

Contributor

Help build an innovative Emergency Department to better serve our region for decades to come

Benefis Foundation launches campaign to raise \$2.5 million for project

Pediatric Hospitalist Dr. Nora Gerrity remembers a day she was called to the Benefis Emergency Department because a child had drowned. The emergency team was working fast in that trauma room; every moment counted. The hallway was filled with the boy's family members, who were emotional and praying for his life.



Dr. Nora Gerrity

In a nearby room sat an adolescent who was suffering with emotional distress and having suicidal thoughts. Dr. Gerrity recalls wishing he could be taken to a distant room that was quiet, calming and safe – a room where he wouldn't hear the chaotic sounds in the hallway right outside.

Scott Schandelson, manager of Benefis Emergency Services, remembers the catastrophic ice storm that hit Great Falls last winter and how the Emergency Department was bursting at the seams because of it. All of the department's 14 rooms plus its four trauma rooms were full. The waiting room was packed.



Patients were being taken to rooms in empty neighboring departments, which hadn't been used in years for clinical purposes.

Inefficient patient flow. Enormous wait times. Not enough room. To put it plain and simple: this just isn't working. But Benefis Health System has a solution – it's time to build a new Emergency Department and, once again, we need donor support to make it the best it can be for when you or your loved ones face your worst day.

“The Emergency Department is one place we hope we never have to visit,” said Chris Reiquam, Chair of the Benefis Foundation Board and co-chair of the Emergency Department campaign. **“But, in reality, the majority of us at one time will need to visit, and when that time comes we want it to be efficient, well-equipped and not overcrowded.”**



Chris Reiquam

The current Emergency Department opened in 1998, shortly after the Deaconess and Columbus Hospitals merged to create Benefis Health System. The state-of-the-art department came to be thanks to the generosity of two Great Falls families – Carter and Judy Williams and Keith and Olive Ario – who made the lead gifts to bring the project to life.

When the Williams-Ario Regional Emergency & Trauma Center first opened, the physicians and highly trained nursing staff were delivering exceptional care to around 24,000 patients a year. Our emergency care providers continue to offer exceptional care, but the number of patients has grown to more than 34,000 a year and the department wasn't built to handle that volume. Still, all patients are accepted regardless of their ability to pay.

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Emergency Department Campaign



Continued from the cover

Benefis has come up with an innovative solution to the Emergency Department challenges that will serve our region for decades to come.

The Benefis Foundation Board of Directors has committed to raising \$2.5 million of the \$12.5 million that the new Emergency Department will cost, and Benefis employees have already stepped up with \$400,000 in pledges and gifts.

We are looking to the greater community and region to help us with this important project – your support will make it possible to bring the project to full fruition.

The fact is you or someone you know will eventually need the services provided by the Benefis Emergency Department, and you won't want to have to wait several hours or get stuck in a hallway until a room opens up.

"After touring the department, it came to light that it is a very crowded place," said Mary Beth Ewen, who is co-chairing the campaign with Chris.

"I think a lot of people are not aware that they are seeing 10,000 more patients each year than when the current department was built. They are doing a good job with what they have, but they really need more space and more state-of-the-art equipment." ♦

A video about the ED Campaign is on the Benefis Foundation website: benefisfoundation.org



Please support the new Benefis Emergency Department

You can make a gift using the enclosed giving envelope or make your gift online at benefisfoundation.org.

For information about opportunities such as naming a room in the new department, please call the Benefis Foundation office at 406.455.5840.

The new Emergency Department will incorporate many improvements and innovations, such as:

- ♦ A covered entrance canopy to the reception concourse off a new main entrance at the corner of 11th Avenue South and 28th Street South.
- ♦ Multiple intake rooms at the front of the department where a physician will be able to rapidly assess patient needs.
- ♦ More than 30 patient rooms, all significantly larger than present, including two specially outfitted for pediatric patients and two multi-purpose rooms for exams and procedures. Expanded space will make it possible for family members to be more involved in the care process.
- ♦ An enclosed ambulance garage with drive-through access so ambulances no longer will have to back up more than 200 feet to unload patients in sometimes harsh weather conditions.
- ♦ Three large Trauma/Resuscitation rooms with direct access from the Mercy Flight helipad and the ambulance garage.
- ♦ A two-room behavioral health suite with a separate bathroom and observation anteroom so a patient facing a psychiatric crisis can be cared for in a safe, secure, calming setting.

♦ A two-room SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Exam) suite, with a separate bathroom and shower; the first room will be a safe, comfortable area for interviews of victims of sexual or domestic abuse and the second will be for medical exams.

♦ Multiple healthcare team stations for nurses and medical staff with direct line of sight to all the rooms under their care.

♦ Decontamination areas adjacent to the ambulance garage and trauma rooms that can be completely isolated so a highly contagious patient or patient suffering from a chemical exposure can be treated without forcing the closure of the entire ED.

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Longtime Great Falls Neurosurgeon's Family Gives Back With Gifts of Stock and Book Royalties

Just like with Christmas presents under the tree, charitable gifts come in all different shapes and sizes.

Dr. George Schemm, who was a celebrated neurosurgeon in Great Falls for nearly 20 years before retiring in Oregon, and his wife, Janet, gave a special gift to the Benefis Foundation shortly before Dr. Schemm passed away in 2014.

Along with giving gifts of stock, they directed the royalties of the 13 novels written by Dr. Schemm's mother, noted author Mildred Walker Schemm, who penned a story about Montana farm life called *Winter Wheat*, to support a family endowment they created.

The Dr. George and Janet Schemm Endowment was set up to support continuing education for care providers (nurses and technicians) who work in the Benefis Health System Surgery Department.

"George had talked about leaving money to Benefis – he was always a Montana boy," said Janet, who lives in Oregon City. **"He always wanted to direct it to the surgical staff there, whom he said were top-notch; Sue Warren was one of his favorites. And he enjoyed working with neurosurgeon Dr. Dale Schaefer throughout Dr. Schaefer's training."**

Sue Warren, Director of Nursing/Senior Services at Benefis, fondly recalls the "privilege, if not honor" of working with Dr. Schemm, whom she describes as a highly respected neurosurgeon who changed and saved lives.

"I was a young nurse in the ICU," she said. **"He not only was a physician but enjoyed teaching the nurses in the ICU, where most of his patients came after 10-12 hours of surgery. He was humble and passionate about his patient care and held nurses in high regard."**

Dr. Schemm followed in the footsteps of his father, who was a cardiologist and surgeon, when he went to medical school, earning his undergraduate degree at Yale and then an M.D. from the University of Michigan. He met Janet, his wife of 47 years, while working as associate professor of Neurosurgery at the University of Oregon medical school. They moved to Philadelphia, where Dr. Schemm taught at the Medical College of Pennsylvania, and then settled in Great Falls, where



Janet and George Schemm, MD

they raised four daughters while he worked in private practice until 1990.

After Dr. Schemm retired, they returned to Oregon and Janet said they went on to enjoy 22 years of memorable adventures.

"But we always had a foot there in Montana," she said. "We have a cabin in the Rocky Mountain Front and have great friends up there."

About a year before Dr. Schemm passed away, Janet said he became ill

and they started talking about making the gift to Benefis and Great Falls. After talking with his other family members, they decided to direct the royalties of more than a dozen books written by their mother to the Benefis Foundation.

Mildred Walker's books were first published by Harcourt, Brace & Co., but by the mid-1970s many were out of print. The University of Nebraska Press began reissuing the works in 1992, and a decade later *Winter Wheat* was chosen by the Montana Center for the Book as the "One Book Montana" subject for reading discussions throughout the state.

Because the Benefis Foundation owns the royalties from Mildred Walker's books, anyone who buys *Winter Wheat* or any of her other famed titles is indirectly supporting continuing education for the Benefis surgical staff. Earnings from the Dr. George and Janet Schemm Endowment are already being used to send surgical care providers to educational conferences to improve and enhance their skills.

"Dr. Schemm's long hours with the surgical team at the former Montana Deaconess Medical Center has led to this incredible support of continuing education for surgical nurses and techs," said Warren. **"This is a tremendous gift which will last well into the future as a tribute to his transformation of neurosurgical care."** ♦

"It's just winter wheat to the people who raise it, only to me it means more than that. It means all the winter and all the cold and the tight feeling of the house in winter, but the rich secret feeling I have, too, of treasure in the ground, growing there for us, waiting for the cold to be over to push up strong and green."

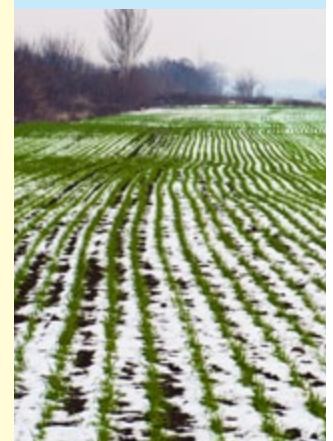
From *Winter Wheat* by Mildred Walker



When you buy any of Mildred Walker's books, you are helping to provide continuing education for the surgical staff at Benefis Health System.

Here is a list of titles to look for:

- Fireweed, 1934*
- Light from Arcturus, 1935*
- Dr. Norton's Wife, 1938*
- The Brewers' Big Horses, 1940*
- Unless the Wind Turns, 1941*
- Winter Wheat, 1944*
- The Quarry, 1947*
- Medical Meeting, 1949*
- The Southwest Corner, 1951*
- The Curlew's Cry, 1955*
- The Body of a Young Man, 1960*
- If a Lion Could Talk, 1970*
- The Orange Tree, 2006*



Foundation Scholarship Programs Pass \$1 Million Mark With Latest Awards



Benefis Health System Foundation has awarded 39 college students from Great Falls and the surrounding areas with \$81,250 in healthcare scholarships for the fall 2016 and spring 2017 semesters.

The Foundation also provided \$6,750 towards the MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus Upper Division Summer Internship, which fulfills a graduation requirement for 9 students. The funds came from the Cecil & Dorothy Goodbrand Nursing Scholarship.

With these awards, the Benefis Foundation has awarded more than \$1 million in healthcare scholarships since the Healthcare Scholarship Program began in 1998.

“Over the years, our donors have helped more than 500 students reach their career dreams,” said Benefis Foundation President Dan Hollow.

“Through giving to this program, our donors also have helped staff Benefis Health System and other hospitals and clinics in our region with quality healthcare professionals, several of whom were able to advance their degrees and become family nurse practitioners and physician’s assistants thanks to these scholarships.”

The Healthcare Scholarship Program offers a general Medical Education Scholarship, more than a dozen Named Scholarships funded by generous donors for years, and several other scholarships that all are directed toward students pursuing degrees or certifications in healthcare. All of the scholarships are listed online at benefisfoundation.org. The application deadline is June 1 each year.



Congratulations to the Fall 2016 and Spring 2017 Awardees

Scholarships are for nursing unless stated otherwise.

Benefis Family Scholarship

Jill Yeager, CHOTEAU, Great Falls College-MSU

Austin Klinger, GREAT FALLS, Healthcare Administration, MSU Billings

Marie Franko, CASCADE, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Sadie Ondick, GREAT FALLS, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Bloemendaal Family Scholarship

Jodi Johnson, BYNUM, Great Falls College-MSU

Jane M. Buckman Husted Memorial Nursing Scholarship

Shawn Blackman, BROWNING, Blackfeet Community College

Darcy Dengel Mercy Flight Scholarship

Kelsie Kubick, GREAT FALLS, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Bonnie Gardner Memorial Nursing Scholarship

Jessica Bray, GREAT FALLS, Walden University

Madison Wall, GREAT FALLS, Carroll College

Maria Bernhardt, BILLINGS, MSU College of Nursing, Billings Campus

Cecil & Dorothy Goodbrand Nursing Scholarship

Cori Enseleit, GREAT FALLS, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Marie Franko, CASCADE, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Madison Wall, GREAT FALLS, Carroll College

Heidi Winslow, GREAT FALLS, St. John’s College of Nursing

Evan Thompson, GREAT FALLS, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Julie Hickethier Nursing Scholarship

Brooklynn Merja, FORT SHAW, Carroll College

Mercy Flight Scholarship

Evan Thompson, GREAT FALLS, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Medical Education Scholarship

Katy Merrick, GREAT FALLS, Great Falls College-MSU

Justin Stokes, CONRAD, Great Falls College-MSU

Caleb Taylor, GREAT FALLS, Surgical Technician, Great Falls College-MSU

Danielle Tierney, GREAT FALLS, Certified Surgical Assistant, ACE Surgical Assisting

Patricia Aimsback, HEART BUTTE, Blackfeet Community College

Rebecca Rutherford, BROWNING, Blackfeet Community College

Gavin Lee, GREAT FALLS, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Michele Van Valkenburg, GEYSER, Great Falls College-MSU

Sadie Ondick, GREAT FALLS, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Rice Family Scholarship

Alyssa Hogan, GREAT FALLS, Master’s in Occupational Therapy, University of Mary

John & Darlene Skees Memorial Nursing Scholarship

Tarracea Eckenstein, GREAT FALLS, Master’s in Nursing Leadership and Administration, Capella University

Jennephyr Reiche-Sterling, SUN RIVER, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Jaimee Gregoire, GREAT FALLS, Master’s in Nursing Administration, Benedictine University

Scott Schandelson, GREAT FALLS, Master’s in Nursing Leadership and Administration, Capella University

Patricia Vielle, SAND COULEE, Master’s in Nursing Leadership, Capella University

Triston Fitzgerald, BABB, Blackfeet Community College

Spencer Mitchell, GREAT FALLS, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Ed & Ethel Ugrin Memorial Scholarship

Heather Smith, GREAT FALLS, Nurse Practitioner, Walden University

Deborah A. Wilson Memorial Nursing Scholarship

Michelle Curtis, VAUGHN, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Frances M. Wylder Scholarship

Bobbi Gallineaux, BROWNING, Blackfeet Community College

Thomas Cole, GREAT FALLS, Surgical Technician, Great Falls College-MSU

Kyra Mad Plume, BROWNING, Blackfeet Community College

Crystal St. Goddard, BROWNING, Blackfeet Community College

Michael White, GREAT FALLS, Great Falls College-MSU

Gavin Lee, GREAT FALLS, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Margaret Wynn Memorial Nursing Scholarship

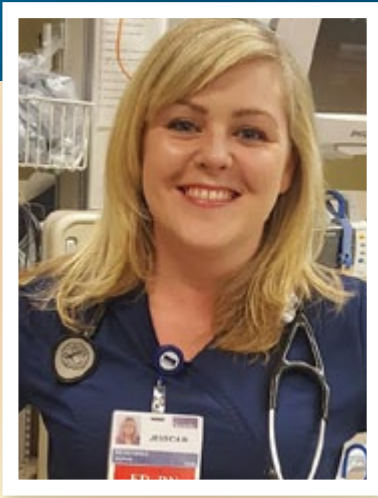
Kelsie Kubick, GREAT FALLS, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

Jennifer Laisnez, CHOTEAU, Great Falls College-MSU

Shelby Senger, GREAT FALLS, MSU College of Nursing, Great Falls Campus

“The John and Darlene Skees Memorial Nursing Scholarship will lessen the burden of paying tuition while obtaining my master’s degree and raising two babies. Thank you for your continued support of so many students who are furthering their education in hopes to give back to the community through the nursing profession.”

Jaimee Gregoire, Great Falls



"This scholarship will help me complete my master's degree and allow me to serve my community at a higher level than I can now. I am thankful to the Bonnie Gardner family for setting up this scholarship through the Benefis Foundation. This gift will have a lasting impact on the lives of nurses, the facility and the patients who will be served."

Jessica Bray, Great Falls



"It is a wonderful feeling to have support like this. This scholarship makes me feel even more dedicated and inspired to help patients through my clinicals in school and in my future job as an RN."

Cori Enseleit, Great Falls



"This money will help tremendously. I am a single father, and I'm on a fixed income until graduation. This scholarship will give my family the financial boost that we need."

Thomas Cole,
Great Falls



"With our aging population and shortage of nurses, I feel this scholarship helps open the door for people who may not have been able to enter the nursing field. This especially applies to someone like me as I have small children to take care of while making a career change."

Michael White, Great Falls

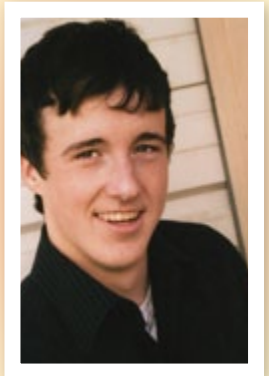
"Thank you for your generosity to help me pay my tuition as I continue nursing school. This award will make a difference in the lives of patients because they will have nurses with compassion, skills and knowledge to provide quality care."

Patricia Aimsback, Heart Butte



"This scholarship will make a big difference in my life by taking away some of the stress that comes with trying to find ways to pay for college. This award will help me become a surgical tech and make a positive difference in the lives of our patients."

Caleb Taylor, Great Falls



"I am grateful for this generous scholarship, which will make going back to school that much easier for myself and my family. I will be able to work as a registered nurse and contribute to the need for RNs here in Choteau at Benefis Teton Medical Center."

Jill Yeager, Choteau

You Can Help Make Dreams Come True

To support the Healthcare Scholarship Program, you may use the enclosed giving envelope to make a gift. To learn more about creating a named scholarship endowment to carry on your family's legacy, please call 406.455.5840.

Young Professionals Enjoy Benefits Foundation “Lunch & Learn” Sessions

Early this year, Benefits Foundation introduced a new program aimed at educating young professionals on the breadth of services offered at Benefits Health System. Come

December, the group will have met four times and heard presentations on topics ranging from sports specific training to emergency services. They even took a guided tour of the beautiful Benefits Sletten Cancer Institute and listened to the institute's talented professionals explain the many services they offer to the region.

“I wanted to get to know and work with professionals within our community,” said

Marilyn Parker, Director of Planned Giving and Finance at Benefits Foundation. **“We recognize that these professionals will be leaders in our community for years to come. I am so energized by the talent, humility, and generosity I see in them.”**

Marilyn organized the Lunch and Learn sessions to help educate young professionals on the health system's many services, particularly those they have not yet experienced firsthand. The group included professionals from a variety of fields, including attorneys, dentists, CPAs and business owners, making the audience as varied as the subject matter.



Marilyn Parker

“I wasn't really sure what to expect,” said Alyse Considine, a junior account manager and publicity coordinator for The Wendt Agency. “There was more exposure to what Benefits offers for learning opportunities compared to networking opportunities.”

Each presentation has highlighted both the scope of Benefits' services and the vital role philanthropy plays in keeping our community healthy. The impact of our donors' generosity is visible in every facet of the hospital.

“The tour of the cancer center was a very powerful experience; I took a lot away from that session,” said Audra Bergman, who

owns and operates Groundworks Farm in Fort Shaw. “The tour paid close attention to both the innovative technology and the compassion and care available to patients facing some of their hardest days.

“We don't usually get to interact with those who provide care until we or a loved one has a health crisis,” Parker said. **“We feel fortunate to be able to introduce members of our community to these professionals.”**

Next year's young professionals will be selected and invited by input from this year's outgoing group. And all who have gone through the series will be welcomed back for biannual presentations that will continue to explore the services Benefits offers. ♦



Above: Adam Elliott, a Medical Physicist at Benefits Sletten Cancer Institute, leads the group on a guided tour of the Radiation Oncology wing. The area combines state-of-the-art technologies like the linear accelerator, with soothing surroundings to keep patients at ease.

Bottom left: Supervisor Dan Groux presents on the many services offered for both students and adults through RESULTS Sports Specific Training and the Benefits Orthopedic Center.

IRA Charitable Rollover Made Permanent

For those who are 70½ or older, it is once again possible to make tax-favored charitable gifts from traditional and Roth IRA accounts.

Congress has passed legislation making this provision permanent for future years. A total of up to \$100,000 can be transferred directly from traditional or Roth IRAs to one or more qualified charities, such as Benefits Health System Foundation, free from federal income tax each year. There may also be state income tax savings. Amounts given in this way count toward required IRA minimum withdrawal amounts for the year of the gift.

To make such gifts, it is important to not withdraw funds prior to a gift, but have the gift amount distributed directly from an IRA to one or more qualified charities. For those with check writing privileges on their accounts, this may be the most efficient way to make gifts directly from an IRA.

Check with us, your IRA administrator or your tax advisor for more information.

For more tax-advantaged giving ideas, information about the Montana Endowment Tax Credit, and gifts that can provide an income stream for you and your family, call Marilyn Parker at 406.455.5836. ♦



Buzz Your Fuzz Raises \$38,000 to Help Cancer Patients



Left: Jordan Husted gets "buzzed" by Morgan Knudson and Charlie Murphy. Above: Joe Eve, Tom Mathews, Dan Konen, Josh Eve, Jordan Husted, Quay Butler, Zane Drishinski, Dan Hollow, Grant Eve, and Cody Lindabury.

The 6th annual Buzz Your Fuzz event, held at the Hollis Hi Ho on August 27, was another wonderful success thanks to the nearly 20 people who collected pledges, the amazing live and silent auctions that featured everything from ski resort getaways to a guided hunt in South Africa, and the generosity of the many people who gave to support the cause.

This year's event raised more than \$45,500, with about \$38,000 going to the Sletten Cancer Institute and about \$8,000 to the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle.

The event is organized by a dedicated group of people who each year reach out to family, friends and numerous businesses for support. They do this in memory of former Great Falls and Whitefish resident Michael Eve, who lost his fight with renal cell carcinoma in 2009 at the age of 49, in an effort to help the many people in our community and region who battle cancer each year.

"Cancer treatment services at the Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute bring hope to cancer patients and families throughout Montana," said Joe Lo Duca, Chief Administrative Officer of Benefis Cancer and Heart & Vascular.

"As an increased number of people are covered by high deductible health insurance plans, requiring larger out of pocket payments, philanthropy like this is more critical than ever. Whether we are helping patients with transportation, wigs, prosthetics, nutrition, genetic counseling or other critical cancer services, support from this event will make a huge difference," he added.

Thanks to all of the caring organizers and everyone who supported this year's Buzz Your Fuzz. Your generosity will help make the cancer journey a little better and easier for many of our patients and their families. ♦



Best of Show: 1931 Model A Sedan



Men and Machines

Car Show Success Brings Support for Cancer Patients

The 5th Annual Men & Machines Car Show, held September 10 at the Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute, was a record-breaking success.

The event raised about \$8,600 for Sletten's Circle of Hope Program, which helps cancer patients by providing support services and helping with non-medical expenses such as housing and travel for their treatment.

The event focused on men's health awareness and included a health "Pit Stop" with guidelines for health maintenance and regular check-ups.

Activities also included the kiddie corner, delicious food vendors, and, of course, the car and bike show with more than 150 registered cars and motorcycles.

Each year a special group of Benefis employees and volunteers organize this event and reach out to the community, friends and numerous businesses for support. A special thanks to all of them as well as everyone who bought raffle tickets and attended the show. ♦



Richard and Bridget Brennan, MD

Medical Director's Family Invests in Community Through Generous Pledge to Emergency Services



Richard and Dr. Bridget Brennan continue to be in awe that they can stand on the back deck of their house just south of Great Falls and see the Highwood Mountains in one direction and the Rocky Mountain Front in the other direction.

The Brennans moved to Great Falls from South Carolina after falling in love with Montana during summer vacations where they took their three children to explore Yellowstone Park, Glacier Park and other parts of the Treasure State.

"We thought this will be the place to retire," said Dr. Brennan, Medical Director of Benefis Emergency Services. **"Then we thought, why wait?"**

When Dr. Brennan received a recruiting call from Benefis Health System, they decided to come have a look at Great Falls. Richard said although it was covered in a blanket of snow and looked rather flat the day they flew in for a visit, they couldn't be happier about living in such a beautiful area.



Hannah, Richard, Bridget, Noah and Rachel Brennan love hiking in Glacier National Park.

Along with being invested in the area, the Brennans are invested in Benefis – specifically the Emergency Services Department that Dr. Brennan has overseen as Medical Director for the past two years.

"The potential for the Emergency Department is so huge," she said. "And its impact on the region is so huge."

When the Benefis Foundation launched a capital campaign to raise money to help support the Health System's project to build a new Emergency Department, Richard and Dr. Brennan sat down with their children Rachel, Noah and Hannah to discuss giving a gift.

"It's a family choice and a big decision," said Dr. Brennan. **"So we sat down and told them our options and got their input. They liked the idea of giving a gift to name the helipad."**

"The irony is I won't fly; I'm a huge chicken," she added. "But I've had involvement with flight crews throughout my career, and it's such a huge part of what we do."

Dr. Brennan has been involved in the design of the new department and looks forward to having the extra space and specialty rooms so they'll be able to take care of patients adequately.

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Through the Brennan family's gift to support the Benefis Emergency Department project, the Mercy Flight helipad will bear their family's name.

There are several other naming opportunities available for the new Emergency Department, such as the Care Stations, the Trauma Rooms, the SANE Room, the Bereavement Room, and many patient rooms. Donors have the option of making gifts over a three-year time period, which may help them make the best use of their tax benefits, including the Montana Endowment Tax Credit.

To learn more about these naming opportunities or making a gift to support the Emergency Department, please call the Benefis Foundation office at 406.455.5840.

Great Falls Tough Enough to Wear Pink Raises \$14,559 in Support of Cancer Patients

Everyone thinks Breast Health Awareness is only during October, but the local Big Sky Pro-Rodeo Roundup was busy raising money during the Montana State Fair.

This summer's Great Falls Tough Enough to Wear Pink events raised more than \$14,500, which will be used to buy fuel/gas cards to help cancer patients and their families get to and from cancer treatments.

The money was raised through a pint night at the Mighty Mo Brewing Company on July 25, the Cowgirl U ladies rodeo clinic at the Big Sky ProRodeo on August 5, the 50/50 held during the rodeo, the "50 Shades of Pink" purses raffle, and the raffle of the champagne-pink sapphire ring that was generously donated by Fox Fine Jewelers and Hempl's Bakery.

Tough Enough to Wear Pink Committee member Lacey Gallagher said there is a great need for help with the cost of driving to the various types of treatment and appointments a patient may have at Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute. For those who live in Northcentral Montana, the distance is great and some patients travel daily for care. Local cancer patients will also receive help from the funds raised too.

She also said that Holiday Stationstores company, where the cards were purchased, kindly donated \$100 for every \$1,000 spent on gas cards.

A huge thanks to the many caring people who helped organize the events, sponsored the events, gave donations, bought raffle tickets or gave donations in other ways. You are making cancer treatment possible for many people who may not have the means to get to their appointments without this support. ♦



Three-year breast cancer survivor Missy Greenwood of Great Falls attended Cowgirl U with her daughter and stepdaughter. She said she loved the opportunity to meet so many women who have gone through a similar experience.

"It was good to get together, compare notes, see where they are at in their journey. I have not had that opportunity before, and I think it's important to know you're not alone in it."

— Missy Greenwood



"The department is outdated and the rooms are tiny," she said. "We currently don't have the capacity to take care of people the way we need to and want to. We've got a family here, too, and I want them to be taken care of if they need to be taken care of."

"The Emergency Department is really the front door to the hospital for many people," added Richard. **"The impression the Emergency Department gives of the hospital is the lasting impression many people will have. People know they get good care there. When they get the new department up and running, it's going to be great for the future of Benefis."**

Dr. Brennan said Benefis has been very successful with the recruiting of superbly trained physicians, noting there are 10 doctors and three family nurse practitioners in the department.

"We have a great core group of very smart doctors," she said. "They have families, too, and are very invested in this community."

Along with supporting the Emergency Department, the Brennans give to support Benefis Peace Hospice, where Richard works with the bereavement program and as a registry chaplain.

Richard, who was ordained as a Catholic priest before he left the priesthood and became a family man, said he has never seen a Spiritual Care Program like the one at Benefis.

"The area of pastoral care is remarkable," he said. "There is a core group of volunteers who are committed in a way I've never seen."

The Brennans commitment to giving also stems from when their youngest daughter, Hannah, was diagnosed with leukemia at age 3. Thankfully, Hannah's treatment was successful. She is now thriving as a sophomore in high school as are their other two children, Noah, who is a senior, and Rachel, who is attending Great Falls College-MSU.

"We had to do more with less at times, and there were so many people who were kind to us," said Richard. **"And it's how we were raised. Giving is just second nature; it's just part of who we are."**

"Plus, we moved across the country for this job," added Dr. Brennan. **"We are invested in this."** ♦

Foundation Donors Create Lasting Legacies

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Student Builds Train Set for Benefis Pediatrics

Thanks to Griff Malloy for the fun model train set he donated to Benefis Pediatrics for patients, families and visitors to enjoy.

Griff, who attends California Polytechnic State University – San Luis Obispo, designed and built the 4-by-8-foot train set as his senior English project at C.M. Russell High School and completed it just before he graduated in 2014.

John and Joy Meyer donated the base for the train set, and **Rory Klaue**, who works in Benefis Facilities, built the display case for it.

The train set was installed on the 6th floor, just outside of the Benefis Pediatrics wing, at Benefis East Campus.



"My main goal was to provide entertainment for kids who are here and for family members who need a distraction for their kids for a bit," Griff said. **"Plus, trains are cool. I really enjoy them."**

Thank you, Griff, for bringing a little bit of fun to make the hospital visit better for our pediatric patients and their families.



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You and your math teacher may be shocked to learn this is true, but giving through a **Deferred Payment Gift Annuity**, or DPGA, is the solution!

Planned giving really does equal smart giving, and some simple math proves it. Designating your gift for one of our many endowment funds is the "x" factor in the scribbled equation below:

You can take the example and multiply your gift by any number and your benefits increase proportionally. For example, a \$15,000 gift has a net cost of \$6,080.

As you can see, it pays to do the math. Best of all, the math is no problem because Benefis Health System Foundation has planned giving experts who can do all of the necessary calculations for you free of charge.

The Montana Endowment Tax Credit makes all the difference in this equation. It can only be received by making a planned gift, such as a DPGA, to a permanent endowment fund.

A gift through a DPGA is a simple and easy way to leverage your charitable gift for the best benefit for you and the people who are helped through the Benefis Foundation.

Because actual numbers vary with an individual's tax bracket and age, please call Marilyn Parker at 406.455.5840. She would be happy to help with your homework! ♦



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Please call Kelly Michel, Benefis Foundation's Director of Annual Giving, at 406.455.5842 to sign up or find out more.



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Thank you for supporting Benefis Foundation!

Our donors deserve proper recognition for being so amazing. If your name is listed incorrectly, please contact us & allow us to apologize & correct our records: 406.455.5840 or by email, foundation@benefis.org.

Chemo Care Totes Donated to Help Cancer Patients

Thanks to Amber Kenner and the kindhearted people who supported her drive to provide 33 Chemo Care Totes for patients being treated at the Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute.

Amber came up with the idea to donate the totes after a close relative was diagnosed with leukemia and a friend's mother passed away from cancer. She said she felt "shocked and helpless" and wanted to do something to help.

The local Thirty-One Gifts consultant reached out to her Facebook friends to see if anyone was interested in donating the cost of a tote, which she would fill with care items for cancer patients. She said "it really hit home" for a lot of people. Some also donated the cost to have the totes personalized with inspiring words.

Amber then reached out to Great Falls businesses, asking for donations to fill the totes and, again, was happily surprised by all of the support she received. She also directed all of her commission from the purchase of the totes to help with the contents, which include journals, adult coloring books, *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books, water bottles, hand sanitizer, tissue, candy, lozenges, gift certificates for free sandwiches and coffee drinks, and more.

These wonderful totes are sure to brighten the day for the patients who receive them. Thanks again, Amber!



Donor Gifts Make New Senior Services Bus Possible



YOUR GIFTS
AT WORK

Feeding the ducks at Gibson Park. Fall foliage drives. Christmas lights tours. Trips to the C.M. Russell Museum, the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center and other local and regional museums. These and other excursions are now on the agenda for the residents of Benefis Senior Care!

Thanks to our donors, Benefis Senior Services now has a new bus that can take up to 14 passengers, a mix of regular seating and up to six wheelchairs at a time.

“I cannot say enough about how this is going to enrich the lives of our residents,” said Becky Pugh, Community Mentor at Benefis Senior Services. **“This is their home but, as great as it is, no one wants to stay home all the time.** Now we have the ability to go out and do basic things such as shopping or visiting another campus. **You wouldn’t believe how much some of those things that we see as mundane chores really mean the world to our residents when they get to do them again.”**

Becky said they’ve carefully trained the staff on how to use the seatbelts and how to lock the safety restraints for the wheelchairs. Now the bus is on the move, rolling around town and helping residents with their “bucket list” items.

“One gentleman mentioned how he wished he could see his farm ‘one last time,’” she said. “He said it to another resident, who came to me asking if we could help. The resident who had asked started crying with joy. He was so happy we would do something to help his friend get his wish.”



Becky said another resident really wants to go to a Great Falls Central High School football game.

“I told her we will take her to a game,” she said. “The resident couldn’t believe it. She didn’t think she was important enough to use the new bus for her request.”

The Benefis Senior Services team is grateful to the many donors who made it possible to get this new bus to enrich the lives of the residents.

“Often it’s just getting out and driving that our residents love the most, especially if we include an ice cream stop or a donut/bakery item as a treat,” said Becky. **“Thank you so much!”** ♦

Family’s Donation Spurs Purchase of Tables for Hospice House

Longtime Great Falls postal worker and veteran Stanley H. Anderson was the kind of guy who always gave back to others.

As a teenager, Stan joined the Marines and went to fight in World War II. He also was a survivor of the epic 1950 battle of the Chosin Reservoir, where 15,000 allied ground troops went up against 120,000 Chinese in the North Korean mountains near Manchuria.

Stan returned to Great Falls and spent the next 47 years working at the post office. Upon retiring, he gave his time as a volunteer until he was no longer able to work.

“Stan was a very giving person, someone who wanted to be able to help other people,” said his niece, Wendy Kennedy, who lives in Cut Bank.

Stan spent his final days in the Peace Hospice Residential Facility. He passed away in 2012 at age 84. His nieces and nephews were grateful for the excellent care he received in the comfortable and homey “Hospice House.”



They wanted to give a donation to the Hospice House to honor their uncle, who had given so much of his life and labor and efforts to the Great Falls community. So together they gave a generous gift to purchase new over-bed tables for the patient rooms, replacing old tables that “were getting harder to fix and maintain” according to Peace Hospice staff.

“When we talked to the staff about what to do with our gift, they were helpful in understanding that Stan would want something that would help other people,” said Wendy. **“He would have wanted the bedside tables for the patients.”**

In order to buy tables for all 20 rooms at the Hospice House, some of the cost had to be taken from the Peace Hospice and Peace Hospice Residential Facility funds held by the Benefis Foundation. The new tables have been in use since early this year and have made an enormous difference for the patients as well as the staff and volunteers who serve them.

Thanks to Stan’s family and to all of the Peace Hospice donors who helped give this meaningful gift. What a wonderful way to honor a remarkable person! ♦

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Voyagers Jersey Auction Raises \$4,310 for Children's Bereavement Program



Top: Player Richard McWilliams signs the jersey won by Tanya Cameron.

Right: Christine and Vincent Lencioni were the lucky winners of Jameson Fisher's jersey.

Russell Country Federal Credit Union presents the check to Benefis Foundation and Benefis Peace Hospice staff.



We are thrilled to share news that the Great Falls Voyagers jersey auction raised \$4,310 for the Benefis Children's Bereavement Program. **At the July 16th game, 30 jerseys were auctioned, with Corey Zangari's going for the highest bid of \$230.**

Thank you to the Voyagers and Centene Stadium for this fun and family-friendly fundraiser and for all who went out to the ball game that night and bid on the jerseys. And a special thanks to Russell Country Federal Credit Union for choosing the Children's Bereavement Program as the beneficiary of this year's auction.

The Children's Bereavement Program helps so many children who are suffering the loss of a parent, sibling or other close loved one through a summer camp for younger kids, a fall weekend retreat for teenagers, support groups in the high schools, a regional outreach program to reach bereaved children in outlying areas, an annual Christmas party and more.

The program, which teaches children how to deal with grief in healthy ways, needs donations in order to continue providing this important care. Thanks again to all who supported this event! ♦

