

Lakes Regional Healthcare Health Happenings

May 2024

Celebrating 1,000 Robotic
Surgeries **Page 13**



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Stay up to date on what's happening at Lakes Regional Healthcare by following us on social media! We also love it when people post messages to us – we're always looking for feedback on how to improve the care experience!

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is an Avera Partner.*

A Message From the CEO

Thank you for taking some time out of your day to read the spring/summer edition of Health Happenings! I have to be honest, I was exhausted after reading it and never as proud of the work of our healthcare team. Although we are not “little” by Iowa hospital standards, the publication made me think of us as the “little hospital that could.” I also would never make the mistake of suggesting that “bigger is better” as I can disprove that in a number of ways. Not the least of which is our being recognized as a 5-star hospital by CMS for the fourth year in a row (the only hospital on the entire west side of the state of Iowa to receive the ranking). In addition, we were named a top 100 Rural and Community Hospital by Chartis, a national healthcare benchmarking group as well as being named a Top 20 Rural and Community Hospital by the National Rural Health Association. Each of these recognize the highest levels of quality, safety, patient satisfaction, and overall costs. Although I am exceedingly proud of our healthcare team for their work, I do not share that as a pat on the back but to simply instill confidence that “the little hospital that could” provides outstanding healthcare and we are blessed to get to do so for our family, friends, neighbors, and those of you that may call the Lakes area home for only a short time during the warm summer months.

I often think about our work as taking care of individual patients every day. From your reading, you will note that our work extends far beyond the walls of the hospital and individual patients to ensure that we have a safe and healthy community. Our work in emergency preparedness ensures that we can respond to any large event or natural disaster that may occur by collaborating with other local agencies. Our work in assessing the needs of the community through collaboration with many other organizations has improved access to behavioral health and transportation services. We collaborate with other local and regional healthcare organizations to ensure we can provide access and state of the art healthcare when you need it. We collaboratively work with other hospitals in our region to jointly recruit specialists and share staff when it’s mutually beneficial to do so. The list of organizations for



which we have collaborative relationships is lengthy. (You may be getting the idea that “collaboration” is important to us and you’d be right.) I often say that “healthcare is a team sport” and that team extends far beyond the walls of LRH.

You are also part of our team. Many of you volunteer your time, choose LRH as your healthcare provider of choice, contribute to our Foundation, or volunteer or perhaps work with one of the many great organizations that we collaborate with. We appreciate you and your support of LRH and our work.

I am certainly proud of our award-winning healthcare team but know that our commitment to providing the highest quality healthcare is not about awards but about our commitment to serving our patients and the community in a way that you can be proud of and deserve. We feel blessed to live in such a wonderful place and want to thank you for your support and trust in LRH as your chosen healthcare provider.

If you have any questions, concerns, or ideas, I am always happy to visit. You can reach me at (712) 336-8795 or via e-mail at jason.harrington@lakeshealth.org.

Jason C. Harrington, FACHE
President & CEO

Dickinson County Prepared for Emergencies

Summer is often the favorite season in Okoboji. The warm weather, lake, businesses that open for the season, tourists – activity is in high gear, and with it comes a higher incidence of emergencies. In fact, Lakes Regional Healthcare's (LRH) patient volume in their Emergency Department doubles during the summer months, often due to lake-related and heat-related illnesses. Fortunately, Dickinson County has a robust emergency services system comprising over 90 volunteer First Responders, 35 Law Enforcement Officers, six dispatchers, nearly 20 DNR Conservation Lake Patrols, six fire departments, an underwater rescue team, LRH's ambulance service and emergency department. The county also has several important pieces of equipment such as specialized water rescue equipment, vehicle extrication equipment including the Jaws of Life, search and rescue drones, and Dickinson County Prepared for

Emergencies equipment to help reach patients found in some of the remote areas of the county such as thermal scopes and aerial and underwater drones.

"Emergency professionals, whether volunteer or paid, must be ready for anything: traumatic injury due to a car accident, boat accident, farm accident or ATV rollover. Strokes or heart attacks or environmental emergencies such as frostbite or heat exhaustion. Pregnancy and childbirth complications and everything in between," said LRH Ambulance Supervisor Chris Yungbluth. "We have a great relationship with the First Responders, and they play a vital role in responding to emergencies. First Responders usually arrive at the scene first because they live and work within the communities that they serve. When minutes count they make the difference in the outcomes of our patients." First Responders are volunteers that undergo special training that varies from

learning how to provide medical care, to extricating victims from their cars after having an accident, putting out fires or rescuing people from a water environment as well as several other skills. First Responders learn to be the solution to many emergencies that citizens and visitors find themselves in.

"Right now volunteer numbers are declining nationwide and that trend is no different locally. We need volunteers in all areas of the county," said Dickinson County EMS Association Vice President Bruce Lee. "If you are interested in giving your time, stop into your local department or city hall and pick up an application. I think you would be surprised at how rewarding volunteering to be a First Responder can be."

The hospital has a total of five ambulances. Three are stationed at LRH and the other two are stationed at Terril and Lake Park for First



Responders to use. Yungbluth said the average time it takes for the hospital's ambulance to start responding to calls once notified is one minute and 30 seconds and then to arrive depends on how far the emergency is from the hospital. When there are community events and more people are expected to be congregated, the ambulance is often stationed near that location instead of at the hospital or an additional ambulance is staffed to reduce response times and be able to handle the potential of a higher call volume. Yungbluth said, "We usually are in the area of Arnold's Park during the University of Okoboji Triathlon and during the 4th of July weekend when we have higher numbers of visitors to our area."

Area lakes and outdoor recreational opportunities in Dickinson County pose some rather unique emergencies compared to other communities. That's when specialty equipment owned and operated by the First Responders and LRH play a bigger role. During the winter, the hospital's Emergency Response Vehicle is used to get to emergency situations on the ice. "Ambulances by design are big heavy vehicles so it was essential to have a lighter, more versatile vehicle to get to places not easily accessed such as in the fields, wildlife areas, and on the many miles of trails throughout the county. That's where the role of the hospital's Emergency Response Vehicle built on a Polaris Ranger platform becomes essential," said Yungbluth.

In addition, Dickinson County being home to a large portion of Iowa's recreational waters creates the potential

for water-related emergencies and that is where the water rescue teams from the Spirit Lake Fire Department and the Water Rescue Teams and Dive Team from the Arnolds Park/Okoboji Fire and Rescue take the lead to keep citizens and visitors protected. Rick Zalabowski III is the Dive Captain of the Arnolds Park/Okoboji Dive Team. He said, "Our volunteers practice multiple different scenarios and train each month all throughout the year. We change what



we train on and how we train to the current weather conditions so we can be prepared when someone finds themselves in trouble on the water." LRH's Emergency Department always has one physician (and Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner on the weekends) and two Registered Nurses working and more during particularly busy holidays such as the 4th of July. Besides being equipped with the newest technology, staff have eER,

which links two-way video equipment in LRH's Emergency Department to emergency/trauma-trained physicians at a central hub at Avera McKennan in Sioux Falls, South Dakota 24-hours a day, seven days a week. The technology provides an additional physician consultation and a more seamless transfer to Sioux Falls, if needed, via helicopter or ambulance.

Each year LRH undergoes drills for various large-scale emergencies. Dickinson County Emergency Management Coordinator and 911 Administrator Mike Ehret said, "These drills are essential to testing the processes we have in place to respond as a whole to large scale events that may affect our communities. It allows for all responders to work together and strengthen their ability to protect our communities as well as learn what works well and the areas that we may need more training or a better process."

LRH President and CEO Jason Harrington agreed and said, "Staff at LRH regularly undergo emergency preparedness drills to test our readiness for emergencies. Our healthcare team includes caring, committed, and trained people who are devoted to handling unexpected emergent situations and providing the care needed."

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer First Responder, please contact your local department or city hall, the Dickinson County EMS Association, or contact the hospital's Ambulance Department. They can help direct you to the right contact to start your adventure. Also, available EMT or Paramedic job opportunities at LRH may also be found online at www.lakeshealth.org/careers.

A Birth Story: Reagan

The 4th of July weekend was a fun weekend to spend with family for Milford residents Alli and JC Koerselman. Not just because it was a national holiday, but because they found out they were pregnant with their first child and could spread the good news. The positivity of the moment continued throughout Alli's pregnancy. She didn't have any issues or complications. Morning sickness wasn't a thing for her, although she was averse to red meat and coffee. Near the end of her pregnancy, she did experience swelling, a somewhat common pregnancy symptom.

"The nurses were all fantastic. They walked me through every step, checked in on me constantly, tended to my every need, and were so knowledgeable. I learned a lot from them."

Alli works in the healthcare industry. She used to work at Lakes Regional Healthcare as a Radiology Technologist and now works from home as a Clinical Applications Specialist for medical imaging software. Her due date was March 7 and after what she felt was a quick nine months, she wondered if she was feeling labor pains while working on February 28. "I wasn't sure if I was having false labor so I just worked through it," she said. "But early in the evening I was taking some laundry upstairs and my water broke. I clearly was in actual labor so my husband and I left for the hospital."

Upon arriving at the hospital, Alli's contractions were somewhat mild and three to four minutes apart. They got closer together and more intense as time went on. Alli kept moving throughout labor. "I didn't sit at all. I stood, walked around, used a birthing ball, and watched a show my husband and I had been binge watching to keep me distracted during labor pains," she said.

Over time, the labor pains became more painful than Alli wanted to experience, so she received an epidural. She said, "It was not in my birth plan to have an unmedicated birth, so I decided to tap out and receive the epidural about 6-7 hours after arriving at the hospital. I was very thankful once it was in place, it made the rest of the labor and birth an overall better experience in my opinion. I am blessed to say I had a very positive birth story."



Although this was Alli's first time in labor, she felt comfortable throughout the experience because nurses kept her very informed and gave great advice. "The nurses were all fantastic. They walked me through every step, checked in on me constantly, tended to my every need, and were so knowledgeable. I learned a lot from them," said Alli. "Delivering at Lakes Regional was nice because of that, plus I had worked there previously, so the familiarity was a benefit, the birthing suite was so comfortable, and I was excited to have my doctor, Dr. Groom, able to deliver my baby."

Less than 12 hours after arriving at the hospital, Reagan was born on February 29. Alli said having a leap year baby was something she never expected but will be a fun fact for her daughter to talk about. "We have had a lot of people ask when we will celebrate her birthday. We will most likely celebrate in the month of February on the 28th."

As a new mom, Alli's advice to expectant moms is to have a positive outlook throughout pregnancy, labor and the delivery process and to remain flexible. She said, "Be informed but have trust in the nurses as they know what they're doing and are there to help. What's most important is delivering a healthy baby in the end, and that's what I'm thankful for most of all."

Location Providers That Deliver

These family medicine physicians provide obstetrical care at Lakes Regional Healthcare and can all be reached at 712-336-3750:



1. Zach Borus, MD, MPH
2. Craig Cunningham, MD
3. Christine Fricke, DO
4. Averill Fuhs, DO
5. Mara Groom, DO
6. Mike Kalkhoff, MD
7. Andrew Mueiting, DO
8. Whitney Nelson, DO
9. Steve Vander Leest, DO

Free Screening Mammograms, Pap Smears and Pelvic Exams Available

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services' Care for Yourself program hopes to improve accessibility to mammograms, pap smears, and pelvic exams for women in Dickinson, Emmet, and Osceola counties in Iowa.

The program provides free screening mammograms, pap smears and pelvic exams to a limited number of women who meet the following qualifications:

- Resident of Dickinson, Emmet, or Osceola counties, and
- Are between the ages of 21-64 years of age (for pap smears and pelvic exams) or are between the ages of 40-64 years of age or are under age 40 and have signs of breast cancer (for screening mammograms), and
- Have a household monthly income of \$3,038 (take home pay) or less (add \$1,070 for each additional household member), and
- Have no health insurance or have health insurance but are unable to pay for out-of-pocket expenses related to screenings.

Those interested in learning more about the Care for Yourself program or in scheduling an appointment for a screening mammogram or pap smear and pelvic exam are to call Dickinson County Public Health at 712-339-6050 and ask for Pam.

Easily Caring for Patients in Emergencies **Wherever They Are**

Thanks to generous Lakes Regional Healthcare (LRH) Foundation donors, an Emergency Response Vehicle was purchased to better allow paramedics and EMTs to get to patients in emergencies otherwise difficult to access, such as on the trails, in fields, and on the ice. Another difficulty in quickly, safely, and comfortably transporting patients to receive emergency care has been identified. Emergency caregivers often need to respond to situations where they must climb stairs to access the patients and no elevators are available. It is not a problem for our paramedics or other caregivers in an emergency to use stairs but can often be difficult and somewhat unsafe to transport the patients back down the stairs to get into the ambulance and to the hospital.

The solution is a Powered Stair Chair. It allows caregivers to transport patients more effectively with increased comfort and security for both the paramedics and the patient. The equipment allows caregivers to safely and ergonomically move patients up and down stairs, utilizing a powered track to help decrease the risk of caregiver injury and fatigue. It also has integrated lights to allow paramedics to easily see the environment around them and their patients. Also, as opposed to using cots, the chair reduces the amount a patient is tipped back while

on the stairs. That, combined with the chair's patient containment system, helps improve patient psychological and physical safety.

We would like your help to purchase five Powered Stair Chairs (one for each ambulance) at a total cost of \$77,500. With your help, people in emergency situations can receive the care they need more safely and efficiently. Your contribution to the LRH Foundation Powered Stair Chairs Fund will go a long way in ensuring the safety of patients as they receive care. Whether you give \$10, \$100, \$1,000 or \$10,000, your gift is greatly appreciated.

We've tried to make it convenient for you to help us. Just complete and mail in the form printed in this newsletter, make a gift online at www.averafoundation.org/donate-withsearch or call LRH Foundation Executive Director Sonja Hamm at 712-336-8791.

Thank you for helping us make a difference in the lives of others. We are dedicated to providing for the health of everyone in the region and appreciate your loyalty, trust in us, and support.



Easy Ways to Give

We want to make giving as easy as possible for you. Here are some easy ways to give that will continue to help improve healthcare in the Iowa Great Lakes.

Online – Give to us directly by going to <https://www.averafoundation.org/donate-with-search> or hovering over the QR code shown here. Once at the site, select **“Other”** for the Avera facility, type **“Lakes Regional Healthcare”** in the “Other Avera Facility” box and make a donation in a matter of a couple minutes!



In Person – Call Lakes Regional Healthcare Foundation Executive Director Sonja Hamm at 712-336-8791 or email her at Sonja.hamm@lakeshealth.org to set up a time to meet with her personally.

Mail – Cut out and complete the card below and mail it in with your gift.



Yes, I Want to Make a Difference!

We are deeply grateful for the support of our friends in the community. Thank you for your gift to Lakes Regional Healthcare Foundation in support of the Powered Star Chairs Fund.

I would like to give a gift of: \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other: \$ _____

My gift is:

In memory of _____ In honor of _____

Please send acknowledgement to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Name _____

Contact Person _____
Title if Business/Organization Gift

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____

Phone Number _____

Card number _____

Expiration date _____ / _____ (month/year)

CVV number _____

Signature _____

Please make checks payable to Lakes Regional Healthcare Foundation. Your gift is tax deductible as provided by law.

If you prefer to remain anonymous, check this box

Please check, as appropriate:

- Address change
- Name change
- I/we have included LRH Foundation in our will
- I would like a personal phone call or visit
- Send volunteer information

Please return to:

Lakes Regional Healthcare Foundation
 Attention: Sonja Hamm
 PO Box AB
 Spirit Lake, IA 51360

For more information on how your gifts make a difference or to make your gift online, please visit

<https://www.averafoundation.org/donate-with-search>.

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 Healthcare Foundation
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Stroke Protocol in the ER Critical for Patients

Did you know that stroke is the fifth leading cause of death and a leading cause of serious long-term disability in the United States? And that one in four stroke survivors suffer a second stroke within five years? What's worse, according to a study by the World Stroke Organization that was published in *Lancet Neurology* in October 2023, the number of people who die of stroke worldwide is expected to increase by 50% by 2050, especially among younger people. Lower- and middle-income countries and poorer areas within higher-income countries are most affected by the increase in strokes.

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to the brain is blocked by a clot or tear in a blood vessel. Since blood vessels carry oxygen and nutrients to the brain, a stroke prevents the brain from getting what it needs, so the brain cells start to die. That's why Lakes Regional Healthcare (LRH) has a stroke protocol in the Emergency Department.

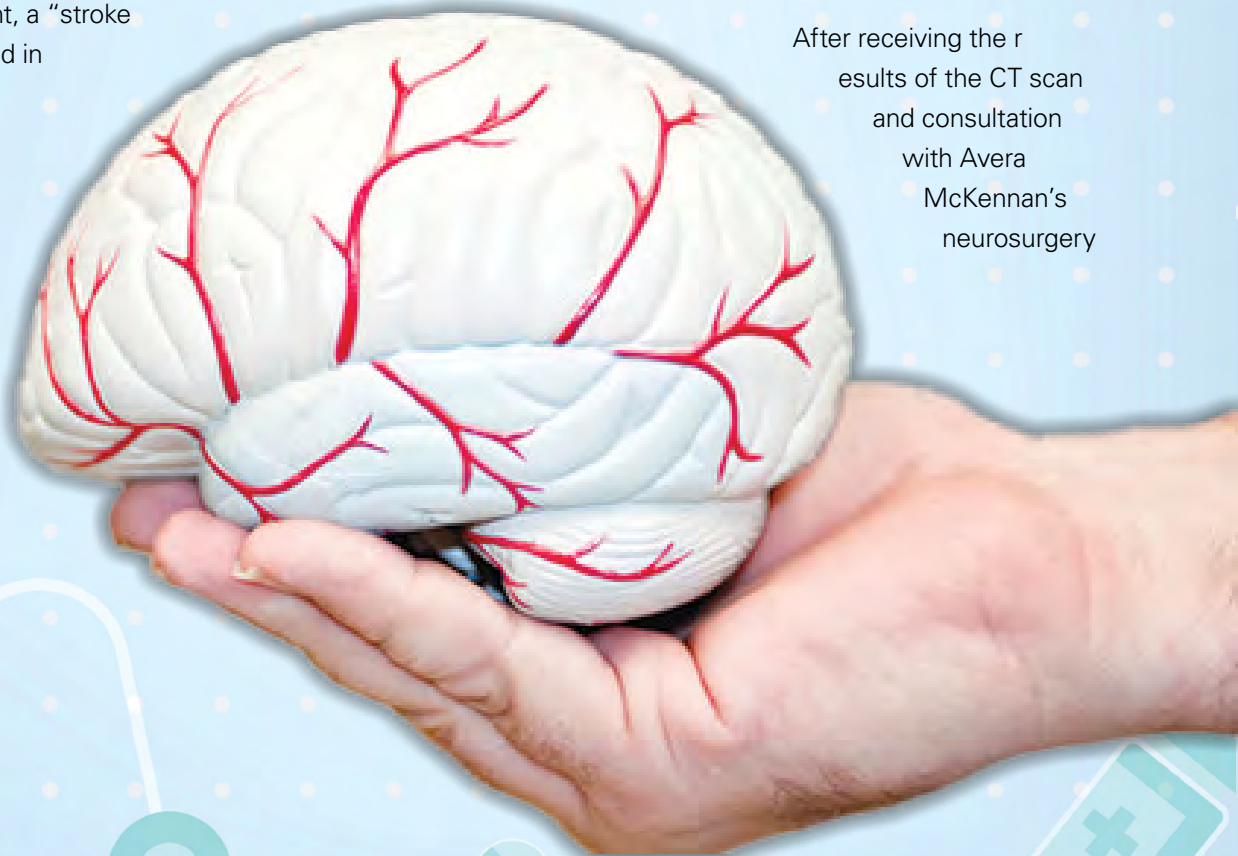
According to LRH Emergency Department Supervisor Emily Gruhlke, as soon as they are alerted to a possible stroke patient, a "stroke alert" is sounded overhead in the hospital. Healthcare professionals from all over, including staff in the Emergency, Respiratory Therapy, Imaging, and Lab Departments, go to the Emergency Department to await the patient's arrival. As the ambulance rushes to the patient, staff back at the hospital are updated on the patient's estimated time of arrival.

"We know when they're two minutes out, one minute out, and so on. Timing is so important during a stroke," said Gruhlke. "We say 'time is brain' because every second saved helps save the patient's brain tissue and prognosis."

Once the patient arrives at the hospital, the priority is for them to get a CT scan after addressing any possible airway concerns. The goal is to have the CT scan done and read by a radiologist within 45 minutes of the patient's arrival at the hospital. Gruhlke said, "The CT gives us an image of the brain and shows us what could be the cause of a stroke, such as a brain bleed or clot."

LRH has special technology to make the CT scan more precise and efficient. VIZ technology is used during the CT scan. It is an artificial intelligence (AI) program that automatically alerts the Avera McKennan neurosurgery team if a major concern is found on the CT scan. This helps to expedite the transfer process and treatment.

After receiving the results of the CT scan and consultation with Avera McKennan's neurosurgery



Know the Signs of a Stroke

Learn these **FAST** warning signs of stroke and get help immediately.

team in Sioux Falls, a clot-busting drug known as a thrombolytic is administered immediately. From there, the patient is transferred to Sioux Falls or another tertiary stroke center, usually by helicopter.

If you think you're too young to have a stroke, consider this: nearly one out of four strokes occur to people under the age of 65. People at any age can and do have strokes. Plus, the risk of stroke more than doubles each decade after age 55. However, you can reduce your own stroke risk by not smoking, exercising regularly, eating a diet low in processed food and high in vegetables, and managing existing conditions such as type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure.

Another step to take is get LRH's Planet Heart screenings. A heart check and vascular check consist of the following items for a total of \$125:

- Calcium score CT for early detection of heart disease
- BMI (body mass index)
- Cholesterol and blood sugar levels
- Education and risk assessment
- Diet quality index
- Carotid artery screening
- Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening
- Peripheral artery disease screening

Those interested can call 712-336-8658 to schedule a Planet Heart appointment.



F – FACIAL DROOPING

Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the person's smile uneven?



A – ARM WEAKNESS

Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?



S – SPEECH DIFFICULTIES

Is speech slurred? Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence like "The sky is blue."



T – TIME TO CALL 911

Check the time so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared.

Loving the Outdoors, Pain Free

Lakefield, Minnesota resident Suzanne Leopold loves to be outdoors. Feeding the fish in her pond, tending to flowers in her garden, going for walks – they are what brings her happiness. So after struggling with arthritis in her knees for five years and eventually needing to rest while working in her flower garden because of the pain in her knees, she was not happy and knew something had to be done.



She started by taking ibuprofen constantly, but the pain never went away. Her activities changed even more. She couldn't walk down the steps without walking down them backwards because of her knee pain. Her family and friends encouraged her to have surgery but she didn't listen, even though her quality of life wasn't great. Her dear friend who is a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist told her to see Dr. Chris Rierson of Northwest Iowa Bone, Joint & Sports Surgeons and she agreed. Leopold said, "I went to Dr. Rierson and he gave me injections every now and then because I didn't want to have surgery. But that was only a cover-up. It didn't fix the source of the problem."

Eventually she was convinced she needed a total knee replacement surgery in both knees. She had surgery on her left knee in December 2022 and surgery on her right knee in March 2023. According to Leopold, the first week was difficult. She tends to get nauseous from anesthesia, which required two overnight hospital stays instead of the usual one-night stay. She said, "My pain level was pretty high. They had me do Congratulations, Dr. Rierson! In January Dr. Rierson, orthopedic surgeon with Northwest Iowa Bone, Joint & Sports Surgeons, completed his 1,000th Mako robotic-assisted joint replacement surgery! If you are interested in robotic

surgery at Lakes Regional Healthcare, talk to your healthcare provider or call Northwest Iowa Bone, Joint & Sports Surgeons at 712-336-8708. physical therapy right away and I didn't like that too well," she said. "But once the anesthesia was completely out of my system, I was 110% committed to my recovery."

Leopold's daughter stayed with her during her first week at home. Despite her daughter repeatedly asking her mom if she could help her, Leopold kept answering that no, she needed to do things herself. "I said 'I need to do this myself because otherwise what will I do once you leave?'," said Leopold. "Yea, it hurt, but I got myself up. I walked around the house two times, then three times, then up to five times during the night. I'm a strong believer that if you sit just because it hurts, you'll never ever have a good outcome."

Swelling was gone two weeks after surgery and her quick recovery amazed Dr. Rierson. "He said he didn't even know how I healed so fast, but I think it's because I kept moving and was diligent about doing my physical therapy exercises at home," said Leopold. "I had nine PT sessions with my left knee and only five for my right knee because I thought I could do them myself at home. You must religiously do your exercises at home – don't just rely on doing PT exercises at your appointment."

More than anything, Leopold credits Dr. Rierson for everything. She said, "My two knee surgeries wouldn't have been possible if it wasn't for my very skilled doctor, Dr. Rierson. He is such a good hearted, awesome surgeon. I keep referring friends to him because he was so integral in my care."

Now Leopold is back to tending to her flowers and feeding the 32 fish in her pond and doesn't need to take breaks to rest because of knee pain. She occasionally gets stiff after sitting a while, but she just "walks it off" and the pain disappears. The only regret she has is not having surgery earlier. She said, "I should have listened to my friends and family right away. If you have knee pain, don't mess around like I did for five years. You always think it'll go away. If I would have known how good I'd feel, I would have done it sooner. Get it done as soon as you can."

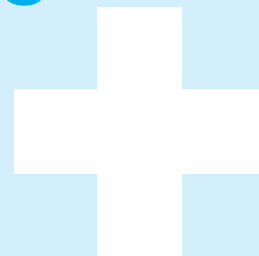
Congratulations, Dr. Rierson!

In January Dr. Rierson, orthopedic surgeon with Northwest Iowa Bone, Joint & Sports Surgeons, completed his 1,000th Mako robotic-assisted replacement surgery!



If you are interested in robotic surgery at Lakes Regional Healthcare, talk to your healthcare provider or call Northwest Iowa Bone, Joint & Sports Surgeons at 712-336-8708.

Healthcare When You Need It



We're fortunate to have several ways to receive healthcare in the Iowa Great Lakes. However, it is important to know where to go for your injury or illness that is the best for your health and your finances. Here are some tips to help you out:

Non-Emergent, Acute Health Concerns

- Minor burns and cuts
- Cold or flu symptoms
- Earache
- Allergies
- Nausea

QuickCare Clinic

Lakes Regional Family Medicine
 2301 Hwy 71 South,
 Spirit Lake
 712-336-3750
Monday-Thursday, 1-5 pm
Saturday, 8 am – noon

Chronic and Routine Health Concerns

- Diabetic management
- Heart health and management
- Obstetrical care
- Well child care
- History and physical examinations
- Establishing care with a new provider

Lakes Regional Family Medicine

2301 Hwy 71 South,
 Spirit Lake
 712-336-3750
Monday – Friday, 8 am – 5 pm

Emergent Health Concerns

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Major burns/cuts
- Complications from pregnancy
- Poisoning or drug overdose
- Stroke-like symptoms
- Suicidal thoughts

Lakes Regional Healthcare ER

2301 Hwy 71 South,
 Spirit Lake
Available 24 hours/day, every day

MIND Diet Shown to Protect the Brain and Preserve Cognitive Function

Research shows that the MIND Diet, which is the acronym for the Mediterranean Diet and DASH Diet Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay, protects the brain and preserves cognitive function. It was developed by nutritional epidemiologist Dr. Martha Clare Morris and her colleagues at Rush University Medical Center and Harvard Chan School of Public Health.

The MIND Diet is a hybrid of the Mediterranean and DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) Diets, both of which have been found to reduce the risk of cardiovascular conditions like hypertension, heart attack, and stroke. According to Morris's initial research over 10 years ago, the MIND Diet lowered the risk of Alzheimer's Disease by as much as 53% in participants who adhered to the diet rigorously and by about 35% in those who followed it moderately well. Some of the newest research suggests that the MIND Diet substantially slows cognitive decline with age. Additionally, the longer a person adheres to the diet, the more positive the results are.



Lakes Regional Healthcare Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Beth Samuelson says the MIND diet, as with most nutritious diets, focuses on whole foods instead of processed foods. "Whole foods are rich in nutrients, anti-inflammatory, benefit gut health, and satisfy your appetite – the opposite of processed foods," she said. "If the MIND Diet seems overwhelming to you, pick one of MIND Diet strategies. Maybe, start each supper with a big salad or fresh vegetables. Have a bowl of berries for dessert twice per week. Eat fish every Friday. I think we often get caught up in the details, so we do nothing. I just want to remind everyone that small changes are beneficial too."



Those interested in learning more or scheduling a nutrition consult are encouraged to call Samuelson at 712-336-8785.

The MIND Diet includes 9 brain-healthy food groups, which are green leafy vegetables, other vegetables, nuts, berries, beans, whole grains, fish, poultry, and olive oil. It advises consuming the following:

- **3+ SERVINGS OF WHOLE GRAINS DAILY**

Whole grains include items such as quinoa, brown or wild rice, oatmeal, whole wheat bread, whole grain pasta or crackers, farro, barley, and even popcorn. To ensure you're consuming whole grains, look for the words "whole grain" at the beginning of the list of ingredients on the nutrition panel. One serving is one slice of bread, 1/2 cup cooked whole grain pasta, rice, or oatmeal, or three cups popped popcorn.

- **1 SERVING OF GREEN LEAFY VEGETABLES PLUS AT LEAST 1 ADDITIONAL SERVING OF VEGETABLES DAILY**

Some green leafy vegetables include spinach, microgreens, Romaine lettuce, broccoli, kale, and arugula. Two cups of raw, leafy vegetables is equal to one serving. Otherwise, one cup of fresh, vegetables or only 1/2 cup for cooked vegetables and vegetable juice equal one serving.

- **5+ SERVINGS OF NUTS PER WEEK**

There are many nuts to choose from, including almonds, walnuts, pistachios, Brazil nuts, and cashews. One serving size is roughly 1/3 cup.

- **4+ SERVINGS OF BEANS AND LENTILS PER WEEK**

Some great ones to eat include chickpeas, dried peas, kidney beans, black beans, and lentils. One serving size is 1/2 cup.

- **2+ SERVINGS OF BERRIES PER WEEK**

Berries are great choices because of their antioxidants. The deep, rich color of berries called polyphenols is what makes them superstars. Wild varieties, like with blueberries, and organic choices have more of these polyphenols, but conventionally grown berries are still good too! If you don't like berries, other antioxidant rich fruits include grapes, apples with skin, and citrus. One serving is equal to one cup.

- **2+ SERVINGS OF POULTRY AND EGGS PER WEEK**

One serving of poultry is four ounces.
One serving of eggs is two large eggs.

- **1+ SERVINGS OF FISH PER WEEK**

Some fish to try includes salmon, herring, trout, and sardines. And canned light tuna is a great option to eat with your green leafy vegetables. One serving size is equal to four ounces.

- **OLIVE OIL IF ADDITIONAL FAT IS USED**

There are also foods specifically identified to avoid eating, which include:

- No more than 1 tablespoon of butter or stick margarine per day
- No more than 5 servings of pastries or sweets per week
- No more than 4 servings (one serving is 4 oz) of red meat per week (beef, pork, and lamb)
- No more than 1 serving (1 1/2 to 2 oz) of cheese per week
- No more than 1 serving of fried foods per week
- No alcohol



MIND Diet Meal Ideas

Breakfast

- Oatmeal with cinnamon, walnuts, flax seeds plus a dish of plain Greek yogurt topped with blackberries and raw honey, and a cup of black coffee
- Omelet with spinach, onions, tomatoes, and bell peppers, one slice of whole wheat toast topped with peanut butter, and a red apple
- Buckwheat pancakes topped with blueberries, two turkey sausages, and V8 juice
- Whole wheat toast with avocado slices, Swiss cheese, drizzled with olive oil and topped with red pepper flakes, plus a fresh orange

Lunch

- Chicken street tacos on corn tortillas topped with fresh cilantro, tomato, and onions. Add sides of brown rice and seasoned black beans.
- Hearty vegetable and barley soup with a dish of cottage cheese and fresh pineapple
- Big green salad and vegetables topped with olive oil and light balsamic vinegar, mercury-safe tuna, whole grain crackers, and a dish of strawberries for dessert
- Peanut butter and banana sandwich on whole wheat bread. Add a side of carrots, cucumbers, and celery sticks with hummus for dipping, and some purple grapes.

Dinner

- Salmon, roasted potatoes, and asparagus, and melon
- Navy bean soup, crusty whole grain bread, cucumber and tomato salad, and tart cherry juice
- Big green salad with olive oil and balsamic vinegar, whole grain noodles, marinara sauce, roasted zucchini and mushrooms, and Parmesan cheese
- Seasoned baked chicken, sweet potato, and roasted Brussels sprouts with raisins

Snack

- GORP: good old raisins and peanuts or variations of that with dates and cashews or pecans and dried apricots
- Apple slices dipped in almond butter
- Whole grain crackers with guacamole
- Fresh vegetables with hummus
- Peanut butter energy bites with a cup of green tea
- 1 oz of dark chocolate
- Mixed berry cup and a ginger snap cookie



Dickinson County's Greatest Needs Being Addressed

Every three years Lakes Regional Healthcare conducts a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and then develops a Health Improvement Plan based on the feedback provided from Iowa Great Lakes area residents. The 2022 CHNA identified awareness and access to behavioral health resources and affordable transportation as two of our community's greatest needs.

The next CHNA will be completed in 2025, and a survey is being developed to get input from Dickinson County residents this fall regarding the community's greatest needs. Lakes Regional Healthcare (LRH) Director of Population and Public Health Katy Carey believes mental health will continue to be a top priority. She said, "We've done much to address the community's needs that were identified in the 2022 CHNA, such as with mental health. We plan to continue that and do even more with what we learn in the next CHNA."

Behavioral Health Coalition Addressing Mental Health Needs in Dickinson County

The Dickinson County Behavioral Health Coalition (DCBHC) was formed to increase awareness and access to behavioral health resources. The coalition includes representatives from area schools, mental health organizations, businesses, non-profit organizations, Lakes Regional Healthcare, and Dickinson County Public Health. According to Carey, the coalition meets approximately every other month, and membership continues to grow.

The coalition has been successful with several initiatives, focusing on different audiences. One focus has been increasing access and awareness of mental health resources across the community. Last summer the coalition partnered with the Iowa

Great Lakes Rotary Club to organize the first Rotary Move for Mental Health Walk. Nearly 70 people participated in the walk. The group hopes to make this an annual event and will begin gearing up for the second walk in August. DCBHC also developed a Crisis Navigation Guide together with the Dickinson County Hunger Coalition and Iowa State University service-learning students. They also created a more discreet postcard version of the guide, containing the contact information and hours of operation for food pantries, emergency food assistance and affordable transportation, as well as resources related to mental health, substance abuse, veteran affairs, and housing



and homelessness. The digital Crisis Navigation Guide is located on Lakes Regional Healthcare's website at www.lakeshealth.org and the postcards are available at schools, churches, physician offices, public health offices, and more. DCBHC also created a website that provides several local mental health resources and tips to help friends and family members struggling with depression. That website, www.LetsTalkDickinson.org, is routinely updated to support people in the Iowa Great Lakes. There are tabs with resources specifically for the farming community, youth, and the coalition is currently working on developing a tab specifically for senior citizens.

(cont'd from page 17)

Another focus of the coalition has been educating young adults about mental health resources. Students and parents received information at school registrations and intake conferences last fall about area mental health and wellness resources. In February over 100 children and adults attended the free Let's Talk Dickinson LIVE: Parent Panel where parents learned about potential signs and resources to support children and adolescents who are struggling with mental health, behavior, or learning challenges. Additionally, proceeds from Rotary Move for Mental Health Walk registrations and donations and Rotary's Brew Fest event covered the cost of bringing in national mental health speakers to schools in Dickinson County. In February, Donovan Taylor Hall of Active Minds spoke to students at Spirit Lake Middle School, Harris-Lake Park Middle School, and Okoboji Middle and High Schools. In March, Rachel's Challenge presented to elementary school students at Spirit Lake and Okoboji.

A third focus has been on agricultural workers, as they are at greater risk of depression due to farm-related stressors. The coalition held a Harvest Outreach initiative the last two fall seasons. It recognized farmers' hard work while acknowledging the struggles that may accompany their lifestyle. Over 600 bags containing a snack, bottle of water, and a mental health resource card were provided to ag workers at all five grain elevators across Dickinson County as well as the two farm implement shops in Lake Park.

The Dickinson County Behavioral Health Coalition meets approximately every other month and will continue to address behavioral health resource concerns. Anyone interested in attending the meeting is welcome. Please call the Dickinson County Public Health office at 712-339-6050 to learn when and where the next meeting will be held.

Affordable Transportation Available Locally

The 2022 CHNA identified affordable transportation as one of Dickinson County's greatest community needs. Thanks to RIDES, there are many options for affordable transportation within the Iowa Great Lakes.

RIDES was started in 1976 to provide transportation of Dickinson County residents to Dinner Date. It has greatly expanded since then and now provides door-to-door transit service for anyone of any age, including those with disabilities. They provide service in nine counties in northwest Iowa with their fleet of 55 vehicles that can hold anywhere from eight to 50 passengers. RIDES Associate Executive Director Cindy Voss said RIDES is one of the area's best kept secrets. She said, "People tend to think of it as transportation for just the elderly or disabled, but it's actually for anyone," she said. "There are many people that use it for several reasons. Maybe you don't want to drive in the winter. Or your child needs to get to the YMCA after school and it's hard for you to leave work to get them there. Perhaps you don't have a car but want to visit a friend or go to a doctor's appointment. Or if your car is in the shop. In any of these situations, you don't need to call a friend, neighbor, or coworker. You can call RIDES."

The cost per trip to be taken anywhere from the north end of Spirit Lake to the south end of Milford is \$2.50 one way (\$5 round trip). Trips on A34 or M56 are an additional \$2.50 per trip (\$10 round trip) because it's considered outside of the corridor. Hours of operation are 8:00 am until 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. The service does not compete with afterhours taxi services and the niche they fill. Voss said, "RIDES is used for predetermined trips. It's not a 'right now' taxi service, although we are looking at a potential weekday, daytime 'right now' service option in the future."

Scheduling a trip is easy. They just ask for a 24-hour notice. Customers can call 800-358-5037 to schedule a trip. A RIDES representative will request a bit of information, including your name, phone number, address, emergency contact, along with your pick-up and return times. Then you just need to get in their vehicle when they arrive at your door.

Occasionally bad weather may cause them to cancel the service, but it usually doesn't last long. Voss said they often



follow the school schedule. For example, if schools have a late start, RIDES might, too. She said, “We err on the side of caution. We try to run in town as long as possible but will not do out-of-town trips nor put our customers at risk of being on the side of the road due to poor road and weather conditions.”

The organization is constantly trying to identify how they can better serve the community. As a result, RIDES has recently had some significant developments to make transportation even easier to access. They developed an “R Mobile App” that allows customers to secure a ride quickly and easily. The app is available for both iOS and Android users and can be found on the Apple App Store, the Google Play store, and on RIDES’ website at www.nwiarides.org. It can also be found by scanning the QR code shown in the photo on the previous page.

According to Voss, the app is exceedingly friendly. She also said, “The app is wonderful for adult children who live elsewhere to use for their parents who live here. Or for children that need to be taken somewhere. You can schedule a ride for them, know when they’ve been picked up, when they’re in transit, when they’ve arrived at their destination, and when they’ve returned home.”

RIDES also partnered with Enterprise (yes, the rental car company) and their eCommute program to provide affordable transportation to those in outlying areas such as Lake Park and Terril and to reduce the transportation barrier so area businesses can hire people that don’t otherwise have transportation to get to work. Specifically,

it allows a group of employees who live in the same community and work at the same company to carpool to and from work with a RIDES-provided vehicle. Enterprise assumes the insurance, liability, and expenses related to the vehicle. The employer can deduct the trip costs from the employees’ paychecks. The arrangement must have buy-in from both the employer and the employees. Voss said there are many ways RIDES is working to make it as affordable as possible. For example, eligible “vanpools” can receive up to a \$500 monthly subsidy from RIDES.

RIDES is currently working on another service that will roll out in another six months or so. It utilizes what’s called a Centers portal and depends on partnerships with hospitals, nursing homes, dentists, and other healthcare organizations. Basically, when a patient is seen at the healthcare organization, staff can schedule a ride to and from the patient’s next appointment at the same time they’re scheduling their next appointment. Voss said it’s resulted in reducing the number of no-shows for appointments, improved medical compliance, and increased access to healthcare in the communities that have implemented use of the Centers portal.

Affordable transportation for all people in the Iowa Great Lakes will continue to be addressed through RIDES. Anyone interested in using the service is encouraged to call 800-358-5037. Those interested in using the R Mobile app are encouraged to call RIDES at 800-358-5037 and request to have an account established. The RIDES dispatch team will be pleased to assist you.

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Ways to Make a Difference

Scholarship Endowment Fund

Make it possible for a local high school or college student achieve their dream of having a career in healthcare. Lakes Regional Healthcare Foundation's Scholarship Endowment Fund provides scholarships each year in hopes of having those students return to the Iowa Great Lakes to provide care to those who helped them.

Hospice Fund

This fund is utilized to support a service that cares for people who have a terminal illness. Hospice works with patients and their families to maintain quality of life and support the patient's loved ones during a difficult time.

Engraved Pavers

Engraved brick pavers and seat walls at Lakes Regional Healthcare's outdoor garden patio are available for purchase as a gift to Lakes Regional Healthcare Foundation. Your gift would memorialize your loved one, and positively impact others who receive care at Lakes Regional Healthcare. To learn more, contact Sonja Hamm at 712-336-8791 or sonja.hamm@lakeshealth.org.

Caring for Life Fund

This fund is utilized to support just-in-time support for our patients and their families. It is our "area of greatest need" fund and supports programs, services, and equipment in all areas of Lakes Regional Healthcare.

Your gift to the Lakes Regional Healthcare Foundation supports lifesaving services that hospital revenue alone cannot provide. Choose a project that is close to your heart and know you are making a difference in the lives of others.



Grape Escape Benefited Area Students

In February, Lakes Regional Healthcare Foundation hosted their annual Grape Escape event. It was held at the Roof Garden Ballroom, where people enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, wine, bourbon, dinner, a lively live auction, and live music. The event raised \$60,000 for the foundation's Scholarship Endowment Fund.



Special Thanks

to the following sponsors for making the Grape Escape possible!

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Volunteers Provide Valuable Service

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

Gift Shop Volunteer

Gift Shop volunteers are the frontline staff that greet and assist customers, ring up their purchases, and straighten up and restock shelves. Shifts are weekdays between 9:00 am and 12:00 pm and 12:00 pm and 3:00 pm.

West Entrance Volunteer

West Entrance volunteers greet patients and visitors as they enter the hospital and help escort and direct patients to various locations within the organization, including occasionally transporting patients via wheelchair. Shifts are weekdays from 8:00 am until 12:00 pm and 12:00 pm until 4:00 pm.

East Entrance Volunteer

Similar to the West Entrance volunteers, the East Entrance volunteers greet patients and visitors as they enter the hospital's east side. Shifts are weekdays from 8:00 am until 12:00 pm and 12:00 pm until 4:00 pm.

Hospice Volunteers

Hospice volunteers provide companionship, read, write letters, run errands, prepare meals, do housework or yard work, provide respite care for hospice patients and relief for their caregivers, and do clerical duties for the hospice program.

There are also volunteers that donate their time and talents from home by sewing teddy bears for pediatric patients in our ER and knitting baby caps for newborns in our Birth Center.

Volunteering has been part of our history since before the first patient received care and is still an integral part of the organization. For over 60 years, Lakes Regional Healthcare volunteers have assisted patients and staff in various ways, such as escorting and transporting patients throughout the facility, providing companionship to patients, delivering patient meal trays to cancer patients as they receive chemotherapy, and assisting Gift Shop customers.

We currently have approximately 5+0 volunteers that give of their time and talents based on their availability and desires. Depending on the area, volunteer shifts are three or four hours long. Some volunteers work every week and others work once a month. Some take the winter off, and some take the summer off.

If you're interested in volunteering, apply online at www.lakeshealth.org/volunteer or call 712-336-8799.

Lakes Regional Healthcare is Northwest Iowa's Top Hospital!



We at Lakes Regional Healthcare (LRH) are dedicated to providing our patients with the highest quality care, and happy to be recognized as such. LRH is the only hospital in the western half of Iowa to be rated a 5-star hospital by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) – and has been for four years in a row! CMS' Care Compare program reports on quality measures for more than 4,000 hospitals nationwide. Roughly 13 percent of hospitals in the country were rated five stars. The overall star rating summarizes quality information on important topics in five categories: safety, readmissions, mortality, patient experience, and timely and effective care.

We have also been recognized as a Top 100 Rural and Community Hospital by The Chartis Center for Rural Health for six years in a row. The center analyzes rural hospitals through the Hospital Strength INDEX®, a comprehensive and objective assessment of rural hospital performance in the United States. What's more, we have also been named as a Top 20 Rural and Community Hospital by the National Rural Health Association based on information provided by The Chartis Center for Rural Health. This is the third time we've received that designation as well!

"Amidst challenging times, we are excelling in achieving higher quality, securing better outcomes, increasing patient satisfaction, and operating at a lower cost than our peers," said LRH President and CEO Jason Harrington. "To be recognized once would be an accomplishment but to maintain each of those recognitions for several years is both impressive and humbling. It speaks so well of each one of our team members and everything they do for our patients and our community."







An Avera Partner

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What Our Patients Say...

**"Everyone worked so well together. Felt good to be taken care of by a cohesive unit.
I liked that everyone loved where they work."**

"I was very impressed with everyone who attended to me. They were professionals to the T. I felt very comfortable with each person who I encountered during my stay, from the first person who did the admittance to the person who walked me to the door when I was discharged. I would highly recommend Lakes Regional Healthcare to anyone."

"Everyone has ALWAYS been very good – wouldn't want to go to any other hospital."

"All departments – from the receptionist to anesthesia to dietary to PT and OT to nursing and my surgeon to anyone else I had contact with – were exceptional!"

"We are lucky to have such a great hospital in such a small community. I give it an A+!"

**"We are very fortunate to have such a first-class facility in Dickinson County.
You're the best!!!"**

"Everyone in every department did an excellent job providing care for me."