

Momentum

Local people. True stories. Real advice.

Summer 2017



Excellence. *Always.*

Training the Next Generation of Athletes



Getting Back on (Digestive) Track with BRMH



Janice at Ettrick Golf Club

When she couldn't even drink water without getting heartburn, Janice Anderson knew it was time to take action.

"I'd tried everything," she said. "For years. I was taking lots of over-the-counter heartburn medications, I was careful about what I was eating, and I slept on a raised bed, but it just got so bad."

A hernia made it worse for Janice. She also had surgery on her shoulder earlier in the year. The surgery went great and her shoulder was healing well, but Janice was anything but comfortable. She wasn't able to eat or do the things she loved.

Janice met with Dr. Nicholas Kitowski and decided surgery was the best option: she would have surgery for both her chronic acid reflux and hiatal hernia on August 29th.

"I had both of them at once," Janice explains. The procedures went well and Janice was back home the next day. An unexpected result of the surgeries was weight loss, as she was on a restricted diet to help with recovery.

"I lost 60 pounds," she says. "At a follow-up appointment, Dr. Kitowski said, 'Janice, is that you?' He hardly recognized me, I looked so good!"

Janice made up for her limited diet by watching plenty of cooking shows and making food for her husband Calvin during her month and a half of recovery. She was back at work by October, and she had her first post-operation steak in January of this year, for her birthday.

Janice says she is grateful for the providers and staff at BRMH. "The nurses there were just super," she says. "And Dr. Nick [Kitowski] called to check on me. I felt very well taken care of."

Now Janice is heartburn-free, retired, and loving life with Calvin, aka "the sweetest guy in the world." The couple has a 19-year-old granddaughter and recently welcomed their second grandchild, baby Georgia.

Janice looks forward to a bright and healthy future with her family. Her immediate plans? "I'm going to help take care of Georgia and I'm going spoil her," she says. ■



Your
Perspective

To hear more of Janice's story,
visit brmh.net/perspectives.

Shaping Up this Summer

Physical activity is essential to fighting obesity, living longer, and enjoying good mobility all your life. One of the best ways to stay physically fit is by participating in sports. Getting kids involved in sports early is a great way to prepare them for a lifetime of good health.

Black River Memorial Hospital (BRMH) shows its commitment to healthy kids and families through many programs and initiatives. One of them is Tiger Train and Gain. Dawn Jacobson, MA, LAT, ATC, is an athletic trainer at BRMH and in charge of this summer program.

“We identified a need to create a more structured summer athletic enhancement program, open to all student athletes in middle school and high school,” says Dawn. “Rather than athletes training specific to one sport, this program is focused on overall strength and athleticism, applicable to every sport.”

As an athletic trainer and coordinator of Tiger Train and Gain, a key part of Dawn’s role is teaching athletes how to stay safe. “I find great purpose in working with our local schools to keep our student athletes safe,” she says. “A large part of my job is educating athletes on prevention of

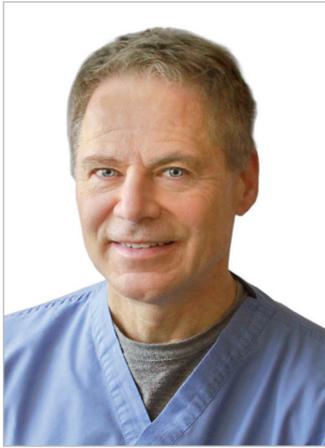
injuries, and when an injury does occur, how to best take care of the injury to allow for a quick return to sport.”

As important as sports are, the priority is always the safety of the athlete: “I do everything I can to help a student athlete return to the field or court as quickly as possible, but my main goal is each athlete’s long-term health and safety.”

This focus on safety is important for students and parents to know as greater attention is given to the risks associated with sports. Dawn says there are a lot of things to do to keep kids safer: “Encourage your child to participate in multiple sports over the course of the year, rather than specializing in a single sport at any early age. Aim to have your child only participating in one sport per season, and allow time off between seasons for recovery. Our kids’ bodies need time to recover from the demands of sports in order to stay healthy for the long-term.”

Although there are some precautions to take when your children get involved with sports, Dawn says it is more than worth it. “The health risks of a sedentary lifestyle are far greater than the risks of injury during sports and physical activity,” says Dawn. ■





Keeping an Eye on Summer Eye Health

The sun, sea, and sand may do wonders for your mental health—after all, it's not easy being stuck inside all winter long. But while you're out enjoying the good things that come with the season, **Dr. Chris Buntrock** wants to make sure you keep your eyes protected and ready for anything the summer holds.

Five Ways to Protect Your Eyes in the Summer



Wear Sunglasses: Aside from making everyone look cooler, sunglasses have actual health benefits. When your eyes are exposed to UVA and UVB rays over a long period of time, you are more likely to develop cataracts and/or macular degeneration. Both of these can damage your vision—even to the point of blindness. Want a bright future? You gotta wear shades.



Get a wide-brimmed hat: For the same reason you should wear sunglasses, a hat is a great idea. If you wear glasses, a hat is the perfect alternative to getting prescription sunglasses or dealing with impaired vision while outside in the sun. The brim of your hat can protect you from UVA and UVB rays just as well as sunglasses—assuming you keep it on.



Be smart in the pool: Chlorine is a miracle worker when it comes to killing icky bacteria, but unfortunately it can irritate your eyes. The chemical breaks down a protective layer on your eyes' surface and can cause irritation and even mild forms of chemical pink eye. Wear goggles or keep your eyes closed in water. If you do get pool water in your eyes, be sure to rinse them with saline or have eye drops ready in your swim bag.



Avoid scratches: Corneal abrasions (or scratches on the surface of your eye) are very painful. Be careful not to get sand in your eyes and don't ever rub your eyes in the event that you do. If you do get an abrasion on your eye, your doctor can prescribe eye drops that will help prevent infections. These can be a bit uncomfortable, but the good news is that your eyes heal fast.



Don't set off fireworks: Are you a professional pyrotechnician? Great! You know how to handle fireworks safely. Go put on a show. If you're not, avoid deploying your own fireworks. Every year, the number of people who lose their sight (or worse) because of summer fireworks increases. Stay safe and leave the lightshows to the professionals.

If you have questions about summer eye health or would like to make an appointment with Dr. Buntrock, call **(715) 284-3678**

Putting an End to UTIs

It was hard for Sheila Young to be her normal, happy self when she was constantly plagued with such a bad problem: recurrent bladder infections.

"It was just awful," she recalls. "I was constantly on medication. I was allergic to one of the kinds, and then, over time, I became resistant to the antibiotics."

Sheila (and her body) had reached her limit when one month, she was in the hospital for a total of 18 days. She had developed sepsis, a life-threatening immune response. Her uterus was prolapsing. Her doctors said there was nothing else to be done.

But Sheila wasn't convinced. A family member and an infection prevention nurse suggested getting a second opinion.

So Sheila went to Black River Memorial Hospital. She met with Dr. Josiah Nelson and Dr. Nick Kitowski who determined that the best course of action would be three procedures: a hysterectomy, prolapse repair and a bladder sling. This would solve Sheila's ailments and get her back to full health.

“Dr. Nelson and Dr. Nick gave me my life back. It's as simple as that.”

The procedures were successful. Sheila recovered without complications. Sheila raves about the providers and quality of care she received at BRMH: "I was so impressed," she says. "I received exceptional, compassionate care. The doctors gave me my life back, and the nurses and staff showed such care and compassion. They all treated me like family."

Thanks to her successful surgeries, Sheila was able to continue the chain of care: she works as a CNA at a group home and was eager to get back to caring for the residents there. ■

"Never give up. There is always something that can be done."



Your Perspective

To hear more of Sheila's story, and to see how our expert providers have impacted the lives of other patients, visit brmh.net/perspectives.



Lori Prindle decided when she was just a teenager that she would be a registered nurse.

"I had seen the wonderful care the hospice staff at Black River Memorial Hospital provided for a loved one of mine," she says. Lori's education and career initially took her away from Black River Falls. "I worked as a hospice nurse first and then became an emergency room nurse and critical care transport nurse," she says. "After years away from home, I relocated back here with my family. My husband and I are from here and knew this was a wonderful community to raise our family."

Before long, she started at BRMH in the emergency department. "It was a different pace from what I was used to," she says. "But I soon found myself loving rural emergency nursing."

Lori quickly became a valuable member of the BRMH staff, working to make improvements like heart attack and stroke kits available in the emergency department. These kits contain supplies and medications staff can use to provide quick, efficient care. "Patients having a heart attack or stroke require time-sensitive treatments," says Lori. "These kits have helped us intervene faster."

Stroke prevention, in particular, is a passionate cause for Lori. She's a member of the Stroke Team at BRMH,

which consists of Black River Fire and Rescue and BRMH staff. The team provided stroke packets for pre-hospital providers. It was nominated as a best stroke practice and presented at the annual Wisconsin Emergency Medical Services Association's Wisconsin Rural Stroke Conference.

Lori decided to give more of her time to community service following a missionary trip. "When I returned home, I decided to get involved by becoming a volunteer medical responder," she says. Currently, she volunteers as an Emergency Medical Responder for Alma Center First Responders and Merrilan Fire and Rescue. "Working with fellow volunteer responders is an experience I will never forget," she says. "It is really nice to help family, friends, neighbors or complete strangers in a time of need."

But Lori's commitment to the community doesn't stop there: among many other endeavors, Lori is a volunteer ski patroller and volunteers for Jackson County Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers.

Lori and her husband live on a hobby farm near Alma Center with their two girls. She doesn't have a lot of free time; what time she does have is devoted to her family. "At this point I spend my free time going to our girl's sports games and hanging out with family and friends," she says. ■

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

In 2007, **Chris Hovell** was trying to decide if she wanted to work in Black River Falls at the Jackson County Health Department (JCHD) as Health Officer/Public Health Manager.

"I thought the area to be quite pretty, but I never really thought about it as a place to work," she says. "I love the outdoors and knew that Jackson County had a lot to offer in that realm, but I still wasn't sure."

Two signs—one figurative and one literal—sealed the deal for Chris.

"The first was a phone call from a very friendly staff member at JCHD," she says. "The second was the Mother Teresa prayer on the building at the bottom of the bridge. That prayer had been a mantra of mine for the 25 years I'd been a county government employee. After that, I knew I belonged here. I've been in love with Black River Falls and Jackson County ever since."

Chris had her work cut out for her. In 2010 Jackson County was ranked at the bottom: 71 out of Wisconsin's 72 counties in a health assessment. There were community health issues that needed to be addressed and, together with the Ho-Chunk Nation and Black River Memorial Hospital (BRMH), Chris and her colleagues developed a plan, via the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), to address the five biggest concerns: obesity, suicide, family supports, drug use, and oral health.

"I cannot say enough about how this county pulls together to meet the needs of its citizens," says Chris. "The sense of collaboration and volunteerism is pervasive across generations. It is humbling and amazing!"

Volunteerism has always been close to Chris's heart. She learned from her father how important it is to give back. "He always worked to better our local community and encouraged us to give back to the community whenever possible. I think growing up that way, you realize that giving to your community is simply a way of life. I am proud to have learned that from him."



In that spirit, Chris is involved in helping people outside of work as well. A nurse by trade, Chris does physicals at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation that helps keep the youth in school. She and her family have also fostered children and hosted foreign exchange students.

Chris's hard work has paid off. In 2017, Jackson County skyrocketed to 32 on the health assessment. She credits hard work and a committed community for this success.

"I am so amazed at the spirit of volunteerism and the compassion people have for each other here," she says. "It's incredible that we have people and organizations who pull together and offer services and programs unheard of in other communities this size." ■



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

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HOSPITAL EVENTS 2017

Nutman Sale

Friday, July 28, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Senior Stay Fit Strength

August 1 – 24

Tuesdays and Thursday, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Lunda Community Center, BRF

Register by calling 715-284-1379

Car Seat Safety Check

August 3, Sept 7, October 5

First Thursday of the month, 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Jackson County Farmers Market – BRF

Community Blood Drive

Tuesday, August 8, 10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Comfort Inn & Suites - BRF

Diabetes Education & Support Group

(DESG) Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, August 9, 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Childbirth Education Class

August 11 & 12, 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. and

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Better Breather's Club Meeting

Monday, August 14, 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Purse Sale

Tuesday, August 15, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Heartsaver CPR/AED Class

Tuesday, August 22, 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Senior Stay Fit Yoga Classes

September 5 – September 28

Tuesdays and Thursday, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Lunda Community Center, BRF

Register by calling 715-284-1379

Breastfeeding Class

Tuesday, September 12, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Diabetes Education & Support Group

(DESG) Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, September 13, 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Chair Yoga

September 14 – November 2

Thursdays, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Lunda Community Center, BRF

Register by calling 715-284-1379

Better Breather's Club Meeting

Monday, October 2, 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

BRMH – Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

Senior Stay Fit Strength

October 3 – 26

Tuesdays and Thursday, 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Lunda Community Center, BRF

Register by calling 715-284-1379

Momentum is published by Black River Memorial Hospital. The information contained in the magazine is to educate consumers about various health subjects and is not intended to replace professional medical advice or service. Personal health concerns should be brought to the attention of your physician or health professional prior to any change in medical treatment, routine exercise or diet.