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MOMENTUM

SUMMER 2022

A New Leader for a New Era

Introducing BRMH's new CEO, Carl Selvick



“My favorite part about it is when I’m all by myself, and I’m out in the greenhouse, and I’m trimming the plants,”

Dana says. “It’s quiet, it’s cathartic, it’s warm. It’s one of those things where, if I could do that all day, I would.”



Community Spotlight

Greenhouse owner creates a rewarding career from her ‘happy place’

Filling her Passion Bucket

Dana Rave stood in an aisle of Falls Florist & Greenhouse, as she had many times before. The strong scent of dirt filled her nose as sunlight covered the flower-filled shelves bursting with color. She was calm. She was in her “happy place.”

And she still is today — but it means so much more to her now.

Go back a decade or so, and Rave is employed as a hospice social worker with Black River Memorial Hospital. She often would ask her patients about their work experiences and any regrets they had. Some talked about despising their jobs; others said they felt like they never even had a job because their work was something they enjoyed so much.

As much as she loved working at Black River Memorial Hospital, those conversations rekindled fond memories for Rave of taking her 6-month daughter to the greenhouse and watching her play in the dirt. Little did she know she soon would be making many more memories as her relationship with the greenhouse would grow stronger than ever.

The greenhouse owners at the time were looking to sell and approached Rave about taking over. After initially laughing off the idea, Rave came to a realization: “I wanted to find something that would fill my passion bucket.”

So that’s exactly what she did. Along with her husband, Michael, who has a business degree, the couple became the new owners of Falls Florist & Greenhouse in 2019.

Owning the greenhouse hasn’t always been sunshine and butterflies, though. The previous owners stayed on for a year as Dana and Michael found their footing, Dana balanced family and greenhouse responsibilities with taking business courses, and they somehow made it through the pandemic.

The greenhouse is now thriving as a community gathering spot that showcases the work of talented people in the area and supports other small businesses, in addition to selling a wide variety of flowers, houseplants, garden plants, and accessories. “I want to promote local businesses, local artists,” Dana says. “Our community is full of very talented, fantastic people.”

With Michael taking on the role of project manager, the couple recently completed a renovation of the greenhouse that will allow the space to be utilized for even more community activities including serving as a photography location and hosting classes, such as “Yoga in the Greenhouse.”

Dana stands in an aisle of Falls Florist & Greenhouse once again, only this time her passion bucket has significantly more weight to it. She has turned her passion into a career and is pleased knowing how she would answer the same question she used to ask her hospice patients years ago.

Community health comes first for new CEO

As Carl Selvick took over the role of CEO at Black River Memorial Hospital on July 1, he took some time to discuss his family, the biggest challenge facing the hospital, and a particularly impactful patient interaction.

Momentum: What influenced you to choose a career in health care?

Carl Selvick: A lot of my family members are in health care, so it was either that or the family marine business. I'm a fourth-generation tugboat sailor. My family came to America in the engine rooms of ocean liners bringing people over (from Europe). We are a traditional working-class family, and we would work on tugboats; that's how we came here, and we've been working on marine or tugboats ever since (up until now). I have six cousins, and none of us wanted to take over the family business, but it served our family well for four generations.

M: You started out as a pharmacist. What prompted your move to the administrative side?

CS: There was a patient who really influenced me to move into leadership. I started a specialty pharmacy selling medicines for rare diseases that are hard to treat. I had a patient who had hepatitis C for 20-plus years. The cure had just come out, but it was completely unaffordable, \$93,000, and this patient couldn't afford it. The industry wasn't there to support her, but the model we built was. We ended up finding a foundation that paid for the cost of her medication. Afterward, she called me up crying. She said, "I am cured. This is the nicest thing anyone has ever done for me in my life." It really impacted me. People should have a right to good health care, and that was when my whole career changed. I knew I wanted to be more involved in leadership to build more of these types of services.

M: As you prepare to start in your new role at BRMH, what is the biggest challenge the hospital faces?

CS: The greatest challenge in health care right now is the workforce: workforce development, engagement, and retainment. The pandemic exacerbated the workforce challenges that our industry is facing, and we

Something interesting you may not know about Carl: he has a blue belt in Brazilian jiu-jitsu.



Senior Leadership Team (Left to right): Dr. Esteban Miller (CMO), Melissa Erickson (CNO), Carl Selvick (CEO), Holly Winn (COO), and Kyle Kovacevich (CFO).

see a lot of clinicians and employees choosing to retire or choosing alternate careers. I come from an organization (Fort HealthCare in Fort Atkinson) that is an employer of choice, and I am committed to ensuring that Black River Memorial Hospital remains an employer of choice long into the future.

M: What is your primary objective for BRMH?

CS: I would like the hospital to remain independent because, from what I've seen in health care, is that if you're affiliated or join another organization, you give up more than you get. And, really, what I've seen is that the best way to improve community health is to make sure those decisions come from and within the community.

M: Is there a strength of yours that is a particularly good fit for BRMH?

CS: I would say a strong skill I bring is my experiences in building new service lines and programs that are tailored to meet community health needs. I've been successful in my career by listening to the communities we serve and finding ways to meet the gaps in

care that we've identified together. We try to always find a way that answers the question, "How do we build services in a sustainable way that increases the health and well-being of our community?"

M: Can you give us a snapshot of what your life looks like outside of work?

CS: Most of my family's time is centered on being active in one way or another. My wife, Samantha, and I try to build personal fitness into our family activities. It wouldn't be unusual to see our family at community 5Ks, run/walks, or other family-friendly activities. With two young children (Oliver, 5, and Everett, 3), we have to keep our energy levels up to match them! My children have helped develop in me a passion and joy in many of the simple things in life that I for so long took for granted. Whether it is baking bread, learning to ride a bike, or finding a collection of cool acorns during a walk, I enjoy learning about this great world of ours through the lens and exuberance of youth.

Her loss becomes her patients' gain

The ability to overcome tragedy takes great courage. Being able to turn that tragedy into something positive to help others – that requires a strength of character few people have. Jennifer Smikrud is one of them.

July 8, 2016. That is the day Smikrud's life changed forever. Over the previous couple of days, her motherly instincts were telling her something was off with her pregnancy. Then, during a shift as an RN in the Obstetrics Department at Black River Memorial Hospital, her water broke — at 16 weeks.

Taken by ambulance to Mayo Clinic in La Crosse, Smikrud gave birth to her first child, Jace, shortly after arriving, but he did not survive. Jenny was immediately taken to surgery, and when she was finally able to be with Jace, she said her time with him felt rushed. Groggy from surgery, she didn't feel alert enough to express her wishes.

"It was really, really hard," she said. "Your mind is constantly going to, Why me?"

Jenny Smikrud sought comfort in sharing Jace's story and listening to those of others who were suffering from the same type of pain she was. The healing process took up to two years, she said, and at some point, she realized "you either grow from this and get stronger or you just fall apart."

For Jenny Smikrud, there was only one option. She dove into the challenge of helping BRMH improve its process for providing a supportive environment for patients experiencing a loss similar to hers. Miscarriage occurs in 10% to 20% of pregnancies, according to the Mayo Clinic, while about 3,400 babies in the United States die suddenly and unexpectedly each year, according to the CDC.

"Being there for other people in those situations is very important to me," Smikrud said. "Given my experience, it taught me a lot about the importance of offering patients as much time as possible to be with their babies" and how important it is for them to "name them, hold them, see them, those types of things."

Smikrud remains an OB nurse, and in her role as the department's grief coordinator, she has been able to help BRMH provide some comfort for patients with:

- packets containing information and resources for every type of infant loss;
- infant loss memory boxes;
- a photography session for miscarried or stillborn infants;
- access to Smikrud, offering patients the opportunity to ask questions and seek support;
- hopefully soon, symbolic cradles for parents to take home

And then there's the latest addition: the donation of a Cuddle Cot by its creator, Ashley's Embrace, thanks to the effort of Smikrud. A Cuddle Cot is designed to allow parents more time with their deceased infant. They can be used in the instances of delivered miscarriages, stillborns, and even when parents bring their infants to the Emergency Department after their infant has passed away from SIDS.

"I knew it would be a great asset for our hospital, so I reached out (to Ashley)," Smikrud said, "to allow patients to keep their baby with them longer. You're only going to get those hours with your baby during that time."

As for Smikrud, she is enjoying being a mother to her daughters, Jocelyn, 3, and Bailey, 9 months. Jace's remains sit in an urn on a shelf in her living room, and his memory will live on inside her forever. For those parents who will find themselves with the same hole in their hearts, she will continue to help provide a sliver of light in a moment of darkness.

OB nurse Jennifer Smikrud uses her own experience to help others grieve the death of an infant

"Once you go through something like that, you know what it feels like, so you want to make sure you do everything in your power to be there for them."



The Cuddle Cot is a temperature-controlled bassinet that provides the gift of time to parents. It ensures the last memories parents will make with their child do not feel rushed.

Sleeping. Eating. Exercising. Difficulty breathing can make almost every aspect of life a challenge for those who endure it chronically. The pulmonary rehab program at Black River Memorial Hospital provides an opportunity for such people to breath better — and live better.

**“I love it,”
she says.
“It’s my passion.”**

Program breathes New Life into patients

Kim Schlifer’s comprehensive, 1-on-1 approach to pulmonary rehab helps people ‘live life to the fullest again’

Kim Schlifer started the outpatient program in 2008 to help people suffering from chronic lung diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and pulmonary fibrosis. Currently, she is treating a large number of patients who are experiencing lingering symptoms from COVID-19, known as “long haulers.” This group of people can struggle with chronic fatigue, loss of stamina, and continued breathing difficulties post-infection.

Having specialized in outpatient pulmonary rehab, Schlifer believes what makes the program stand out is that all sessions are one-on-one between herself and her patient. Most other area health care facilities provide this type of rehab in a group setting.

“The patient gets my full attention,” Schlifer says. “I get to be the eyes and the ears for the doctor. If there’s a change in symptoms or overall condition, I can communicate that to the doctor.”

The goal-oriented program, accepted by most insurance plans, is aimed at providing patients with more confidence and a better quality of life through techniques that help them breathe better, improve their strength, and build overall endurance. Sessions are typically one hour twice per week and include:

- **an educational topic**, such as inhaler usage, infection prevention, energy conservation, fall prevention, oxygen therapy, safety in the home and while traveling, home exercise, and tobacco cessation;
- **breathing and relaxation techniques**;
- **exercise**;
- **music therapy**, demonstrated by Schlifer as she pulls out a harmonica during an interview and begins

playing “Mary Had a Little Lamb”;

- **individualized programming**, helping create a special bond between Schlifer and her patients. “They become family to me,” she says.

Patients who complete the program “don’t feel isolated anymore or as limited in their breathing,” Schlifer says. They can go from depressed to hopeful and get back to “living life to its fullest again.”

So many patient stories are memorable for Schlifer, but one that stands out is the 58-year-old who was having breathing issues from having worked around dust and wood shavings. A pulmonary function test revealed the diagnosis: severe pulmonary fibrosis, or scarring of the lungs. Things turned worse from there,

and the patient needed a double lung transplant.

Needing to be “extremely fit” for the procedure, the patient came to Schlifer. Rigorous therapy with specific benchmarks ensued over many sessions. The patient was up to the task — an overachiever, according to Schlifer — and went on to have a successful transplant.

He no longer requires oxygen to breathe, is physically fit, and “doing fantastic,” Schlifer says. “Absolutely amazing. He’s a very special human to me.”

It’s outcomes like this one that have Schlifer excited about the future of the program as she hopes more people take advantage of what she believes is a greatly underutilized service.



Kim Schlifer has suffered from asthma for much of her life, giving her a special perspective that helps her connect with her patients.

A referral from a specialist or your primary care provider is required to participate in the pulmonary rehab program. Call (715) 284-1313 for more information.

A Mighty Operation

Diversity of surgical services offered at BRMH matched by level of patient care

It was a busy day for the surgical services department led by Michael Steinfadt as he took time out to be interviewed for this story. It was no different than any other day, though — thanks to the wide variety and extensive number of procedures offered at Black River Memorial Hospital.

From orthopedic and gastroenterology to ophthalmologic and gynecological, BRMH's surgeons perform an average of about 187 procedures per month. On this day alone, eight different types of urology surgeries were to be done.

"The fact that we offer some of these procedures in our small community is pretty impressive," Steinfadt said. "We love that we can offer our patients the opportunity to stay local."

But where the department really stands out is the level of care it provides to patients, which Steinfadt said he observes firsthand on a day-to-day basis and also when reading patient surveys.

"The fact that our staff and surgeons can get positive reactions in what can be a scary situation for a patient is probably what sets us apart the most," he said. "From the moment they get here to the moment they leave, they get excellent care from every nurse, doctor, anesthetist ... and everyone in between."

Quick stats

3,000

Approximate number of surgeries performed at BRMH in the 16-month period from January 2021 to April 2022

74

Number of those surgeries that were emergent (primarily laparoscopic, appendectomy, and C-section)

14

Number of surgeons performing procedures at BRMH



"I hear from patients a lot that they are so glad they didn't have to travel for a procedure ... How lucky there were to have general surgery here as well as all as these specialty procedures."

— Michael Steinfadt, BRMH Director of Surgical and Respiratory Care Services

The Top 25 surgeries performed at Black River Memorial Hospital

Cataract Surgery	Cyst/Mass/Lesion Excision
Gallbladder Removal	Laparoscopic Tubal Ligation
Carpal Tunnel Release	For desired sterility
Hernia Repair	ACL Repair
Knee Arthroscopy	Breast Lumpectomy/Mastectomy
Knee Replacement	Tendon Repair
Hip Replacement	Transoral Incisionless Fundoplication
Rotator Cuff Repair	Endoscopic procedure to provide relief from heartburn/GERD
Shoulder Arthroscopy	Biopsies (Skin, Tissue, Lymph Node)
Prostate Biopsy	Wound Debridement
Prostate Resection	Removal of dead or infected skin tissue to help a wound heal
Hysterectomy	
Kidney Stone Removal	
Repair of Fractured Bones	
Shoulder Replacement	
Hemorrhoidectomy	
Bladder Procedures	
For incontinence issues	

Employee Spotlight

5 Things You Need to Know
About System Analyst

Mark Hughes

Working Harder To Make His Coworkers' Jobs Easier



What does Mark do?

A few of Mark's many responsibilities include assisting with reporting, maintaining web servers, facilitating system interfaces, and devising ways to add new functionality to existing systems.

What does he really do?

He saves people time and makes everyone's job easier by making systems more user-friendly. Getting data into the right people's hands, he helps them understand it, manage it, and use it effectively. "Even though I sit at my desk and I don't physically touch the patients, I'm here supporting my coworkers who do have that more direct impact on patient lives," he said.

What is Mark's favorite project?

As part of the Emergency Department Consistent Care Program, he helps develop reports aimed at improving the care provided to individuals who frequently use the emergency department. "I don't see patients on a day-to-day basis. All I see are the numbers. But helping to take that data and build a story for decision-makers is the kind of thing I can give to our emergency department to help them manage their care of the patients," Mark, 26, said. "It's the closest I can get to help out a patient. So that's a big thing for me."

What led him to where he is today?

Mark is extremely dedicated to what he does, and it all started with a professor at UW-Madison. Still exploring his career options, he took a computer theory class taught by an instructor who "lit a spark" in Mark that led him to realize he wanted to commit his professional life to computer programming. "Every day I came to class, this professor was passionate about teaching, and that really helped me develop my passion, too," he said. "I never thought I would end up in healthcare. I found my coworkers had a similar passion to what lit the spark for me in college, and I felt like I was a part of the team from day one."

Who is Mark outside of work?

Working primarily behind a keyboard, maybe it's no surprise Mark is an outdoorsman who enjoys camping, backpacking, and being out in nature. He also owns a motorcycle on which he likes to perform maintenance. Mark is a runner and has a passion for volunteering, two things he combined with the Jackson In Action Laces to Leaders program that featured leadership lessons for the youth participants and physical training for the Pace & Pedal 5K Run/Walk.

Caring more and stressing less

Tips for handling the responsibility of being a "sandwich" parent

For caregivers who care for both their children and their parents, it can be easy for stress to build up. Michelle Goetting, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, at Black River Memorial Hospital, offers five tips for managing it:



1

Get back to the basics

Getting adequate sleep, eating healthy, nutritious food, drinking plenty of water, and moving your body every day can have a profound, positive impact on anyone's health.

2

Unplug

Reducing screen time gives our brain and body time to recharge. It is easy to make ourselves so available to others at all times via phone, email, Zoom, social media, etc., and it's not doing us any good in terms of reducing stress.

3

Use your time off from work

Making sure to use your vacation time is just step one. Step two is actually using your time off as time off. Leave your work at work. Know that it's OK to set boundaries and say no.

4

Ask for help

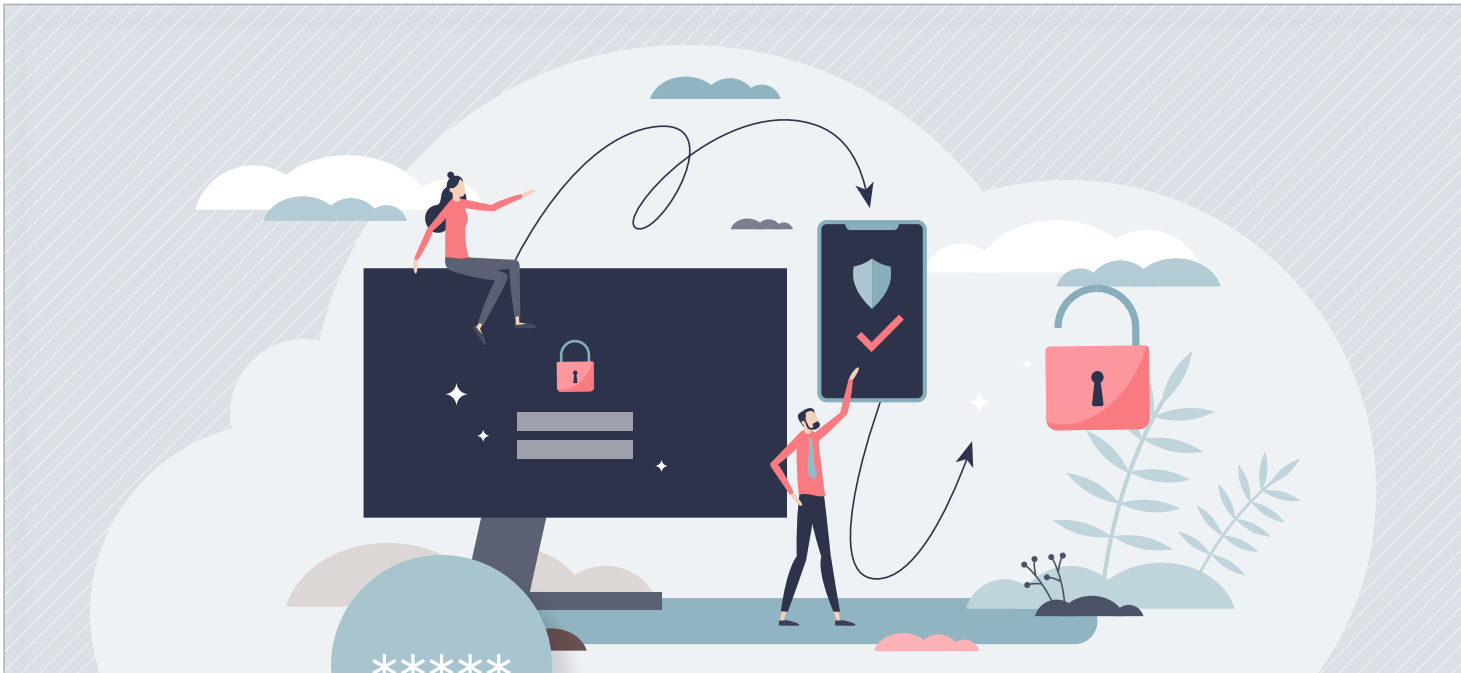
Asking for help has developed a negative stigma as we've gone from being a "we" society to a "me" society. When we need help, it is OK to ask for it and realize that people usually like to help. That old saying "It takes a village" is absolutely true.

5

Self-care

It's counterproductive to try to care for others if you aren't caring for yourself. If you're enduring chronic stress and notice you're not eating or sleeping well, your mood is off, you're irritable, or you're having health problems, check in with a professional.

Resources Jackson Co. Dept. of Health & Human Services, Jackson Co. Aging and Disability Resource Center, Dementia care specialists available through Jackson County, Jackson Co. Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers, Lunda Community Center, including The Hub senior center, Ho-Chunk Nation District 1 Community Center, Ho-Chunk Tribal Aging Unit and Social Services Dept., Alzheimer's Association, Local healthcare organizations and behavioral health clinics.



Tips for safeguarding your identity online

1. Use strong passwords and multi-factor authentication

Create passwords using longer and/or more complex combinations of letters, numbers, and symbols. Multi-factor authentication creates an extra layer of security by requiring a passphrase or second piece of information when logging into a website or app, and many organizations offer it.

2. Be on the lookout for suspicious emails

Verify any suspect senders, attachments, or links before clicking. The best way to do so is to call the sender, but verify the phone number from a source other than the email.

3. Use secure networks

Private, password-protected networks are much more secure than free, public Wi-Fi locations. However, using a secure Virtual Private Network (VPN) when in public can secure your transactions.

4. Keep your devices updated

Operating your devices on outdated software leaves you vulnerable, as updates often contain security patches or new security features. Check your device settings to learn if your software is up-to-date.

5. Keep personal information to yourself

Your data is valuable, so treat it as such and do not share it over the phone, email, or social media if you do not trust the source 100%. For example, what seems like a harmless game on a social media platform asking for your birthday could be an attempt to harvest your data.

The fast pace of our lives and the incredible amount of information we consume every day can make it easy to overlook security when it comes to our online activity. Brett Spafford, information security specialist at Black River Memorial Hospital, emphasizes the importance of understanding where you are at risk so that you can avoid the potentially devastating outcome of having your online identity stolen. Here are her five tips:

Resources Spafford recommends staysafeonline.org and SANS OUCH! newsletters (www.sans.org/newsletters/ouch) as resources where you can learn more about protecting your online identity. If your identity is compromised, she advises you to contact your bank to prevent any further losses, then report the theft to the Federal Trade Commission online at IdentityTheft.org or by calling (877) 438-4338. Internet crimes should be reported to the FBI's Internet Complaint Center at www.ic3.gov.

Nutrition

for your Body and Mind

Answers on the website: brmh.net/momentum

How many total triangles are in this image?

a) 16 b) 22
c) 23 d) 26
e) 27 f) 32

1		2		3	4		5
6	7		8		9		10
			11				
12				13			
			14				
15		16		17	18		19
20				21			

1. Extreme Anger

3. Prepare for publication

6. Infant

9. Temporary Worker

11. It's used to hear

12. Wrapping bread

13. Thing to worship

14. Caress

15. King of the jungle

17. Reflected sound

20. Push or prod

21. Living in poverty

1. Chest bone

2. Chat

4. Stop living

5. Faucet

7. Legal account of whereabouts

8. Desire

9. Group of same race

10. Obtain without paying

15. Part of a mouth

16. Type of tree

18. Chief executive officer

19. Belonging to us

Colorful Tomato, Pepper, & Cucumber Salad

This recipe is a great source of Vitamin A. Vitamin A is protective to vision, immunity, and proper bone, tooth, and nerve development. This recipe is also a great source of Vitamin C. Vitamin C aids in wound healing, iron absorption, immunity, and much more!

Ingredients

Salad

1 pound sweet mini peppers
1 pound cherry tomatoes
(or colorful grape tomatoes)
1 English cucumber

Salad Dressing & Seasoning

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
1/2 large lemon, squeezed
1/4 cup fresh dill, chopped
Sea salt & freshly ground pepper to taste

Instructions

Salad Dressing

1. Combine freshly squeezed lemon juice with olive oil. Mix well and set aside.

Salad

1. Wash, rinse and cut all vegetables into desired pieces and place in bowl.
2. Wash and rinse dill, place in bowl with chopped vegetables
3. Pour salad dressing over the cut vegetable and dill. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Recipe provided by Wendy Backaus, Clinical Dietitian at BRMH.

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2021

ANNUAL REPORT

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