

Straight Talk

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most

November 13, 2008

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

We have just enjoyed two wonderful celebrations with our NCH family and friends. These events illustrate the breadth of healthcare capabilities we offer as well as the wonderful support we receive from the community we serve.

On Saturday night, November 1st in an elegant full ballroom at the Ritz-Carlton, we celebrated our 50th Annual Ball with a theme of *Neptune's Soirée*, with all proceeds flowing to the NCH pediatric program that has grown in census days of 27% year over year. Our pediatric unit is now officially the *Robert and Mariann MacDonald SeaCAREium*, and the MacDonalds were recognized for their generosity in naming this magnificent unit that recently won an award for creative décor designed by Lori Wegman.

At the dinner, Dr. Dan Morris was named *NCH Physician of the Year*. Sharing honors with him were Drs. Alberto De La Rivaherrera, Jeffrey Heitmann, John Lewis, Kenneth Plunkitt, Barbara Rumberger, Charles Todd Vedder, and Michael Vickers—all of whom were nominated by their colleagues in the medical and nursing staffs of NCH. Criteria for nomination were based on the highest standards in clinical care, relationships with patients and colleagues, standards of moral and ethical conduct and commitment to the needs of the community.

Drs. Barbara-Ann Britten and Deborah Lopez were also recognized as *2008 Compass Award* winners. The Compass Award was created to recognize physician leaders within our healthcare system, who are not only well-versed in the latest medical science and technology but extend themselves above and beyond their formal responsibilities to improve our community.

Finally, we recognized *NCH Nurse of the Year* Sue Moran, *Administrative Nurse of the Year* Cindilee Lukacs, *Indirect Patient Care Nurse of the Year* Joan McNerney, *Direct Patient Care Nurse of the Year* Robert Yoshida, and *Rising Star Award* winner Kara Prestigiacomo, all for their outstanding performance.

We congratulate all these worthy recipients for being nominated and recognized by their colleagues for the excellence they deliver to our patients.

The second major event was the dedication of the *Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging* on the North Naples Campus this past Tuesday night. Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Schwartz had the vision to graciously and generously support a 32-bed acute care unit for the elderly. The Brookdale Foundation has supported geriatrics in many areas of the country over decades and has been responsible for training many geriatricians.

This new unit includes four palliative care beds, a recreational area with a large “great room,” and three gardens. Patients will be encouraged to journey out of their hospital rooms, take as few medicines as possible, and typically reduce their length of stay.

Providing the highest quality care for both Pediatrics and Geriatrics—at opposite ends of the age spectrum—underscores the depth and breadth of healthcare service at NCH. We are fortunate not only to have the outstanding leaders honored this month, but also the 5,000 colleagues, physicians and volunteers, who make NCH synonymous with pride, passion, purpose and professionalism.

Respectfully,



Allen S. Weiss, M.D.