

Consider

Summer 2008



Your Gifts Aid Stroke Victims

The details are still a bit fuzzy, but the impact of that Saturday morning will not soon be forgotten. The late April day had begun like any other. Doris Johns, 94 years old, was going about her normal routine, unaware of the frightening turn her life was about to take.

Standing in front of the mirror, she was washing her face when, without warning, everything went black. Moments later Gladys Herrick, Doris's sister and roommate of three years, discovered her, collapsed on the floor. The next couple of hours are a confusing blur of ambulances, EMTs, doctors and nurses, and a terrifying realization – she could not move her legs.

As Doris lay in a hospital bed in Metro's ER, she learned that a stroke had stolen her voice and her mobility. For the first time in her life, she found herself reliant on others for almost everything. Even moving her legs required assistance from nurses and family members. It was a state of being she found unacceptable, and she immediately determined she would make a full recovery.

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Your Gifts Aid Stroke Victims

(continued from page 1)

“I hadn’t been in the hospital since 1945,” Doris recalled. “Depending on others is not something I’m used to. I was incredibly grateful for the kindness of the doctors and everyone at Metro. I was treated like a princess!”

While the stroke threatened her physical capabilities, it couldn’t dampen her fiercely independent spirit. She quickly recovered her voice and declared her resolve to walk again. Sharing her determination, the staff at Metro’s stroke center in the Steve and Cindy Van Andel Center for Restorative Care started her down the road to recovery.

Doris began daily workouts with rehabilitation therapists and quickly felt her strength, coordination and balance returning. Her daily routines included sessions using therapy beds, exercise balls, balance bars, and other rehabilitation equipment. In addition to her physical therapy, Doris and her family also viewed educational videos and received written reference materials made possible by Metro Health Hospital Foundation donors to aid in her recuperation. Soon she was meeting and exceeding her health goals, surprising everyone with her spunky and speedy recovery.

“I never missed that exercise ball, and I don’t think the therapists expected me to throw as hard as I did,” Doris grinned proudly. “I made up my mind I was going to get better. And they supported me every step of the way.”

Her determination and hard work paid off. She improved so rapidly that in mere days she was using a walker to take trips to the hospital lobby and gift shop with her physical therapist. Then only 11 days after her stroke, Doris was able to return home.

Now that Doris is back at home, it’s hard to stop her. She continues to progress at lightning speed, impressing her therapists and even warranting a few warnings to slow down and take it easy. Although she has had to give-up driving and relies on a walker for balance, not much else has changed. She’s back to her BINGO games, frequenting the casino and just enjoying life at her own pace.

That frightening morning, when the life she knew hung in the balance, is now a distant memory. With a little willpower and a lot of caring support from the Metro stroke center, and Metro Health Hospital Foundation donors, Doris overcame the odds and regained her independence—a priceless gift for anyone and a precious solace for such a free spirit.

*“I made up my mind I
was going to get better.
And they supported me
every step of the way.”
—Doris Johns*



DORIS JOHNS AT HOME ONCE AGAIN ENJOYING A CUP OF TEA.



Tribute Gifts

Our appreciation to the following donors for making memorial and tribute gifts between March 12, 2008 and July 15, 2008.

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These gifts are a celebration of life, health and hope. They are often made to commemorate a milestone such as a birthday, wedding, graduation or anniversary — or to remember a deceased loved one. If you're interested in making a memorial or tribute gift, please complete the enclosed envelope and mail with your check. The accuracy of this list is very important so please contact us at (616) 252-5000 if an error has been made. Thank you.

Your Support Creates Opportunity, Builds Memories

She can still see the bright lights and hear the thunderous applause. She can still feel the rhythm of the music pulsing through her body. Words fail to describe how Nola Hammond felt listening to her favorite high school songs and watching the mind-blowing, live performance of legendary superstar Phil Collins. But her face says it all—the twinkle in her eyes resembling that of an enraptured teenager with a school-girl crush.

At 42, Nola is not a teenager and life is no longer as simple as it was back then. But for a few hours at that concert, she got the chance to forget her daily health struggles and get lost in the music. An experience she treasures to this day.

Born with achondroplasia, a genetic bone growth disorder also known as dwarfism, Nola has faced health challenges her entire life. But five years ago, a critical respiratory failure changed everything. Wheelchair bound and reliant on a ventilator for at least half of the day, Nola was no longer able to live independently. She gave up her apartment and came to the Metro Health Hospital Assisted Breathing Center (ABC) where she would have 24-hour access to medical care.

The complexity of Nola's medical condition makes leaving the hospital difficult. There is a variety of medical equipment that must be hauled, a nurse that is designated to accompany her, transportation to arrange, and other considerations. The logistics of any trip require detailed planning, preparation and expense. So the opportunity to get out and participate in mainstream community events is a luxury that comes only a handful of times every year. But those are the times that Nola cherishes most, the times that make her feel most alive.

“The group and personal outings are so important to me,” related Nola. “They are

“The group and personal outings are so important to me. They are the only opportunities I have to experience life outside of the hospital.”

—Nola Hammond



NOLA HAMMOND ENJOYING A THERAPEUTIC RECREATIONAL OUTING MADE POSSIBLE BY GIFTS TO THE METRO HEALTH HOSPITAL FOUNDATION.

a break from the every day routine—a chance to get away and do something fun and different. They are the only opportunities I have to experience life outside the hospital.”

Nola clings to the memories she’s collected during outings over the last five years: a family reunion in her home town of North Adams where she visited with relatives, some of which she hadn’t seen in two decades; Christmas shopping for her brother at the mall; a church picnic where she met new people, made new friends and enjoyed the fresh air outdoors; and of course, the Phil Collins concert, among others.

The recreational outings, made possible by donors of the Metro Health Hospital Foundation, are more than just fun for Nola and the other ABC patients. They are a respite, a chance to return to some sense of normalcy, if only for a day. The outings are rare opportunities to build memories beyond the walls of their hospital rooms. And every moment is treasured. Nola adds new, exciting activities and community events to her catalog of life experience, she still hasn’t found the one that tops seeing Phil Collins live—at least not yet.

Shining Star Gifts

Our appreciation to the following donors for honoring outstanding healthcare providers by making Shining Star gifts between March 12, 2008 and July 15, 2008.

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Shining
Star

Beyond Medicine...

There is so much more to health than medicine. And no one understands that better than Chris and Kim Branoff.

Throughout their careers, Chris, former owner of one of the nation's largest Weight Watchers franchises, and wife Kim, a retired psychologist, labored tirelessly alongside individuals struggling to overcome physical and emotional barriers to better health and, ultimately, better lives. They witnessed countless lives changed. And they gained a unique understanding of the impact that one's environment and outlook can have on personal wellness. That understanding, along with their desire to help others improve their lives, led them to Metro Health.

"The care at Metro has always been phenomenal. But when we saw the new hospital and village, there was an undeniably different feel from the traditional hospital setting," Chris stated. "Metro removed the dread and gloominess that patients often associate with hospitals. They are really doing something different, and that got us excited!"



KIM AND CHRIS BRANOFF, PROUD SUPPORTERS OF METRO HEALTH HOSPITAL'S HOLISTIC APPROACH TO CARE.



During their first tour of the new hospital, the peaceful atmosphere and low-stress environment of the entire campus immediately captured Chris and Kim's attention. They saw a facility and staff that went a step beyond medicine to consider all aspects of healing—physical, mental and emotional.

“Attitude and mental outlook have such a huge impact on recovery. The environment at Metro is one that is wholly conducive to healing,” said Chris. “It is a positive place to be, it allows patients to feel relaxed, and it exudes confidence. Each of those factors is vital to helping patients form an outlook that promotes health and improves quality of life.”

Helping people live better, healthier lives has been the Branoff's driving force for years. In the dawn of their retirement they were seeking new ways to grow their own community involvement to impact even more lives. With Metro poised to revolutionize the community's health care experience, the fit seemed natural.

The Branoff's knew that they wanted to be a part of what was happening at Metro Health Hospital and they immediately got involved. Through a generous donation they helped to create the Chris and Kim Branoff Surgery Prep and Recovery Area, designed to support the hospital's holistic approach to care. But their commitment didn't stop there. Recently, Chris joined the Metro Health Hospital Foundation Board of Directors, committed to furthering his and Kim's passion and the hospital's mission for improving the health and lives of those in our community.

While the Branoff's careers have wound down and their retirement has begun, their affect on other's lives only continues to grow. Chris and Kim took their passion for people and invested it in partnership with Metro. Together they are creating an environment of healing, a place of hope, and a promise for the future—taking health care beyond medicine, making it positive and personal.

“Metro removed the dread and gloominess that patients often associate with hospitals. They are really doing something different, and that got us excited!”
— Chris Branoff.

Side Notes

Like the warmth of a summer breeze, your support continues to bring comfort and hope to the many patients and families seeking life-saving and health-restoring care at Metro Health Hospital.

With the changing of another season comes new memories and milestones in our history. We have enjoyed our first summer in our new facility – welcoming new patients, introducing new specialties in care and expanding our community services. All of this is possible because of you and the support that you provide.

Again, we thank you. May your summer memories be filled with sunny days and happy gatherings that warm your heart.

Wishing you health and happiness,

Laura Staskiewicz
Chief Development Officer





Respect for Every Individual, Personal Care for Generations

*“Because of the respect that we have consistently received over the years, we wanted to do our part to help Metro carry on its tradition of personal care.”
—Gerry Whitten*

Every person has a basic need for respect. And when respect is blended with sincerity and compassion, it’s a formula for success. That formula is what has kept Gerry and Beverley Whitten committed to Metro Health Hospital for years, first as patients and now as donors and founding members of the Metro Health Hospital Foundation Legacy Society.

Serving as President of an automotive parts manufacturing company for 23 years, Gerry, now 77, has a special appreciation for the value of the individual. He applied his philosophy of mutual respect to every area of operation in his business. As a result, he led a floundering 28-employee company back from the verge of bankruptcy, transforming it into a thriving enterprise with a workforce of over 600 upon his retirement in 1992.

One of Gerry’s secrets to success was maintaining an open-door policy with his employees and constituents. It’s a policy he sees reflected at Metro and one of the attributes he appreciates most as a patient.

“You have to keep your door open for people to share their opinions,” stated Gerry. “It makes a difference when you treat people by name, not just by number. And that is the kind of treatment we get at Metro.”

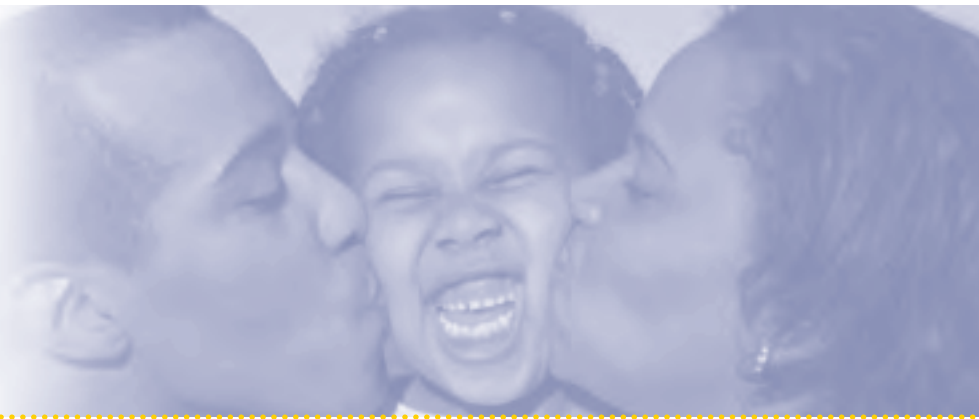


Since moving to the greater Grand Rapids area from Fenton in 1996, the Whitten’s have found a dependable and caring ally in Metro. As Beverley has faced repeated hospitalizations in the last decade, they have come to rely on the personal care that bonds them closely with the doctors and nurses they have encountered.

“The staff treats you like family. And they give their patients the respect they deserve as individuals,” Gerry said.

As the Whitten’s planned for their future, it was important to share their success by supporting community organizations that reflect the same values that they have held close through their 38 years of marriage. Metro was on the top of

GERRY AND BEVERLEY WHITTEN, FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE METRO HEALTH HOSPITAL FOUNDATION LEGACY SOCIETY.



their list, and they generously chose to name the Metro Health Hospital Foundation as a beneficiary in their will.

“Because of the respect that we have consistently received over the years, we wanted to do our part to help Metro carry on its tradition of personal care,” said Gerry. “And I hope that others will follow our lead and do the same.”

Following their lead couldn't be easier. Anyone can amend their will, trust, life insurance policy or retirement plan, to give a gift that will improve the health and lives of future generations.

The Whitten's gift was born out of appreciation for a different kind of care – care that offers respect and dignity to every individual. Your gift today will carry your message of inspiration and the promise of personal care to individuals and families, tomorrow.

Metro Health Hospital Foundation Legacy Society

The following individuals and families have named Metro Health Hospital Foundation in their will or trust. Their foresight and thoughtful commitment to the future of health care at Metro Health Hospital is extremely appreciated and will be felt for generations to come.

Dr. Donald & Ellen Arlinsky

Brad & Tia Cavender

Dr. William & Norine Cunningham

Dr. Paul & Jennifer Dwyer

Cynthia L. Fish

Doyle Hayes

Dollye Johnson

Vic & Joan Krause

John & Barb Leegwater

Donald G. Marsh

Jeff & Alice Morrill

Franklin P. Randall

Todd & Laura Staskiewicz

Warren & Shelly Westbrook

Gerald & Beverley Whitten

Michael H. Zakem, DO



Let us know

Have you named Metro Health Hospital Foundation as a beneficiary in your will, trust, life insurance policy or other financial vehicle? If so, we want to hear from you. You have an opportunity to become a founding member of the newly established Metro Health Hospital Foundation Legacy Society. Please contact Scott Halquist at 616-252-5007 or scott.halquist@metrogr.org.

Experience the joy of giving now, with a gift to help carry on the tradition of personal care that will be felt for generations.



Corporate Partners

The old saying “there is strength in numbers” rings true when describing the support our Metro Health Hospital Corporate Partners Program receives. They are businesses and organizations that believe strongly in our mission to improve the health and well-being of our community and support our annual giving program with contributions of \$2,000 or more.

Corporate Partners receive numerous recognition benefits as well as opportunities to share information about their business to Metro Health physicians, employees, patients and visitors. They also receive exclusive hospital updates and comprehensive reports on the difference that their support makes.

Together, Metro Health Hospital and its Corporate Partners have the power to heal those who are injured, prevent debilitating health conditions and advance health care through new technology.

It is with deep appreciation that we recognize and thank our Metro Health Hospital Corporate Partners.

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Their generosity helps to assure our continued ability to provide our community with the highest quality of medical care. If you'd like more information on how your organization can become a Corporate Partner, please contact Cindy Fish at 616-252-5002 or cindy.fish@metrogr.org.

