



The Pipeline

The online newsletter of Geary Community Hospital
Junction City, KS www.gchks.org

**February/
March
2010**

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∞ Treasured friend passes away



**LaVerne Allen, RN
1918-2010
61 years at GCH**

LaVerne Allen, a retiree with 61 years of service to GCH, passed away on January 22 at the age of 91. She was truly a treasure, an inspiration, and someone who found it hard to hang up her nursing shoes.

Shortly before her retirement in 2005, the drive in front of the hospital was named *LaVerne Allen Drive* as a testament to her devotion and value to patients and hospital staff alike.

At Geary Community Hospital, she nursed generations of Junction City families and served as a role model for nurses of all ages.

During her tenure at the hospital, she was named *Employee of the Year*, a nominee for the *Nursing: Heart of Healthcare Award*, and the *Topeka Capital-Journal Kansan of the Year*.

Allen's family established The LaVerne Allen Nursing Scholarship Fund as a memorial after her death. Contributions may be sent to the Geary Community Healthcare Foundation, P.O. Box 3015, Junction City, Kansas 66441.



∞ AlphaCare to open March 10

AlphaCare is an after-hours, walk-in clinic for the treatment of minor illnesses and injuries.

Patients who use the ER for primary care, those without a primary care provider, and anyone needing care in the evenings or on weekends should find AlphaCare convenient. It also offers:

- Faster treatment time
- Lower cost
- Same great care available in the other GCH Rural Health Clinics.

Initial clinic hours will likely be:

- Wednesday-Friday, 3-10 pm
- Saturday, Noon-6 pm
- Sunday, Noon-5 pm

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Staffing will be provided by a midlevel practitioner (nurse practitioner or physician assistant) and a nurse. The medical director will be Dr. Marc Felts, an emergency room physician with more than 20 years experience.

Patients self-refer to AlphaCare. Examples of the kinds of illnesses and injuries treated in such a clinic are ear aches, sore throats, fever, sunburn, small cuts, muscle strains, sprains, nausea, diarrhea, congestion, rashes, coughs, insect bites, Poison Ivy, and minor infections. Patients who are not sure whether to use AlphaCare or the Emergency Department, but who feel their situation poses a serious threat to life, limb or eyesight should definitely go to the Emergency Department.

Since AlphaCare is primarily an after-hours clinic, the best way to get to AlphaCare is to park in the parking lot north of the hospital, enter through the Emergency Entrance and follow the signs to the clinic. It is located in the Medical Arts I, Suite 105. The clinic phone number will be 785-238-0828.

≈ Hospital hopes to improve patient satisfaction in billing/payment plans

Officials at Geary Community Hospital have terminated the hospital's contract with The Midland Group of Lawrence and will change the collection strategies, effective February 23, 2010. Because performance in the self-pay portfolio is not meeting hospital goals, the decision was made to pursue other options, according to GCH Chief Financial Officer Darren Rumford.

The hospital plans to replace the current payment program with a new payment plan that will be based on the patient's ability to pay. There will be no contracts to sign and no annual fee. Payment options will include interest-free (for those who qualify) and low interest (6-9 percent) plans.

Information regarding payment options will be available beginning February 23 at registration and also through the hospital's Patient Financial Services Department.

The hospital will continue to offer patients a prompt-pay discount if the patient portion of the bill is paid in full in 20 days after receiving the first bill. Detailed information about the new payment options will be available at www.gchks.org after February 23. Questions may be referred to Patient Financial Services representatives at 785-210-3405.



≈ Auxiliary to celebrate 50 years of caring in April

The Geary Community Hospital Auxiliary will celebrate its 50th Anniversary with a luncheon on Wednesday, April 14, at the Geary County Convention Center in Junction City.

The keynote speaker will be B. Ellen Smith, President of the Hospital Auxiliaries of Kansas.

In addition to this major milestone, GCH Chief Executive Officer David Bradley and GCH Auxiliary President Gin Steinbrecker will present auxiliarians who volunteered in 2009 with service certificates. In all, 60 active members worked 8,943 hours in 2009, an increase of 3,918 hours over 2008.

The increase was primarily due to the popularity and availability of the new gift shop following construction and the addition of a third information desk in the Surgery Center. Auxiliarians also fanned out into other hospital departments last year to volunteer where needed, which boosted the total.

The 2010 Auxilian of the Year and the 2010 Distinguished Auxilian award winners will be announced at the luncheon.

Previous winners of **Auxilian of the Year**, which is awarded for significant contributions as a volunteer in the previous year, include Karen Cyphers and Gin Steinbrecker. Previous winners of **Distinguished Auxilian**, which is awarded for a lifetime of volunteer service to the hospital, include Nadine Edie and Dorothy Johnson.



Last year's Auxilian of the Year Gin Steinbrecker, left, and Distinguished Auxilian Dorothy Johnson.

≈ Solicitations not allowed in hospital

Solicitations for donations or sales information from restaurants, schools, churches, home and retail businesses, and organizations are not allowed on the Geary Community Hospital campus. If materials are placed in the hospital waiting rooms or elevators, they will be promptly discarded. One can imagine the clutter if the hospital's public spaces were used to distribute these materials.

Limited health-related announcements will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

We have a beautiful hospital and want to keep it this way. One flyer for any of the above activities or groups may be placed on the employee's *Personals Board* and should be given to Cyndy Platt in the Public Relations Office. Anyone unsure about what is or is not allowed should check with Platt at 210-3307. Thank you.

≈ February Employee of the Month



Chad Bennett, center, was surprised with the monthly honors by Andrew Shimon, assistant director of information systems, and David Bradley, chief executive officer.

Chad Bennett, Computer Technician, Information Systems, was selected the February Employee of the Month. He has always been more than helpful and willing to do whatever it takes to help get the job done right in the quickest time possible.

Chad is very personable and has a good attitude towards his fellow coworkers. He goes above and beyond his normal course of duties and takes on whatever challenges he's presented.

Chad drops everything to help in a computer crisis, always keeping his cool while remaining positive.

≈ Third anniversary of "Second to None" customer service



Christy Gannon, of Patient Financial Services, chose a piece of Kathleen Bowman's (in background) cake at the 220 Celebration. Employees sign the banner (pictured) when training is complete.

Last week, hospital employees celebrated the third anniversary of the **Disney 220 (Second to None)** customer services program. Program director Pat Tabor arranged for prizes, cake and punch in the cafeteria. Employees signed up for prizes ranging from a Disney cake, Disney gift baskets and stuffed characters, inspirational plaques, journals, gift cards, flashlights and more.

Les Flower new Safety Coordinator

Junction City native Les Flower feels right at home as the hospital's new safety coordinator. He retired with 32 years as a professional fire fighter with the J.C. Fire Department and 37 years as an EMT.

He succeeds Gene Myers.

