

Local people. True stories. Real advice.

# Momentum

**BLACK RIVER**  
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

July 2013



## Finding Fun Again

# WHAT'S THE BIG HOOPLA ABOUT HIP AND KNEE PAIN?

When hip or knee pain has you reminiscing about the things you used to do, it's time to stop living in the past and start looking to a pain-free future.

Black River Memorial Hospital helped Brian Dobson, Darlene Neisner and Tim Johnston do just that.

## BRIAN: NO KNEEPAD NEEDED

As a groundskeeper at BRMH, Brian Dobson is always on the move. But planting and watering gardens, clearing debris from walkways and stairwells and performing general maintenance tasks put a lot of pressure on his knees. So when it took only 10 minutes for his knees to stiffen and swell, it made for long and painful days.

Brian's knee pain was not only affecting his job, it was keeping him from enjoying his favorite activities.

"I couldn't run; I couldn't water ski; and for the past few hunting seasons, I couldn't get out as much as I'd have liked," Brian says. "All because of my worsening knee pain."

But Brian was no stranger to knee pain. He had an arthroscopy performed on his right knee 30 years ago—the result of lingering damage from a football injury. Then three years ago, he had the same procedure done on his left knee. At that point, Brian discovered both of his knees were bone on bone, and he was on track for two new knees.

On April 17, 2013, he got them.

Brian had minimally invasive bilateral knee replacements performed at BRMH by Todd Duellman, MD. With this type of knee replacement, Dr. Duellman was able to use smaller incisions and decrease the amount of damage to surrounding tissue. That ultimately meant Brian experienced a quicker and less painful recovery.



Brian's knee replacements will not only benefit BRMH's gardens, they will help him return to gardening at home.

"I knew within about ten minutes of talking with Dr. Duellman, I wanted him to do my surgery," Brian says. "He was easy to talk to, explained the procedure in a way I understood and had tremendous confidence that I would make a quick and full recovery."

Within six weeks of surgery, Brian was up and walking without any assistance. On July 1, he was back to his groundskeeper duties, pain free.

## DARLENE: SECOND TIME AROUND IS A CHARM

Darlene Neisner wasn't the only one suffering from her hip pain. Her garden was, too.

As her hip mobility decreased over the past few years, so did the size of her flowerbeds and her ability to do chores around the house. She already had one hip replacement 15 years ago and was certain a second one was ahead.

Luckily, in the fall of 2011, Darlene heard through her work with BRMH's volunteer organization, Partners, that the hospital had a new orthopaedic surgeon—Todd Duellman, MD. He would be speaking at a community event about a new, less invasive approach to hip replacements.

Darlene attended the event and immediately knew she had found the doctor for the second hip replacement she had predicted.

But this second hip replacement, done on November 21, 2012, was much different than her first.

Her first was done using the traditional, posterior approach, in which doctors need to cut through the muscles at the back of the hip. Dr. Duellman used the anterior approach for Darlene's second, which is performed from the front of the hip and doesn't require cutting through any muscles. Smaller incisions are made and patients recover faster.

"After surgery all Dr. Duellman told me to do was walk, walk, walk and do a few other exercises at home," Darlene says. "I was surprised how much sooner I could walk on my own compared to after my first replacement".

With Darlene's pain now long gone, she's turned her attention away from her hips and is bringing her gardens back to their previous splendor.



Darlene is so happy with her results she tells everyone that Dr. Duellman is the guy to go to if they need a hip replacement.



Scan the code to watch our employees "Do the Hoopla" and learn how to join.

## JOIN THE HOOPLA!

Attend BRMH's Summer Hoopla Block Party on **August 5, 2013 at 5:30 p.m.** to enjoy tailgate food and lawn games, and have the chance to win a brand new bike. Plus, meet orthopaedic surgeon Todd Duellman.

Register to attend online at [BRMH.net/hoopla](http://BRMH.net/hoopla) or call **715-284-1325**.

Dr. Todd Duellman  
Orthopaedic Surgeon





Hunting is such a big part of Tim's life that his basement is a fully equipped hunting lodge with extra beds, a bow repair shop and even an indoor practice range.

## TIM: LESS PAIN, MORE GAME

Not much can stop Tim Johnston. He's a retired firefighter and paramedic who climbs trees, walks up mountains and hunts turkey, bear, elk, deer and other big game. Plus, he and his wife live on and take care of over 50 acres of land.

However, over the past three years hip pain started to slow him down, and simple things like tying his shoes became a painful task.

Frustrated by his diminishing ability to stay active, Tim decided it was time to find out what was causing the pain and how to fix it. He discovered he needed a new hip.

At age 57, Tim was young for a hip replacement. Many people his age might wait because there is a chance the artificial joint would have to be replaced 20-30 years later. But his active lifestyle outweighed this risk.

"My biggest concern was how long it was going to take to recover," Tim says. "During my career as a paramedic, I met many patients who've told me about the months of recuperation and later discomfort or dislocations they experienced after their hip replacements."

Dr. Duellman squashed any of Tim's fears about his young age, prolonged recovery and chance of dislocation when he proposed the anterior approach.

"When Dr. Duellman told me he'd have me up and running in six weeks and that the chance of dislocation was less than one percent, I said, 'Let's do it,'" Tim says.

Tim had surgery on May 22, 2013, and went home 24 hours later with only the assistance of a cane and some big hunting plans in the works. ■

## MARY BETH WHITE-JACOBS: FROM STAFF NURSE TO CEO



communities have access to quality healthcare. Her passion for community care shows in her volunteer activities as well.

She's been a member of the Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers Board of Directors since 2011, and this year she serves as president. She's on the UW-Eau Claire School of Nursing and Health Sciences Advisory Board, and is co-chair of the legislative committee for the Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Executives. Her involvement in these organizations allows her to promote and nurture nursing leadership.

### LIVING A REWARDING LIFE

As Mary Beth's career evolved, BRMH became more than just a job. The hospital is now her second home and the staff an extension of her family.

Her co-workers have supported her during some of the happiest and difficult moments in her life. They were at her side during all three of her children's births, and they were there when she moved her parents up from southern Wisconsin to use the hospice program.

"It's been a blessing to have my BRMH family take care of my personal family," Mary Beth says. "I wouldn't feel we were doing our best if we couldn't do that."

### CARING FOR THE FUTURE

Although it's been only a few weeks since Mary Beth has assumed her duties as CEO, she's already making plans for BRMH's short- and long-term futures.

"I want to keep pushing our Excellence Always journey and continue to raise our standards bar higher," she says. "I'd love for us to achieve the excellence level from the Wisconsin Forward Award."

Mary Beth also wants to strengthen and grow relationships with other local healthcare organizations. She believes working in partnership with these organizations is one more way BRMH can ensure community members will have greater access to the best and most appropriate care.

"Healthcare is changing," Mary Beth says. "So I'm excited to be involved at a time when hospitals like ours will need to be more innovative in how we deliver care." ■

When Mary Beth White-Jacobs first walked through the front doors of Black River Memorial Hospital as a staff nurse in 1982, she couldn't have imagined she'd walk through them 31 years later as CEO. But that's exactly what happened.

On June 29, 2013, Mary Beth officially became BRMH's President and CEO.

### FINDING HER WAY TO LEADERSHIP

Throughout Mary Beth's career at BRMH, she has grown along with the hospital. As the hospital added service lines and physicians, she moved her way up from staff nurse to various leadership positions.

Mary Beth continued on the leadership track and became the Vice President of Patient Care Services 15 years ago.

As a member of BRMH's senior leadership team, Mary Beth became instrumental in the hospital's growth. Her proudest achievements include:

- Creating a "whole family" concept for the OB department so mom and family can stay together in the same room.
- Leading the initiative for the hospice care program in 2003 and co-leading the homecare project in 2005.
- Implementing the Baldrige Performance Excellence Criteria to drive organization-wide excellence and seeing the hospital achieve proficiency and mastery level ratings from the Wisconsin Center for Performance Excellence's Wisconsin Forward Award.

These achievements stem from Mary Beth's honest desire to ensure all people of Black River Falls and surrounding

**Becky Windsor**

Physical Therapist Assistant  
Black River Memorial Hospital

Sit at a desk all day? Not Becky Windsor. This is the one thing Becky was certain about when deciding which direction she would steer her career. Becky not only wanted a job that would keep her up and moving, she wanted to help people feel better. Nursing crossed her mind. But the idea of working with needles and blood quickly pushed that thought aside.

It didn't, however, put a halt to considering a career in healthcare. It just had to be the right one. Becky found it when she became a physical therapist assistant, starting her career in geriatrics at a nursing home in Sparta. Later, when a job opened up at Black River Memorial Hospital, Becky knew this was where she belonged.

"I liked that BRMH is a smaller, privately run hospital," says Becky. "It offered me more opportunities for professional development and ended up being a better fit for me."

**A Day in Becky's Life**

Becky is a pediatric specialist at BRMH, helping children from birth through school-aged who have developmental needs. She educates parents and works with their children as they learn to sit, crawl, stand and take their first steps.

In addition to her pediatrics education, Becky is certified in personal training and group fitness, allowing her to

help people of all ages. On a typical day, she might help a child advance his or her skills; help seniors increase strength, balance and mobility at a community center; visit a middle school to help children with mobility and participation in activities; and offer group fitness classes and consultations to BRMH employees.

Becky is also involved with a program called Abilities, which is focused on improving the health and wellness of community members with special needs. The program is offered through the Black River Memorial Hospital rehabilitation department and takes place at Connection Community Center, located just outside of Black River Falls.

Here, Becky creates individualized exercise programs that, depending on a person's needs, might include losing weight, building strength or increasing flexibility. She also does base line and progression testing as participants start and continue with their exercises. Through these unique programs, all Abilities participants have made significant progress. Not only have they lost weight—an average of 10 pounds per person—and increased strength and flexibility, they've learned to enjoy exercising and eating healthy. Many participants now have their own exercise equipment at home.

"One of our biggest success stories is Orvilla. She had trouble walking and needed to use a lift to get in the transport van a few years ago," Becky says. "Since starting with Abilities, she's lost over 100 pounds and is moving around independently." ■



Pictured: Front center – Becky Windsor (right) and Linda Nelson (left), the exercise program manager at Connection. Participants include (from left to right): Rita Weideman, Craig Nelson, Mark Lahmayer, Nicole Boettcher, Daniel Larkin, Eve Lane, Orvilla Kavistad, Staci Weyenberg, Carol Morris and Frank Wortman

**IN HARMONY WITH HOME**

Kristi takes the same hometown dedication that motivates her at work to help her community as well.

Since 2008, she's been a member of the Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers board of directors, and has served on the Alma Center-Humbird-Merrillan school board for eight years.

"Since I've always lived here, I've seen all the good things that go on in the community and how beautiful Jackson County is to live in," Kristi says. "I want to do my part to ensure it continues to be such a nice place to live, work and play." ■

Through TATU, Kristi trains local high school students to teach Jackson County fourth graders about the dangers of tobacco. Her oversized tobacco props are serious attention grabbers.

Like most children, when **KRISTI HANSON** was younger she had a definitive answer to the question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Kristi was going to be a nurse.

**MEANT TO BE**

Kristi started her nursing career on the clinical side, working in home health. But she wanted to find a way to use her nursing skills to give back to her community.

She found her way 13 years ago when she became a public health nurse for the Jackson County Health Department.

"In public health, we work to improve the health and well-being of the community as a whole rather than just providing specific care to individual patients," Kristi says.

She's doing this through community programs such as:

- TATU (teens against tobacco use)
- Diabetic Alliance
- Oral Health Initiative



**CRAFTING THE PERFECT RETIREMENT**



Stan's always admired his dad's carpentry skills, so woodworking was a natural fit for him.

We all look forward to the day we can retire. No matter what our plans are—moving somewhere warm, buying a motorcycle or traveling the world—retirement promises a more relaxing and leisurely life.

Stan Gaynor, who retired as Black River Memorial's President & CEO on June 28, 2013 says his proudest accomplishment is helping BRMH achieve a high level of success and become one of nation's top rural hospitals. He attributes the growth and achievements of BRMH to a skilled and dedicated staff who always kept the patient's best interests in mind and worked diligently to deliver high quality care.

Although Stan will enjoy every minute of retirement, Black River Memorial

Hospital will always be in his heart and mind.

"The people inside and outside of the hospital are one of the reasons I originally took the CEO position 20 years ago," Stan says. "I'll miss the camaraderie and culture within the organization."

But he truly is looking forward to spending more time with his grandkids and his hobbies—especially woodworking.

"I've been dabbling in woodworking for about five years," Stan says. "With more time now, I am hoping to start building furniture for my kids." ■