

LOCAL PEOPLE. TRUE STORIES. REAL ADVICE.

MOMENTUM

SPRING 2022

Oh Babies!

Giving birth at BRMH
is a special experience
for employees



Black River
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Letter from our CEO



Mary Beth White-Jacobs
Chief Executive Officer, BRMH

LOOKING BACK, AND AHEAD, AS MY CAREER WINDS DOWN

Looking at the cover of this issue, I can't help but take a trip down memory lane to the births of my own three children at Black River Memorial Hospital, and what a special experience it was being an employee here at the time.

Having my babies in an environment where I knew the training and background of my caretakers — and I knew them as people, too — there's nothing like it. So it comes as no surprise that many of my co-workers who have had their babies at BRMH over the years share that feeling. Read more about their experiences on Page 5.

Having a baby is one of many healthcare events over a lifetime, and navigating the system can be a challenge even for someone like me who knows it well. You may see a primary care provider, specialists, visit urgent care, the emergency department, but when it comes down to it, the only person who knows the whole story of your care history ... is you. That's why becoming your own health advocate is so important, and you can learn how to do it on Page 11.

Our own healthcare system is getting a little bigger — and a lot better — with the opening of our pain clinic (Page 3), where Ed Zhovtis, doctor in nurse anesthesiology practice, will expand our service to offer comprehensive treatment of acute and chronic pain to help get people back to their regular lives.

It's only fitting this issue features our OB department, because that's where I cut my teeth on leadership as the director for seven years. It comes full circle on July 1 when I retire from a 40-year career at the hospital (Page 7). There are so many moments, accomplishments, and most of all, people to treasure from my time here, but it's time for my family and me to have more time together to enjoy each other, our friends, and this community.

Excellence Always,

Mary Beth White-Jacobs

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PASSION FOR COMMUNITY DRIVES

CO-OP CREDIT UNION PRESIDENT



Eric Chrisinger was born at the old Black River Falls hospital downtown and has lived in Wisconsin his entire life, giving him a valuable perspective on the needs of area communities.

And now it's those communities that are benefitting from the volunteer work, partnerships, and donations that take place at Co-op Credit Union, where Chrisinger has been employed for 40 years including the past 14 as president, putting his local knowledge to work.

"Concern for Community" is one of the seven principles of cooperatives, and "those principles guide us in everything we do," he says. "When we give back, we're giving back to our members and their families, and it makes it a better place to live and work."

Employees are encouraged and allowed to take work time to volunteer, strengthening morale at the credit union. "Absolutely," he says. "The employees love to give back and help."

It's part of a successful formula for the credit union, which Chrisinger says is experiencing record growth in membership and assets.

Chrisinger's propensity for helping others through his work took on a whole new meaning in his personal life when he sought help for his mother as she suffered a decline in health over the past few years. He's grateful for the level of care provided for her by Black River Memorial Hospital.

"I'm just beyond impressed with the service she's been able to get," Chrisinger says, "and not just the doctors and nurses. I'm talking about that plus the human side of it, the services side, finding accommodations for her during a pandemic. It couldn't have been better."

It's the kind of service Co-op Credit Union seeks to emulate with its Concern for Community. "We're very blessed to help our members and our community," Chrisinger says.

If you would like to nominate someone in the community who deserves a spotlight, email us at excellence@brmh.net.

A few of Co-op Credit Union's community efforts in its 10-county service area include:

- Meals on Wheels deliveries
- Volunteering at Neighborhood Food Pantry in Black River Falls
- Rotary Club and Lions Club participation
- Sponsorship and support of Jackson County Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers' annual golf event
- Community partner of the Boys & Girls Club
- Hosting and sponsoring financial wellness events
- Supporting local community festivals and fairs
- Improvement projects for youth ballfields and hockey rinks

ED ZHOVTIS' PASSION FOR ANESTHESIOLOGY MEANS LESS PAIN AND
MORE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR HIS PATIENTS AT NEW CLINIC

Meet pain's worst enemy

Anyone who has experienced the kind of pain that makes daily life a struggle can appreciate the significance of Black River Memorial Hospital taking another big step forward in its holistic approach to health care by opening a pain clinic.

Dealing with pain is a huge deal for a patient.

"Dealing with pain is a huge deal for a patient," says Ed Zhovtis, doctor in nurse anesthesiology practice, who will oversee the clinic after having provided anesthesia care at BRMH since 2018. "It destructs everything that has to do with your life: sleep, food, mood, everything, and if those people who have that experience can get this high-quality care without driving to Eau Claire, La Crosse, Rochester, I think it's huge."

Zhovtis aims to provide comprehensive management and treatment of both acute and chronic pain that not only alleviates his patients' pain but also helps give them their lives back.

"If I can help bring someone's pain from an 8 to a 6, it's a great improvement," he says. "But if I also can help that person get out of a chair, out of bed, walk down their driveway to pick up their mail, take their dog for a walk, do anything extra from what they were able to do yesterday, it's a great win for the patient, the profession, for science, and for us as people who are there to care for other people."

Part of Zhovtis's inclusive approach will be to not rely solely on opioids as a treatment solution.

"We all know the opioid problem in the country," he says. "I believe there are better ways or more comprehensive ways to approach chronic and even acute pain, such as nerve blocks and anti-inflammatory medications, for example, and that multidimensional approach could take 80, 90 percent of the pain away without using opioids."

The care Zhovtis provides will be part of a comprehensive approach by BRMH to treating pain.

"Absolutely," he says. "The whole idea behind it is that pain is not an independent problem. It is a multi-faceted problem that requires a multi-faceted approach" that also will include physical therapy, behavioral therapy, and other specialty services.

As far as his goals for the clinic, Zhovtis first wants to create awareness so that everyone in Jackson County and the surrounding area who has a chronic pain issue

20.5%
OF U.S.
ADULTS
EXPERIENCE
CHRONIC PAIN
ACCORDING TO A 2019
NATIONAL HEALTH
INTERVIEW SURVEY



knows there is a local option where they can receive high-quality care. Next would be to build the clinic's reputation so that it becomes a referral center for residents in surrounding cities such as Tomah and Sparta.

"It's a new endeavor. It's exciting," Zhovtis says. "I've provided anesthesia care on every possible level, from the mountains of Afghanistan to Black River Falls to Chicago. Delivering high quality, safe anesthetic care has been my passion for the past 13 years. Anesthesia is what I love, is what I'm good at and what I hope to do for another 30 years of my life."

And now he's eager to provide this crucial service to the people of the Jackson County area — and help them move past their pain.

Ed Zhovtis, a board-certified nurse anesthetist, was born and raised in the Soviet Union and earned his degree in nurse anesthesiology in 2008 from Rush University in Chicago. He now lives in Dresbach, Minn., with his wife, Kelley; they have three children: Jakob, who is stationed in Alaska with the Army; Ellie, a senior in high school; and 16-year-old Benjamin.

Patients do not need a referral to visit the pain clinic. To make an appointment or for more information, call 715-284-3612.

Blakely



Bailey



Graye



Jace



Caden



Merik



Hazel



Jonah



Sharing the experience with coworkers, and the compassionate care of the OB department makes the hospital a popular choice for its employees who are having babies.

Born into the BRMH Family

Considering the family culture that exists at Black River Memorial Hospital, it's only natural that so many employees choose to add to their own families here.

Remember those babies you saw on the front cover? All eight of those bundles of joy were born at the hospital to BRMH employees.

Melissa Erickson, chief nursing officer, was born at BRMH, and she had both of her children, Megan, 19, and Lauren, 16, here. Sharing her babies' birth experiences with coworkers made them even more special.

"It's the family feeling that every single one of those employees caring for me was part of my family," she says. "It gives you this warm, fuzzy feeling just to know you're surrounded by people who care about you."

OB and Infusion Center director Ashley Fjelsted was at first unsure about sharing such a personal experience with her coworkers but eventually decided to have her first son, Keaton, 12, at BRMH.

"And I'm so glad I did because everyone was so invested in my pregnancy and how I was doing. Our OB nurse provided wonderful,

amazing care," she says. "It was an easy decision to have my second baby here."

After also considering other options, respiratory therapist Kim Schlifer decided to have her child at BRMH, too, and the care she received from the Obstetrics Department confirmed she made the right choice.

"What I loved most about having my children here was that I was treated like a queen the entire stay," she says. "The labor and delivery suites were spacious yet made me feel cozy as if I was home. The



nurses were so knowledgeable and set my mind at ease the entire stay, even coming in late at night to help me with breastfeeding my baby."

It's all part of the plan at BRMH, Erickson says. "It's about the little things. What's important to you and how you want to design your delivery to meet your needs. We really want to give families the experience they're looking

for so they can look back at their fond memories and share their stories."

Those stories are part of a family tradition for some BRMH employees.

The Fjelsted family tree has four generations rooted at the hospital. In addition to her two sons, Fjelsted, her mother and grandmother were born here.

Kathryn Nachreiner gave birth to her son Brady at the hospital. Kathryn was also born at BRMH, as were her



husband, mother, father, and mother-in-law.

No matter who it is, an employee giving birth at the hospital is an exciting day for everyone.

"You know when the parents have come back to visit because you hear oohing and aahing and everyone comes running to see the new parents and baby," Erickson says. "It's a celebration, and people are excited because it's like a family member just had their baby here."

Families get bigger. The family culture at Black River Memorial Hospital gets stronger.

Visit brmh.net/ob to learn about BRMH's innovative birthing options and advanced care. There are certain delivery situations that BRMH is not equipped to handle. Consult with your primary care provider to determine the best birthing option for your situation.

BRMH Messenger Newsletter – May 2008

Black River Memorial Hospital Receives Laureate Award for Workplace Excellence

Black River Memorial Hospital (BRMH) has been named the recipient of The Jackson Group's prestigious Laureate Award for Workplace Excellence. Alan Jackson, President of the Jackson Group presented the award to the hospital's leadership on Monday, April 28.



Alan Jackson, center, President of The Jackson Group, presents the Laureate Award for Workplace Excellence to Black River Memorial Hospital's administration team, from left, Holly Witton, Director of Human Resources and Ancillary Services, Stan Gaynor, Chief Executive Officer, Bob Daley, Director of Fiscal and Information Services and Mary Beth White-Jacobs, Director of Patient Care Services.



Jackson County Chronicle – December 6, 2006

Black River Memorial Homecare granted license by the State of Wisconsin



Mary Beth White-Jacobs, R.N., B.S.N., M.H.A., left, and Stan Gaynor, CEO, congratulate Shawn Callisto, R.N., Black River Memorial Homecare's manager for the homecare license the hospital recently received from the State of Wisconsin.

Mary Beth White-Jacobs, N, BSN, MHA, director of patient care services at Black River Memorial Hospital has announced that Black River Memorial Homecare has been granted a license by the State of Wisconsin.

been providing," she said. "We are pleased to now be able to provide comprehensive homecare services to people in Jackson County and surrounding counties." The homecare staff consists

One for the books

Retiring CEO Mary Beth White-Jacobs leaves
rich legacy during 40-year career at BRMH

Mary Beth White-Jacobs has had the type of career you could write a book about — and she might.

"I have a lot of funny anecdotal stories, but I'm going to save that for a book that maybe no one will ever read but I feel like I need to write," she says. "The things I've seen in 40 years in health care at a rural community hospital ... pretty interesting."

No doubt there also should be chapters on her numerous accomplishments at Black River Memorial Hospital, her immense community impact, and the many meaningful relationships she's developed.

The story will come to an end July 1 when White-Jacobs retires from a career that began when she joined BRMH as a medical-surgical nurse, and ends with her having spent the past nine years as CEO.

"I have a lot of funny anecdotal stories, but I'm going to save that for a book that maybe no one will ever read but I feel like I need to write."

- MARY BETH WHITE-JACOBS

"It was a very personal decision for me, but I'm confident it's going to be a good decision for the organization too," she says.

There have been plenty of highlights for White-Jacobs during a tenure that also included the roles of head OB nurse, OB clinical director, Medical-Surgical/OB department manager, and VP of Patient Care Services.

Her contributions were vital to the hospital's addition of several services, but she's particularly proud of her role in BRMH offering hospice care.



She helped build a community coalition, creating the momentum that led to the addition of a service that is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

She has helped create better communities throughout Jackson County with her involvement in the Jackson County Women's Health Alliance, 4H, Black River Falls Area Foundation, Servant Led Community, and Rotary Club of Black River Falls, among others.



And the culture that was established with the Excellence Always program has resulted in frequent recognition for the hospital for patient and employee satisfaction.

When she's not working on telling the rest of her story in her book, White-Jacobs plans to continue her community involvement, golf, travel, ride her horses, and spend time with her family.

While it's not common for an employee to work at one organization for their entire career, Mary Beth found immense satisfaction at BRMH. "It has meant the world to me to help grow the organization and provide the excellent care we are known for today. I'm proud to have played a role in making that happen. But more so, I am grateful for all the people - including our BRMH staff - who have supported me and this hospital along the way."

"What I'll miss most about BRMH is the wonderful people. However, I am looking forward to exploring the next chapter of my life."



Spring Fever

a fresh, squeaky clean, new look



Healthcare that comes to you

We understand how difficult it can be for some people to come into our facilities. With our home-based services — homecare, hospice, and palliative — patients can receive the high-quality care and personal attention they need from the comforts of their own home, keeping them close to family and friends.



Stay safe and healthy in your home

Be Home, Home Medical and Wellness Supplies is a local, convenient option meeting all of your home medical equipment and supply needs, in addition to selling a wide variety of health and wellness items — more than 1,000 overall including:

- Bath safety items
- Supplies for daily living
- Walkers, rollators, canes, crutches
- Lift chairs
- Wheelchairs and accessories
- Oxygen equipment and supplies
- CPAP/BiPAP equipment and accessories
- Compression stockings
- Breast pumps and accessories
- Pain relief items
- A full product line of Burt's Bees
- Vionic® brand orthotic shoes

Hours 8:30 am – 5:00 pm Monday-Friday

Things are changing at Black River Memorial Hospital...for the better! Did you know our café and coffee offerings are expanding? Did you know that we offer a variety of healthcare services that can be provided right in your home? Or that we sell an extensive line of home medical equipment, and health and wellness supplies? That's right, and to help make the communities we serve more aware of the services available to them, we've created new brands for our homecare hospice services and our home medical and wellness supplies retail store, as well as a brand new to-go coffee offering to boot. We hope you like what you see, and that you check out all of the other healthcare options available at BRMH — all close to home.



There's something new on our menu

Forget everything you think you know about hospital "cafeteria food." Café on Adams, Black River Falls' newest dining option, is quick and convenient, features a variety of tasty, healthy food, and doesn't even require a reservation. It's open to the public for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and our new Dr. Joe's Coffee is just what your taste buds ordered. Café on Adams is a complete dining experience featuring:

- Hot meal options
- Soups, sandwiches, and salads
- Grab-and-go items including fresh fruit, pastries, healthy snacks, and more
- Specialty beverages

Café on Adams Hours

Breakfast: 8:30 – 10:00 am Monday-Friday

Lunch: 11:30 am – 2:00 pm weekdays

11:30 am – 1:30 pm weekends

Dinner: 5:00 – 6:30 pm every day

Enter through the hospital's main entrance

Something special is brewing

How does a Be-Home-a-Latte sound? Or a White Coat Mocha? We decided to have a little fun with naming our specialty beverages. Come visit us and see if these two made the cut.





5 STEPS TO

Becoming your own health advocate

Becoming a health advocate can provide you with a sense of control over your health and instill confidence that you're receiving the best possible care from your provider. This can lead to a healthier and even longer life. It's up to you to make it happen, and here are a few steps to becoming your own health advocate.

1

Build a healthy relationship with your doctor



Your relationship with your doctor should be based on honesty and openness, so always be forthcoming, don't be afraid to ask questions, and seek clarification if you don't understand something.

"We want patients to feel empowered to speak up and offer insights to whatever illness they are struggling with," says Dr. Jill Boulden, a hospitalist at Black River Memorial Hospital. "When patients work with us and share their concerns and questions, it helps us provide better care and a more positive outcome."

2



Get a second opinion

Beyond confirming a diagnosis, or not, getting a second opinion can have the benefit of providing an opportunity to have a conversation with a provider who may be able to explain things in a way that is easier for you to understand, or have a different opinion about your treatment options. When it comes to your health, knowing all of your choices is essential.

3

Do your own research

But only use sources that are highly regarded. The Internet offers a variety of websites where you can educate yourself about everything from symptoms and treatments to drug side effects and disease research. Good places to start include webmd.com, medlineplus.gov, cdc.gov, and mayoclinic.com/health-information.



4

Keep a medical journal

Whether you're generally healthy or battling a serious disease, keeping close track of how you're feeling and charting symptoms can help you identify when something is going wrong with your body, as well as provide vital information for your provider to use when diagnosing an illness or setting a treatment plan.

5



Value your appointment time

This is when you will receive important and often timely information from your provider, so be prepared. Bring a pen and paper to take notes, and make sure you receive a post-visit summary that you can review for accuracy.

"We appreciate it when patients come prepared with a written list of questions," Boulden says. "Doctor visits can cause some patients anxiety, so having things written down ahead of time ensures you won't forget something important your provider should know."

It also can be beneficial to bring a loved one to your appointment to ensure you capture everything from the visit, especially if you are anticipating receiving potentially bad news that could affect your ability to focus.

“We want patients to feel **empowered to speak up** and offer insights to whatever illness they are struggling with

- Dr. Jill Boulden



Fill 'er up!

How volunteering can fill your cup



As an independent, community hospital, Black River Memorial Hospital is dedicated to providing opportunities for people to join us in our effort to help create better lives for the people of Jackson County.

Giving back to the community through volunteering offers many benefits, such as filling a void created by retirement, strengthening a college application, making new friends, and simply doing something that makes you — and someone else — feel good.

From community outreach and fundraising to patient services and hospice support, BRMH offers a variety of opportunities, making it easy for volunteers to find a program they enjoy.

Here are just a few of the many ways you can make a difference for our employees, patients, visitors, and community:

GIFT SHOP

Our gift shop sales force is staffed by volunteers who greet guests, keep the shop stocked, display inventory, and run the cash register system.

VOLUNTEEN PROGRAM

Volunteers are students at least 14 years of age who work at the registration desk, guide patients to appointments, act as a courier between floors (such as delivering flowers to patients), and more!

RECEPTION DESKS

Volunteers greet incoming patients and visitors, screen all who enter, and help them get to their appropriate location.

HOSPICE

Specially trained volunteers provide respite, companionship, and end-of-life care to patients and their families.

JOIN OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM

If you are interested in volunteering, you can view a full list of opportunities and apply at brmh.net/volunteer, or give **Cindy Clark** a call at **(715) 284-1391**.

8,287

That is the number of hours Nancy Lee has volunteered at Black River Memorial Hospital through 2021. (Which is the equivalent of almost four years of full-time work!) Nancy first joined the BRMH volunteer program in 2006 and was hooked. She will be honored by BRMH this year for her efforts, which have included volunteering at the registration desk, helping with Telecare, and working in the gift shop, her favorite.

“All the volunteering has been special for me ... I just love it.”

NANCY LEE

Nutrition FOR YOUR BODY AND MIND

ASPARAGUS FRIES



Looking for a healthier alternative to a guilty favorite? Baked asparagus fries reduce the saturated fat from traditional deep-fried French fries, while providing a low-carb option. This recipe offers a light, crisp, and nutritious side to any dinner meal.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup Panko
- ½ cup grated parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 lb asparagus, trimmed
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 large eggs, beaten

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Start by preheating the oven to 425°F. Lightly oil a baking sheet or coat with a non-stick spray.
2. In a large bowl, combine the Panko and grated parmesan cheese; season with salt and pepper to your liking. Set aside bowl.
3. Work in batches. Coat asparagus in flour, dip into beaten eggs, then roll in Panko mix, ensuring asparagus is coated with mixture.
4. Place asparagus in single layers onto the prepared baking sheet. Place into oven and bake for 10 to 12 minutes, or until golden brown and crisp in texture.
5. Serve and enjoy!

Recipe provided by BRMH Registered Dietitian, Wendy Barth.



FLORAL FUMBLE

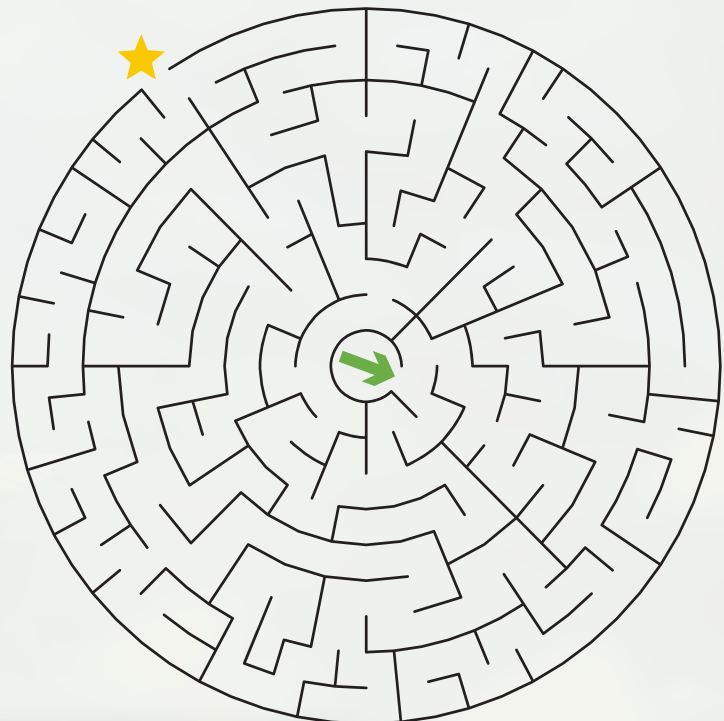
Look carefully at the jumbled words and try unscrambling as many of the anagrams as you can into real words related to flowers.

1. uplit
2. sayid
3. offaldid
4. hadali
5. laicl
6. hangaredy
7. yopne
8. gmoliard
9. aunpeit

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

IN-A-DAZE MAZE

Begin your way through the maze at the green start arrow. Try not to hit too many dead ends, and see if you can make it to the gold star!



Answers can be found on our website.



711 West Adams Street
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for a full list of services.

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A new website for a Better You

Check out our new website at brmh.net featuring tools and resources that will help you improve your health and well-being, highlighted by our new Better You Blog.

Help make your community healthier, win a gift card

The first 400 people who take our Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) survey will get a \$10 Kwik Trip gift card. The CHNA is an essential tool that allows Black River Memorial Hospital to better understand the health needs of the greater community and implement a plan to address those needs — ultimately providing better health care for you and your loved ones.

To take the survey, scan the
QR code with your smartphone
or visit tinyurl.com/chna2022

