

Spring 1999

Beacon Light: Spring 1999

St. Cloud Hospital

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Spring 1999

St. Cloud Hospital
CENTRA CARE Health System

The *Beacon Light* gets its name from the warning beacon once located atop St. Cloud Hospital when St. Cloud's airport was at nearby Whitney Park.

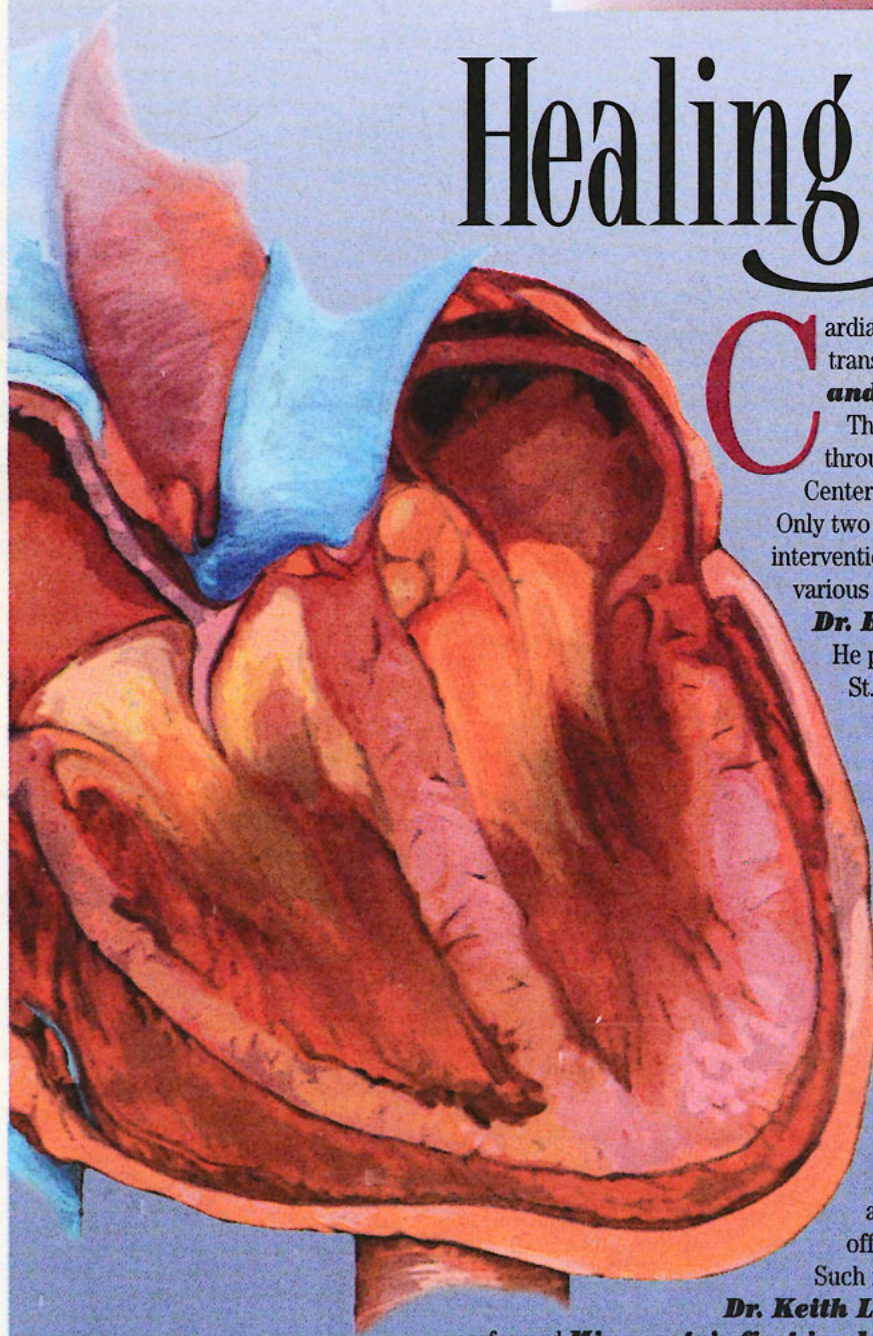
A publication of St. Cloud Hospital

Beacon Light

Feature Story:
Proposed construction of
new ambulatory care center
see pages 4-5



Healing Hearts



Cardiac surgeons at only three hospitals in Minnesota perform transmyocardial revascularization (TMR). **Dr. John Teskey and Dr. Edgar Pineda are among those surgeons.** They perform the laser procedure, which creates new channels through oxygen-deprived heart muscle, at the Central Minnesota Heart Center at St. Cloud Hospital.

Only two interventional cardiologists in Minnesota perform peripheral intervention, a procedure that opens arteries to improve blood flow in various parts of the body such as the kidneys and the extremities.

Dr. Bernard Erickson is one of those cardiologists.

He performs the procedure at the Central Minnesota Heart Center at St. Cloud Hospital.

Only 100 hospitals in the United States were recognized last month for excellence in coronary artery bypass graft surgery.

The Central Minnesota Heart Center at St. Cloud Hospital was one of them.

In short, the type and quality of services for cardiac care available in St. Cloud, rivals that at much larger hospitals in much larger cities. The Heart Center provides advanced cardiovascular surgery, the latest in diagnostic and interventional cardiology and an extensive cardiology outreach program which provides access for the residents of 16 Central Minnesota communities.

TMR, for example, is a major advancement in the treatment of severe coronary artery disease. "TMR is for patients who have run out of options," Teskey said. "Their angina (chest pain) is so severe that they are immobilized. Traditional bypass surgery and/or drug therapy are not feasible or have not been enough. TMR offers patients a chance for a better life."

Such innovative procedures are all in a day's work at the Heart Center.

Dr. Keith Lurie, a cardiologist specializing in electrophysiology, in April performed **Minnesota's first implantation of a device being marketed as the world's smallest defibrillator.** Lurie and other cardiologists from the University of Minnesota have been part of the Heart Center team in St. Cloud since 1992, performing procedures and conducting research.



JOHN TESKEY, M.D.



EDGAR PINEDA, M.D.



BERNARD ERICKSON, M.D.



KEITH LURIE, M.D.

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Seniors extend helping hands

They could be two women from anywhere, good friends who get together regularly to talk, drink coffee and go shopping.

But Mary Ann and "Juanita" have a special relationship, a bond created by an understanding of each others' pain.

As Juanita (not her real name) this spring moved toward completion of chemical dependency treatment, Mary Ann helped her complete the personal journal that is an essential part of the hospital's Recovery Plus program. She has listened, shared and cared. "She really helped me a lot. She understands," Juanita said. "I call her my friend."

Like Juanita, Mary Ann has been through treatment — twice.

After her initial rehabilitation, she was sober for years. Then, little by little, she slipped back into old habits. In 1997, she went through treatment again and for nearly two years has not had a single urge to drink. She attributes her success to her volunteer work with Senior Helping Hands, a hospital program that offers an array of services and support to people in a 14-county area. "Helping other addicts helps me maintain my sobriety," Mary Ann said.

Jerry, another volunteer, agrees. He has been a Senior Helping Hands peer volunteer for two years.

"I started by thinking I was going to help somebody else," he said. "I learned very quickly that I had pretty selfish reasons for being a volunteer. It was helping my self-esteem by helping someone else."

Helping others overcome their addictions "reinforces all the things you need to do to stay on the path to recovery," Jerry said.

The concept is, indeed, simple. "They share a similar value system and experiences that allow a level of comfort. That is very powerful," said Nancy Fandel, Senior Helping Hands Project Outreach case manager.

Senior Helping Hands, sponsored by Recovery



"Juanita" and Mary Ann share a quiet moment.

Plus and funded through various organizations such as United Way, began in 1985 as an outgrowth of a community task force dedicated to finding ways to reach seniors with chemical dependency or mental health issues, according to Sandy Manderfeld, program coordinator. Senior Helping Hands has grown to include:

- outreach, consultation, assessment and referral;
- education for the public, caregivers, social services professionals, clergy and community organizations;
- inpatient and outpatient treatment;
- support and follow-up;
- training in healthy lifestyles for housing managers and tenants;
- a program that helps older adults reminisce to get in touch with their accomplishments and build self-esteem.

Last spring, the program received a two-year state grant that is allowing Senior Helping Hands to further expand its reach. Since last July, Fandel has been conducting workshops for health care professionals in a 14-county area, helping them learn to recognize the signs of chemical dependency and depression in the geriatric population. In the second year of the grant, she will begin to conduct workshops for social service professionals and others who provide services to older adults.

"If substance abuse is not addressed, it increases health care costs tremendously because you end up treating all the symptoms without getting at the root cause," Fandel said.



Sandy Manderfeld, Senior Helping Hands Program Coordinator



Nancy Fandel, Senior Helping Hands Project Outreach case manager

For more information on Senior Helping Hands, call the program coordinator at (320) 255-5732 or 1-800-742-HELP.

Comprehensive diabetes center opens



Nancy Olson, Coordinator of CentraCare Diabetes Center, 418 Second St. S. in Waite Park.

A clinic that opened in Waite Park in April brings all of the services for diagnosis, education and management of diabetes under one roof.

The CentraCare Diabetes Center, one of a handful of comprehensive diabetes centers in Minnesota, offers patients a team approach: Certified diabetes educators (nurses and dietitians) work with physicians to help each patient find the optimal blend of diet, exercise and medication to effectively treat the disease. The center works with all health care providers in the region. That means that patients can continue to be seen by their regular physicians or can opt to be seen by one of the CentraCare endocrinologists (diabetes specialists).

Diabetes patients generally must be checked at the center four times a year. If they have questions or concerns between visits, they can contact a member of their care team. In addition, the center offers several support groups for people of all ages with diabetes and periodic education nights for patients and their families.

The CentraCare Diabetes Center offers state-of-the-art equipment and procedures, including a blood test that measures diabetes control by only sticking a patient's finger rather than drawing a vial of blood from the arm. The results are available in six minutes.

The center, at 418 Second St. S., is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. In addition, the diabetes nurses work with St. Cloud Hospital inpatients from 8:30 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday. A diabetes nurse also is on call evenings and weekends for emergencies, patient calls and physician consultations.

The CentraCare Diabetes Foundation was established with funds from St. Cloud Hospital and the CentraCare Health Foundation.

For more information about the center, dial (320) 202-7759.

ADA STANDARDS GUIDE THE CENTER

The CentraCare Diabetes Center follows guidelines established by the American Diabetes Association.

The ADA last year changed its standards for diagnosing diabetes, according to Nancy Olson, the center's coordinator. A fasting glucose level of higher than 126 on two occasions now is considered to indicate diabetes, she said. In the past, the level was 140.

Keeping blood sugars well-controlled can prevent or delay long-term complications of diabetes, such as eye, kidney and nerve disease.

When the going gets tough, EAP gets going

Can't face another day at work?

Wondering how you'll ever pay off your credit card debt?

Worrying about your spouse or wrangling with your children?

Dealing with work, financial, personal or legal issues can be confusing and stressful. You may recognize the benefit of asking for help, but it's tough to know whom to trust.

For thousands of Central Minnesota workers and their family members, the first step toward a solution is a call to St. Cloud Hospital's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which offers a free, confidential visit with a licensed mental health provider. The provider assesses the client's situation and makes a referral to an appropriate resource such as a counselor, attorney, financial adviser or physician.

Sometimes a few visits to EAP give enough direction toward problem resolution; and sometimes problems take longer to resolve and require referrals to professionals in the community. But the EAP always leaves the door open for people to return with the original issue or a new concern.

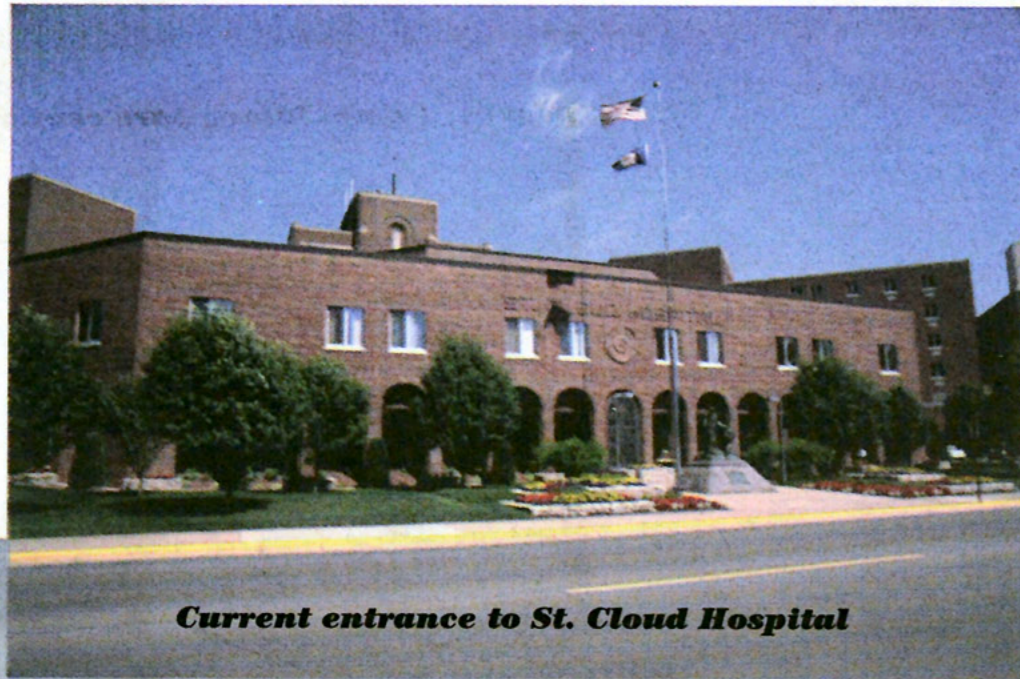
EAP services are available to the employees of more than 120 Central Minnesota companies that contract with the program. These contracts also cover those employees' immediate family members, which means that between 15,000 and 18,000 area residents have access to EAP. Each year, 8 to 10 percent of those covered individuals actually use the service, a rate that is 3 to 5 percent higher than the national average, according to EAP Director Jack Russell. The higher rate, Russell said, is the result of employers' support of the program and client satisfaction with the service.

The Employee Assistance Program, one of 7,000 EAPs in the United States, is an important part of St. Cloud Hospital's working relationship with area employers. It is part of the hospital's commitment to being a healthy community serving healthy communities.

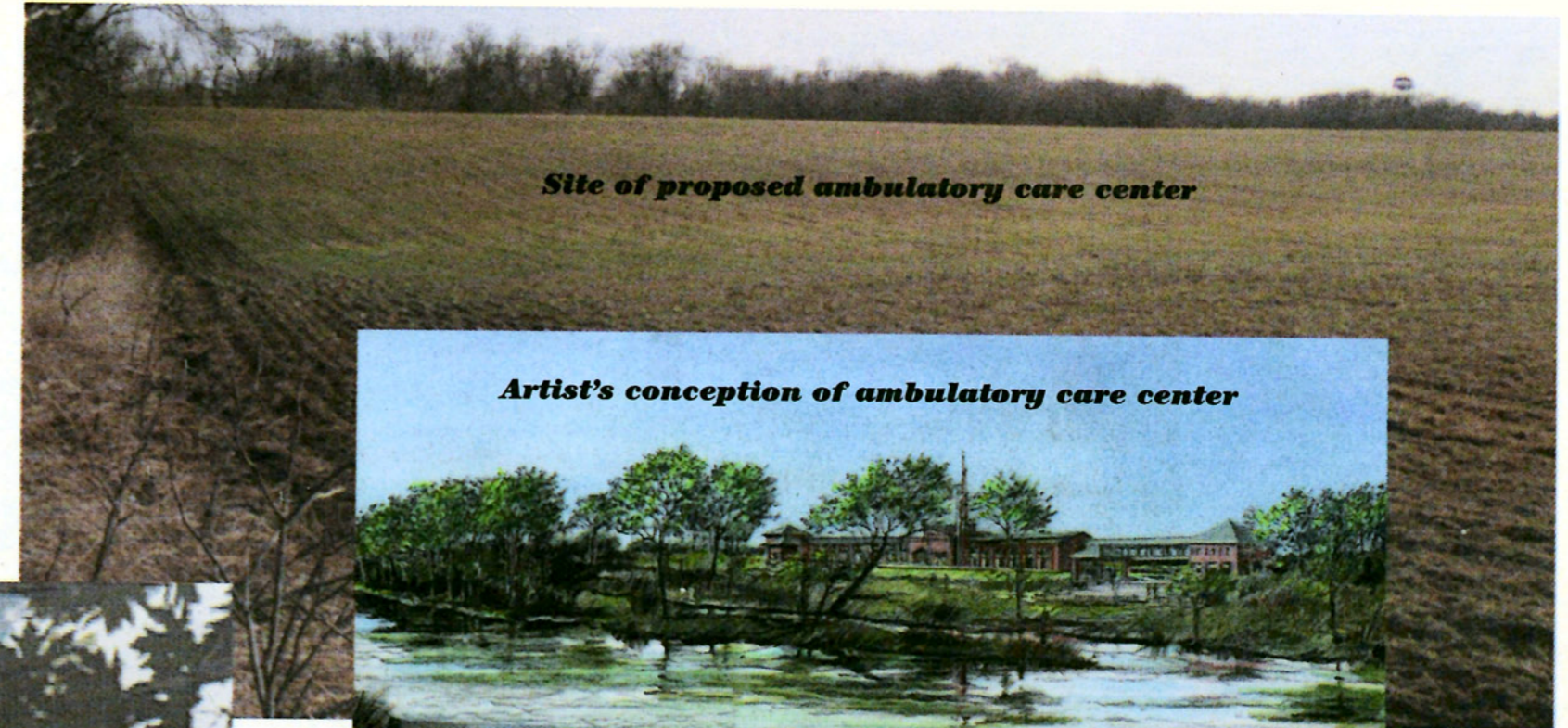
ALCOHOL and the elderly

- Health care providers are significantly less likely to recognize alcoholism in an older patient than in a younger one.
- Between 6 percent and 11 percent of elderly patients admitted to hospitals exhibit symptoms of alcoholism.
- Twenty percent of elderly patients in psychiatric hospitals and 14 percent of older adults treated at emergency rooms show signs of alcoholism.
- In acute-care hospitals, elderly patients are admitted for alcohol-related illness or injury at a rate similar to admissions for heart attacks.

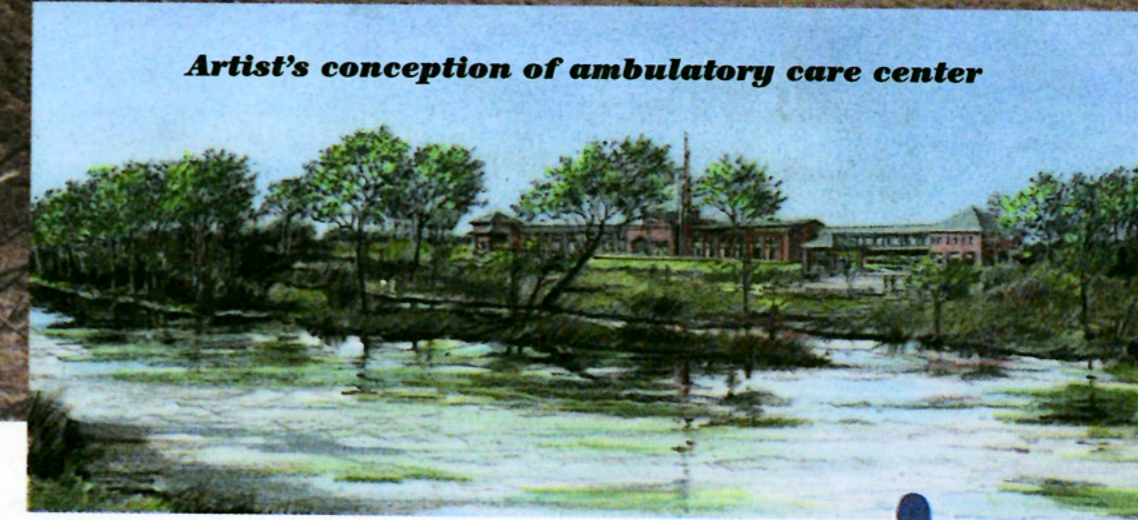
Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism



Current entrance to St. Cloud Hospital



Site of proposed ambulatory care center



Artist's conception of ambulatory care center



Proposed north entrance

A covenant with the community

St. Cloud Hospital is committed to serving the residents of Central Minnesota.

You can see the commitment in the understanding eyes of an emergency room nurse, and in the welcoming smile of a volunteer. You can hear the commitment in an obstetrician's murmurs to a nervous new mom, and in a claims analyst's explanation of a bill. You can feel the commitment in a surgeon's steady hands and in a counselor's reassuring hug.

You also can see that commitment in the hospital's decision to undertake a significant construction and remodeling project that is designed to enhance our services.

By year's end, the hospital expects to have completed the addition of a medical wing on the sixth floor and by early next year expects to have opened three new operating rooms. Plans are in the works for additional on-site parking, as well as creation of a new main entrance on the hospital's north side.

The hospital's plans dovetail with those of CentraCare Health System, which hopes to begin construction this fall of an "ambulatory care center" in northwest St. Cloud near Hennen's Furniture Co. Some of the hospital's outpatient services may move to that site along with CentraCare Clinic - Women & Children's Center. As hospital and CentraCare Health System officials finalize details of the construction and remodeling project, we will share that information in future editions of the *Beacon Light*.

The hospital and CentraCare Health System have made a covenant with the community, an unwavering promise to provide a health care safety net for the people who live and work in this region.

BEACON BRIEFS

State organizations honor St. Cloud Hospital

The Governor's Task Force on Violence and the Health Care Coalition on Violence have honored St. Cloud Hospital with an achievement award for violence prevention.

St. Cloud Hospital was selected to receive the annual award because of its strong commitment to incorporating violence prevention efforts within the health care organization. Efforts included identifying, developing and implementing nine milestones for the prevention, intervention and treatment of violence. The hospital has also partnered with the Central Minnesota Task Force on Battered Women to provide a hospital-based advocacy program and continuing education on violence prevention to health care professionals, hospital employees and the community.

The Minnesota Safety Council has awarded a Governor's Safety Award to the hospital for excellence in workplace safety and health.

The hospital is one of 197 employers to be honored. The hospital earned similar recognition in 1994 and 1996.

Health system streamlines identity

CentraCare Health System, which includes St. Cloud Hospital and St. Benedict's Senior Community, has developed a system of names, wordmarks and logos that readily identify each entity as part of the system.

In addition to the hospital and St. Benedict's, the system includes hospitals and long-term care facilities in Melrose and Long Prairie, nine CentraCare clinics around the region and several specialty services such as CentraCare Radiation Oncology at Douglas County Hospital in Alexandria.

Watch for new signs on CentraCare Health System buildings later this year.

Hospital bans latex balloons

In an effort to create a safe environment for people with latex allergies, St. Cloud Hospital no longer allows latex balloons as gifts for patients.

The hospital has made substantial progress in eliminating the use of latex in clinical areas and has expanded its efforts to include materials brought into the hospital.

Hospice eases end of life; stamp symbolizes journey

Through comprehensive, compassionate and skillful caring, Hospice manages pain and other symptoms to make life more meaningful for those who are in their final days.

According to Vicky Donnay, spokesperson for the hospital's Home Care and Hospice program, St. Cloud Hospice encourages a team approach to providing this care, with family members, friends and others as active participants. St. Cloud Hospital's Hospice program, which serves an eight-county area in Central



Minnesota, has cared for more than 2,700 clients since it began in the early 1980s. Each month, the hospice team makes approximately 250 visits. The team includes nurses, home health aides, social workers, physicians, chaplains and therapists. Volunteer visits complement these services.

In recognition of the national hospice effort, which includes 3,000 hospices, 25,000 professionals and more than 100,000 volunteers, the U.S. Postal Service has issued a commemorative first-class stamp. The stamp design features a butterfly over a home, symbolizing life's journey to its final stage. With the stamp, "the Postal Service continues its tradition of raising public awareness of social issues," said Buzz Snyder, St. Cloud postmaster.

Dial extra digit for hospital extensions

St. Cloud Hospital and its off-campus services such as Home Care and Hospice soon will convert to five-digit telephone extensions. The switch includes patient rooms in the hospital and all phone extensions at CentraCare Clinic River Campus.

When you call the hospital or clinic from outside, you'll simply add one digit to the existing number when an operator or automated answering system picks up your call. For instance, callers to the hospital's lactation consultants formerly dialed extension 2311. That extension will become 52311.

Here's how the new prefixes will be organized:

- Patient rooms: 6 + Room Number + Bed Number
 - Remote sites such as Home Care and the MidMinnesota Family Practice Center: 2 + four-digit extension
 - St. Cloud Hospital, CentraCare Clinic River Campus and offices housed in the former Zapp building downtown: 5 + four-digit extension
- Direct-dial numbers remain the same.

Neck, back injuries respond to active form of treatment

Rehabilitation Medicine of St. Cloud at St. Cloud Hospital is helping patients recover from neck and back injuries using state-of-the-art equipment and a proactive form of treatment. The neck and back program has been in existence for six years at St. Cloud Hospital and often works when other types of treatment have failed.

"We focus on an active form of treatment," said Dr. Thomas J. Balfanz, who, along with Dr. Mark J. Thibault works with the program. This allows patients to participate in their treatment by exercising with therapists and on their own. The approach helps heal not only patients' necks and backs but also the rest of their body.

Physical therapist Sherri Schmitz said the program works on strengthening spinal muscles as well as general strengthening "because when people are in pain, they aren't as active and their body gets de-conditioned."

At the beginning of the program, patients are evaluated by a physician, who continues to see them periodically throughout their program. "We are physician directed, we (doctors) see a patient about five times in a 12-week program," Balfanz said.

Patients work with physical therapists between doctor's visits.

The neck and back program uses MedX brand equipment to treat its patients. "MedX is the Cadillac of neck and back equipment," Balfanz said. "Arthur Jones, who invented Nautilus, found his equipment (Nautilus) didn't work well with neck and back pain, so he went back into research and developed MedX."

The program also works with the social issues of back and neck problems. "We deal a lot with return-to-work issues," Balfanz said. "We work directly with employers to find alternative jobs if necessary."

After patients have completed the program they are instructed in ways to keep their necks and backs strong on their own.

To contact Dr. Balfanz or Dr. Thibault for an appointment call 1-800-835-6652 or (320) 240-7835.

Program sells helmets for \$10, \$15

Helmets that have been certified for bicycling, in-line skating and skateboarding are available through Helmet Smart, a community program supported by St. Cloud Hospital.

Helmets for toddlers, children and teens are available for \$10; large and extra-large helmets for adults are \$15. For information about buying a helmet, contact Whitney Recreation Center, (320) 255-7256 or 255-7277.

For information about developing the Helmet Smart program in your school or organization, contact CentraCare Health Foundation, (320) 240-2810.



Hospital, LifeSource help families understand importance of organ, tissue donation

St. Cloud Hospital has been commended for its quick compliance with a new federal regulation requiring that all deaths that occur at hospitals be referred to an independent government-designated organ donation agency.

After each death that occurs at St. Cloud Hospital, staff must call LifeSource, the organ and tissue "matchmaker" organization for Minnesota and other states in this region, regarding the possibility of the person being a donor. If the person meets the criteria for being an eye, tissue or organ donor, then a staff member from LifeSource or a trained hospital staff member approaches the person's family.

"Sometimes our nurses feel uncomfortable having to approach a family shortly after death, but what we have learned is that having the option makes people feel better," said Barb Scheiber, director of Patient Care Support.

"We don't want to pressure families," said Scheiber. "We believe that their decision must be the right one for them. However, if we don't even offer the option for donation, then we would be making the decision for them."

During the fourth quarter of 1998, 38 percent of eligible tissue donors and 67 percent of all eligible organ donors did donate. Ninety-eight percent of deaths at St. Cloud Hospital were referred to LifeSource.

"These numbers are great," said Lori Ahlsten, clinical hospital liaison to St. Cloud Hospital from LifeSource. "St. Cloud Hospital is one of the top hospitals in the region."

Common misconceptions about organ, tissue and eye donation

If I say no, it will be held against me.

Organ donation is a personal decision, and whatever your decision is, it is the right decision for you.

I can only donate my lungs, heart and kidneys.

You can donate all of those organs, but you can also donate your liver, pancreas and intestines as well as bone, skin, heart valves, eyes, tendons, and other connective tissues.

The decision to be an organ donor will affect the care I receive.

If you are injured and taken to a hospital, the doctors will do everything they can to save your life. It's only after all attempts have been made to save your life and after death has been declared, that the hospital notifies the organ donation program.

I have it on my driver's license so the hospital can remove my organs or tissue.

The hospital can do nothing without the consent of your family. Your next of kin (in order of priority) include your spouse, adult children, parents, or brothers and sisters. If your family is unsure, the staff may suggest your family look at your driver's license to help make their decision, but the indication on your driver's license gives no one the right to remove your organs. If you wish to be an organ donor, TELL YOUR FAMILY!



'I was thankful to think that I could do it.'



Juletta Libbesmeier, 89, still volunteers at St. Cloud Hospital after retiring from 25 years of service.

Delivering mail. Watering plants. Pushing wheelchairs. Running errands.

If it needed doing, Juletta Libbesmeier did it - for 25 years. From September of 1973 through December of 1998, Libbesmeier spent about four hours each week volunteering at St. Cloud Hospital. Although she claims to be retired from volunteering, Libbesmeier, 89, still is willing to pitch in if she can get a ride to the hospital on days when help is needed. She has returned for a couple of engagements in the Education and Professional Development Department, where she labeled envelopes and fliers. "I didn't want to give it up entirely," she said. "I like that old hospital."

When Libbesmeier first joined the hospital's cadre of volunteers, she worked on fifth floor. That's where she handled mail, plants and errands. After about 15 years, she transferred to the admissions area, where she escorted people in wheelchairs to their proper destinations in the hospital.

Her close contact with patients was inspiring for Libbesmeier. It made her thankful for her good health and her clear mind. "To me, it was rewarding," she said. "I was thankful to think that I could do it."

Approximately 400 adults and 120 juniors make up St. Cloud Hospital's Volunteer Services. To learn about volunteer opportunities at the hospital, call the volunteer office, (320) 255-5638.

HEALING HEARTS continued from page 1

Dr. Bernard Erickson, meanwhile, represents a national trend toward cardiologist-performed peripheral vascular interventions as part of a multifaceted approach to treating cardiovascular disease. Peripheral intervention is a procedure in which a physician makes a small incision in a patient's arm or groin and inserts a metallic stent or an angioplasty balloon into an artery. St. Cloud Hospital radiologists have performed peripheral intervention, and continue to do so.

With a cardiologist performing the procedure since July 1998, patients have had more options. As the caseload grows, some of the heart team's other interventional cardiologists will add peripheral intervention training to their list of skills.

All of the Heart Center's programs and services will continue to grow to



meet the needs of the region, says John Frobenius, St. Cloud Hospital president.

"The Central Minnesota Heart Center is an outstanding service, recognized statewide and nationally for the quality of its patient care," he said. "We are proud to have physicians and staff of this caliber at the CMHC and to have such an advanced program available in this community."

Surgery eases suffering from severe heartburn

Don Steckling knew all too well the classic symptoms of gastroesophageal reflux disease: heartburn, difficulty swallowing, a sour taste.

He felt extreme discomfort after eating foods such as citrus fruits, pizza or barbecue sauce. "Orange juice in the morning was absolutely out, even eating an apple," said Steckling, 69.

Those days are gone, thanks to a surgical procedure that Steckling underwent Feb. 16 at St. Cloud Hospital. "I can handle all those (foods) now. I have absolutely no reflux. None."

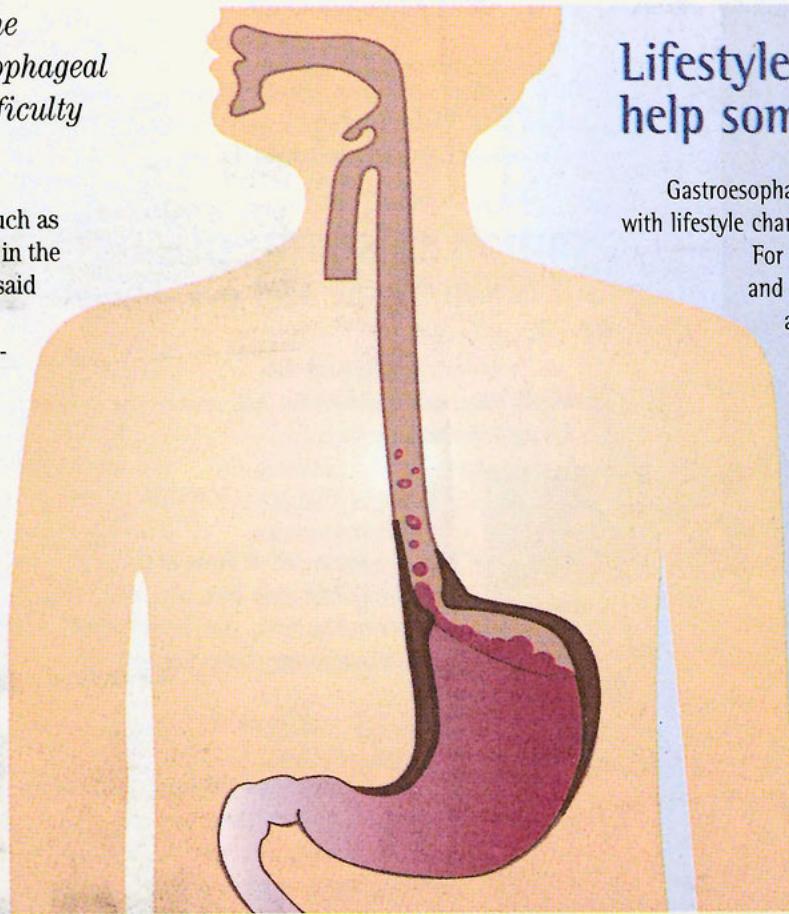
Normally, a one-way valve at the top of the stomach remains closed until swallowing forces it open. But for people suffering from reflux disease, the sphincter fails to close, allowing acid and partially digested food to "reflux" into the esophagus. Some sufferers get relief through lifestyle changes and medication. But some, like Steckling, must undergo surgery to repair or recreate the ring of muscle that acts as a valve.

Dr. Patrick Oakes performed Steckling's surgery, making several small incisions instead of the single, long one that would be made in an "open" surgery.

In this procedure, called laparoscopic Nissen, the surgeon inserts a pencil-thin scope, with a camera attached, through an incision. The camera sends images to a video screen so members of the surgical team can see their work. Small surgical instruments are inserted through the other incisions, allowing the surgeon to wrap the top of the stomach around the outside of the esophagus and stitch it into place. This wrap creates a new sphincter, providing the support needed to prevent reflux.

Each procedure is tailored to the individual patient. For instance, the stomach may be bulging into the chest cavity because of a weakened or enlarged opening in the diaphragm or the patient's esophagus may be scarred and narrowed from continual acid reflux.

In addition to Oakes, Drs. James W. Lundeen, James L. Jost, Christian P. Schmidt, Robert P. Shapiro, and Mark T.



Lifestyle changes, medication help some who have disease

Gastroesophageal reflux disease sometimes can be controlled with lifestyle changes and medication.

For instance, many people get relief from heartburn and other symptoms by raising the head of the bed, avoiding food close to bedtime, and avoiding caffeine and cigarettes. Losing weight, wearing loose-fitting clothing and exercising regularly also may help. Over-the-counter and prescription medications are available.

Surgery is an option only in severe cases that do not respond well to other treatments. Extreme symptoms that may warrant surgery include nighttime choking, a weak voice, anemia, pneumonia, eroding tooth enamel.

Patients who are good candidates for surgery first must undergo a test to measure the muscle tone of the esophagus and one-way valve at the top of the stomach. Other tests include measuring the amount of acid that washes from a patient's stomach to esophagus, and an ultrasound to rule out gallstones.

Engelsgjerd use laparoscopic Nissen to treat their patients.

Because laparoscopic Nissen surgery is less invasive than a traditional open procedure, the patient experiences less pain, recovers more quickly, spends less time in the hospital and has a lower risk of infection. Generally, laparoscopic Nissen patients can leave the hospital within a day or two after surgery and resume their normal activities within seven to 14 days. With the open procedure, patients generally stay in the hospital at least seven days and may not be able to return to normal activities for six to eight weeks.

For a couple of weeks after his surgery, Steckling, who lives north of Lake Mille Lacs, couldn't eat solid food. "Now I eat everything," he said. "I have complete relief."

St. Cloud Hospital celebrates National Hospital Week

May 9-15 is National Hospital Week.

The week's theme is "People Care. Miracles Happen." The theme stresses the human side of health care, promoting the people who make a miraculous difference in the midst of incredible technology, medications and treatments.

"We never want to forget that the most important part of health care is care,"

said John Frobenius, president of St. Cloud Hospital. "Our people are warm, caring individuals who go the extra mile for our patients. This year's National Hospital Week theme recognizes the contributions of these people, who keep hospital doors open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, making sure that people never go without the care they need."

The celebration of National Hospital Week began in 1921 when a magazine editor suggested that more information about hospitals might alleviate public fears about the "shrouded" institutions of the day. From that beginning, Hospital Week expanded to facilities throughout the nation. Today, it has grown into the nation's largest health care observance.

The Beacon Light is produced by the Communications Department at St. Cloud Hospital.

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