. I'm a big spokesperson for the kind of care you get here. Sometimes you feel like a number and not a person at larger hospitals; here, people know your name. To me, that says a lot." **IQ**



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DRAWING WILL BE HELD DECEMBER 2, 2013



PROCEEDS WILL GO TO THE GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL FUND TO BENEFIT THE GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL TAHOE FOREST CANCER CENTER AND THE TAHOE INSTITUTE FOR RURAL HEALTH RESEARCH

AFFORDABLE COMMUNITY HEALTH SCREENINGS

Tahoe Forest Health System offers a variety of affordable lab tests and screenings available monthly at convenient locations in Truckee and Incline Village.

No appointment is necessary. Regular physical exams by your healthcare provider and screening tests are an important part of preventative health care.

If fasting is required, patients should fast for 10-12 hours prior to the lab test. This service is a low-cost laboratory screening that is not necessarily reimbursable by your insurance company. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted. Tests are available to individuals 18 years and older.

TAHOE FOREST LABORATORY DRAW STATION

10956 Donner Pass Rd., Ste. 230, Truckee, CA
(inside the Medical Office Building)

Services available the second Wednesday of every month, 7 AM to 9 AM. For more information, call (530) 582-3277.

INCLINE VILLAGE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

880 Alder Ave., Incline Village, NV

Services available the second Friday of every month, 8 AM to 9 AM. For more information, call (775) 833-4100.

R_x

PATIENT NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

Available Health Screening Tests

- Complete Blood Count (without differential) \$11**
- Comprehensive Metabolic Panel (fasting required) \$26**
- Lipid Panel (fasting required) \$31**
- Vitamin D, 25-Hydroxy \$40**
- Hemoglobin A1C \$25**
- TSH, Thyroid Stimulating Hormone \$30**
- PSA, Prostate-Specific Antigen \$79**

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____



New Location

INCLINE VILLAGE HEALTH CLINIC

Now located on the second floor of Incline Village Community Hospital. Staffed by a Nurse Practitioner, the Incline Village Health Clinic provides primary care services and preventive health programs to the community.

Advance Appointments Available
Walk-in Patients Accepted
Hours of Operation:
Monday, Wednesday, Friday
12 PM to 6 PM

Incline Village Health Clinic
(775) 831-6200
880 Alder Avenue
(2nd floor - Incline Village Community Hospital)
Incline Village, NV 89451

INCLINE VILLAGE HEALTH CLINIC
A Service of Tahoe Forest Health System

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!



Save the Date!

Best of Tahoe Chefs
 May 18, 2014
www.bestoftahoechefs.org



Best of Tahoe Chefs Event Provides **FUNDING FOR CANCER SUPPORT SERVICES**

Photos courtesy of Rob Retting

It's never hard to persuade food and wine lovers to come out for an evening of fine dining and dancing, but when you pair that with a cause so many passionately support, it becomes an extraordinary event with tremendous benefits to our cancer patients. On May 19, 2013, community philanthropy supporting our Cancer Center Patient and Family Programs at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center hit another high standard. Over the last four years, the Best of Tahoe Chefs has raised more than \$600,000. Funds raised from this year's Best of Tahoe Chefs will add another \$170,000, providing much needed programs and services to our local cancer patients and their families. These vital programs are offered free of charge to patients at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center thanks to the funds raised by the 14th annual Best of Tahoe Chefs event.

These programs ensure our patients know that their journey with cancer is supported with positive energy and healing. As an example, if a patient needs a wig to help with the side effect of hair loss during treatment, one is provided and styled personally for that patient, free of charge. If grocery cards are needed to offset the cost of new nutritional requirements, or gas cards for help with travel to daily treatments, these are also available, free of charge. Patients' families and caregivers

also receive resources and support so they can better provide for their loved ones and take care of themselves, too.

The Tahoe Forest Health System Foundation wishes to express its appreciation to the dedicated volunteers and planning committee who bring their personal commitment to make this an incredible night of fundraising, to the Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe, which helped create an elegant experience for each of our guests, and, most of all, to the



L to R: Chefs Scott Yorkey, Jake's on the Lake, and Douglas Dale, Wolfdale's Cuisine Unique

Q: What do you get when you add **25 top regional chefs, 60 dedicated volunteers, and more than 375 fun-loving guests** to the world class Ritz-Carlton Resort, Lake Tahoe?

A: *A magical night of celebration at the Best of Tahoe Chefs for an important cause!*



L to R: Schatzi Boyd, Carey Hood, Alison Elder, Christine Madden, Roseann Parker, Michelle Larson, Martha Simon enjoy the evening



L to R: Chef Billy McCullough, Jim Davis, Joan Davis and Sari Rogoff with table ambassadors

guests and our generous community for supporting this cause that touches so many.

The TFHS Foundation would also like to recognize the amazing and talented chefs who provide all the food and wine for the event and then offer their creativity and culinary talents to deliver special dining packages for the live and silent auctions. Imagine enjoying a helicopter tour that ends at the top of the mountain at Squaw Valley with an exclusive dinner prepared by none other than Chef Billy McCullough. Or consider golf and a penthouse suite at Northstar with your own private chef to create an exquisite dinner for you and your guests. These are just two of the amazing packages won by bidders in the live auction.

For more information on cancer care philanthropy, go to: <http://endowment4cancercare.com> or contact the TFHS Foundation at (530) 582-6277.

A FEW OF THE **PATIENT, FAMILY AND CAREGIVER PROGRAMS & SERVICES** OFFERED FREE TO PATIENTS AT GUMTFCC

- **Individual Counseling and Therapy**
- **Look Good...Feel Better®**
Designed to help women overcome the appearance-related side effects of cancer treatment, this program is offered by expert local estheticians.
- **Whole Body Wellness**
Patients feel a sense of control over their treatment by addressing the emotional aspects of cancer treatment in this program. Topics include stress reduction, communication, nutrition, support networks, specific disease treatment, exercise, and problem solving.
- **Exercise for Energy**
Specially designed for current and recovering cancer patients, this ongoing class offers guidance, support and useful tools to maintain health and wellness. The class incorporates strengthening, stretching, breathing, balance, cardio, wellness education, nutrition and cooking demonstrations, and massage. All classes are supportive, medically-managed and taught by health professionals.
- **Massage Therapy, Yoga, Acupuncture, and Biofeedback**
- **Healing Arts**
- **Gas Cards, Grocery Cards and Hotel Vouchers, as well as Wigs and Mastectomy Products**



L to R: Arlette Rogers of the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center and Terri Wolf of the UC Davis Cancer Care Network

Graduate nurse colleagues join forces to enhance cancer care across the Cancer Care Network

When Truckee-based oncology nurse Arlette Rogers entered the UC Davis Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing masters program in 2010, she became friends with classmate and fellow oncology nurse Terri Wolf, who worked for the UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center. By the time the pair received their diplomas in 2012, they were both in new jobs and collaborating between UC Davis and the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center in Truckee.

Having worked in Reno, Rogers accepted a position as an infusion nurse at the newly opened cancer center in Truckee, and Wolf became the nursing and quality coordinator at the UC Davis Cancer Care Network. The Tahoe Forest center is a community-based rural hospital and one of four cancer centers affiliated with the UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center through the UC Davis Cancer Care Network. The network brings together the academic and research expertise of the UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center with the personal

relationships and insights of community cancer centers in Northern and Central California.

No longer in class together, Rogers and Wolf now work on projects to enhance the quality of cancer care. They are both committed to the mission of the Cancer Care Network and actualizing the vision of the nursing school—to develop transformative leaders and form innovative partnerships to advance cancer care and improve health. Their collaboration supports the delivery of person- and family-centered care, a priority of the School of Nursing and of UC Davis Health System overall.

This was Wolf's first year on the job as the network's nursing and quality coordinator—a new position, and she applied her newly minted leadership skills in numerous ways. Soon after their graduation, Rogers and Wolf got back together when the Cancer Care Network participated in an existing training for UC Davis infusion nurses at the new and leading-edge UC Davis Center for Virtual Care. Fourteen nurses, including Rogers, from network affiliate cancer centers participated, in addition to 35 infusion nurses from UC Davis. It was the first time that nurses from across the network trained together.



ABOVE: Wolf and Rogers discuss emergency procedures

During the training exercises, nurses responded to patient simulators—computerized mannequins that breathe and respond to treatment as if they were real patients—programmed to exhibit the signs and symptoms of anaphylactic shock. Anaphylactic shock is a rare but serious allergic reaction that can occur while an individual is receiving chemotherapy. If the condition is not treated quickly and appropriately, it can be fatal. As an infusion nurse, Rogers was familiar with the need for this training in her community.

Rogers found the training so useful that she and a colleague implemented the educational opportunity with an interprofessional group of clinicians at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center. They enacted the mock anaphylactic shock scenario so clinicians in Truckee could benefit from practicing their response to this crisis situation in real-time.

“These are emergency situations, but we don’t see them very often,” Rogers said. “The training reinforced how we communicate and what our resources are. It’s something staff would like to repeat every six months.”

While the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center has policies and procedures in place to govern such emergency situations, doing a dry run provides an enhanced level of preparation, Rogers said. “It’s important to practice outside of our silos, both between disciplines but also to work outside the silos of our own institutions. We learn from each other.”

Wolf said the training illustrates UC Davis’ philosophy of

sharing knowledge. “We have tremendous academic and clinical resources here, and we opened our doors to our network affiliates so that knowledge and best practices can be disseminated on a wider basis throughout California,” she said.

The training is just one example of how the former classmates are leading new kinds of collaborations to improve health care. For example, Wolf initiated weekly phone calls and a monthly videoconference between the network staff and nurse leaders at the affiliate sites to talk about areas for collaboration and provide leadership coaching and support for network colleagues.

Wolf also collaborated with colleagues from UC Davis Medical Center and the Tahoe Forest Hospital inpatient staff to bring an inservice to the Tahoe hospital for oncology emergencies and supportive care training.

“Inpatient nurses in smaller, rural hospitals do not see cancer patients as frequently as the oncology nurses at large academic hospitals like UC Davis Medical Center, where there are dedicated floors for cancer care,” Wolf said. “This type of inservice provides valuable information, forges connections and allows nurses to share expertise.”

Rogers and Wolf continue to work together to share resources and experiences throughout the five cancer centers in the network. Patients need access to the best care as close to home as possible. Collaboration among nurses is a key element for high-quality care. The relationship Rogers and Wolf forged as classmates, and now as colleagues, makes their work as leaders in transforming health care all the more enjoyable.

Recognized for the Highest Commitment to Quality and Innovation

Tahoe Forest Health System recently received the National Rural Health Resource Center (NRHRC) Award for Excellence and Innovation in Quality. TFHS was recognized for its commitment to offering the highest quality care to its patients and the community it serves. The NRHRC recognized Tahoe Forest Hospital for exemplary leadership and innovation in the area of quality improvement in response to a program implemented by the hospital to reduce instances of pneumonia.

“Congratulations to Tahoe Forest Hospital for delivering an outstanding patient-centered healthcare experience to their community and for demonstrating excellence and innovation in the area of quality,” said Angelica M. Perez, California’s NRHRC Flex Coordinator.

Recognizing excellent work in critical access hospitals (CAHs) throughout the country, the NRHRC works to promote excellence and quality in innovation, honors the achievements of CAHs, and publicizes successful strategies. Twenty CAHs were nominated in 2013.

“This year’s recipients embody both outstanding quality and meaningful innovation,” said Terry Hill, NRHRC Executive Director. “They demonstrate that rural hospitals can lead the way in the rapidly changing healthcare industry.”

“We are very proud to be one of eight California critical access hospitals to be recognized,” said Bob Schapper, TFHS Chief Executive Officer. “This designation is so important to us because it demonstrates to our community the value of great health care available locally. We really want to thank and acknowledge our community, and because of their support we’ve been able to innovate and reinvest, allowing us to offer much broader and high-quality services. Above all, we applaud our excellent physicians and employees for this recognition. They are passionate about providing the very best care possible to our patients and their families.”



ABOVE: Angelica M. Perez, California’s NRHRC Flex Coordinator, presents award to Bob Schapper, CEO, TFHS

NAMED ONE OF

America's Best

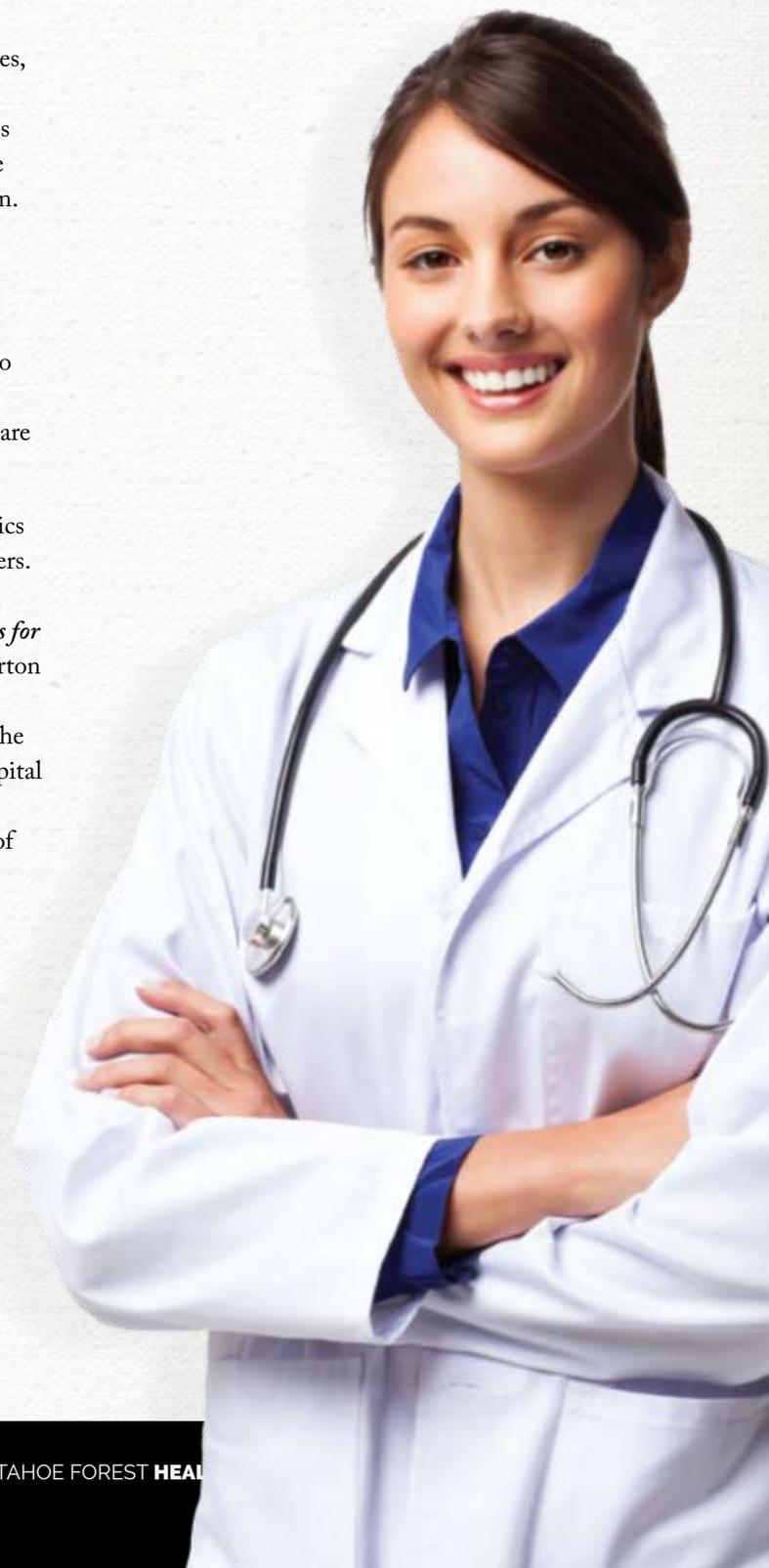
HOSPITALS FOR OBSTETRICS

Tahoe Forest Health System's Women and Family Center was recently honored with the Women's Choice Award for America's Best Hospitals for Obstetrics. This award is given to hospitals that demonstrate extraordinary service in meeting the needs of women and their families, support and empower women in their community, and set higher healthcare standards by appreciating the unique needs and preferences of female patients. One of the selection criteria for this award was the Women and Family Center's exceptional scores for patient satisfaction.

The Women and Family Center at Tahoe Forest Hospital provides comprehensive obstetrical and gynecological care. With a family-centered focus, its comprehensive perinatal services program provides individualized support services, teaching, referrals and consultations to expectant mothers and their families. These individualized care plans provide families with guidance for a healthy pregnancy and help prepare the entire family for labor and the arrival of a new baby.

The Women's Choice Award for America's Best Hospital for Obstetrics was presented by WomenCertified Inc. the Voice of Female Consumers. This organization was founded by Delia Passi, former publisher of *Working Mother* magazine and responsible for the *100 Best Companies for Working Mothers*. In 2007, WomenCertified partnered with the Wharton School of Business to conduct the first-ever gender-based consumer satisfaction study. The groundbreaking results set the foundation for the WomenCertified Audit that is used in tandem with HCAHPS (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) scores to determine which hospitals are meeting the needs and preferences of female patients.

The America's Best Hospitals for Obstetrics scoring process is unique in that it is the only national list that focuses on female patient satisfaction. They select the best hospitals that provide obstetric services based on their exceptional scores for patient recommendation in HCAHPS surveys. They then filter those hospitals to eliminate ones with abnormal results for certain important clinical considerations, such as rates of infection or serious complications. The resulting list of more than 350 award winners represents hospitals women can feel confident in choosing for their maternity needs.



Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center Receives **Commission on Cancer Accreditation**

The Commission on Cancer (CoC) of the American College of Surgeons (ACoS) has granted **Three-Year Accreditation with Commendation** to the Cancer Program at The Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center.

The oncology program has been recognized by the CoC as offering the very best in cancer care. It is a recognition of the quality of our comprehensive, multidisciplinary patient care.

The Cancer Center received this accreditation following the onsite evaluation by a physician-surveyor during which our facility demonstrated a Commendation level of compliance with standards that represent the full scope of our cancer program (cancer committee leadership, cancer data management, clinical services, research, community outreach and quality improvement).

Established in 1922 by the American College of Surgeons, the CoC is a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to improving survival rates and quality of life for cancer patients through standard-setting, prevention, research, education and the monitoring of comprehensive, quality care. Its membership includes Fellows of the American College of Surgeons and 49 national organizations that reflect the full spectrum of cancer care.

The core functions of the CoC include setting standards for quality, multidisciplinary cancer patient care; surveying facilities to evaluate compliance with the 36 CoC standards; collecting standardized and quality data from accredited facilities; and using the data to develop effective educational interventions to improve cancer care outcomes at the national, state and local level.



Above: The Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center

The American Cancer Society estimates that more than 1.6 million cases of cancer will be diagnosed in 2012.

Receiving care at a CoC-accredited cancer program ensures that a patient will have access to:

- **Comprehensive care, including a range of state-of-the art services and equipment**
- **A multispecialty, team approach to coordinate the best treatment options**
- **Information about ongoing clinical trials and new treatment options**
- **Access to cancer-related information, education, and support**
- **A cancer registry that collects data on type and stage of cancers and treatment results and offers lifelong patient follow-up**
- **Ongoing monitoring and improvement of care**
- **And, most importantly, quality care close to home**

The Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center is committed to providing the highest quality cancer treatment and comprehensive support services to patients and families. Led by Medical Director **Laurence J. Heifetz, MD, FACP**, with Medical Oncologist/Hematologist **Melissa Kaime, MD, FACP**, Medical Oncologist/Hematologist **Ahrin B. Koppel, MD**, and Director of Radiation Oncology **Daphne Palmer, MD**, the Cancer Center offers the most current diagnostic therapeutic modalities with equipment and technology.



GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL
TAHOE FOREST CANCER CENTER

www.tahoecancercenter.com

NEW PARTNERSHIP EXPANDS **CANCER CARE SERVICES TO SOUTH LAKE TAHOE**

Barton Health has partnered with the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center, an affiliate of the UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center, to expand its oncology services for cancer patients who reside in the South Lake Tahoe area. Using advanced technology through Barton Health's Telehealth for Tahoe Program, cancer patients undergoing treatment at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center can meet with their physicians via real-time videoconferencing.

"We are now seeing our patients in a seamless way—remotely," Dr. Laurence J. Heifetz, FACP, Medical Director and Oncologist, explained. "This program helps relieve the hardship of driving an hour around the lake to see us. Barton

Health currently has a telemedicine program in place, so it was a good opportunity to create a virtual oncology office in South Lake Tahoe, making it more convenient for our patients."

For cancer patients, who are in-between chemo doses, the program not only minimizes stress and travel expenses, but also saves patients time where they need it most—to heal. Dr. Heifetz, along with Medical Oncologist and Hematologist, Dr. Ahrin B. Koppel, are able to communicate with their patients between chemotherapy treatments, which can vary in frequency from every three to four weeks. Patients must be closely monitored, and, as each treatment can vary with disease diagnosis, often patients may have interim visits about

every 10 to 14 days.

"A vast majority of their diagnostics and lab tests can now be done at Barton as well," Dr. Heifetz said.

In addition to the award-winning telehealth program offered by Barton, both facilities are also looking to partner to bring additional cancer support options to the South Shore.

Patients of Dr. Heifetz and Koppel can be referred to the Barton's Teleoncology Program at Barton based on their needs and preferences. For more information about the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center, visit www.tahoecancercenter.com or call **(530) 582-6450**.

NEW CANCER CENTER SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Music as Medicine

Music as Medicine is part of a whole-body approach to wellness. This program is open to cancer patients and their caregivers. Music as Medicine has been recommended for reduction of stress and pain, to improve mood, and to promote healing. No musical experience is necessary. Group and individual sessions are available.

Walk and Talk

This is a specially designed program that combines exercise and education for cancer patients, led by Dr. Kirk Ditterich, Clinical Psychologist, along with exercise specialists from the Tahoe Center for Health and Sports Performance. Each session begins with a 15-minute discussion about health and wellness, followed by a walk ranging from 10 to 45 minutes, depending on personal ability. Exercise, fresh air and social interaction are helpful for patients' physical and mental health.

Biofeedback

Biofeedback trains the patient in relaxation, mindfulness and coherence, and teaches self-regulation skills that can relieve and ease chronic pain, reduce stress and anxiety, and increase relaxation. Precise instruments measure physiological activity such as heart function, breathing, muscle activity and skin temperature and accurately "feed back" the information on a computer screen. What we can see, we can change.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture provides a holistic perspective for patients at the Cancer Center. Through the practice of both acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine, this program offers a complementary approach to help manage the side effects of chemotherapy and radiation and alleviate some of the disease and stress, both physical and emotional, that cancer patients experience.

For a complete listing of patient and family programs, go to www.tahoecancercenter.com.

Announcing

Tahoe Forest MultiSpecialty Clinics Nephrology Specialists



Peter S. Clark, MD
Board Certified,
Internal Medicine
and Nephrology



Robert F. Quigley, D.O.
Board Certified,
Internal Medicine
and Nephrology



James Sullivan, D.O.
Board Certified,
Internal Medicine
and Nephrology

Tahoe Forest MultiSpecialty Clinics Nephrology office specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of hypertension and kidney disorders/diseases.

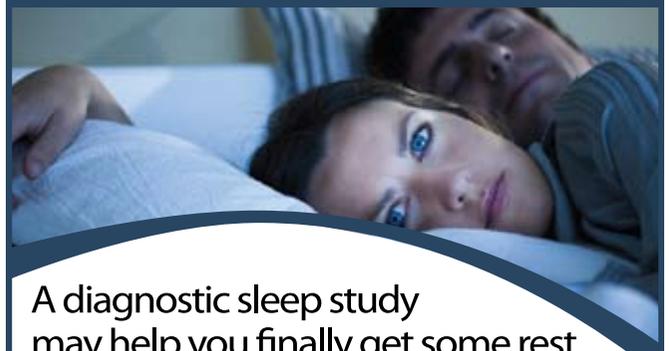
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(530) 582-1212

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How Medi-Cal Rate Reductions Affect Hospital-Based Distinct-Part Nursing Facilities

Provisions contained in last year's California budget package included devastating reductions to Medi-Cal reimbursement for hospital-based distinct-part nursing facilities (DP/NFs). These facilities operate as a designated unit within the hospital and provide subacute care to adults and children who need specialized care. Tahoe Forest Hospital currently has a 36-bed skilled nursing facility.

These reductions will go into effect later this year and, while most Medi-Cal reimbursements were cut 10%, DP/NFs face added wrinkles to the formula. The 10% cut is applied to the 2008 rate resulting in a 25%, or higher, realized reduction. The new resultant rate will be frozen, and, to compound matters further, is a retroactive recoupment of approximately two years. In other words, the 2011-12 budget bill assumed that DP/NFs had been over-reimbursed based on the new formula, and the difference will be recouped by the state. Rates prior to these reductions were based on either the lower of the cost of providing the care, or the statewide median.

The impact on Tahoe Forest Hospital could mean a loss of more than \$500,000 per year. For many hospitals, particularly small rural hospitals, it may mean simply closing their doors altogether. A hospital north of the Tahoe/Truckee region

surveyed bed availability for its 44 DP/NF patients and found only five available beds, and four of those were more than a hundred miles away. Urban district hospitals also provide post-acute care to Medi-Cal beneficiaries and similarly are making difficult decisions regarding the continuation of providing these services with reimbursement rates that fall well below cost.

Tahoe Forest Health System, together with the District Hospital Leadership Forum, has been actively engaging the state legislature to find a solution to this devastating issue. Not a partisan issue, legislation has been introduced in both houses aimed at avoiding implementation of the reductions, AB 900 (Alejo) and SB 640 (Lara), and would require that payment reductions would not apply to skilled nursing facilities. To date, nearly half of all legislators have signed on as co-authors of the senate version. It is very likely to make it to the governor's desk, but will he sign or veto? That remains to be seen.

Questions? Contact Ted Owens, Tahoe Forest Health System Director of Community Development, towens@tfhd.com, or call (530) 582-6551.

Healthcare Reform: Our Local Impact

The world of health care is a complex issue, and the new Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act could make it even more so. The old rules are gone, new ones are here and yet others are a work in progress. Politics and legislation will continue to shape the elements, timing and trajectory of reform with rapidity. Regardless of where you come down on the issue of healthcare reform, major changes are on the way.



Rural communities such as ours face many of the same challenges confronting the rest of the nation regarding healthcare delivery but have a steeper slope to climb because we lack the economy of scale that urban areas have. Our composition and economy are largely small business, self-employment,

hospitality and tourism, and a good deal of seasonal employment. So how will that impact us here in the Tahoe/Truckee region, and will the Tahoe Forest Health System be prepared?

Tahoe Forest Health System has been innovating and preparing for some time. A primary goal of healthcare reform is improving community health outside the hospital environment. Two years ago, Tahoe Forest Health System conducted a community health needs assessment and began work designing "The Wellness Neighborhood" to improve population health and direct resources where they will be most effective. Through integration and community engagement, five "homes" will address issues specific to our region: primary prevention, chronic disease, behavioral/mental health, dental health and ethnic disparities.

Continued on page 34. **See Healthcare Reform**

WELLNESS NEWS

Ecolab Donates Hand Sanitizer Stands to Truckee Tahoe Unified School District

This past December, students at Tahoe Truckee Unified School District (TTUSD) were taught the importance of hand hygiene, flu prevention and dental care from Tahoe Forest Health System medical professionals. To complement the program, Ecolab, the global leader in water, hygiene and energy technologies, donated hand sanitizer stands to Glenshire, Truckee, Lake Tahoe and Kings Beach Elementary Schools.

“Thanks to Laurel Holmer who handles infection control at Tahoe Forest Hospital and her long-standing relationship with Ecolab, we were able to put donated Ecolab hand sanitizer stands at numerous elementary schools,” said Jill Whistler, Wellness Dietitian, Tahoe Center for Health and Sports Performance. “We really wanted to stress to students the importance of hand hygiene during the onset of flu season.”

An American Society for Microbiology hand-washing survey noted that an estimated one out of five people do not wash their hands after using a restroom. Hand hygiene education at TTUSD elementary schools focused on the importance and “how-tos” of hand washing after using the restroom, in addition to after petting an animal, sneezing in one’s hands, and prior to eating dinner. Other flu and cold preventative tactics included not touching one’s “T” zone (eyes, nose and mouth) and covering one’s mouth when coughing and/or sneezing. The education also stressed correct teeth brushing and flossing techniques.

“At some level, we hope and believe that our educational documents, hygiene logs, and overall professional guidance assisted in lowering absentee numbers in December and may also do so during the coming months,” added Whistler.

DEFENSIVE HAND WASHING

Did you know that an estimated 1 out of 5 people do not wash their hands after using the restroom? In 2005, the American Society for Microbiology did a survey of hand washing. They asked people questions about their hand-washing habits and also watched people in public restrooms.



The results weren't great. For example:

- **People don't always wash their hands after using the bathroom.** 91% of adults say they always wash their hands after using public restrooms, but just 83% were seen doing so.
- **People wash their hands less at home.** 83% say they wash their hands after using the bathroom at home. Germs are germs, and a bathroom is a bathroom.
- **Only 32% of people in the survey said they wash their hands after coughing or sneezing.** So it's important to protect the people around you by covering your mouth with your hand when you cough. But, if you then reach for your friend's pizza, you might as well not have bothered.
- **Just 21% wash their hands after handling money.**
- **Only 42% of the people in the survey washed after petting a dog or cat.** You've seen your dog roll in that mystery smell in the park or your cat rub against you after using the litter pan; Fido and Fluffy are dirtier than you think.

How to Wash Your Hands Correctly

- Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold) and apply soap.
- Rub your hands together to make a lather and scrub them well. Be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers and under your nails.
- Continue rubbing your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
- Rinse your hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air-dry them.

5 foods to BOOST your mood



You are what you eat—and it turns out if you eat low quality food, you'll experience a low quality mood. That's right—a diet high in processed, refined foods has been linked to depression, anxiety, mood swings, hyperactivity, and a variety of other problems. In contrast, a diet rich in whole foods is more likely to leave you feeling whole and happy.

If you want to feel peaceful and happy, feed your brain nutrient-dense food. Here are five foods that have been shown to improve mood:

Salmon: Salmon is high in the **omega-3 fatty acids DHA** and **EPA**. Foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids are considered brain foods—these essential fatty acids actually “cushion” the brain cells. Omega-3 fatty acids have been shown to improve mood, memory, and overall wellbeing. They have been linked to a decrease in depression and a decreased risk of dementia later in life. Other mood-boosting foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids include walnuts, flaxseeds, chia seeds, mackerel, herring, and sardines.

Almonds: Almonds are rich in **tyrosine**, which is an amino acid that is considered one of the building blocks for the production of dopamine and other mood-associated neurotransmitters. Low levels of tyrosine have been associated with depression. While a handful of almonds is no cure for depression, foods rich in tyrosine can help boost mood. Other tyrosine-rich foods include chicken, turkey, sunflower seeds, and cheese.

Dark Leafy Greens: Greens like chard and spinach are packed with **B vitamins** and **magnesium**. Low levels of B vitamins (folate, B-6 and B-12) have been linked to depression. Low levels of magnesium have been linked to fatigue and brain fog. Magnesium has been shown to improve sleep, improve the ability to handle stress, and reduce the symptoms of PMS. B vitamins have been shown to prevent depression and reduce fatigue. There has never been a better reason to eat your dark, leafy greens!

Asparagus: Asparagus is an excellent source of **tryptophan**, which is one of the building blocks of serotonin, one of the brain's primary mood-regulating neurotransmitters. What's more, asparagus is high in the B vitamin, folate. In other words, asparagus has a double dose of components that are linked with improved mood.

Chocolate: You were hoping this one would make the list and it did. You've long known that chocolate has a tendency to make you feel better—and it's not your imagination. Dark chocolate stimulates the production of **endorphins**, chemicals in the brain that bring on feelings of pleasure. It's also rich in **magnesium, B vitamins, and antioxidants**—all linked with improved mood. Chocolate is no cure for long-term depression, but it will give you a temporary mood boost. Go for dark chocolate with a high cacao content.

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Yes, it's good for you.



Greater collaborations, like the one with the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District, are also being fostered. Complete physicals under the Affordable Care Act are free, and school programs are being developed to improve healthcare delivery, advance concussion screening programs, and foster dietary improvement. In addition, educational programs like BFit have been created thanks to the efforts of Dr. Nina Winans and other volunteers. New thinking on insurance and other relationships, both public and private, are actively being pursued to keep locals local.

Tahoe Forest Health System and the Truckee Donner

Chamber of Commerce have partnered to present a three-part public outreach series on Healthcare Reform. The first, held in May, focused on impacts to businesses both large and small. The second in the series, to be held midsummer, will concentrate on healthcare delivery in the Tahoe/Truckee region and how it will change. The third and final of the series will be held in the fall to update community members on health insurance and the laws impacting us all. For additional information, call Ted Owens, TFHS Director of Community Development, at (530) 582-6551.



THE BEST ANTIDEPRESSANT MAY COME FROM THE REFRIGERATOR

If you think the pharmaceutical industry holds the keys to happiness, think again. It turns out, fresh fruits and vegetables might just be a critical factor for happiness and mental health. In fact, researchers from Dartmouth University and the University of Warwick have found that people who eat seven servings of fruit and vegetables per day have the highest levels of happiness and mental health. In an era when there is a pill for everything, this is a refreshing bit of news.

When it comes to mental health, researchers have looked at many factors—but rarely do studies evaluate a link between diet and mental health. As a result, little is known about the relationship between diet and psychological well-being. In this study, researchers examined the eating habits of 80,000 people in England and found that mental well-being improved in correlation with an increase in the number of daily servings of fruits and vegetables. (One serving was defined as about 2.8 ounces.) Happiness peaked at seven servings per day.

The subjects in this study were randomly selected and evaluated for seven measures of well-being: life satisfaction, mental well-being, mental disorders, self-reported health, happiness, nervousness, and feeling low. The researchers noted that even after adjusting for demographic, social, and economic variables, individuals who consumed more fruits and vegetables had higher levels of happiness and mental health.

The reasons for the association are unclear, but research will be ongoing to continue to examine the link between diet and mental health. In the meantime, you have nothing to lose by increasing your fruit and vegetable consumption—especially if you're feeling blue. Current government recommendations suggest that people eat five servings of fruit and vegetables per day to protect against heart disease and cancer. Of course, this is a minimum recommendation. If you're striving for physical—and mental—health, you might be better off striving for seven servings.

Reference:

Blanchflower DG, Oswald AJ, Stewart-Brown S. Is psychological well-being linked to the consumption of fruit and vegetables? *Social Indicators Research*. October 2012.

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Tahoe Center for Health and Sports Performance

Here are some of the great classes offered at TCHSP:

Fitness Forever – This is a senior program that has been inspiring men and women to become fit for over 13 years, featuring low and non-impact aerobic dance, weightlifting with small hand weights and tubing to sculpt and tone muscles while building endurance. Combined with balance, flexibility and functional fitness, this is a great class for seniors of all fitness levels! \$5 per class drop-in for seniors 65+.

Intense Cross Training – This is a powerful class mixing cardio, strength and core, and is not for the faint of heart! Expect a workout that includes upper and lower body, core, and cardio segments. A focus on balance and agility brings everything together for a complete workout. Geared toward intermediate to advanced participants.

Pilates Mat – This introduction to the principles and techniques of Pilates exercises allows students to work at varying levels. Each class focuses on proper body alignment, breathing, coordination, and relaxation. This class will help strengthen your core, improve your flexibility, and tone your muscles. All levels welcome!

Pilates Reformer Training – Although the Pilates Reformer may look intimidating, it is a very safe and effective piece of exercise equipment. Beginning Reformer exercises are great for those recovering from injury or who need to develop core strength, as most of the exercises are performed with the spine in a supported position. Once a foundation is established, the Pilates Reformer can be a great tool for functional and athletic training.

Power Yoga Flow – A fun, energetic and challenging yoga class that emphasizes the coordination of breath with movement. Progressing from warm-ups to challenging postures and deeper stretching, modifications are offered so you can determine your own level of intensity. Balance strength and flexibility to gain confidence in movement and integrate your body, mind and breath in this uplifting practice. Intermediate to advanced level of fitness recommended.

Sunrise Yoga – Start your day with this practice of flowing yoga postures that will awaken and energize your body from the inside out. This mixed level class allows you to work at your own ability so that you can stretch, strengthen and restore your body and mind. All levels welcome!

For more information, please call the Tahoe Center for Health and Sports Performance at (530) 587-3769.

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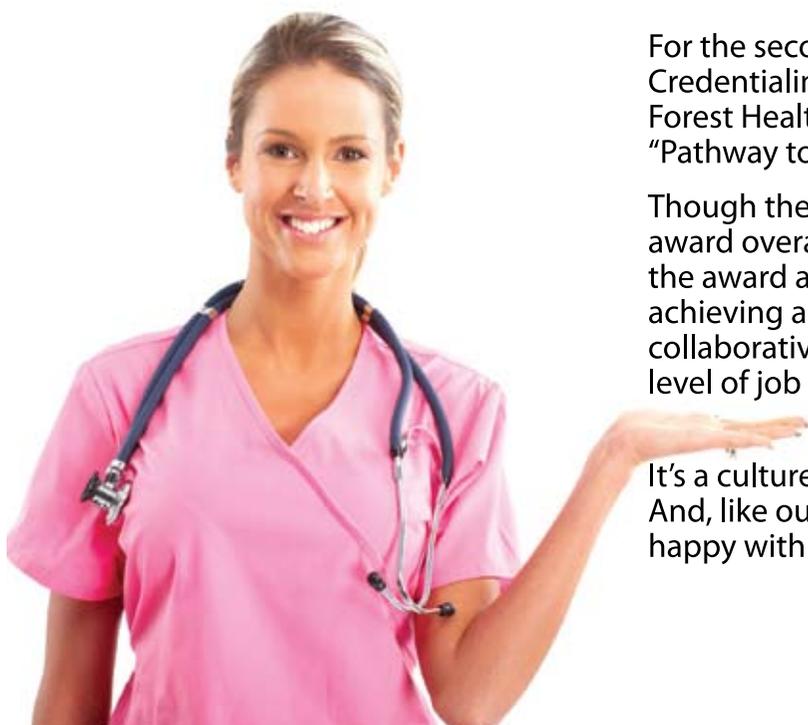
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