

Heartbeats

A Community Service of Mammoth Hospital
Published by the Community Relations Department
Lori Ciccarelli, Editor

Spring 2007

The Seeds of Spring Promise Future Growth

By Gary Myers, Chief Executive Officer

As spring embraces the High Sierra, we are seeing many new and exciting things growing here at Mammoth Hospital. People are the greatest asset of any organization and I'm pleased to report that we've been blessed with the addition of some wonderful new physicians this past year. In general surgery, Dr. Mark Snell and Dr. Andrew Bourne have proven themselves to be extremely warm, caring and skilled individuals. They provide care on both an elective and emergency basis to ensure our community that the highest quality surgery services are available 24/7. Both are experienced and proficient in minimally invasive techniques, have performed thousands of endoscopic procedures including colonoscopy, and have treated thousands of trauma patients. We are really fortunate to have these two fine gentlemen join us. Next, Dr. Paula Nornes and Dr. Woody White have revitalized our obstetrics and gynecology program. Sierra Park Women's Health Service provides the very best care to the women of the Eastern High Sierra through these superb physicians. With many years experience between the two, Drs. Nornes and White have shown themselves prepared to handle any situation with skill and compassion. Next, Dr. Murat Akalin and Nancy Akalin, Ph.D. joined us on April 1, 2007.

Dr. Akalin is double board certified in family medicine and psychiatry and will become an integral part of Sierra Park Family Medicine. His wife, Nancy, is an experienced behavioral health therapist and will team up with her husband to provide a hospital-based mental health and behavioral health service for our community. Our world class orthopedic surgeons Jack Perry, M.D., Mike Karch, M.D., Mark Robinson, M.D., and Jeffery Mast, M.D., continue to build a center of excellence in sports medicine, joint reconstruction, and sports trauma at Mammoth Hospital. We are so pleased to have all of these physicians put down roots in Mammoth Lakes!



Dr. Murat Akalin

Also in full bloom for the season at Mammoth Hospital is a brand new, 38,000-square-foot addition consisting of a new Emergency Department, Surgery Department, Medical Imaging Department, and Women's Health Unit.

continued on page 2

Krames Online Patient Education Resource

By Jennifer Hansen, Public Relations Coordinator

Mammoth Hospital believes a patient's well being is above all else and is committed to making sure you get the care you need, the answers you deserve and the resources to make it happen. As a patient at Mammoth Hospital and the Sierra Park Clinics, questions can sometimes slip your mind after receiving care. A great informational tool is available on Mammoth Hospital's website to help you answer these questions. This tool is Krames Online Patient Education.



On the homepage of MammothHospital.com, there is an arrow in a blue box under the news and information box. You can just click on this arrow and have access to over 4,000 topics related to health and medicine. You can search for answers 24 hours a day. Krames Online Patient Education Resource is the

most up-to-date patient education resource. You can browse through the health sheets feature. This feature is an extensive library of evidence-based, peer-reviewed information which was written specifically for patients. These health sheets cover diseases and conditions, diagnoses and treatments, surgeries and procedures, and wellness and safety for people of all ages and walks of life. You can also browse the medication library. This is a comprehensive drug reference which will answer your medication questions. There are over 33,000 prescriptions, over-the-counter products and nutraceuticals to browse. And finally, if you aren't quite sure what exactly it is you are looking for, you can search through the library of medical topics using key words to help better define your search.

Krames Online Patient Education resource is a great tool to utilize for those medical questions and can also be accessed in Spanish. For more information on this new tool and to use this resource, please visit www.mammothhospital.com.

The beautiful facility features all digital radiology as well as wonderful new surgical technology that bring state-of-the-art medical services to our community. We are humbled by the generosity of so many who have donated their time and dollars to bring a new digital mammography program to our hospital scheduled to open in October 2007. The three-room Women's Health Unit in the new hospital wing is a warm and beautifully designed section of the new building with beautiful views of the Sherwin Mountains and features fully secure, family-sized private labor and birthing rooms and a nursery. The new 15-bed emergency department with eight private treatment rooms will meet our community's emergency and trauma needs with state-of-the-art facilities and technology for many years to come. Occupancy of the new wing is expected later this spring and will allow for future development of other key services in the years ahead to meet new demands as the community grows.

Our new hospital-wide information system is also beginning to take root nicely. We underwent a full conversion of our financial information system last December and have overcome many of the usual challenges related to that. Other issues and challenges

are still a work in progress and we continue to work diligently to correct those as well. In the years ahead, the new system will enable us to have a fully digital health record integrated with all financial services. For now, we are in the initial stages of this new technology and we apologize for the many errors and lapses of service in the accounts receivable system that we have all endured with frustration and inconvenience. The goal of improving Patient Financial Services was the main impetus for investing in a new information system for our hospital and clinics. As we continue to work with the Siemens Corporation to correct data conversion and other system problems, we are continuing to train our staff on correct claim filing and follow-up procedures to ensure accuracy, timeliness, and improved reimbursement. We appreciate everyone's patience as we seek to build our Patient Financial Services Department into an area we can all be pleased with and be proud of.



Nancy Thomas Akalin, Ph.D.

continued on page 4

Celebrate Mammography

By Lori Ciccarelli, Community Relations Director



Our community members certainly took a stand with the fight against breast cancer supporting Mammoth Hospital's mammography initiative from personal donations and fund raising events to corporate contributions. In just little over one year, we reached our goal of raising \$350,000. We heard numerous

stories from our local women on how early detection saved their lives and how they wanted to be a part of getting mammography to Mammoth. Living in Mammoth has caused barriers for many to receive a mammogram on a regular basis. We are so fortunate to have an expert like Yuri Parisky, MD., former director of breast imaging at USC/Norris Lee Breast Center, take the lead on a project such as this and stay focused; and to also have the support from the Southern Mono Healthcare District Board of Directors. It definitely takes a village.

We plan to kick off our new mammography services this fall with the celebration

of National Breast Cancer Awareness month. Full field digital mammography has gained FDA approval for the screening and diagnosis of breast cancer, and touted to be the single biggest advance in mammography in the last 30 years. It allows for faster acquisition, fewer total exposures, and less patient discomfort. Early detection of breast cancer greatly increases the chance for survival. How fortunate that we won't have to leave Mammoth to receive such advanced care.

Thank you all for your untiring support and efforts. You have made a HUGE difference in the Eastern Sierra by helping to save lives with the fight against breast cancer.

A special thank you to the generosity of:

- Mammoth Hospital Auxiliary
- Von's of Mammoth Lakes
- Sam & Shelly Walker
- Gull Lake Marina
- Robin Stater, Sierra Design Studio
- The Ralph M. Parson's Foundation
- Brent and Anna Allen

- Drs. Cherne, Harrell and Parisky
- Tomi Bortolazzo, MD
- Cecil & Jean Spearman
- Doug & Sherilynne Will
- Dave & Sharon Harvey
- Russ & Keely Ferguson
- Hologic, Inc.

- Mammoth Emergency Physicians Group
- Mammoth Hospital Medical Staff
- Gary & Karilyn Myers
- Rotary Club of Mammoth Lakes
- Bruce & Chris Torrence
- Mammoth Mountain RV Park
- Mammoth Mountain Ski Area
- Drs. Mark and Susan Robinson
- Deena & Andrew Kastor
- Dennis & Jane Domaille
- Wayne Anderson, MD
- Kathy & Jack Copeland
- Kim & Garth Getchell
- Chris Hummel, MD
- Mammoth Lakes Board of Realtors
- Ray Montalvo
- Adrienne & Mike Ragen
- Erick Schat
- Suzanne Stokes
- Jaymee Thies & Judy Northrup
- Gallerie Barjur



Point of Service Collections at Mammoth Hospital

By Jennifer Hansen, Public Relations Coordinator

The Southern Mono Healthcare District is dedicated to excellence in the preservation, enhancement and restoration of the health and well being of all members of our residential and visitor communities. Mammoth Hospital and our physicians are committed to providing the highest quality of care while ensuring sustainability through sound financial management. The ability to sustain the excellent services that we all enjoy is dependent upon receiving fair and complete payment as early as possible. How many times last year did you walk into a department store, walk out with new clothes, and not have to pay for them before leaving? Or how many times last year did you walk into the grocery store, buy a week's worth of groceries, and not have to pay for them before leaving the store? Food and clothing are essential commodities in our lives and we expect to pay, and we willingly pay, for them when we consume them. Quality health care service, like food and clothing, is also a necessary commodity. It also must be paid for. And like food and clothing, it should be paid for when the services are received.

As the cost of co-pays, co-insurance, deductibles, and out-of-pocket expenses incurred by patients continue to rise, it becomes increasingly important for us all to pay our financial responsibility at the time of service," says Gary Myers, CEO. "The number of uninsured and underinsured patients continues to rise. The number of patients choosing high deductible, catastrophic type insurance plans is also on the rise. This has shifted the responsibility for payment onto the patient which is why we have to change the way that we are conducting business and shift payment of the patient portion of the bill to the point of service."

What does this mean to you as a patient? For non-emergency services, you will be expected to pay

your portion of the services rendered at the time you receive care. This will include deductibles, co-pays, co-insurance, Medi-Cal share-of-cost and self pay.

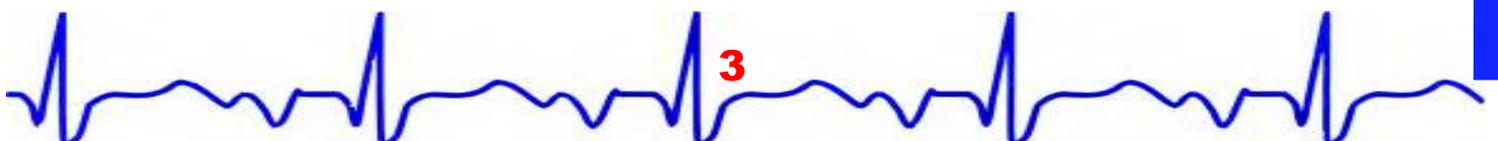
To help make this new implementation easy, please familiarize yourself with your health insurance plans. Does your plan require you to pay a specific amount or portion of the cost of your care? What is your co-payment amount that you pay at each visit when services are rendered? What is your deductible amount and how much do you pay per year? These are all great questions to have answers to when you receive care at Mammoth Hospital to help make the payment process easy.

To help ensure proper management of your account, please bring your proof of identity, your mailing address and phone number, your health insurance plan cards, your physician referral and insurance authorization if necessary, and payment for your out-of-pocket expenses. Mammoth Hospital does have financial counselors available on-site to help patients fully understand their financial responsibility and to assist with any alternative payment arrangements that would include federal, state, county, or hospital assistance programs.

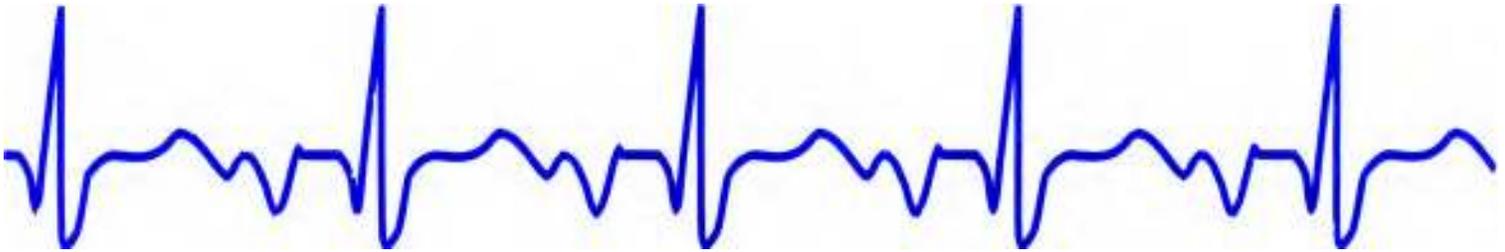
Mammoth Hospital and physicians want to continue building and strengthening relationships with patients by providing education, supportive customer service, and clear communication regarding financial expectations. Continuing to provide patient-centered, quality health care services will always be our top priority. If you would like more information regarding Mammoth Hospital's Non-Emergent Patient Financial Guidelines, visit our website at www.mammothhospital.com or call one of our financial counselors at (760) 934-3311.

Save the Date - 4th Annual Golf Tourney

Get ready to play golf for a great cause on Friday, June 22, 2007 at Sierra Star Golf Course hosted by local cancer survivor Brian Venneman. The hospital foundation, The Healthcare Trust of Mammoth Lakes, is sponsoring the fourth annual Golf Benefit Tournament to raise funds and awareness for the hospital cancer outreach program. Proceeds from this event will help provide support, resources, and financial assistance to cancer patients living or working in Mono County. Space is limited, so reserve your space early. For more information, call 924-4200 or visit www.mammothhospital.com.



Postal Patron
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546



Future Growth ... page 2

In the last five years, our hospital and clinic facilities, staff, technology and services have grown tremendously and we thank the community for the trust you've placed in us to care for you and your families. All of this growth has required tremendous effort and expense and has strained and stretched our ability to keep abreast of the human, technical, and financial resources necessary to bring these aggressive plans and projects to fruition. As our lawmakers continue to grapple with universal insurance coverage, health-care labor shortages, and the rising cost of health-care technology, the drought year and rising uninsured populations in our region have presented new financial challenges locally that will additionally constrain us. Our board of directors, management team, and staff are focusing intently on our fiscal responsibilities while striving to maintain the level of service that the community needs and deserves. Finance in health care is tight and getting tighter, and Mammoth Hospital is responding by implementing many new policies and procedures to improve our financial practices, control our operating expenses, reduce bad debt, and improve our payment results. We need the support of everyone to make our efforts successful. We look ahead to the harvest of our efforts with excitement, hope, and renewed energy as the wonders of Spring manifest miracles all around us and give us new perspective. Thank you all for your support and good health to all!

SIERRA PARK CLINICS

Family Dental	924-4007
Family Medicine	934-2551
General Surgery	924-4014
Internal Medicine	924-4001
Neurology	924-4084
Orthopedic & Sports Medicine	924-4084
Pediatrics	924-4000
Physical & Occupational Therapy	934-7302
Urology	924-4102
Women's Health Services	924-4044
Bridgeport Family Medicine Clinic	932-7011

Vision

The Southern Mono Healthcare District is dedicated to excellence in the preservation and restoration of the health and well being of all members of our residential and visitor communities.

Mission

The mission of the Southern Mono Healthcare District is to:

- ♥ Deliver excellent, compassionate health care services for our residents and visitors;
- ♥ Provide appropriate health care services which conform to the highest standards of care and are directed toward improving the overall health of our community;
- ♥ Ensure sustainability through sound governance; quality management and financial responsibility; and
- ♥ Facilitate continuity of care through the development of local and regional collaborative relationships with businesses and other providers.

Administration

Gary Myers, *Chief Executive Officer*
 Jim Smith, CPA, *Chief Financial Officer*
 Joe Bottom, *Chief Operations Officer*
 Kathleen Alo, RN, BSN, *Chief Nursing Officer*
 Keely Ferguson, *Chief Information Officer*
 Nancy Hilmo, *Executive Assistant*

Southern Mono Healthcare District Board of Directors

Donald Sage, M.D., *Chairman*
 Lynda Salcido, P.H.N., *Vice Chair*
 Helen Shepherd
 Jack Copeland
 Dan Wright

