



BeWell

Fall/Winter

2010



Raising the Stroke Care Standard

High-Tech Care
in the High Country
page 3

Building a Healthy Community

The Power of
Community Outreach
page 6

The Best Medicine

How Ashe Memorial Hospital
Ensures Medication Safety

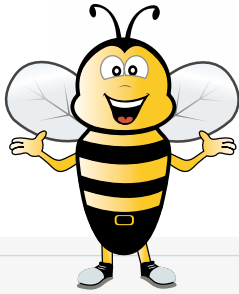
pages 4 & 5



Find the hidden bee
and win!
Details on page 2

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Find the Bee

Find this bee hidden in this issue of *Be Well*, and you will be entered to win a \$100 gift card!

Send a postcard or e-mail with your name, address, and phone number along with the page number and location of the bee to:

**Ashe Memorial Hospital
Marketing Department
200 Hospital Avenue
Jefferson, NC 28640**

E-mail address: pr@ashememorial.org

All entries must be received by October 3, 2010.

Correct entries will be entered into a drawing.
One winner will be chosen for the prize.

On the Cover!

Photo on Front Cover by Ed Reed

Message From the C.E.O.



Dear Friends,

In this issue of *Be Well*, you'll have the opportunity to learn more about some of the ways Ashe Memorial Hospital ensures you receive the highest quality care possible each and every time you enter our hospital.

On pages 4 and 5, you can learn about our stringent medication safety standards. By merging leading-edge technology with the expertise of Ashe Memorial Hospital's skilled providers, patients are getting the best of both worlds. The availability of telemedicine and DEXA scan in the High Country is eliminating the need for some local residents to travel for medical care. You can read more about these services on page 3.

While technology is wonderful, it is our people who make Ashe Memorial Hospital truly unique. We hope you'll take a few minutes to meet Nancy Kautz, our recently retired Community Outreach Coordinator and Grants Administrator, on page 6. She is just one of the many reasons Ashe Memorial Hospital is an invaluable asset to our community.

Be Well,

R.D. Williams, C.E.O.
Ashe Memorial Hospital

Up Close with Dr. Kurtz



Kevin J. Kurtz, M.D.

After seeing the satisfaction and joy his father received from being a physician, Kevin J. Kurtz, M.D., decided to pursue a career in the medical field. Now a board-certified family medicine physician and obstetrician, Dr. Kurtz is glad to be practicing close to home at Ashe Memorial Hospital.

"I think we provide excellent care here, and we do it with a personal touch and attention to detail," Dr. Kurtz says. "You really get involved with people's lives. You get to help them."

When he's not working, Dr. Kurtz enjoys spending time with his wife, Beth, and children, Carter and Kenan. Reading, yard work, golf, and basketball are a few of his other hobbies.

To learn more about Ashe Memorial Hospital's physicians, visit www.ashememorial.org.

Find the Bee Contest Winner



Joe Thore, Chief Operating Officer at Ashe Memorial Hospital, presents a \$100 gift card to Juanita Roten, winner of the Find the Bee contest from the first issue of *Be Well* magazine. Congratulations to Juanita Roten. We would also like to thank everyone that participated in the contest.

A New Era in Stroke Care

New technology and a partnership with Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem are taking stroke care for patients in Ashe County to a higher level.



John Sundin, M.D., General Surgeon, interacting with the Telestroke Robot.

Prior to the acquisition of the InTouch RP-7® (Remote Presence) telemedicine robot, stroke patients at Ashe Memorial Hospital had to be transported more than 85 miles to a tertiary location staffed with neurologists and stroke specialists for diagnosis and treatment. Now, a stroke specialist in a remote location can evaluate patients and suggest treatments that can be administered here at Ashe Memorial Hospital.

The RP-7 allows physicians or other healthcare providers to interact remotely with a patient by providing audio/visual communication capabilities, as well as diagnostic instruments for medical evaluation. A member of the care team here at Ashe Memorial Hospital remains at the patient's bedside during the consultation to assist the remote physician in the diagnostic exam, as well as while administering treatment.

“This technology allows rapid intervention, as well as quick identification of patients who require a higher level of care,” says R.D. Williams, C.E.O. of Ashe Memorial Hospital. “One of our goals at Ashe Memorial Hospital is to expand our patients’ access to high quality care right here in their own community, and the RP-7 does just that.”



Kina Jones, R.N., is pictured with SAM, our Telestroke Robot that is stationed in the Emergency Department.



The Details about DEXA

As men and women age, their bones begin to weaken, and monitoring bone density becomes important. The Imaging Department at Ashe Memorial Hospital can help you do just that with a dual energy X-ray absorptiometry (DEXA) scan.

Postmenopausal women are particularly susceptible to osteoporosis, which puts them at an increased risk for fracture as a result of calcium and bone mineral density loss. To ensure their best bone health, women should begin undergoing DEXA scans when they reach age 65 and continue to do so every one to two years, particularly if they're diagnosed with osteoporosis.

How It Works

A DEXA scan takes 10 to 15 minutes and involves a low dose of radiation. While the patient lies flat on his or her back on a table, a small, thin beam scans the lumbar

spine and hips—areas that possess the most bone mass. A computer formula considers the patient's age, sex, race, and other factors. A national database is consulted to determine normal bone density for the areas in question.

“A printout lets the radiologist know if bone density is within normal limits or if treatment is warranted,” says David Mc Cune, R.T.(R), Director of Imaging at Ashe Memorial Hospital. “The patient usually receives the results of a scan within a week via the referring physician, who decides what treatment to pursue. Be conscientious about receiving regular DEXA scans. The best way to live well with osteoporosis is by catching the disease in its early stages.”

SUPERIOR MEDICATION Management

From the time medication arrives in the Ashe Memorial Hospital Pharmacy to the time it is handed to the patient, it is checked for accuracy and verified against medical records in real time to ensure patient safety.



Polly Osowitt, R.N., scans a patient's bar-coded bracelet before administering medication.



Pictured is Debbie Siders, C.R.N.A., working at the Anesthesia Workstation, a state-of-the-art system for the management of anesthesia supplies and medications in the operating room. This allows clinicians the convenience and time they need to focus on patient care.

When Ashe Memorial Hospital converted to electronic medical records (EMR), the hospital added a safety component at the bedside of each patient. Hospital leadership wanted to take safety one step further and began implementation of the medication verification system in 2006.

Trust Your Pharmacist

Ashe Memorial Hospital personnel play vital roles to ensure the medication verification system provides optimal safety for each patient. The verification process begins when the pharmacist enters medication orders into the EMR.

Each medication comes bar-coded from the manufacturer, but often the barcode is not easily read by Ashe Memorial Hospital's medication verification system. For approximately 60 percent of the medications entered in the system each year, the pharmacy staff replaces problem labels with new ones featuring uniform barcodes.

"Patients admitted to Ashe Memorial Hospital can be assured we are doing everything we can to ensure their medication is safely administered," says Billy Smith, R.Ph., Pharmacist at Ashe Memorial Hospital. "Medication verification at each stage from the Pharmacy to the bedside has improved our accuracy of medication administration by 68 percent."

Bedside Scanner

When a physician orders a medication for a patient in the hospital, the request is entered in the EMR. Nurses retrieve the prescribed dose from automated dispensing cabinets. The new system enhances standard security measures. At the bedside, nurses scan the medication referencing the EMR for up-to-the-minute information and scan the patient's bar-coded identification bracelet, ensuring the correct medications have been selected for that patient.

The unique patient barcode offers an added level of protection to resolve potential errors involving patients with the same first and last name or two patients who share one room.

"Even before EMR and bedside scanning, our nurses verified medication verbally, asking patients for their full names and birthdates," says Sara Houser, R.N., B.S.N., M.S.N., C.N.O. at Ashe Memorial Hospital. "The biggest change is the immediacy of information accessed through EMR. For example, new lab results might indicate that patients scheduled to receive medication for low potassium or high blood pressure no longer need the drugs. Nurses have the information and tools they need to effectively administer medication, responding to up-to-the-minute changes in a patient's condition."

5 Rights of Medication Administration

1. Right patient
2. Right route
3. Right dose
4. Right time
5. Right medication



Billy Smith, R.Ph, pictured compounding IV fluids in a sterile IV cabinet.



Kaye Miller, R.N., pictured working at the automated dispensing machine, a state-of-the-art system that controls and accurately track the use of medications. This technology allows the nurses more time for patient care.

Safety Net

Medication management at Ashe Memorial Hospital ensures the accuracy of more than 240,000 doses of medication each year. Barcode verification is also used to track bags of intravenous admixtures and glucose monitors administered to patients.

An ongoing investment in technology and training, the medication verification system is in use by all in-house nursing areas, from the Emergency Department to Medical/Surgical, Surgical Daycare, Monitor Bed Unit, Obstetrics, Respiratory Therapy, and Imaging. Each screen has been customized to meet the needs of Ashe Memorial Hospital staff and to comply with Joint Commission requirements.

“The integrated verification system has increased the accountability and confidence of our staff, providing more information about each medication administered that can be shared with each patient,” says Diana McClure, R.N., B.S.N., Nurse Informatics at Ashe Memorial Hospital. “We are very aware of safety and continue to make efforts to ensure patients receive the correct medication.”

Medication Safety at Home

Adults age 65 and older are twice as likely as other adults to experience an adverse drug event at home, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Although more than 177,000 visits to the Emergency Department nationwide are due to problems with medication, only a few medications, most of which require careful monitoring, are to blame for the majority of incidents.

What You Can Do

Follow directions for over-the-counter or prescription medication and consult with your physician or pharmacist before taking something new. Here are more tips for medication safety at home:

- Ask your physician if your medication requires regular blood testing.
- Avoid taking prescription medication and over-the-counter medication together until you have cleared the combination with your physician.
- Don't take expired medication and dispose of it in a manner that prevents children and pets from consuming it.
- Give your physician a complete list of all the medications you take regularly and occasionally.
- Keep medication in its original container.
- Never take medication prescribed for someone else.
- Store medication in a locked cabinet out of the reach of children.



Nancy Kautz, R.N., B.S.B.A.

Passing the Torch

Nancy Kautz, R.N., B.S.B.A., Community Outreach Coordinator and Grants Administrator for Ashe Memorial Hospital, retired on June 30. Born in New York City, raised in Miami, Florida, and a longtime resident of Cincinnati, Ohio, Nancy has called Ashe County home for the past 22 years.



Janet Braithwaite

An Emergency Department nurse by training, Nancy relocated with her husband to Ashe County when he assumed a job as a local pediatrician, and she began her work in the Ashe Memorial Hospital Emergency Department.

One of Nancy's biggest responsibilities in Community Outreach was facilitating projects and programs to advance the health and well-being of the community, as well as the hospital's I CARE Mission focus—"Responsiveness to the HealthCare Needs of the Community." Some of these programs and projects include the Mountain Hearts Center for Prevention and Wellness, the School Based Health Center, Foster-Tyson Park, Lansing Park, and the Mountain Family Care Center.

A Successful Career

Nancy, who passed the torch to Janet Braithwaite on July 1, asks that the community be as helpful, kind, and generous to Janet as they have been to her for the past 22 years.

"Janet has been working with the Healthy Carolinians Task Force for the past year and an half and is ready to take the facilitator role

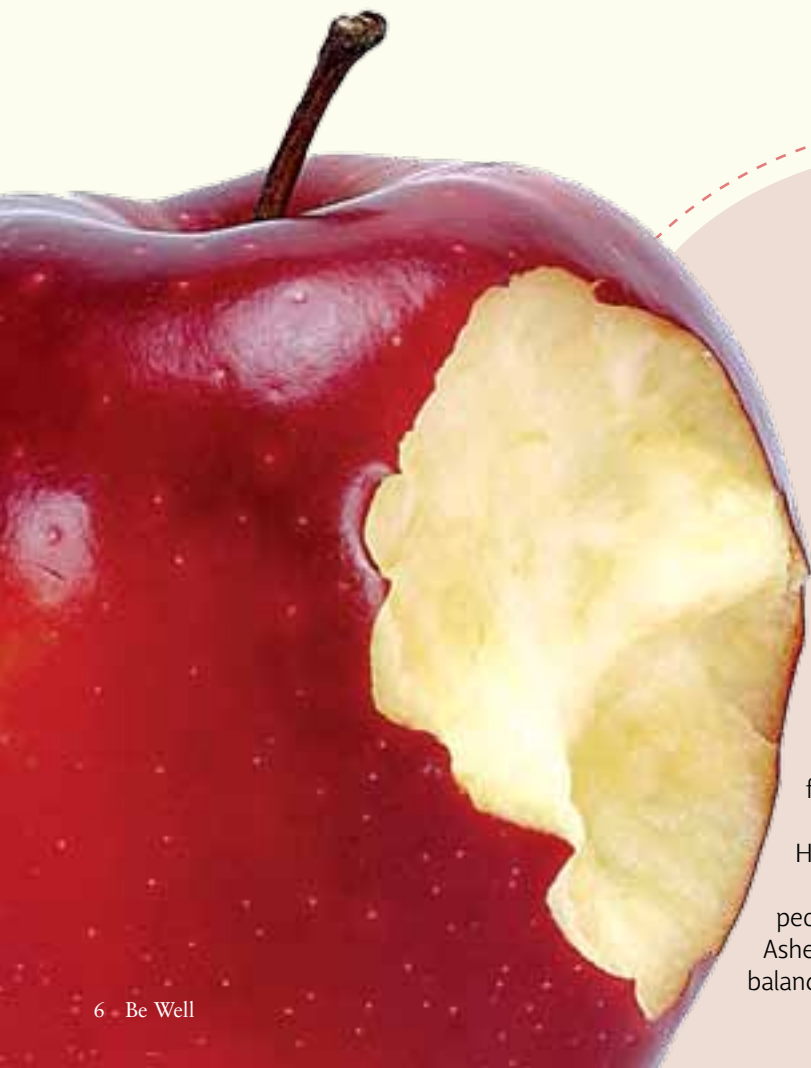
in order for the vision of a 'Healthy Ashe' to continue and be even more successful in increasing access to care and reducing early death," Nancy says. "She will need everyone's help and willingness to continue to contribute so that our mortality rates and quality of life will continue to improve."

Nancy went on to say how grateful she is to have known so many good people. She is proud to work at a hospital that agrees with the World Health Organization's definition of health and that believes health is "not just the absence of disease, but a state of physical, emotional, spiritual, mental, economic, and social well-being."

It is because of this belief in responsibility outside of the hospital walls that the National Rural Health Association selected Ashe Memorial Hospital as Outstanding Rural Health Organization of the Year in 2006.

Nancy is looking forward to spending more time with her children and grandchildren as well as with her husband of 47 years. They plan to stay active skiing and hiking.

For more information about Community Outreach at Ashe Memorial Hospital, visit www.ashememorial.org



BITE INTO THE RED APPLE PROGRAM

Ashe Memorial Hospital is embracing the Red Apple Program's goal of promoting healthy eating in hospital settings.

The Red Apple Program originally began as an outreach of North Carolina Prevention Partners—the group that spearheaded a campaign against smoking in hospitals. The goal of this program is to encourage hospitals to offer healthy food choices in vending machines and cafeterias.

At Ashe Memorial, the healthiest vending machine snacks are placed at eye level, a move that encourages people to choose them over less-healthy items. Also, the hospital cafeteria offers healthy meal options, as well as fresh fruits and salads.

Local residents are welcome to visit the cafeteria at Ashe Memorial Hospital anytime they want a fulfilling, healthy meal.

"Educating the public about healthy food options will hopefully teach people to make better choices," says Karen Creed, R.D., L.D.N., Dietitian at Ashe Memorial Hospital. "Think of us as one of the best places in town to get a balanced meal."



Building a Healthy Community

The Ashe Memorial Hospital Foundation is committed to making quality improvements to your hospital.



Tom Efford, President of the Foundation

With the annual campaign half over, we have raised \$112,722 through contributions from the annual campaign letter and the golf tournament. This speaks well about the community's involvement and support of the hospital.

Events for the Community

The Foundation's Annual Frank M. James Memorial Golf Tournament teed off another successful fundraising event. This year marked the 16th year for the tournament and was a record year, raising over \$63,000.

The 5th Annual Gala, a black-tie event will be held September 18, 2010 at the Club at Jefferson Landing. For more information or to purchase tickets call the Foundation office at (336) 846-0712.

"We're headed toward meeting our \$157,000 goal for the year with strong support from area residents," says Tom Efford, President of the Ashe Memorial Hospital Foundation. "We would like thank all of our volunteers that help with the Frank M. James Memorial Golf Tournament and the Gala. These fundraising events would not be possible without the support of the community and our volunteers."

A Powerful Ally

The Ashe Memorial Hospital Auxiliary is an integral part of Foundation's fundraising efforts. The goal of the Auxiliary is to aid the hospital's social, financial, and service needs in any way



Ashe Memorial Hospital Auxiliary President Margaret Watson and Pat Cooper, Volunteer Coordinator, present a \$12,000 check to Tom Efford, Ashe Memorial Hospital Foundation President.

possible. The Ashe Memorial Hospital Auxiliary has raised thousands of dollars for the Ashe Memorial Hospital Foundation in the past years by sponsoring books sales, jewelry sales, and uniform sales. This year the Ashe Memorial Hospital Auxiliary presented the Foundation with a check for \$12,000 to go towards the annual campaign.



Tribute to a Friend

Bernard Calhoun has been a great friend to the Ashe Memorial Hospital Foundation for many years. We are thankful to have been blessed with his service and dedication as a Foundation Board Member from 1992 until 2009.

This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.



New Mountain Family Care Center Opening Fall 2010



Pictured is the site work.



Pictured is a rendering of the new Mountain Family Care Center building.



Pictured is the site work.

Hours of Operation

Monday–Friday: 1–9 p.m.

Saturday: 9 a.m. –1 p.m.

The Mountain Family Care Center provides non-emergent care for:

- Abrasions
- Bronchitis
- Diarrhea
- Ear infections
- Flu
- Gastrointestinal problems
- Genitourinary conditions
- Minor injuries and illnesses
- Minor eye injury
- Minor lacerations
- Minor nose bleeds
- Nausea and vomiting
- Rashes
- Removal of simple foreign bodies
- Respiratory and upper respiratory infections
- Simple small burns
- Sprains
- Strep throat
- Urinary tract infections

To make an appointment, call (336) 846-6322.



Shown here is the first conceptual drawing of the site and the new Mountain Family Care Center.