

Report to the Community: August 2010



RIVER FALLS
AREA HOSPITAL
Allina Hospitals & Clinics

River Falls Area
Hospital Foundation



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Welcome

Dear Friends,

As a not-for-profit organization, River Falls Area Hospital reinvests in this region by supporting services and programs that help improve community health. From the development of a new cancer care program to support of programs that help low-income members of our region access health care services, our hospital is committed to its mission:

“To serve our communities by providing exceptional care, as we prevent illness, restore health and provide comfort to all who entrust us with their care.”

The River Falls Area Hospital Foundation is dedicated to helping the hospital secure the financial resources it will need as it grows and expands to meet the needs of this region. And to do that, we need your continued support.

Whatever your reason for giving, your contributions are an investment in the health of our region. With your support, we will continue to provide exceptional state-of-the-art care to our patients while working with our community partners to improve community health.

On behalf of the patients and communities we serve, we thank you for continued support and generosity.

In appreciation,



Lori Peterson, PhD
Foundation Board Chair
River Falls Area Hospital



David Miller
President
River Falls Area Hospital



Heather Logelin
Foundation Director
River Falls Area Hospital

Access to Care Fund:

Ensuring Access to Health Care

In these tough economic times, many people need help paying for medical care. At River Falls Area Hospital, we are committed to ensuring that all people have access to necessary medical care, regardless of their financial situation. We provide several programs for those who cannot afford to pay their medical bills, and we support other programs that provide primary health care to those in our region who might otherwise go without.

Hospital Care

The Allina Partners Care program helps uninsured and underinsured patients at our hospital. For those patients who meet the eligibility guidelines and complete a brief application, their account balance will be written off as charity care, with the exception of some elective services.

Those who do not qualify for Allina Partners Care or for Medicaid may be eligible for a discount on medically necessary hospital charges. For more information about Allina Partners Care or medical discounts, please call 1-800-859-5077.

Primary Care

River Falls Area Hospital and the River Falls Area Hospital Foundation are proud to be founding partners and continuing supporters of the Free Clinic of Pierce and St. Croix Counties, a local nonprofit dedicated to providing primary care services to low-income, uninsured residents of our region.

The Free Clinic, which operates out of donated space at the River Falls Medical Clinic, is open Tuesday evenings. It provides both basic medical care and management of chronic conditions such as diabetes. The clinic also provides patients with needed medications.

In addition to providing care, the clinic helps patients enroll in assistance programs, such as Badger Care, or in national prescription assistance programs sponsored by drug companies. They may also help connect patients with other local resources, such as food pantries and heat assistance programs.



River Falls Area Hospital supports the Free Clinic in numerous ways, including providing discounted lab and X-ray services, follow-up surgical care through the Allina Partners Care program, space for pre-screening of patients on Tuesday evenings and human resources and other administrative support. The River Falls Area Hospital Foundation provides support to the Free Clinic through both grant writing and direct financial support.

Pierce County Dental Program

The Pierce County Public Health Department's school-based dental clinics provide dental cleanings and sealants to uninsured low-income children at schools in Elmwood, Spring Valley, Plum City and Ellsworth. Thanks to a grant from the River Fall Area Hospital Foundation the program was expanded in 2009 to include exams, prophylaxis and fluoride and to bring the program to a school in River Falls.

To make a gift to support programs that ensure access to needed health care services, please contact the River Falls Area Hospital Foundation at 715-426-4503.



Quality Cancer Care in Our Own Backyard

Jerry Nelson believes that healing is 90 percent attitude, faith and hope and that the remaining 10 percent is medicine. But for someone battling colon and metastatic liver cancer, he is glad that that 10 percent is coming from the experts at the Rivers Cancer Center at River Falls Area Hospital (RFAH).

“We have been so pleased with Jerry’s treatment,” said Mary Nelson, Jerry’s wife. “The nurses and doctors have been fantastic to work with, and the stress of going to a large hospital for chemotherapy is nonexistent.”

Nelson, a resident of Spring Valley, is receiving compassionate and cutting-edge cancer treatment at Rivers Cancer Center, which was formed in 2007 through a partnership between RFAH, River Falls Medical Clinic, Minnesota Oncology and St. Paul Radiology. The Rivers Cancer Center is also affiliated with the Virginia Piper Cancer Institute. The goal of the partnership is to bring together experts in medical oncology, surgery and radiation to deliver multidisciplinary specialized cancer care to the residents of the River Falls region locally.

“It is important that patients feel comfortable in the environment where they receive their cancer treatments,” said Amy Cernohous, Rivers Cancer Center nurse navigator. “Having their treatments close to home puts patients in a relaxed state of mind and decreases anxiety. Without having to worry about the logistics of getting to appointments, patients have the peace of mind to focus on completing the prescribed treatments.”

According to the Commission on Cancer, the national organization that oversees cancer care and programs in the United States, a comprehensive cancer program requires:

- Leading-edge clinical services
- Access to expert cancer care specialists, including medical oncologists, radiologists, pathologists and other specialists
- Multidisciplinary cancer conferences
- Quality improvement measures, including cancer registry and database



Mary and Jerry Nelson of Spring Valley are very pleased with the cancer care program at RFAH.

To ensure these elements are available at the Rivers Cancer Center, RFAH upgraded the Surgery Center and Radiology Department. They also partnered with Minnesota Oncology and St. Paul Radiology to add more surgeons and specialists, as well as chemotherapy services.

Once these elements were in place, the Center began holding regular, multidisciplinary tumor care conferences. During these conferences, each patient’s case is presented to a multidisciplinary team, including an oncologist, radiologist, surgeon, pharmacist and family medicine physician, where a best-care plan is determined.

In addition the Rivers Cancer Center maintains an active tumor registry and database to ensure that complete and accurate data are collected and maintained for all patients diagnosed and/or treated for cancer and certain benign tumors at RFAH.

Individualized Treatment

Nelson’s cancer is complex and complicated by diabetes. He is currently undergoing chemotherapy to reduce his tumor so it can be surgically removed more safely. And, because the liver metabolizes oral diabetes medication, he has had to switch to insulin injections.

“We’re trying to keep him as close to normal blood sugar levels as we can,” said Mary Nelson, “but it is challenging as the anti-nausea meds he receives tend to elevate his blood sugar.”

Throughout these challenges, the Nelsons have received help from specialized cancer care coordinators. Care coordinators and nurse navigators act as liaisons between patients and their treatment teams, provide patient education and act as patient advocates.

“When Jerry was diagnosed with cancer, our anxiety levels were too high to measure,” said Mary Nelson. “But with the reassurance and education we have received that anxiety level has dropped significantly.”

Improving Expertise

Nelson has also benefited from the intensive training that the chemotherapy nurses and pharmacists have received. With the support of a grant from the River Falls Area Hospital Foundation, six RFAH nurses have undergone intensive training in chemotherapy delivery, helping to ensure safe treatment locally. In addition, RFAH pharmacists received advanced training in the preparation and administration of chemotherapy medications, and special equipment was purchased to facilitate the preparation of the medications.

“We’ve found that convenience is a major factor in people choosing to receive treatments at the Rivers Cancer Center,” said David Miller, RFAH president, “But patients quickly realize that our doctors, nurses and support staff have the same expertise they would have received at any of the large, metro locations.”

For instance, Rivers Cancer Center patients have access to:

- Genetic counseling
- Clinical trials
- Specialized pathology and lab services
- Chemotherapy and infusion services
- Specialized surgical services
- Support services for patients and their families



The River Falls Area Hospital expert chemotherapy team includes (front row, L to R) Kirsten Imrie, RN; Mary Buss, RN; Laura Webster, RN; Diane Ward, RN; and Bridget Maier, RN; (back row, L to R) Vladimir Hugec, MD; Heather West, Registration; and Amy Cernohous, RN.

The Future

According to Peter Dahlberg, MD, PhD, FACS, director of the Rivers Cancer Center, “The future of cancer care in the River Falls area is actually quite bright and exciting.” For instance, Dahlberg cites innovative services through the Minimally Invasive and Advanced Endoscopy Center that will soon include advanced ultrasound and robotic technologies, both of which will shorten recovery time and reduce pain and disability from procedures for patients. And, while most care and services can be delivered locally, the affiliation with Allina’s Virginia Piper Cancer Institute means that RFAH patients have access to additional surgical expertise, laboratory diagnostics and support services.

The cancer care expansion fund is dedicated to the continued development of cancer services at RFAH. To donate to this fund, please contact the River Falls Area Hospital Foundation at 715-426-4503.



Health Careers Scholarship Program:

Helping the Nontraditional Student

River Falls Area Hospital has played an important role in the lives of Sue Nelson, RN, and her daughter, Kirsten Imrie, RN. Nelson, who has worked at River Falls Area Hospital for the past 44 years, gave birth to Imrie, as well as three other daughters, there. Imrie has continued the family tradition and is a part-time registered nurse at the hospital, specializing in chemotherapy, critical care and same-day surgery.

“And now, thanks to a scholarship from the River Falls Area Hospital Foundation, Kirsten will complete her bachelor’s of science in nursing this winter,” said Nelson.

Imrie, age 37, was awarded a health careers scholarship for nontraditional students from the River Falls Area Hospital Foundation this spring. She is in the final year at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, which has a special program with Allina Hospitals & Clinics that helps registered nurses complete their BSN.

Imrie, who has been working and going to school part-time, had exhausted other financial resources with just a few classes left to go. The scholarship from the Foundation will help her finish her program.

“I need to take a course this summer, then double up on the course work in the fall trimester to be done by December,” said Imrie, who has been a floor nurse at RFAH since 1997. “The money from the Foundation will help make that possible.”

The River Falls Area Hospital Foundation has a long history of supporting health care education. “We like to think of it as ‘growing our own,’” explains Foundation Board Chair Lori Peterson. “We are investing in people



Sue Nelson, RN, and her daughter, Kirsten Imrie, RN, appreciate the support provided by the Foundation’s Health Careers Scholarship Program.

who have demonstrated a commitment to providing health care in this region.”

“I really want to thank the Foundation for this scholarship,” said Imrie, a mother of a nine-year-old step son and a two-year-old daughter, who was also born at RFAH. “My husband is a teacher whose hours were reduced to 50 percent last year. Between day care, child support and school, we find ourselves in the same boat as many people in this economy. I’m very grateful to the Foundation that they can help me achieve my dreams.”

The goal of the Foundation’s Health Careers Scholarship Program for Nontraditional Students is to increase the number of health care providers practicing in the region served by the hospital. In selecting award recipients, preference is given to applicants with a demonstrated commitment to practice in the region. Other factors include a work history in a hospital, clinic or other medical setting; demonstrated financial need; and demonstrated potential for academic success.

To make a gift to support scholarships for students pursuing careers in health care, please contact the River Falls Area Hospital Foundation at 715-426-4503.

Looking Ahead

It is an exciting time to be part of River Falls Area Hospital (RFAH). Here in western Wisconsin and throughout the country, people are talking about health care reform, wondering what it means for them. At the hospital, conversations focus on what reform will mean for our patients, our employees and the health of our region.

Whatever the outcome, RFAH remains committed to working with our dedicated employees, physicians and volunteers to meet the needs of the communities we serve. RFAH's plans for the future lie in four strategic areas, where we will continue to:

Develop and Enhance Care

- Cancer Care — The Rivers Cancer Center will continue to grow in the depth and breadth of care it provides.
- Sleep Center — The River Falls Sleep Center will continue to educate our community on the importance of quality sleep and the health risks associated with obstructive sleep apnea.
- Cardiology — More frequent cardiology clinics are available at the River Falls Medical Clinic, along with consults for hospital patients.
- Minimally invasive surgery — Additional minimally invasive surgeries (or laparoscopic surgeries) are being performed at RFAH resulting in less trauma to the patient and often faster recovery times.
- Neurology — Monthly clinics are available for neurological consults with a neurosurgeon. Minor back surgeries can now be performed at RFAH.

Create and Enhance Beneficial Partnerships

- Physician groups — We will continue to develop and strengthen partnerships with physician groups, both here in western Wisconsin and throughout the region. This will not only bring more specialty care to River Falls, but will also ensure seamless care when our patients do have to travel into Minnesota.
- Community partners — We will build community partnerships and focus on developing and strengthening programs that respond to the identified health needs of our region, including programs focused on prevention and early intervention.

Create a Healing and Welcoming Environment

We will continue our work to ensure a welcoming and healing environment for our patients, their families and visitors.

Develop Staff

We will continue to invest in and listen to our staff, recognizing the excellent care they provide to our patients.



To find out more about how you can support these and other exciting initiatives, contact the River Falls Area Hospital Foundation at 715-426-4503.

Another Year of Fun and Fund Raising

In 2009, many community members donated time, money and talents to the River Falls Area Hospital Foundation's Harvest Moon Barn Dance. This fun annual event features a picnic-style barbecue dinner, silent auctions, raffles and live dance music. Net proceeds benefit the Foundation's Access to Care fund, which helps ensure that people in our region can access the health care services they need to get and stay healthy.

Nearly 300 people attended the 2009 Harvest Moon Barn Dance and raised more than \$65,000 to help improve the health of our region. We hope you'll plan to join us in 2010! Event proceeds will help improve access to cancer care services at River Falls Area Hospital and throughout the community.



A huge "thanks" to the 2009 Harvest Moon Barn Dance planning committee! Polly Kleven, Heather Logelin, Julie Gore, Mary Conroy-Johnson, Mary Johnson, Amy Scholz, Michelle Johnson, Pam Deal, Deb Brown, Kelly Sylla and Donna Miller (not pictured).

Save the Date

Saturday, October 2, 2010
Harvest Moon Barn Dance
Westridge Farms, River Falls

To sponsor the event, purchase tickets or donate an item or service for the silent auction and raffle, call 715-426-4503.



Thank You

We offer our deepest gratitude to the following individuals, organizations and businesses whose contributions help River Falls Area Hospital continue to provide exceptional state-of-the-art care to its patients while working with community partners to improve community health.

Together in 2009, 1,176 donors gave more than \$160,000 to help make a difference in the lives of the patients, families and the communities we serve.

The following donor listing represents cash donations received from January to December 2009. We do our best to make sure everyone is listed correctly. If you do find a mistake, please help us correct our records by contacting us at 715-426-4503.

\$2,500+

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First National Bank of River Falls & Prescott
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\$100-249

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All who made cash gifts of \$1-99. You are too numerous to recognize here by name, but we sincerely appreciate your support.

All who made pledges in 2009 that will be fulfilled in 2010 and beyond. Your support will be recognized at that time.

Meaningful Giving Reflected in Shared Values

The Community Giving Campaign offers Allina employees an opportunity to give back to the communities where they live, work and play. Oftentimes, the communities they work in are different from where they live.

Erin and Cliff Jennings live in River Falls, and both work at Allina's System Office in Minneapolis. Cliff is a systems analyst in Human Resources Information Services, and Erin is a program coordinator for the Leadership and Organizational Development team. Although Cliff was born in River Falls, the area quickly became home for Erin as well when she moved there almost 10 years ago, and it is now home to their one-and-a-half-year-old son, Gavin.



Erin, Gavin and Cliff Jennings of River Falls supported two River Falls Area Hospital funds during the 2009 Community Giving Campaign.

Giving for the Jennings is tied to their family and their roots. They showed this during the 2009 Community Giving Campaign by supporting two River Falls Area Hospital funds: the general fund (gifts are used where they are needed most) and the Free Clinic fund.

“Community giving, for us, is directly tied to where we live,” said Erin. “We understand that what we invest in community resources today will one day benefit us when we need it. In the meantime, it is helping everyone we know, from our parents and family to friends and neighbors.”

As with most people, the Jennings's giving reflects their values. They see the need for exceptional health care in their backyard. Just a few decades ago, community

members who needed specialty care, such as cancer treatment or diabetes care, had to drive to St. Paul to receive service. Specialty care services such as these are becoming more accessible at smaller hospitals and clinics through donations from people like the Jennings.

“Now that we're raising our own family in River Falls, we need to do everything we can now to make sure our community is sustained and that it remains a strong and healthy place to live for years to come,” said Erin.



**RIVER FALLS
AREA HOSPITAL**

Allina Hospitals & Clinics

**River Falls Area
Hospital Foundation**

1629 East Division Street
River Falls, WI 54022
715-425-6155

riverfallsareahospital.com



On the cover: Wisconsin's state flower, the Wood Violet.

**RIVER FALLS AREA HOSPITAL
BY THE NUMBERS: 2009**

25 licensed hospital beds
253 employees
186 medical staff
131 volunteer auxiliary members
243 babies delivered
5,322 emergency room visits
1,558 infusion therapy visits
401 sleep studies
15,330 patient meals served
594 inpatient surgeries
1,326 outpatient surgeries
1,597 inpatient admissions
64,000 lab tests
21,300 radiology procedures
210 charity care patients
\$2.6M uncompensated care
27,382 wellness center visits
962 hours of athletic training for local student athletes
283 6th graders trained in CPR
40,730 Web site visits
347 free H1N1 vaccinations for area health care providers