

Local people. True stories. Real advice.

Momentum

Fall 2016



Excellence. Always.

Being Cared for by Friends and Neighbors





NEW SPACE FOR MORE SERVICES

Calhoun building to house staff as well as retail store

When space is limited but services are expanding, a hospital needs to think about branching out. That was part of the thinking behind Black River Memorial Hospital's (BRMH) decision to acquire the Calhoun building.

New digs

"We needed more space at the hospital," says Don Finck, Environmental Services Director at BRMH. "Senior leadership put a lot of thought into how best to proceed. They started looking at potential places in 2014 and purchased the Calhoun Professional Building from Steve and Jeanne Calhoun in January of 2015."

Work began refurbishing the building, creating ideal spaces for its intended uses. The decision was made that part of the

building would house the hospice, homecare, and palliative care services staff and administration. The other part would be a retail space for purchasing home medical equipment and about a quarter of the space would be for lease.

"It's only about five blocks away from the hospital," adds Finck.

Finck says that the building is getting a major facelift. "We've renovated nearly everything."

Solutions for sale

A major need identified by BRMH leadership was a home medical equipment store. While some patients are happy to go online, it was found that the majority feel more comfortable being able to purchase the exact product recommended by their doctor or therapist from somewhere close to home.

Respiratory therapist Mary Beth Olson and her colleagues are eager to start referring people to the store. "We will carry canes, walkers, and typical home medical equipment, compression stockings, braces, and much more. It's a huge plus for our patients and our community."

"Right now all my time is spent on product research pricing, and determining what we should carry. I'm getting the input of other caregivers in the area," she says. Moreover, Olson's goal is to make everyone feel welcome at the store and make the community aware of the health solutions available there.

"It's going to be a store for everybody, for every age. There will be things for nursing moms, elderly, athletes. . . a little bit of everything for everyone," says Olson.

Grand opening

While Olson and her colleagues are busy researching products, the hospice, homecare, and palliative care team has been busy packing up and getting ready to move to their new office space at the new location on County Highway A.

"It's still in progress," says Finck. "But we are on schedule to open to the public on November 2nd."

Both Finck and Olson agree that the new space will be an asset for the hospital and the community. ■



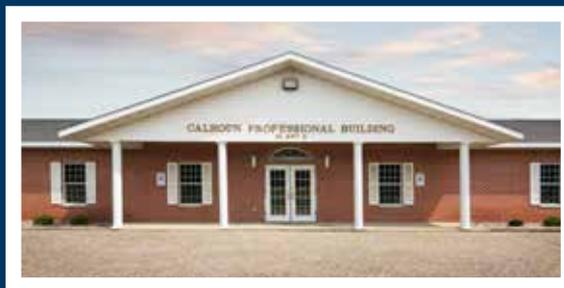
"Our patients deserve the best. It's our job to have the best facilities to help serve them and offer them the products that will help them live their best lives."

- Mary Beth Olson, Respiratory Therapist



Join Us for an Open House!

Please join us at our Open House on **Thursday, November 17th**. There will be food and drinks served, as well as tours of the new building. The open house is free for the general public from **10 a.m. to 6 p.m.**



311 County Highway A, Black River Falls



Sarah Staff's Breast Cancer Journey

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and for those battling cancer, it's useful to have as many tools as possible at their disposal. Sarah Staff, a breast cancer survivor, knows her support system was crucial. From a loving family, to a supportive community, and a hospital that felt like home, Sarah was well equipped.

"I'm not saying I didn't have dark days," says Sarah. "I certainly did—and do. But I tell people: you would do the exact same thing. The alternative is to lie down and take it. So you gotta step up."

Sarah's journey began in a way that isn't typical of most breast cancers: It didn't start with a lump. Instead, she thought she had an infection. "It felt like mastitis," she recalls. "All of a sudden, my breast was hot and swollen."

She saw a nurse practitioner at BRMH who recommended antibiotics and some tests and said to check back in 10 days. When nothing had improved in 10 days, Sarah started on another course of antibiotics and had an ultrasound. The ultrasound raised concerns, so Sarah saw a surgeon, Dr. Nick Kitowski.

"Dr. Nick ordered another test," recalls Sarah. "But, bless his soul, I looked him straight in the eye and said, 'This is cancer,

isn't it?'" It was. Sarah was diagnosed with inflammatory breast cancer on May 15th, 2015. It was time, as Sarah says, "to get the party started."

"I'm a teacher," she says. "I had to learn everything I could about it. And then I had to tell people about it. It's a rare and progressive cancer. It's misdiagnosed, often."

Sarah managed to finish the rest of the school year with just a few days off after her first of 17 weeks of chemo. After her chemo finished up in September of 2015, Sarah went in for a double mastectomy. "I asked my doctor, 'should I have the surgery at Black River Memorial Hospital, or go somewhere bigger?' He said the surgeons here were great. And they were," says Sarah.

At BRMH, she says, she felt as if friends and neighbors were caring for her. "The care was just wonderful. Everyone was doing their job, but they were doing it because they cared." Although the prognosis for Sarah is good, she lives every day with the possibility of her cancer returning. But she refuses to let that dark cloud get her down.

"I'm treasuring the gift of life," she says. "I'm trying to focus on the positive things I've gained from this journey." ■

The Health Insurance Marketplace: Choosing the Right Plan is Essential

Choosing the right insurance plan during open enrollment can be a daunting task. With the 2016-2017 open enrollment period approaching, we are here to help with the most frequently asked questions regarding the Health Insurance Marketplace:

How can I enroll for the Health Insurance Marketplace?

- You can apply for coverage online, over the phone, by mail, or in person.

When can I enroll?

- Open Enrollment for 2017 begins on November 1, 2016 and ends on January 31, 2017.
- You might qualify for a Special Enrollment Period in the case of a life-changing event like getting married, having a baby, or losing other coverage.
- There's no specific enrollment period for Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Is Black River Memorial Hospital in your health plan?

Here are the top 3 reasons why we should be:

1. Award-winning, individualized care provided by a trusted, highly-skilled staff close to home.
2. A comprehensive and diverse list of specialty services to meet your healthcare needs.
3. Supporting your local community hospital that not only views you as a patient, but also our friend and neighbor.

For more information, go to www.brmh.net/marketplace.



Good Health and Good Taste: A Chef's Mission

The Jackson County Diabetes Alliance and community partners are pleased to welcome Chef Robert Lewis on November 5th, 2016 for Healthy Cooking Live. What can audience members expect during this event? We asked the chef himself!

Q: You travel all around the country doing shows to teach people healthy eating. How do you bring good eating habits to Wisconsin, the land of beer and cheese?

A: *[laughs]* Good question! I tailor the presentation around the idea of "turning ordinary ingredients into something extraordinary." I want folks to be able to go to their local grocery store or farmers market and easily get the ingredients needed to create amazing flavors. Quick and easy and delish is my goal. Every food—even beer and cheese—can be part of a healthy way of eating. It's all about balance and moderation.

Q: What are you looking forward to about being in Black River Falls?

A: *I'm very excited to share my message with folks who need a positive message about healthy eating. What can I say? I want to make a difference and leave people with wholesome habits to practice in the future.*

Register for the Healthy Cooking Live and Wellness Fair on Saturday, November 5th at the Lunda Community Center, call **715-284-1325** or go online at www.brmh.net/chefrobert. Registered guests could win a Fitbit Flex!

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

All parents wish the best health for their children, but it can be stressful when things don't go according to plan.

Fortunately for **Mary Beth Olson**, respiratory therapist at Black River Memorial Hospital, when her two-year-old son was diagnosed with asthma, she knew what to do.

Mary Beth has been a respiratory therapist for 18 years, 13 with BRMH. She mostly specializes in home medical equipment for patients, but also works on behind-the-scenes issues at the hospital, including insurance and patient care coordination.

Now 17, Mary Beth's son still asks for help every once in a while when he gets a cold. Luckily for him, the respiratory therapist of the house is still there to help. Not only does she provide the best care for her family, Mary Beth also brings excellence to patient care.



"I primarily work with home medical equipment, so I help with getting the patient set up with respirating equipment they need, like home oxygen," Mary Beth says. "I also work with sleep patients who need sleep apnea machines and nebulizers."

Mary Beth knows it can be tough to be confined in your home with a respiratory issue. She does her best to keep patients healthy and motivated.

"Our goal is to help our patients live as actively as they can," says Mary Beth. "When people come home from the hospital and they're on home oxygen, they think they're confined to their house. And we never want them to feel like they're stuck; we want them to continue to do the things they love to do. They have a say in their care."

Aside from helping patients live their lives to the fullest, Mary Beth values her family time at home. With four active kids between her and her husband, three of whom are currently in high school, sporting events tend to take up most of her time.

"I enjoy every moment of it," Mary Beth says. "Pretty soon they'll be out of the house so I'm going to miss the time."

Mary Beth continues to provide exceptional patient care at BRMH, and encourages patients to stay healthy.

"The biggest thing I tell all my patients is to make sure you get your flu shot every year," Mary Beth says. "With being more home-based, we're always talking about washing your hands, getting your flu shot, and being more proactive with your wellness to keep you out of the hospital." ■

Could Your Lungs
Be Hiding
Something?



Catch lung cancer earlier. Go online to see if our lung cancer screening is right for you at www.brmh.net/lungcancer.



Someone once said, “A library is a hospital for the mind.” That quote rings true for **Tammy Peasley**, Director of Black River Falls Public Library.

After 20 years of teaching and working in area schools, Tammy accepted the position of Library Director in 2013, appreciating the significance of the job.

“I knew how important this library was to Black River Falls,” Tammy says. “It’s my goal for the library to continue the role as a vibrant center of social and educational enrichment for generations to come.”

While Tammy understands there’s a rich heritage associated with the Black River Falls Public Library, the first public library in Wisconsin, she knew there were changes to be made when she started.

The first changes came to the library’s interior. “With the support of staff and the generosity of local business and community members,” says Tammy. “We were able to create a more comfortable and inviting space for our patrons.”

A self-checkout station, mounted television, two Samsung tablets, and two iPads are just a few of the new technological advances added to the library. The library also underwent renovations from 2014 – 2016, including a new layout of the building, an “Internet Café,” furniture, interior paint, and carpet. These renovations required the help of volunteers and staff members alike.

“I am so grateful for the generosity the library has received to continue to provide relevant services for our community,” Tammy says. “Without the financial support from our community, these initiatives would not have been realized.”

The updated library and its hardworking staff involve the community as much as possible with events, programs, and clubs. They offer activities for all ages such as nutrition and wellness programs, story time for preschoolers, Lego® Club, treasure hunts, Black River Falls Writers Group, Green Book Club, Library Book Club, and occasional author visits and music events.

“As a library director, I am so grateful to work with a team of library staff members that truly care about helping and making a difference,” says Tammy. “I look forward to going to work each day in a friendly and welcoming environment.”

Along with her husband of 34 years, Tammy can often be found at her busy home with their four children and many grandchildren. She enjoys gardening, reading and walking.

Tammy is thankful to be able to continue serving the community by bringing positive and exciting changes to the library.

“Forward thinking by all librarians and community members is what has made this library a jewel in our community for more than 140 years,” Tammy says. “We need to continue to work together to prepare for the future.” ■



Visit our website at www.brmh.net for a full list of hospital events and to view our latest videos.

HOSPITAL EVENTS 2016

Heartsaver CPR, AED, First Aid Training
Tuesday, October 11, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Two-Day Childbirth Education Class
October 14 & 15,
6:30 – 9:00 p.m. & 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Grief Support Group
Tuesday, October 18
10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Barb Mason Conference Room

Nutman Sale
Monday, October 24, 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Senior Stay Fit Yoga Classes
November 1 - 29
Tuesdays and Thursdays,
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
NEW Lunda Community Center, BRF
Register by calling 715-284-1330

**Marketplace Insurance – 2017
Open Enrollment Start & End Dates**
Tuesday, November 1 – Sunday, December 31
For more information, visit: www.healthcare.gov

Healthy Cooking LIVE and Wellness Fair
Saturday, November 5, 9 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Lunda Community Center Field House
Register by calling 715-284-1325

Breastfeeding Class
Tuesday, November 8, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

**Diabetes Education & Support Group
(DESG) Monthly Meeting**
Wednesday, November 9, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Holiday Tea
Thursday, November 17, 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Black River Memorial Hospital

**Homebased Medical Equipment and Supply
Services and Open House**
311 Highway A (formerly Calhoun Professional
Building) 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Evergreen Memorial Service
Tuesday, November 29, 7 p.m.
BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Love Lights Ceremony
Sunday, December 4, 5:30 p.m.
BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Better Breather's Club Meeting
Monday, December 5,
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Two-Day Childbirth Education Class
December 9 & 10,
6:30 – 9 p.m. & 9 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Hospice Gift Wrapping Fundraiser
Tuesday, December 20,
9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room