Pucker Up for Preemies

The NMMC Women’s Hospital hosted Pucker Up for Preemies, a fundraiser for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Patient Assistance Fund, on Nov. 4. The event include a pig-kissing for the neonatologist who raised the most money, a barbecue lunch and T-shirt sales. In all, Pucker Up for Preemies raised more than $4,500 for the patient assistance fund.

Dr. Nading (far right) reacts to learning that at the last minute, Ob-Gyn Associates donated $500 in his name to secure the win. In an show of solidarity and in support of the event, Drs. Ginger Pole, Bryan Darling and Dennis Wright also kissed Pip, a 200-pound potbelly pig that belongs to NMMC Women’s Hospital employee Amy Clouse, RN.
Project Hope Awards Grants at Dissolution

Project Hope recently awarded more than $65,500 in grants to local organizations as a parting gift.

“Our board of directors made the difficult decision to dissolve Project Hope because of declining contributions and participation, coupled with the deaths of two founding members,” said Liz Dawson, Project Hope board president.

Project Hope started in 1998 with a handful of local volunteers who wanted to make a difference in the lives of individuals with heart disease, cancer and diabetes and their families who were impacted by those diseases. Founding members Hank Boerner died in December 2012, and Marsha Grace died in June.

The group’s signature event, Festival of Hope, was held annually from 1999 to 2014. In addition to awarding grants each year to local organizations for patient assistance, health screenings and prevention efforts, Project Hope also awarded scholarships to area high school seniors who were either pursuing a medical career or whose lives have been impacted by cancer, heart disease, or diabetes.

Funds were recently distributed from proceeds of the 2014 Festival of Hope as well as the Project Hope Endowment Fund managed by the CREATE Foundation.

Recipients are:
- North Mississippi Medical Center Diabetes Patient Assistance Fund, $12,131
- NMCC Cancer Care Assistance Fund, $12,131
- NMCC Heart Patient Assistance Fund, $10,000
- Camp Bluebird scholarships, $4,000
- Weston Reed Foundation, $7,000
- Antone Tannehill Good Samaritan Free Clinic, $5,839.91
- Tree of Life Free Clinic, $5,839.91
- Sisters’ Network, $4,601
- Barbershop Talk, $1,000

Pediatric Hospitalist Joins Women’s Hospital

Dr. Viswanath “Vishwa” Gajula, assistant professor of pediatric critical care at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, is caring for seriously ill pediatric patients at the North Mississippi Medical Center Women’s Hospital.

Since January the University of Mississippi Medical Center has been providing pediatric hospitalist services in Tupelo 24 hours daily. The pediatric hospitalist consults with pediatric patients in the Emergency Department and provides hospital care for children on the Pediatrics unit. Dr. Gajula works with pediatric hospitalist Dr. Jana Sperka.

Dr. Gajula holds a master’s degree in environmental health management at the University of Findlay in Findlay, Ohio, degrees in medicine and surgery from Gandhi Medical College and Hospital/NTR University of Health Sciences in Hyderabad, India, and degrees in biology and physics from Sri Chaitanya University in Vijayawada, India.

A pediatric critical care fellow at Children’s Hospital of Michigan/Wayne State University School of Medicine, Dr. Gajula did his pediatric residency at Michigan State University-Kalamazoo Center for Medical Studies. His areas of specialty are hospitalist medicine, pediatric critical care and emergency care.

Experienced as a researcher and principal investigator in pediatrics, Gajula is a member of the Society of Critical Care Medicine, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Educational Commission of Foreign Medical Graduates, the Medical Council of India and Andhra Pradesh State Medical Council of India.

“We admit children from all over the region, not just from the Tupelo area,” explained Ellen Friloux, administrator for NMCC Women and Children’s Services. “Having a pediatric hospitalist means that all area physicians can send their pediatric patients to us and feel assured that they will receive a higher level of care around the clock.”

NMCC’s pediatricians continue to care for babies in the Nursery, and neonatologists care for fragile newborns in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.
Hallmark Named NMMC Employee of the Month

April Hallmark, inpatient coder with Health Information Services, was named Employee of the Month for August at North Mississippi Medical Center. Hallmark has worked at NMMC since 1993. She grew up in the Brewer community, is a graduate of Shannon High School and attended Itawamba Community College in Fulton. She completed her bachelor's degree in Health Record Administration at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson. She received additional training to become a certified coding specialist.

Coworkers commented that Hallmark is a hard worker who is very knowledgeable about her job.

“April is an excellent employee and coder who is always willing to help out when needed,” one coworker wrote in her nomination. “She was extremely helpful as a resource for our CDS nurses for coding questions as we started and continue to grow the program. She is really friendly and always has a smile. She has been a valuable mentor to our newer coders.”

“(Coding) requires skill, knowledge and a tenacious attitude,” another coworker wrote. “(April) works with physicians and other departments to ensure the accuracy of her coding. She has a pleasant attitude and is very easy to work with. She exemplifies the attitude and the aptitude of an Employee of the Month.”

When asked what she loved most about her job, Hallmark said: “Each chart I code brings challenges, and using my skills as a coder to figure those out each day makes for an exciting job. My goal is to apply codes to each patient’s record for reimbursement and also trending health issues. The best part of it is all the friendships I have made with all the coders and employees of HIS. I cannot imagine working with any other group of people. They are simply the best, and I love them all!”

She and her husband Ronnie Hallmark II have two sons – 17-year-old Tyler and 12-year-old Trey. The family attends First Baptist Church of Shannon.

Clinics Select Employee of the Month

North Mississippi Medical Clinics recently named Doris Edwards as the September Employee of the Month. Edwards is an admissions/discharge specialist at Lowndes Medical Clinic. She joined the NMHS system in 2006 at the Women’s Hospital before transferring to Lowndes MC. She is a graduate of Hamilton High School, and is also a registered coder.

“Doris is always willing to help out,” said a coworker who nominated her. “She is very knowledgeable and is always a big help. She’s a team player and never complains.”

Edwards says her favorite part of her job is helping patients with their insurance and billing questions.

She has two sons, one daughter and five grandchildren. She attends church at New Life Assembly of God in New Hope, where she serves as church secretary.

The Employee of the Month honor recognizes employees with exemplary job performance and customer service skills, as well as community involvement.
Dr. Frank Abrokwa Osei, assistant professor of pediatrics in the Division of Pediatric Cardiology at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, has joined the medical staff of the Children’s of Mississippi Clinic in Tupelo.

After receiving his medical degree at the School of Medical Sciences, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana, Dr. Osei interned in the Departments of Child Health and Surgery at the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in Kumasi. Afterward, with his interest in pediatrics, Dr. Osei continued to take care of children and was a medical officer in the Department of Child Health at the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in Kumasi. He was also involved in clinical research.

Dr. Osei completed his pediatric residency at the Medical University of South Carolina Children’s Hospital in Charleston, S.C. He completed a pediatric cardiology fellowship at the Children’s Hospital at Montefiore, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, in Bronx, N.Y., and a fellowship in advanced pediatric non-invasive cardiac imaging at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston, Texas.

Dr. Osei is board certified in general pediatrics and pediatric cardiology. He is a fellow of the American College of Cardiology and a member of the American Heart Association, American Society of Echocardiography, American Academy of Pediatrics and Academic Pediatric Association.

NMMC-Pontotoc Hosts Lunch for Employees

North Mississippi Medical Center-Pontotoc hosted a buffet-style meal outside on the Long Term Care patio for hospital and nursing home employees on Nov. 11. Employees enjoyed rotisserie chicken with sides and plenty of desserts.
North Mississippi Medical Center Home Health and Hospice's booth at the 2015 Outcomes Conference featured a photo booth with props for participants to enjoy.

Dr. Ben Kitchens of Iuka

Dr. Alan Flowers, IMA-Tupelo

NMMC Outcomes Conference participants (from left) Rhonda Saunders, Kim Wade and Tracie Conwill.

NMMC Home Health and Hospice Business Development Coordinators (from left) Tara Terrell, RN; Carrie Kimbrough, RN, BSN; Stacy Cobb, RN, BSN; and Dana Smith, RN.

Low Vision Rehab Relocating

North Mississippi Medical Center’s Low Vision Rehabilitation Services has moved to North Mississippi Retina Center, 606 Brunson Drive, Tupelo.

Cheri Nipp, MS, OTR/L, SCLV, can be reached by phone at (662) 377-3340 or by fax at (662) 377-3349. Low Vision Rehabilitation Services are covered by Medicare and most insurance companies when provided by an occupational therapist. A person is considered to have low vision when he is experiencing problems with daily activities because of his vision.
Bill Farrar was recently honored at a retirement reception for his 30 years of service at North Mississippi Medical Center.

Farrar was born at NMMC and grew up in Nettleton, graduating from Nettleton High School. He attended Itawamba Community College and the University of Mississippi in Oxford, where he finished his pharmacist training.

After working for 10 years in retail pharmacies in Nettleton and Tupelo, Farrar joined NMMC as a night pharmacist at the main unit. He worked there for five years before going to work at the Employee Pharmacy.

Farrar said technology has made for some drastic changes in his occupation over the last three decades. “It’s night and day,” he said. “I told somebody the best thing to happen to pharmacy is technology, but it’s also the worse thing really. It took the personal feel out of it. It’s not nearly as personal a job as it used to be. You used to know your customers. That’s one thing I tried to do as best I could is to know my customers.”

Farrar said he would miss his coworkers and enjoyed his work at NMMC.

“I don’t know where the years went,” Farrar said. “It’s been a good profession that I’ve thoroughly enjoyed, but it’s time to take a rest. It’s almost like leaving your family. You spend so much time with people at work. This was a hard decision to make.”

Farrar’s post-retirement plans include travelling, spending more time with his brother and his family and playing piano.

“I love to travel and I’m sure that will be a big part of my plans. I like music and I play piano. So hopefully I can get back into that and do some more practicing,” he said.

Pink Lemonade Day

North Mississippi Neurosurgical Services celebrated Pink Lemonade Days during October for breast cancer awareness. The clinic shared information on preventing and treating breast cancer, as well as refreshments.
Kevin Hines in Tupelo – Cracked, Not Broken

As their senior project, four Tupelo High School seniors are holding an event featuring Kevin Hines, author of “Cracked, Not Broken.” The event will be held at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 30, at the Tupelo Civic Auditorium at Tupelo Middle School. The event is free and open to the public.

At age 19, Hines nearly became one of the more than 2,000 people who have jumped to their deaths from the Golden Gate Bridge since it was built in 1937. Fortunately, however, Hines became part of a much better statistic: he is the 26th person known to have survived the 200-foot fall. He has also found a reason for living after suffering for years without help from bipolar disorder with psychotic features.

His book, “Cracked, Not Broken,” tells of his struggles with his illness and his attempt at suicide…and all the things that came together to save his life.

This event is sponsored in part by the NMMC Behavioral Health Center. For more information, call (662) 390-4286.
Annette Jackson, RN, was recently honored at a retirement reception for 28 years of service at North Mississippi Medical Center and NMMC-Pontotoc.

Jackson worked for 17 years in NMMC’s Surgical Intensive Care Unit and then spent 11 years as a registered nurse in NMMC-Pontotoc’s Emergency Department.

She earned a bachelor degree in psychology from Georgia State in Atlanta and went back to school to pursue a nursing career. Jackson finished requirements for an associate’s degree in nursing from Wallace State Community College in Dothan, Ala., and earned a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Mississippi University for Women in Columbus.

Jackson has two grown children – son Ian Jackson of Shannon and daughter Lauren Whaley of Sulligent, Ala., and two grandchildren – Zac Whaley and Jon Eaton Jackson.

The things she said she was most proud of in her career are a national scholarship she earned from the American Association of Critical Care Nurses that she used to finish her nursing education and a Lee County Volunteer Parent of the Year award that she won.

“I really want to thank Cathy Waldrop and Curtis Cunningham for being good supervisors,” Jackson said of her time in the NMMC-Pontotoc ER. “I have enjoyed working with all of my recent and past coworkers.”

Jackson Retires After 28-Year Nursing Career

Annette Jackson, RN, (right) receives a certificate of appreciation from Curtis Cunningham, nurse manager of NMMC-Pontotoc’s Emergency Department for her 38 years of nursing at NMMC and NMMC-Pontotoc.

Jackson, a resident of Shannon, said her retirement plans include travelling and spending time with her grandchildren.

Trauma Academy

Participants in NMMC’s trauma academy, which includes select Emergency Department registered nurses, CareFlight team members and Emergency Medical Services crew, meet monthly for advanced training. On Oct. 16 these individuals learned how to place external jugular IVs and intraosseous IVs for critical patients. The skills they have learned will enable them to rapidly place lifesaving infusion lines rapidly. In November, Dr. Vishal Sachdev will speak to the group about cardiothoracic care.
The following named employees recently received service pins in recognition of service milestones:

**Five Years**

**NMMC-Tupelo**
Kayla Thompson, Thelma Reed, Contessa Williams, Paula Pierce, Rhonda Terrell, Kristi Hall, Allyson Moore, Amanda Johnson, Gerri Smullins

**NMMC-West Point**
Judi Gray

**Clinics**
Tiffany Collum, Erica Witcher

**Ten Years**

**NMMC-Tupelo**
Mary Baker, Jessica Cagle, Whitney Hill, Lora Ivy, James Mooneyhan, Michael Shook, Virginia Hodges, Amanda Foster, Casey Humphries, Dana Smith, Tabitha Oswalt

**NMMC-West Point**
Kim Godney

**NMMC-Pontotoc**
Angie Andrews

**Clinics**
Judy Holland, Malinda Prewitt

**Fifteen Years**

**NMMC-Tupelo**
Joan Maxcy, Barbara Rogers, Grayland Westmoreland, James Wheeler, Melissa Manalac, Courtney Stringer, Bonnie Dill, Makeba McCoy, Dianna Coleman, Kathy Tesseneer

**NMHS**
James Franklin, Amanda Thomas

**North Mississippi Medical Center-Hamilton**
Sonia Frost, Tina Brown

**Twenty Years**

**NMMC-Tupelo**
Sarah Johnson, Katonya Copeland, Rebecca Blalock, Cynthia Brown-White, Charlene Dillard, Suzanne Tackett

**NMMC-West Point**
George Brown

**Clinics**
Lora Rodgers, Cindy Welford

**Twenty-Five Years**

**NMMC-Tupelo**
David Thomas, Susan Hyatt, Felita Fells

**NMHS**
Marsha Tapscott, Leanna Stephens

**NMMC-Pontotoc**
Melissa Lindsey, Larry Ramsey, Mona Weeden

**Clinics**
Amy Wolfe

**Thirty Years**

**NMMC-Tupelo**
Steven Newby

**NMMC-West Point**
Elisha Sacus

**Clinics**
Patricia Walton

**Thirty-Five Years**

**NMMC-Tupelo**
Sheila Easter, Sandra Stockard

**NMHS**
Aundra Menefield

**NMMC-Eupora**
James Burney
Volunteer Service Awards

Outstanding Hours 2015
Carla Enis (left), director of NMMC Volunteer Services, and Laura Land (right), chief human resources officer for North Mississippi Health Services, recognized volunteers who have contributed the most hours for fiscal year 2015: Esther Brown, 551 hours; Sallie Parker, 684 hours; Margret Collins, 637 hours; Nancy Forrest, 895 hours; and Robert Stanley, 1,066 hours. Renea Satterwhite contributed 1,038 hours this year.

New Volunteer & 100 Hour Pins
During North Mississippi Medical Center’s Volunteer Awards Luncheon, Carla Enis (left), director of NMMC Volunteer Services, and Laura Land (right), chief human resources officer for NMHS, honored Janice Williams for volunteering 100 hours; Cheryl Storey, new volunteer; Margaret Ann Parmer, new volunteer, and Debbie Volf; 100 hours. Also receiving 100 hour pins were Harold Arrington, Becky Carlton, Judith Drew, Harriet Miller, Dylan Scroggins and April Turner. NMMC honored its volunteers with a western-style luncheon Oct. 23.

200-500 Hour Pins
Carla Enis (left), director of NMMC Volunteer Services, and Laura Land (right), chief human resources officer for NMHS, presented service pins to George Bogardus for 300 hours; Mary McCollum and Darlea Heitger, 500 hours; Shirley Anderson, Nancy Grissom, Bettye Tutor and Kathy Rutherford, 200 hours; and Louis Dearman, 300 hours. Other honorees were Lynn Huffhine, Manpreet Kalher, Nancy Poore, Calvin White and Sandy Yang, 200 hours; Kathy Jetton, 300 hours; and Greg Haynes and Isis Johnson-Brown, 500 hours.

700 Hours
Carla Enis (left), director of NMMC Volunteer Services, and Laura Land (right), chief human resources officer for NMHS, presented 700 hour service pins to Lynn Vuncannon, Mardell Nance, Gloria Williams, Carolyn Brown and Janice Scales. Elizabeth Fuller and Phyllis Lendon were also recognized with 700 hour pins.
Volunteer Service Awards

800-1,000 Hours
Carla Enis (left), director of NMMC Volunteer Services, and Laura Land (right), chief human resources officer for NMHS, presented service pins to Ruth Whittley, Idella Crawford and Fran Herring for 1,000 hours; Jane Fielder, Jean Vickers and Alan Naylor for 800 hours. Jean Jacobs was also recognized for 1,000 hours.

1,200 Hours
Carla Enis (left), director of NMMC Volunteer Services, and Laura Land (right), chief human resources officer for NMHS, presented service pins to Norma Wicker, 1,200 hours; Mary Catron, 700 hours; and Betty Thomas, 1,200 hours.

1,500-2,700 Hours
Laura Land (left), chief human resources officer for NMHS, and Carla Enis (right), director of NMMC Volunteer Services, presented service pins to Mary Johnson, 2,700 hours; Rick Campeau, 2,000 hours; Virginia Allred, 1,500 hours; Wilma Trice, 1,800 hours; Bonnie Carnathan, 1,800 hours; and Nancy Forrest, 2,700 hours. Other recipients were Faye Gable, 1,500 hours; Jay Harris, 1,800 hours; Ruth Baldwyn, 2,000 hours; and Omie Payne, 2,700 hours.

3,000-4,000 Hours
Laura Land (left), chief human resources officer for NMHS, and Carla Enis (right), director of NMMC Volunteer Services, presented service pins to Pauline Goree and Joe Potts, 4,000 hours; Ken Wicker, 3,300 hours; Grace Gower and Erie Wheeler, 3,000 hours; and Esther Brown and Elvira Blanchard, 3,300 hours. Also recognized were Jeanette Fandel, 3,000 hours; and Lela Finney, 3,500 hours.

4,500-13,000 Hours
Laura Land (left), chief human resources officer for NMHS, and Carla Enis (right), director of NMMC Volunteer Services, presented service pins to Suzanne Coggin, 13,000 hours; Robert Stanley, 4,500 hours; and Sallie Parker and Margret Collins, 6,000 hours.