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Bank’s donation

Kathy Rhyner and Marty Reinhart
For Associated Bank, the link between healthy citizens and strong community banking is part of the fabric of the organization. “We are committed to health care at every level of the company,” said Paul Beideman, chairman and CEO of Associated Banc-Corp, parent company of Associated Bank.

That link recently was forged a little stronger when Associated made a donation to support the capital campaign for the Laird Center for Medical Research, a building to be completed next summer that will place researchers close to physicians and connect research directly to patient care.

Because of the impact of medical research at Marshfield Clinic, the donation will affect people in all the communities Associated Bank serves, Beideman said. “Marshfield Clinic provides cutting-edge research and health care that reaches across a wide spectrum. To the extent that Marshfield Clinic does well, it will benefit many people.”

The donation is important within the research arm of Marshfield Clinic, but the community benefit also was important in choosing to support the building, Beideman said. When considering philanthropic support, the number of people who benefit is considered, he said.

As a company, Associated Bank focuses on community development, education and health care as primary charitable projects.

Marshfield Clinic and Associated are both bound to their communities through centers that provide health care and branches for financial services, he continued. “We are both business partners and partners in looking out for the health of the community.”

Associated Bank has the most branches of any bank in the state. It was the Marshfield branch that encouraged the Bank to make the donation to the Laird Center for Medical Research. Kathy Rhyner, Community Bank president, said her customers and staff have received excellent health care at Marshfield Clinic and she wanted to support the capital campaign through the company.

“Marshfield Clinic is where the future of medicine lives,” she said. “For me, looking to the future in health and in banking are similar. If I can help someone plan for retirement, or if I can help their child avoid the consequences of a genetic illness, I’ve improved their lives. Financial planning and health planning are so closely linked with the future.” Rhyner also serves on Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation’s Board of Trustees.

Supporting research and health care at Marshfield Clinic has another benefit to the bank’s customers, said Marty Reinhart, a former long-time Marshfield resident and current regional president of Associated Bank. “Having Marshfield Clinic in our communities has an economic benefit,” he said. “It also helps draw and keep the best talent worldwide, which benefits everyone.”

Associated Banc-Corp wanted to be among the first companies to support the Laird Center, Beideman said. “We wanted to step up and help build and keep momentum for the fund-raising efforts. We wanted to make a statement early on about the importance of the project.”

Because the Laird Center will provide researchers and physicians a common location for research discoveries, it will help improve patients’ lives for generations to come. “We don’t know who will benefit,” Rhyner said. “But we know they could be our customers. It could be our staff. This is a story we want to be part of.”

**CURE supports medical research, education at Marshfield Clinic**

Associated Bank is a charter member of Communities Uniting for Research and Education (CURE). Marshfield Clinic formed this giving organization to recognize and honor individual companies that support Marshfield Clinic’s medical research and education mission.

By their charitable contributions, these companies are demonstrating their commitment to actively address, through medical research and education, the Clinic’s commitment to find cures for some of humanity’s most difficult diseases, including cancer, heart disease and Alzheimer’s disease.

Through their demonstrated commitment to the communities in which they serve, these firms will actively support health education for their customers and their employees.
Thompsons lead by example

Chuck and Dianne Thompson have made careers of working with children and building their community. The Eau Claire natives settled in Wisconsin Dells so Chuck could teach. He also served as a principal, and after leaving education as a career, served on the school board.

The Thompsons have been involved in their community but raising children, and now grandchildren, was always their top priority. Daughters Elizabeth Knoop and Julie Johnson and five grandchildren are close. “We are lucky in that our family was able to be with us,” Dianne said. Now, grandchildren have spent time with the Thompsons, particularly traveling with Dianne. “We’ve had wonderful adventures,” she said.

The Thompsons also ran several Wisconsin Dells icons, including the Mr. Pancake Restaurant, now operated by their daughter, Elizabeth Knoop. In 1966, Chuck met Tommy Thompson, who was running for state office. Since then, the Thompsons and Tommy, have worked closely together. When Tommy was elected governor, Chuck led the transition team, served as chair of the Public Service Commission and secretary of the Department of Transportation.

Chuck’s first foray into political activism occurred during college. Although he worked third shift at the Uniroyal Tire plant in Eau Claire to put himself through college, he found time to work on a political campaign. “You could say I’ve always been a joiner,” he said. “But I wanted to be involved.”

In addition to political involvement, the Thompsons continued to work back in the Dells as well. Many business ventures, including a hotel conference center, and active community involvement kept them tied to their adopted home town.

Chuck and Dianne have been married for 52 years and they have been business partners for 45 of those years, investing in real estate, a game farm and additional restaurants. They also built a home Dianne designed and have added on or remodeled it several times over the years.

“I always thought highly of Marshfield Clinic, I wanted to do something on a volunteer basis that interested me. I think the research at Marshfield Clinic is so important to improving health care in Wisconsin, and beyond.”

Chuck Thompson

Members of the NAC advise Marshfield Clinic leadership and they also contribute to its causes. The Thompsons have supported the research and education mission at Marshfield Clinic for many years. Most recently they made a donation to the capital campaign for the new Laird Center for Medical Research, a $40 million project that will more closely link research and patient care.

The Thompsons make donation decisions together. “We wouldn’t do it if we didn’t agree,” Dianne said. The Thompsons have taught their two children and five grandchildren about community involvement by example. “Family is our top priority,” Dianne said. “But if they are with you, as they were with us growing up, they are going to be involved, too.”

For Chuck and Dianne, family, the environment and community are key issues to support. By supporting Marshfield Clinic, they believe they are providing for the future of their community.
Although educational messages designed to reduce obesity among children exist, changing the environments in which children develop and the policies that govern their education about healthy lifestyle choices are the best ways to change outcomes. “We learned from the anti-smoking campaign that telling people smoking is bad for them didn’t change smoking rates,” said Dr. McCarty.

This childcare center study has been under way for six months. Dr. McCarty is reviewing the toolkit and gathering feedback from childcare center staff about which toolkit information and messages they are finding particularly useful. “Our goal is to promote good nutrition and physical activity,” he said. “We’ve had success working with school districts to implement policy change. Now, we want to help the children that are not yet in school by making changes in places where they spend a bulk of their time.”

The toolkit is designed so the information can be easily shared with parents and used to train childcare center staff. For example, pages include how to encourage a picky eater to try new food and suggest fun activities for families to play together. Other sections help childcare centers consider ways of raising money that don’t include selling unhealthy food and encourage the use of non-food related rewards for good behavior.

The study will be completed in June 2008. When researchers determine how useful the toolkit is in informing childcare centers about healthy lifestyles and how to improve kids’ day-to-day environments, it will be available online and free to the public. “We expect this toolkit will evolve to meet the users’ needs,” said Dr. McCarty.
Every day, friends of Marshfield Clinic remember and honor relatives and others by making contributions that support research and education programs necessary to enhance the quality of healing and caring.

Memorials honoring these individuals were received from April through June 2007.

George C. Adams
Dorothy Allen
Leone M. Allington
Jesse James Amndahl
Joseph F. Amerson
Nicholas Anderle
Olga Anklam
Steven E. Arendt
Oldine B. Arndt
Buddie “Gene” Artz
Keith Aschenbrenner
George Ashbeck
Jean Bailey
Adriene Lee Baker
Michaela Jade Barby
John W. Barnes
Dale E. Bartkowiak
Jackie Barum
Roman A. Batt
Todd Bauer
Dr. Thomas J. Beck
Chester Bell
Eugene J. Belter
Audrey I. Berg
Jane Biese Brautigan
Mary Biese
Hazel B. Billings
Harvey G. Bishop
Casey L. Blume
DuWayne Boehm
Zona R. Boettcher
Margaret N. Bohlin
Myron “Mike” R. Bores
William J. Boulieu
Carole A. Bradley
Charles E. Brandt
James P. Brasington
Mrs. Sigmund Brecke
Carol Bredemann
Rosetta Brimm
Ann E. Browell
Helen K. Brown
Eugene L. Bruggeman
Brian G. Buckli
Heidi S. Buckli-Lavinski
Donnie A. Budke, Sr.
Ruth Burnett
William G. Bushman
Meta Butterfield
Robert R. Butterfield
Beverly C. Campbell
Marvin G. Carlson
Jens and Agnes Casperson
Joseph P. Charron
Annelle Clark
Emilie Conterato
Clarence T. Cridelich
Helen Crump
Charlie Cummings
Barnard J. Dahlke
Wayne Dake
Dr. Dean J. Danner
Bernard A. Daul
Leon De Beleyr
Dan Decker
Thomas P. Decker, Sr.
Elaine M. Degenhardt
Sandy and Vera Dehart
William J. Dehn
Leonard F. Denk
Mabel Denzine
Adam J. Dodge
Melody Meissner
Dovenbarger
Donald W. Dunn
John and Lourene Dwyer
George Eberhart
Ronald E. Eggebrecht
Keith Eggman
William “Carlie” Ehrike
David and LouAnn Ellefson
L. Dale Elwood
Vicki Lynn Erickson Massey
Samuel Emil and Baby Esselman
Harold A. Esser
Andrew and Elva Fadness
Mildred A. Felch
Patrick V. Felker
Patty Fischer
James E. Fossum
Shirley Ann Fredrick
McKenna Frenkel
LeRoy J. Fritschle
Loretta M. Fritschler
Rueben H. Frome
Thomas H. Fruhe
Robert Gehman
Trent M. Geiger
Kyle Gessert
Diane J. Geurink
Margaret H. Gilbertson
Rich and Ila Gilbertson
Thomas Givsdal
Richard W. Goes
Richard R. Grassman
James Greatorex
Robert and Mary Greatorex
Don and Helen Grimm
Elmer C. Grosskopf
David A. Gruel
Elaine C. Grundy
George “Fuzzy” Guldan
Elizabeth Gullesserian
Dorothy Gutknecht
Glenn R. Haasl
Lois Hackbarth
Dorothy M. Hakl
Jane Haminiak
Linda K. Halopka
Molly Sue Hardesty
Robin M. Hanggi
Harold E. Hansen
JoAnn Hatch
Lindsey R. Hauke
Edward L. Haupt
Jerry Hayes
Donald H. Hazelwood
Shawn Heckel
Alvin and Louise Heidrich
Wilfred “Willie” B. Heindl
Raymond and
Theresa Heiting
Richard F. Heiting
Marvin L. Hemp
Irene Henchen
Melvin and Helga Henrikson
Donald A. Henke
David W. Herrmann
George Hightdudis
Josephine Hiles
Donna M. Hinke
Robert J. Hoogesteger
Clifton A. Hoyt
Carole Hubing
Wilfred J. Hupy
Jerry Husting
Harold P. Huth
Vicki Jackson
Lloyd Jacobsma
Dr. Daniel M. Jacobson
Ralph James
Thomas L. Joas
Loren E. Johnson
Ronald M. and Erna H. Jonett
Donald Juedes
Tony Kapla
Donald “Hezzy” Kappus
Joseph F. Kauer
Mary Kauer
Dorothy Kayhart Meyer
Dale R. Kell
Mary A. Kern
Lloyd and Mary Kieffer
Gordon L. “Buck” Kjentvet
Wendy A. Kleckner
Marie A. Kleiber
Gerald Knapp
Frances R. Kneser
Barbara B. Knolton
Gordon Koch
Kathryn J. Koch
Rose Kohout
Ervin J. Kopf
Bobbie Kornig
Andrew Korntved
MaryAnn and
Melvyn V. Kosobucki
Rudolph A. Kraege
Wayne J. Kraemer
Sylvester Kraukramer
Richard J. Krocka
Steven Krohn
Helen M. Kronsedt
Al Krueger
Artsi J. Kuess
Elmer E. Kumm
DuWayne B. Kunding
Oscar Kunz
Harold J. La Chapelle
Joyce K. LaGasse
Richard V. Lappe
Debra J. Larson
Verna LaSee
Anita J. Lautenbach
Father Paul J. Lauzon
Alvin B. Lavene
Earl and Virginia Lavergne
Keri B. Ledden
John and Ruth Lemoing
Anna M. Lessard
Bobbie Levine
Paul M. Lewis
J. O. Liebenstein
Diane M. Lieberman
Kathleen Lieberman
Michael A. Lindner
John O. Line
James W. Link
Diane Louze
Karl P. Ludzack
Karrl A. Maier
Susan Marie Haasl Mancl
Agnes W. Martin
Clarence and Bernice Martin
Lucien Mason
Charles and
Henrietta Matthis
Wilfred Maurer
Lynden McClurg
James L. McNamara
Mary Patricia Mehr White
Carl L. Meissner
Jeanne Meissner
Steven L. Meissner
Terry M. Mews
Roberta Mikkelson
Cookie Miller
Mildred Miller
Sharon M. Morzinski
Alex Mroczenski
Leo D. Mueller
Leonard Murray
Jeroma L. “Jerry” Neis
Karen Nekola
Gerald A. Nelson
Darlene “Dee” Nesbitt
Harold “Snow” L. Neufeld
James R. Neumier
Timothy J. Nikolai
Susanne K. Noeldner
John A. Oberbeck
Mary Oberweis
Henry “Hank” Ohm
Byron F. Olson
Duane A. Olson
Mariana Olson Miles
Douglas A. Opelt
James E. Paatsch
Lyle A. Pagel
Barry Pagenkopf
John A. Pankratz
Gilbert S. Parks
Larry Paul
Jonathan Paulson
Lois Peach
James R. Peterson
Jackie Petrick
Lyle Phenege
Cara Pichelmann
Denise A. Pichler
Margeary A. Pilsner
Francis J. Plank, Jr.
Joseph Pohlod
Henry Piskywka
Margaret R. Polansky
Chester Poplawski
Harold R. Praus
Norman Prosser
Matthew H. Raasch
Robert C. Radlinger
Bernice Radunzel
Vi Rajewski
Ernest F. Raschke
Ronald G. Rasmussen, Jr.
Eleanor Regner
Dale A. Reis
Sally Reischel
Timothy Remitz
Gerald I. Rice
Arnold E. Richardson
Dale Riske
Lyle W. Rohrig
Elaine M. Rossnieler
Jesse L. Ruffalo
Dr. Bahij S. Salibi
Lyle G. Sandersen
Danal B. Sandstrom
Werner J. Schafer
Lola Schalow
John and Irma Schenk
Mildred Schlichting
Marjorie Schmidt
Verland A. Schmidt
Vernon Henry Schmidt
James Schmitz
Bobby Schnelle
Milton “Bob” Schraufnagel
Jack Schrauth
Vernon C. Schreiber
Romayne Schueller
Martin P. Schulist
Eric J. Schulte
Emery Schultz
Lorraine M. Schultz
Erica Schwab
John C. “Jack” Schwieso
Gwendolyn D. Sebold
Justine See
Lois J. Seefeldt
Mike Sepersky
Leona Severson
Don Shaurette
Mary Jane Sitkawitz
Jon Benjamin “Koko” Skaden
Doris E. Smith
John F. Snowbank
Neil Sokolowski
Dale V. Sommerfeldt
Donna J. Spaulding
Kay St. Arnauld
Donald St. Louis
Roman J. “Romie” Stauber
Paul & Lucile Steger
Steinberg Family
Lionel Stowers
Joshua Strandman
Clark Straub
Evelyn M. Sturm
Mary Ann Sunita
Kathryn H. Syring
Jeremy Hilton Tautges
Jami L. Terril
Caiden Tishim
Darian J. Tishim
Marc J. Tishim
Helen Tjumg
Jorge Tobar
George Tork
Alvin and Ruth Trachte
Robert Treat
Martha Truhlar
Norbert A. Tuchscher
Ernest R. Van Ryzin
Harold P. “Vandy” Vandenbergen
George Verkilen
Sister M. Krista Voegerl
Linda M. Voller
Stanley J. Volosiek
Ira & Florence Vruwink
Robert C. Wachholz,
Chas Waldenmeier
Eleanor S. Walenski
Frank E. Wasserburger
Daniel Waters
Art Weber
Cletus P. Weber
Celia M. Weidenhoef
Antonette M. Weis
Lenore M. Welker
Gerd Wellman
Elizabeth Wentz
Theresa Wenzel
Scott Donovan Wesenberg
Robert W. Weyer
Robert L. “Bob” White
Sue and Earl White
Robert H. Wibben
Lucille Christina Wilsman
C. Woodrow and
Mamie E. Wilson
Marvin R. Wimmer
Dorothy Winkler
Iris M. Wirsing
Lester and Bette Wiskerchen
Dolores G. Wisneski
Vern H. Wittlinger, Sr.
Bonnie M. Wittman
Lawrence A. Wittman
Charles L. Wnukowski
George W. Wnukowski
Leo Wolf
Catherine M. Wolter
Brian L. Wright
Leo E. Yorde
Marian F. Zabrockas
Ardis Zawuba
Erwin Zastrow
Gerald Zastrow
Ted M. Zettler
Ziegler Family
Judy L. Zima
Marie M. Zoellner
Willard R. Zoellner
Sylvester Zurr

In Honor of

John Amend
Dan and Julie Beck
Nancy K. Beck
Kyle Beining
Arthur C. Bernhardt
Gideon Bernstein
Hadassah Bernstein
Ruth Breider
Susan M. Buehler
Andrew R. Carl
Jan Ciolkosz
Peggy Driesen
Cynthia M. Esqueda
Debbie Farley
Marion R. Farrish
Margy Frey
Dianna Friske
Lowell R. Gesche
Lee and Lorraine Gresser
Stuart R. Guenther
Maisy Lyn Harris
J. Mark and Julie Hemer
Renée M. Hertel
Dr. William G. Hocking

Thank you
Diane's passion for pool and her desire to help others were the driving forces behind the events. She was an avid pool player, so a tournament was a fitting way to raise money and celebrate her life. For the last eight years, the family has coordinated a golf outing, and when Charlotte and Dale winter in Florida, their friends and neighbors deliver pop can tops to be recycled. All the money is given to Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation.

The events take planning and time from several family members and friends, but the effort is worth it. “We don’t want to ask our friends and family to contribute too much. These are fun events that raise money for research to improve others’ lives. Most winners donate back to the fund as well,” Charlotte said.

Diane would likely have pitched in to help. “She was always the first one to help out when people needed something,” Charlotte recalled. “Her philosophy was that if we could help one person, it was worth all the work.”

About a year after Diane died, at age 40, friends asked if they could hold a pool tournament in Diane’s memory. The Webers joined the project to help secure raffle items and collect donations. They have continued the pool tournament. In addition to planning and working the event, preparing food and hosting, Charlotte has played in the tournament a few times. “I don’t normally play pool, and I’m not very good,” she said.
Eye research applied to patient care

Eye diseases and impaired vision affect millions of people in the United States and thousands in Wisconsin. Catherine McCarty, Ph.D., M.P.H, senior research scientist at Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation, shared information about the most common eye ailments at a recent Science on Sunday. Besides uncorrected refractive error (the need for vision correction with glasses or contacts), cataracts, glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy are the most common diseases that impair vision, she said.

These diseases often have a genetic cause as well as an environmental link, Dr. McCarty explained. This means that family history plays a role in developing disease. But it also means that lifestyle choices and other environmental exposures may play a role in developing eye disease as well. “The interaction of the actions we take and our genetic makeup contribute to whether we’ll have eye diseases and may affect the severity of the diseases,” she said.

Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation and the Clinic’s Personalized Medicine Research Project scientists are studying the links between genetics and environment in eye diseases. In a study funded by donor dollars, researchers are evaluating specific genetic changes and lifestyle actions, such as smoking, to the risk of developing macular degeneration. “Some people may be more prone to develop macular degeneration if they smoke,” Dr. McCarty said. “Once we learn who is most at risk, we can focus efforts on preventing smoking in those people.” The research team is also looking into potential influences of common medications that “may protect against macular degeneration, and that protection may vary by genetic make-up.”

Smoking is implicated in 25 percent of blindness, she said. Another eye disease with a link to smoking is cataracts, she said. “In addition, being overweight likely contributes to cataracts and taking statins – cholesterol-lowering medications – may reduce risk.” A research project involving cataracts also is funded by donors, she said. “We appreciate the support our donors have provided to our research. Thank you for your donations.”

Researchers also are working to determine the genetic basis of intraocular pressure response to specific medication to treat glaucoma. Using the Personalized Medicine Research Project information, combined with health records from people who are participating in the study, researchers can compare the DNA and response to glaucoma medications. The research team has identified a gene that is associated with a less-than-desired decrease in intraocular pressure. “If caught early, glaucoma can be treated, and much of the vision loss prevented,” Dr. McCarty said. “But knowing who will benefit from specific medications will allow personalized treatment to begin right away and prevent additional damage.”

Studies at Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation focus on discoveries that are applied to patient care, she said. “We use research results to allow physicians to practice evidence-based medicine,” she said. “Our research improves patients’ lives.”

Dr. McCarty had suggestions for everyone to follow to keep eyes healthy. “Eat right. It works for everything,” she said. That means eating five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables daily, maintaining a healthy weight and exercising. “Consider taking a multivitamin with antioxidants in it. Antioxidants help prevent and slow eye damage from age-related macular degeneration and other eye diseases. Wear sunglasses, which slow cataracts. And, wear safety glasses when mowing the lawn, working in the yard or workshop. This will reduce eye trauma.”

Science on Sunday

More than 150 people attended Science on Sunday, an annual event to showcase medical research at Marshfield Clinic. Science on Sunday also is an important opportunity to thank the many donors and friends who have supported the health care, research and education mission of Marshfield Clinic, said Lynnea Miller, operations and stewardship manager in Marshfield Clinic’s Development Department.

Science on Sunday includes not only donors to Marshfield Clinic, but many researchers attend as well. It gives donors and researchers the opportunity to meet and discuss ongoing projects.

“It is an honor to thank our donors,” Miller said. “Their generosity is important to our researchers and physicians fighting disease and working to find cures.”

Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation Director Humberto Vidaillet, M.D., joined Chief Development Officer Steve Yorde, Marshfield Clinic Executive Director Reed Hall and Clinic Vice President and Chairman of the Research Foundation Board of Trustees Douglas Reding, M.D., in thanking donors for their ongoing and generous support of Marshfield Clinic research.

“You have allowed Marshfield Clinic to grow over the years,” said Clinic President and CEO Karl Ulrich, M.D., M.M.M. “We are excited about the future of research, and we hope you will join us in this endeavor. We think of you as friends of Marshfield Clinic.”
Eye research applied to patient care

Catherine McCarty, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Bench Marks 11
Erik J. Stratman, M.D., a Marshfield Clinic dermatologist and Dermatology Residency training director, has been named the new medical director for Marshfield Clinic’s Education Foundation.

Dr. Stratman replaces John L. Olson, M.D., the Division’s medical director since 1999, and will serve as the Clinic’s leader for its mission-related educational initiatives as they relate to physician, professional staff, support staff, students and residents, and fellowship education as well as related support components. He will work with executive leadership to assure organizational commitment to education in accordance with the mission of Marshfield Clinic.

Among his many duties and responsibilities, Dr. Stratman will provide oversight for the Corporate Education staff, the Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs, instructional media services, and the George E. Magnin Medical Library. He will partner with executive, system and Division leadership to identify and institute projects related to the Clinic’s educational mission and initiatives.

“We want to continue in the strong tradition that Dr. Olson has provided in the Division and look to further expand CME events, residency programs and our student programs,” Dr. Stratman said. “We look forward to fostering strong relationships with the University of Wisconsin in the further development and expansion of student programs.”

Dr. Stratman emphasizes the importance of the Division of Education and its role in meeting the educational needs of the Clinic system. “I view the Division as a key aspect of the Clinic that is here for everyone including the patients, staff, practicing physicians, resident physicians, fellows and the students,” he stated.

“I think it’s very important that we value the partnership between the research and the systems operations of the Clinic. Together, these strong partnerships lead to improved patient care and strengthen all points of our mission.”

Dr. Stratman identifies the importance of not only continuing the tradition of creating high quality educational programs and materials, but also showing that the education leads to some improvement in tangible patient outcomes. “The world today is focused on outcomes and that’s an important starting point that we have to recognize,” said Dr. Stratman. “Whether we are talking about staff education with the medical assistants and nursing staff, continuing medical education events with practicing providers or competency education of residents and medical students, outcomes must be the target of our focus.”

He will continue to have an administrative and teaching role in the Dermatology Department, albeit a modified role. “I have a lot of time, effort and emotion tied into the success of our Dermatology Residency,” said Dr. Stratman. “This decision was made easier knowing the strength and commitment of the other dermatology faculty members. I think that our Dermatology Residency will continue to thrive.”

In addition to his new role and ongoing involvement in the Dermatology Department, Dr. Stratman has been active on the national level. In February, he started his role as new chairman for the Council on Education for the American Academy of Dermatology and recently received grant funding for a teacher development seminar through the Association of Professors of Dermatology.

He will continue his work with the Dermatology Foundation, the University of Wisconsin-Madison Teaching Academy and the Wisconsin Dermatological Society. As director of Medical Education, he will now serve as the Associate Dean of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health for the Marshfield campus.
Barb Johnson, C.P.A., M.B.A., likes the opportunity to influence where Security Health Plan, the HMO owned by Marshfield Clinic, puts its emphasis. By providing good information that influences decision making, Johnson, director of Finance, supports the patient care, research and education mission of the Clinic. “Marshfield Clinic allows all levels of employees to participate in determining its direction,” she said. “That’s not common in many industries.”

Although she is not directly involved in patient care, patients are Johnson’s focus. “The patient is the reason we exist,” she said. “It is so important that we never lose sight of that.”

Johnson worked at a public accounting firm before joining the Clinic. “I like the opportunity to focus on one business, one company,” she said. “My sister worked here and was proud of the Clinic, so when a job opened up here, I applied.”

Johnson has been involved in many watershed projects at Marshfield Clinic, from the creation of Security Health Plan of Wisconsin, Inc., to merging Marshfield Clinic and its Research Foundation. As she worked with researchers and learned about the Foundation, making donations was a natural step.

“I think it’s important to contribute to research because those discoveries support our patient care,” she said. Even before moving up the career ladder to her current role, contributing was important. “If you don’t start when you have less, it’s harder to give when you have more,” she said. “A person tends to live on what she has and more income doesn’t mean you have more money to give. If you incorporate giving at the beginning of your career, it is part of what you do. It’s baked in.”
The recent dedication of Pink Ribbon Cancer Survivor’s Garden at Marshfield Clinic Wisconsin Rapids Center was a celebration of life and the tenacity to weather the storms it brings.

Less than two years ago, the garden was only a dream of a Wisconsin Rapids woman, who was successfully treated at Marshfield Clinic for breast cancer. Jackie Pickett envisioned a garden of gratitude for her good health and source of encouragement and comfort for those affected by the disease. She proposed the idea of the garden in a letter to Reed Hall, Marshfield Clinic executive director, writing: “I can’t think of a more appropriate location than Marshfield Clinic.”

“Marshfield Clinic championed this garden from the start,” she said.

“Without its partnership and support, it would be very difficult to have this garden,” Pickett said.

The Pink Ribbon Cancer Survivor’s Garden is a special place for the Clinic’s Wisconsin Rapids Center and the community, Hall said. “It’s the first of its kind in our Marshfield Clinic system and the first of its kind in the state. This garden reminds us that patient care does not end at the door of the examining room. As this medical office building is a place for diagnosis, care and treatment, these grounds provide a place for reflection, prayer, comfort and healing. The flowers, the walkway, the water, the benches, all assist in the healing hospitality that is so critical in total patient care today,” he said.

The 5,100-square-foot garden is just outside the Wisconsin Rapids Center and visible to patients receiving chemotherapy and other treatments on the second floor of the center. A pink ribbon-shaped path winds through the garden of perennials, trees and shrubs in hues of pink, purple and white.

“Cancer treatment can be overwhelming,” noted Michele Bachhuber, M.D., medical director of Security Health Plan, citing long days of chemotherapy or radiation treatments and unpleasant side effects. Marshfield Clinic Cancer Care provides quality therapy for the body, and the Pink Ribbon Cancer Survivor’s Garden provides comfort for the soul, she said. SHP sponsored the naming opportunity for the large angel statue that is a focal point of the garden.
Cancer is like the hail storm that struck Wisconsin Rapids June 7, noted Douglas Reding, M.D., Marshfield Clinic oncologist and vice president, who provides care at the Wisconsin Rapids Center and is one of Pickett’s physicians. Just as hail suddenly shattered windshields and damaged buildings, cancer can change lives in an instant, he noted. The Cancer Survivor’s Garden, spared from the hail storm, was dedicated a week later.

“To the cancer survivor, this is truly a victory garden,” said Pickett, who has weathered another personal storm. After being cancer-free for eight years, her cancer recurred last December. She recently completed chemotherapy at the Wisconsin Rapids Center.

To those who have lost someone to cancer, the garden is a place of remembrance and reflection, Pickett said. To those battling cancer, it is a place of peace in the storm. To caregivers, friends and family members, physicians and other health care providers, the garden is an oasis from the ordeal and a source of hope for the future, she said. “Everyone’s been touched by cancer.”

Cancer survivors were asked to stand, and more than a dozen did. “You are our strength and our hope,” said state Rep. Amy Sue Vruwink, D-Milladore. “That so many of you are survivors, we hold you up and say, ‘You can beat cancer. See? I have.’” Vruwink lost her mother to cancer a year ago. Gifts in memory of Donna M. Vruwink are among those supporting the garden. The legislator thanked donors to the garden and to research toward a cure for cancer.

Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation scientists and physicians are involved in more than 150 clinical trials aimed at preventing and treating cancer through such therapies as targeted radiation and angiogenesis drugs to inhibit tumor growth, Dr. Reding said.

“Our research, we hope, will translate to earlier diagnosis and better treatment outcomes.”

The Pink Ribbon Cancer Survivor’s Garden was planted and is maintained by the River Cities Evening Garden Club, to which Pickett belongs. Club members include (pictured on previous page, from left to right) Joey Marshall, Jackie Pickett, Bea Kohl, Nancy Radlinger, Margie Schenck and Joan Milka. Installed only a year ago, the garden is already a well-established, beautiful botanical refuge. It is open to the public.

The garden has had terrific support from local businesses, individuals and organizations that donated money, plants and other features valued at $30,000, said Teri Herr-Wilczek, annual giving and special events manager for Marshfield Clinic. All of the naming opportunities were filled, she said, but more will be available in the future. A privacy arbor and pergola are planned. “We hope this garden has special meaning for each of you,” she told more than 175 people attending the dedication.

Donors to the garden included individuals, families, businesses, foundations and Clinic employees. Many gifts were made in memory or honor of loved ones. Permanent plaques in the garden recognize both donors and honorees.

For additional information on the Pink Ribbon Cancer Survivor’s Garden, including future naming opportunities, please contact Herr-Wilczek at 715-389-3249.

Calendar

Thursday, September 27
Heritage Foundation Award
Froehlke Auditorium
Melvin R. Laird Center
Marshfield Clinic

Friday, October 19
Disco Cures Cancer
Rothschild Pavilion
Rothschild

Wednesday, November 14
Gwen D. Sebold Fellowship Award
Froehlke Auditorium
Melvin R. Laird Center
Marshfield Clinic
Marshfield Clinic donors take advantage of new tax law

Last fall, President Bush signed the Pension Protection Act of 2006, which created the opportunity to gift assets to charitable organizations from IRA assets and receive tax-favored treatment (see article on facing page). The Marshfield Clinic Development Office has worked with many donors who are using their IRA dollars to make their charitable gifts this year.

“We are pleased to see so many of our Marshfield Clinic donors taking advantage of this law,” said Steve Yorde, chief development officer. “This law has resulted in increased donations to support the mission of Marshfield Clinic, while providing a tax benefit to our donors. We hope Congress votes to extend this favorable tax treatment.”

Marshfield Clinic major and planned giving officers

Julie Brussow
Major gifts officer
715-389-3530

“I have several donors who are not able to itemize their deductions. Under this law, they are able to make their annual contribution to Marshfield Clinic from their IRA and do not have to report the amount given in their taxable income. This provides a tax savings to individuals who have always made charitable gifts, but who never received a tax benefit in the past.”

Beth Busscher
Major gifts officer
715-389-3235

“I met with a couple who made an IRA contribution to the Laird Center for Medical Research. They used their mandatory distribution and said that it was a painless way to make a gift. They didn’t need the income for the year and they avoided paying the income taxes. This gift also qualified them as members of the Lawton Society, for cumulative lifetime giving of $10,000 or more.”

Karen Piel
Planned giving officer
715-389-3868

“This tax law benefits many people, not just the wealthy. If you make charitable gifts to any organization(s) during 2007, whether those gifts total $1,000 or $100,000, it may be wise to make your gift from your IRA if you are eligible to do so. We encourage our donors to speak with their financial or tax advisers to get the best possible tax result from their gift to Marshfield Clinic.”

Matt Schneider
Major gifts officer
715-858-4427

“IRAs make great charitable gifts because they are heavily ladened with income and estate taxes when given to anyone other than a spouse at death. Some of our donors are accelerating these gifts since current law allows them the opportunity to avoid paying income taxes on up to $100,000 of their required minimum distribution. This gives them the opportunity to see their dollars at work in their area of interest while they are living.”
May I receive a tax benefit from donating my retirement plan distribution directly to a charity?

Georgette Frazer: For the 2007 tax year, taxpayers who are at least age 70 ½ and own a tax-deferred IRA have the opportunity to receive an additional tax benefit when making contributions to qualified charities.

This new option, called a “qualified charitable distribution” (QCD) and made possible through the Pension Protection Act of 2006, is especially helpful to donors who don’t normally itemize deductions on their tax returns.

Here’s how it works: When you take your annual IRA distribution, which is mandatory after age 70 ½, you instruct the trustee of your IRA to distribute part or all of the funds (up to a maximum of $100,000) directly to the qualified 501(c)(3) charitable organization of your choice. Most IRA trustees now make this option available.

On your tax forms, the amount you’ve donated is included in the total IRA distribution amount (Form 1040, Line 15a on the 2006 forms), but is not included in the taxable amount (line 15b). So your contribution is given tax-free treatment even if you take the standard deduction.

Your tax and investment advisers will help you in implementing this new option. It’s a great benefit for both taxpayers and the charitable organizations they support.

For additional information on making a planned gift to Marshfield Clinic, please contact Karen Piel, planned giving officer, at 1-800-858-5220 or e-mail piel.karen@marshfieldclinic.org.
Life has its moments.

Get the best health care so you can enjoy every one of them.

www.marshfieldclinic.org