

Contributor



Building a Better Emergency Department

Emergencies happen when you least expect them.

The Benefis Emergency Department provides excellent care for patients arriving with everything from a minor emergency or illness to those who may be experiencing the worst day of their life.

This excellent care will continue for the thousands of patients that arrive through the doors of the ER each year, but soon that care will be delivered in a new, state-of-the-art facility designed for the future.

Benefis has one of only four Level II Trauma Centers in Montana. This means that highly skilled teams are ready to respond 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to provide expert care to tens of thousands of patients annually. Over the years, there has been a huge increase in demand for the Benefis Emergency Department. The current center was built in 1998 and was designed to serve 24,000 patients per year. However, they now care for more than 34,000 patients per year, highlighting the need for a new and improved Emergency Department.

The plans for the new state-of-the-art Emergency Department are very ambitious.

The plans will address increasing the number and size of rooms, improving efficiency to rapidly assess patient needs and decrease wait times, improving comfort for patients and families, and implementing new, innovative approaches and tools for patient care.

More specifically, **the new Emergency Department will have 33 rooms, up from the 18 rooms currently.** The new rooms will be significantly larger and will allow family members to be more actively involved with their loved one's care, as well as allocating additional space for current and future

technologies. The Emergency Department staff is in the process of determining the best design for the patient rooms. The Benefis Facilities team built full-size mock-ups of the rooms for our clinical teams to use in the process of designing every detail of the rooms, as shown in the photos on page 2.

Improved efficiency was of the utmost importance when planning the design for the new Emergency Department. There will be multiple rooms at the front of the new department where a physician will be on hand to rapidly assess each patients' needs.

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Your support is needed

NELSON ARCHITECTS



Emergency Department

Continued from the cover

Additionally, the healthcare team stations will be located where the nurses and medical staff have direct line of sight of the patients under their care.

Improving comfort has also been an integral part of the plans for the new center. A new main entrance with a covered canopy to the reception concourse and waiting area is planned to provide better protection from the elements. An enclosed ambulance garage with drive-through access is also being added so ambulances will no longer have to back up 200 feet to unload patients outdoors in harsh weather conditions.

Because of the commitment to make this the best Emergency Department possible for years to come, innovation is playing a big part in the design as well.

The innovations include:

✚ A two-room behavioral health suite with a separate bathroom and observation anteroom, so a patient facing a psychiatric episode can be cared for in a secure and calm setting.

✚ A two-room SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Exam) suite with a separate bathroom and shower to provide a safe and secure area for interviews and a second room for medical exams.



✚ New decontamination areas adjacent to the new ambulance garage and trauma rooms that can be completely isolated to prevent the entire Emergency Department from being forced to close down in the case of a highly contagious person or group of people requiring treatment.

Kevin Langkiet, Benefis Director of Emergency Services, is leading the charge, with help from physicians, Emergency Department staff, and other departments such as radiology, laboratory, surgery, IT services, and housekeeping, as well as contractors and design groups, to create the best facility possible.

The Benefis Foundation Board of Directors has committed to raising \$2.5 million of the \$12.5 million the new Emergency Department will cost. Thanks to generous donors we are more than a third of the way to our goal, but we still need help. ✚

Here are a few ways you can get involved

Make a gift by using the enclosed giving envelope or make your gift online at benefisfoundation.org.

Ask us about naming opportunities, such as naming a new room in the department.

Let us come speak to your service organization or group about this important project.

Organize an event to benefit the Emergency Department. If you would like help with an idea, please contact the Benefis Foundation office at 406-455-5840.

Stay connected. Visit us online at benefisfoundation.org and like us on Facebook to learn the latest news about the Emergency Department project.

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Full-size room mock-ups ensure that no detail is overlooked.

The Emergency Department worked with teams from across the system to make sure the mock-up rooms were outfitted to handle any situation. Many departments, such as Respiratory Therapy and Radiology, provided input on room design to fully enhance the experience of their patients.

Dr. Paul & Cindy Dolan

Extraordinary Service and Gratitude

The Dolans have made it their life-long mission to serve others, whether by providing patient care, mentoring young adults at risk, or providing philanthropic support to causes that are important to them.



In the summer of 2012, Dr. Paul and Cindy Dolan found themselves needing the services that they had so often provided for others. Their son, Kyle, became unexpectedly sick – very sick. It became clear that something was terribly wrong. He was rushed to the Benefis Emergency Department with a high fever, and his body was going stiff. Tests were run, but they couldn't determine what the problem was. Kyle spent the next 26 days in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) in a coma and near death.

“His life was saved in the ER that day and then twice again in the ICU. We couldn't be more grateful for the exceptional care he received,” said Dr. Dolan. Cindy added, **“In fact, he did die.”**

Cindy remembers Kyle telling her of seeing a light leading to golden doors. He saw family members who had already died welcoming him. **“He remembered hearing my voice telling him that if it was his time, it was okay and he would be with loved ones, but we wanted him to stay,”** said Cindy. **“He said he was told there that it wasn't his time.”**

Because of that exceptional care and the Dolans' commitment to service and philanthropy, the Dolans decided to generously contribute \$30,000 to name the Behavioral Health Suite in the new Benefis Emergency Department in honor of their son, Kyle.

Caring for those with mental illness began many years earlier for the Dolans when Kyle began exhibiting signs of early depression when he was in the third grade. His depression progressed to seeing colors around people and developing a superhero persona in the eighth grade. He was given the psychiatric term of being a “magical thinker.” Things continued to worsen when a serious incident was averted in his stagecraft class in high school. Coincidentally, Cindy, who was already championing the best care for those with mental illness, was conducting a conference for the state Mental Health Board at exactly the same time.

Kyle was diagnosed with schizophrenia and hospitalized for three months at the Menninger Clinic, an inpatient psychiatric hospital, then located in Topeka, Kansas. During this time, they discovered firsthand the gaps in mental health services and the financial strain it can cause. Kyle improved and came home to live, but the ups and downs and the loving care needed to live with mental illness continue to this day.

To truly understand Dr. Dolan and Cindy's commitment to serving others, we must go back to the beginning of their story. It began when the two met during freshman orientation at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota. It was there they fell in love and were later married in 1975. Dr. Dolan's plans were to have a career in math, but through the help of his high school friend and now, fellow Benefis physician, Dr. Brice Addison, he decided in his senior year of college to go to medical school. Cindy obtained a degree in social work with a minor in religion, and after graduation, the two moved to Omaha, Nebraska where Dr. Dolan attended medical school at Creighton University Medical Center. That is when Cindy began her career as a social worker.

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The Dolans' son Kyle had a near-death experience and spent 26 days in the ICU at Benefis in 2012.



“ Paul and I have been friends since junior high, and even then he showed compassion and care to others. We went to high school and college together, did our residency together, and worked together in our practice. Through all those years, the good times and not so good, I have had nothing but admiration for Paul and Cindy. They have a constant, caring manner toward everyone. ”

—Dr. Brice Addison

The Dolans then moved to Rochester, Minnesota where Dr. Dolan completed his residency in Internal Medicine at the Mayo Clinic. After residency, they moved to Claremore, Oklahoma, where Dr. Dolan worked for Claremore Indian Hospital, gaining experience caring for the Native American population.

By the time the Dolans moved to Great Falls, Montana in 1986, they had already amassed a long list of accomplishments centered on serving others and making others' lives better. In the midst of building careers in medicine and social work, they were also raising their own young children, Jessica, Kyle, and Peter.

Upon moving to Great Falls, Dr. Dolan joined Dr. Brice Addison and his father in practice, and Dr. Dolan and Cindy quickly became active community members. Dr. Dolan added a geriatrics certificate and became the Medical Director for the nursing home at Benefis between 1993 and 2005. He was the Chief of Staff when Columbus Hospital and Deaconess Hospital merged to create Benefis, and volunteered for the school board in his spare time. After the merger in 1996, he was on the planning commission and joined the hospital board. In 2003, Dr. Dolan joined the Benefis Administration team and is currently the Chief Medical and Information Officer at Benefis Health System.

While Dr. Dolan was busy caring for patients over these years, Cindy was making sure that the underserved and especially those with mental illness and developmental issues were not forgotten in Montana. She worked with the state Mental Health board, The Montana State Board of Visitors, CASA, Lutheran Mission Action, and the Boys and Girls Club, to name a few organizations.

"I have always cared about the underdog. It has been my mission in life to look after people," said Cindy.

Her passion for caring for the "underdog" continued as she founded the For Children Coalition in 1998 and served as its CEO. She started a program under the coalition called the AGAPE Youth Investment Center, with a mission of helping young adults age 17 to 21 who were homeless and needed a residence and guidance to move forward with their lives.

With all of the challenges they have faced over the years, Dr. Dolan and Cindy have remained dedicated to each other, to their children, and

to the community. Through service and philanthropic support of programs for which they have a passion, these two individuals have improved countless lives.

In honor of Kyle and those who have struggled with mental illness, Dr. Dolan and Cindy established the Behavioral Health Endowment to benefit behavioral health services at Benefis.

This endowment, established in 2011, supports education and other needs associated with addiction medicine and mental disorders. The endowment is at work today and will continue to support these services long into the future.

The Dolans' most recent contribution made in honor of Kyle will name the Behavioral Health Suite in the Benefis Emergency Department. This two-room suite will feature a separate bathroom and observation anteroom so that a patient facing a psychiatric crisis can be cared for in a safe, secure, and calming setting.

When asked what they see for themselves in the future, Cindy answered for the both of them. "We'll still be in love and, of course, helping our family and others in need whenever we can." ♦



Above: Kyle made a remarkable recovery. Right: The Dolans are young at heart, playfully posing in the giant Adirondack chair at West Glacier.

You can help support the Behavioral Health Endowment at Benefis

The Endowment was created by the Dolans in Kyle's honor. You can honor a friend or loved one affected by addiction or mental illness with your contribution.

To make a gift, you may use the enclosed giving envelope and mark that you wish it to be used for the Behavioral Health Endowment at Benefis or make your gift online at benefisfoundation.org.

Tough Enough to Wear Pink—Central Montana Donates Nearly \$10,000 to Help Cancer Patients

In an effort to reach cancer patients in Central Montana who aren't able to travel to Great Falls for appointments and treatment, Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute medical oncologists have been offering outreach clinics in Lewistown a few times a month to allow existing patients to receive follow-up care closer to home.



Thanks to the fundraising efforts of a small group of people doing great things, important support services for cancer patients will now be available in Lewistown.

Tough Enough to Wear Pink—Central Montana recently gave a generous gift of \$9,750 to the Benefis Foundation to benefit cancer patients who live in Judith Basin, Fergus, Wheatland, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Petroleum, and Garfield Counties. About \$3,000 of the donation will be used to buy gas cards to help cancer patients with travel costs associated with their care, an item that can quickly add up as patients drive hundreds of miles round trip to get to Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute in Great Falls. The remaining funds will then be used to offer additional services—such as support groups, cosmetology services including wigs, prosthetics and bra fittings, genetic counseling, and more—to patients in the Lewistown area and beyond.

“Getting to Great Falls for treatment is one thing,” said Betsy Smith, Genetic Counselor at Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute. **“But to come here for the many services we provide to patients in addition to the treatment is another thing. We’re trying to be as comprehensive as we can with our approach, and we’re excited about this new opportunity to take some of these services to patients in Lewistown who otherwise may not have access to them.”**

Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute serves as an essential resource for those in Great Falls and the expansive surrounding region who have the misfortune of needing cancer care. Tough Enough to Wear Pink—Central Montana began partnering with the institute in 2014 to help cancer patients in Central Montana by providing gas and meal gift cards for when they had to travel for appointments. The group has also provided hotel vouchers to help meet housing needs, in addition to the Gift of Life Housing, which is available to people

Working wonders for cancer patients

Central Montana Tough Enough to Wear Pink Committee spokesperson Anna Morris, far right, and several of this hardworking group, presented a check to Benefis Foundation’s Marilyn Parker, bottom right.

who live outside of Great Falls but are undergoing treatment at Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute.

Tough Enough to Wear Pink-Central Montana holds several annual fundraisers, including a pancake breakfast, prime rib dinner, golf tournament, and events at the Central Montana Fair and Stanford Stampede. Along with donating to the Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute, they also give to Liberty Medical Center and a cancer-screening program in Lewistown, as well as to cancer centers in other Montana cities. The group originally focused on helping breast cancer patients, but thanks to amazing support from their community, they are able to help patients with other types of cancer as well.

“We keep fundraising because it’s not a matter of if you will be affected by cancer, it’s a matter of when cancer will personally affect you, whether it’s you or a family member,” said Anna Morris, a founding member of the group. **“We want to help people because one day some of us may be in the same situation.”**

Since the beginning, Anna and other members of Tough Enough to Wear Pink-Central Montana have worked with Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute to identify ways to best serve patients from Central Montana with their donations, and they plan to continue doing so.

“What a wonderful group of individuals to work with,” said Jodi Dake, Patient Navigator at Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute. **“We are grateful to continue partnering with Tough Enough to Wear Pink—Central Montana to take the best care of our Central Montana patients.”** ♦

Two Tax-wise Giving Tools

Charitable IRA Rollover

For people who are age 70½ or older, a charitable distribution from your IRA is a tax-favored way to make a gift. Amounts given in this way count toward the IRA required minimum withdrawal amount and are not subject to income tax. These gifts must be directly transferred from your IRA administrator to the charity. Contact your IRA administrator or tax advisor for more information.

Montana Endowment Tax Credit

Gifts that qualify for the Montana Endowment Tax Credit are another tax-savvy way to make charitable contributions.

To learn more about this opportunity, please contact us. We make it easy for you and provide all the information needed for your tax preparation.

To learn more about tax-wise giving, call Marilyn Parker at 455.5836. ♦

Benefis Employees Donate \$473,479 — Becoming Heroes for So Many



**The theme of this year's campaign was
Everyday Heroes, Be a Lifesaver.**

Heroism was very evident during the 2016-2017 *We Care! We Share!* Campaign through the generosity displayed by Benefis Health System employees.

The month-long campaign lived up to its name with record-breaking results. More than 1,200 everyday heroes donated \$473,479 to support Benefis Health System Foundation and other local nonprofits.

Eighty-eight percent of the donations were directed toward Benefis Foundation programs such as *Benefis Emergency*

Services, Angel Fund, Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute, and Peace Hospice, providing support to these and other critical programs and services. This year's campaign focused on support for the construction of the new Benefis Emergency Department—employees generously contributed nearly \$130,000 towards that project.

Employees once again joined together to donate more than \$67,000 to the Foundation's employee /volunteer compassion fund, *Caring For Our Own*.

The names of these caring and sharing employees are found on the following pages.

Benefis Employee Donors

Ashley Abbott
Stacie Abbott
Missy Abbott
Kylie Adams
Dr. Brice Addison
Karianne Agostinelli
Kristina Aguilar
Jim Albrecht
Arlene Allen
Becky Allen
Stacy Allen
Jillian Altenburg
Susan Altona
Gregory Altringer
Dr. Rudo Ambayi
Rebecca Amen
Deb Ammondson
Dolene Anderson
Jessica Anderson
Kaleen Anderson
Michelle Anderson
Ronda Anderson
Taya Anderson
Erika Andreasen
Mert Antonich
Amanda Archey
Marlene Archuleta
Aleshia Arensmeyer
Tammie Armanazy
Julie Arnold
Amber Artherton
Carolyn Arves
Toni Atchison
Leah Atwater
Kendra Auger
Patty Aune
Monie Ayers
Danielle Azure
Linnie Babcock
Julie Back
Danielle Baeth
Donna Bagley
Dr. Steven Bailey
Dr. Jeff Baker
Karin Baldwin
Maureen Balyeat
Clara Bancroft

Kenny Bania
Beverly Bargas
Genny Barhaugh
Helene Barrick
Marsha Barrick
Tamara Bistodeau
Deb Bjorsness
Darla Black
Pam Blackwell
James Blair

Dee Braxton
Jessica Bray
Kelsi Brekke
Dr. Bridget Brennan
Crystal Bridges

Burnham
Cathy Burnstein
Kurtis Burrall
Kyle Burwell
Christopher Busch

Lisa Christensen
Wendy Christofferson
Dr. Alexander Chung
Joanne Ciolkosz
Brianna Clancy

Nancy Crawford
Lisa Crisman
Pam Crisp
Maggie Croff
Christina Cron
Donna Crosier
Thomas Croskrey
Courtney Crouch
Ron Crowder
Joseph Crowell
Patti Curry
Cassi Curtiss
Karen Czech
Louis D'Antuono
Jennifer Dabler Tuss
Jodi Dake
Vicki Dale
Marci Daley
Angela Dangerfield
Amber Daniels
David Dattilo
Kodi Davenport
Jerin Davidson
Jennifer Davies
Amy Davis
Mary Davis
Starla Davis
Kelli Dawson
Jeanette Day
Belva DeBruycker
Jennifer Debus
Rhiannon DeForest
Arnel Dehl
Meghan Dellen
Lisa DeMallie
Tiffany Denning
Arnie Depping
Ryan Depping
Carol Derbyshire
Emily Derks
Crystal Dess
Brandy DeWart
Bonnie Dicapò
Rick Dicapò
Karen Diekhans
Kelsy Diekhans
Robert Dieruf
Suzanne Dieruf
Samantha Dietrick
Audree Dobbins



I am passionate about contributing and have done so since I started over 35 years ago when I was a CNA. I often support the Caring for Our Own program because of how it has helped multiple staff members in the past, but this year I chose to support the Benefis Emergency Department campaign because of the importance of these much-needed improvements to the Emergency Department. It is my pleasure to donate every year.

Deb Vance, Director Patient Flow and Medical Nursing Services

Stephen Barrick
Jon Barrow
Karen Barton
Alicia Beagles
Kaycee Beall
Amy Beames
Christina Beattie
Michael Bedwell
Sally Beeble
Sandy Bell
Yvonne Bell
Teri Bellusci
Becky Benbow
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Lorrie Bertus
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Tamie Blair
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Robin Boland
Kathy Bollwitt
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Pat Broadus
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Casey Buckingham
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Jackie Buskirk
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Brandi Cornwell
Jason Cosby
Amanda Court
Carrie Covert
Maxima Cox
Nancy Cramer



I choose to participate in the We Care We Share campaign each year and donate to either the Gift of Life Housing or Hospice. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to visit with patients and their family members who were grateful to have these programs available to them in their time of need.

I am proud to donate to the Benefis Foundation because they are a vital part of our organization and they help so many people.

Jerry Shaw, Radiology Supervisor

- | | | | | | | |
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| Misty Dobbins | Brandi Fleming | Emily Gillespie | Seraphim Gulick | Vanessa Hernandez | Jennifer Irish | Judy Kenmir |
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The Benefis We Care We Share Campaign elevates the concept of giving to a whole new level. The Caring for Our Own Fund is one of my favorites because it helps employees going through a difficult time financially. My second favorite is the Children's Bereavement Fund. With a past diagnosis of cancer and being a mommy of three little girls, I cannot tell you how many nights I lay awake thinking of how my children would cope without me.

Gratefully, Benefis Peace Hospice of Montana would warmly and lovingly accept my children and our community's children with open arms and warm hearts due to the Children's Bereavement Fund.

Jodi Dake, Oncology Patient Navigator, Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute



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Giving to the campaign is very important to me because I have watched co-workers and now employees under me go through terrible grief-stricken periods when funds are tight and family members are in need of their help. A small amount can make such a huge difference when someone is in crisis. I have even been the recipient of such funds when my husband was diagnosed with Parkinson's three years ago and we made an emergency trip to a neurologist in Arizona. Getting that plane ticket covered was such a load off our minds as we considered what the future had in store and we appreciated the help more than words could ever express. It means a lot to me to be able to contribute to those in need.

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Donating to Benefis Foundation is a fulfilling way to support the staff at Benefis and the community. None of us could provide the services we do without a support staff that is conscientious and well trained. By donating to the "Caring For Our Own" fund, I hope to provide my support through the Foundation to all those who are part of the Benefis team and my "Work Family."

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Applications for financial assistance through the Benefis Health System Foundation's Healthcare Scholarship Program are available now for students pursuing degrees in healthcare.

The available scholarships along with the application form are listed online at benefisfoundation.org.

The deadline to apply for both Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 semesters is June 1.

Last year, Benefis Foundation awarded 48 students from Great Falls and the surrounding region with a total of \$88,000 in scholarships.

Help make careers in healthcare possible with your gift today!

We are so grateful for the many generous donors who have supported the Benefis Foundation's Healthcare Scholarship Program, making dreams come true for so many students wishing to pursue a career in healthcare.

If you would like to contribute to the Healthcare Scholarship Program, you may make a gift by using the enclosed envelope or by making your gift online at benefisfoundation.org. ♦



Darcy's Hope—An Oasis for Teens Struggling with Bereavement

Tucked away in the mountains outside of Neihart, Camp St. Thomas is the picture of serenity. The weather is clear for a Friday in October and the empty grounds and still pond water give no impression of the energy building inside the community room, where a group of near strangers are building a framework of something transformative.

Darcy's Hope showcases the most important power of philanthropy, the ability to respond to tragedy with compassion and build something lasting and vital from the ashes.

The camp's namesake, Darcy Lynn Dengel, was a flight nurse with Benefis Mercy Flight who gave her life in service on February 6, 2007. Darcy loved Camp Francis and for seven years she made sure that one week of her vacation was spent there as a volunteer.

In her memory, her friends and family created Darcy's Hope to carry the magic of Camp Francis to teens and young adults too old for camp.

Teenagers' grief is often compounded by the struggles that come with the transition to adulthood. The experience of Darcy's Hope is driven by these differences.

Camp opens like any new, social group should – with an ice breaker. And as the campers describe what “Sounds Like Respect/Looks Like Support/ Feels Like Safety” to each of them, they begin relaxing, leaning into the circle, and sharing ideas with each other. Most importantly, they are casually building the boundaries of camp.

Camp Director Dawn O'Leary describes the process of these ice breakers and introductions as “building the container.”

“It's all about how to make this a place to invest in, a safe place for them. If you're invested, you're more likely to trust (the process),” she said.

The idea of “building the container” is rooted in the relationship between campers, no matter how new. They come from a wide range of places (geographically and metaphorically). Some were counselors at Camp Francis first; others are brand new to the program.

“We shoot for a balance of new and returning kids. It helps build the culture of camp,” Dawn said. “Your peers can be so powerful. Sometimes it's easier to buy into the process and believe if someone your own age is telling you, ‘Yes, this works.’”

Even within the returning campers there is a wide range of experience. Some have only attended camp, others have volunteered as teen counselors at Camp Francis. All of them believe in the magic of this weekend.

Some of the campers, like Andi Abarr, are familiar with the routines of camp. **“I've been counting down the days to come back,”** she said. **“Being a volunteer and a camper both, you get a powerful experience, but being a camper is different, especially because you don't know the schedule.”**

Her fellow teen counselor and camper, Jake Goodrich, agreed. **“I like how here we can focus on ourselves without having to worry about the kids. There's a big difference in the attitude from one camp to the other. We can just be teens.”**

That focus on the self helps make Darcy's Hope an oasis for teens struggling with bereavement.

Volunteer Deb Loutit, a retired public school psychologist and six-time volunteer, likes the breaks for lightheartedness as well. **“The mix of grieving and fun is very healthy. Kids don't sustain grief the way adults do.”**

By taking those breaks between moments of intense focus, she added, “they are able to process fully and naturally.”

The purpose of Darcy's Hope is transformation. For many of the teens, this means a transformation from grief to growth, or from strangers to friends.

For volunteer Darleen Cashman, it meant a transformation from duty to privilege. Darleen found Darcy's Hope almost by accident. She schedules the bus that transports the teens to and from camp, and in 2014 her driver dropped out at the last minute. So she took the responsibility on herself.

That year, like every other, the campers end the weekend by sealing wishes for themselves and their loved ones inside balloons and releasing them into the sky.

Darlene's eyes fill with tears as she describes watching the ceremony that first year. **“I lost my mother earlier (in 2014) and as the balloons rose into the sky they seemed to take on new colors. I could feel the overwhelming presence of those being remembered as though they were right there with us.”**

This year she told camp organizers, “No matter what, you will always have a driver.” ♦

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Benefis Health System Foundation is grateful to the many caring donors who support our mission of improving and enhancing healthcare services in Great Falls and Northcentral Montana. Thank you for making an important difference for people and families in our region. Donors listed gave gifts October 1 through January 31.

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Thanks to our Greatest Need Donors, AvaSys Comes to Benefis

Together We Improve Patient Care

Thanks to the generosity of donors to the Benefis Foundation Greatest Need fund, the AvaSys TeleSitter Solution — a technology available to reduce patient falls while also improving patient and nurse satisfaction — is now being used at Benefis.

The AvaSys TeleSitter is a remote patient observation system that enables continuous audio and visual monitoring of high-risk patients from a central station. It allows staff to immediately and directly intervene when a patient is at risk of self-harm.

For example, a patient at risk of falling may decide to go to the restroom in the middle of the night and not buzz for assistance. When the monitor technician sees that the patient is getting out of the bed without assistance, the tech will say, “Joe, please wait a moment, and a nurse will be there quickly to assist you.”

Deb Vance, Director of Patient Flow and Medical Nursing Services, brought a request for funding to the Benefis Foundation, explaining the importance of this new technology. Deb explained, “**The AvaSys System has proven results in hospital settings in the reduction of inpatient falls, and it was important that we have this cutting-edge technology available at Benefis.**”



Thanks to Benefis Foundation Greatest Need donors, Benefis was able to purchase 12 AvaSys TeleSitter remote observation towers. These towers are mobile, so they can be moved from room to room to efficiently direct resources to those patients most in need of monitoring for their safety.

These devices allow 12 patients to be monitored by a single monitoring technician. This allows the clinical team members more time to care for their other patients.

Benefits of the technology include:

Ability to monitor more patients at a time in an effort to reduce falls and related injuries.

Improved employee satisfaction as the clinical teams are spared disruption of their workflow and the emotional impact of falls.

Improved staffing efficiencies as the clinical team can be out on the floor instead of watching high-risk patients one-on-one.

Your gift to the Greatest Need Fund helps support important projects such as the AvaSys system. Please consider a gift to continue enhancing this program and others that improve patient care and safety. ♦

Thank you for supporting Benefis Foundation!

Our donors deserve proper recognition for their generosity. 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.



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Leroy Strand: A Life Well-Lived and a Legacy Well-Planned



Leroy Strand was born in Iowa in 1919 and started his cattle business with two calves he bought for a 4-H project.

Leroy and his father later partnered and grew a very successful cattle-merchandising business.

Each year, the Strands would come to Montana to buy cattle to ship back to their stockyards in Iowa. During their annual cattle buying trips, they came to know many of the ranchers and ranches in Central Montana. When the Osnes' ranch near Geysers went up for sale, the Strands took advantage of the opportunity. The Strands purchased the property and established the Strand Ranch in 1944.

Because of their sound business practices and land stewardship, the Strand Ranch grew to become one of the best cattle operations in the region.

Leroy's first wife, Norma, died in 1975 after a two-year battle with cancer. Twenty-three years later, Leroy's long and affectionate relationship with the Benefis Foundation began.

Leroy's gifts to the Foundation date back to 1998, with a generous donation of \$1,000 to the "Cancer Care Fund." The Foundation staff and Board members continued to communicate with Leroy over the years, maintaining and strengthening their relationship. One highlight was when Dr. J.W. Bloemendaal visited Leroy on his ranch.

Over the years, Leroy gave generously to Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute, Greatest Need Fund, Angel Fund, Peace Hospice, and Gift of Life Housing. Leroy was of the "civic-minded" generation, supporting his community regularly.

On August 2, 2016, Leroy passed away at the age of 97. He had a plan for his estate—upon his death, his ranch and cattle were transferred to a private foundation he and his second wife, Claris, established to benefit students and several communities in Central Montana. A portion of the remainder of his estate benefitted many area charities, including Benefis Foundation.

The Benefis Foundation was honored to receive an estate gift from Leroy totaling approximately \$880,000. This gift will benefit our community for many years to come through some of the funds Leroy supported throughout his life, including Gift of Life Housing, the Greatest Need Fund, and Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute. ♦

Leroy loved driving visitors around his ranch, showing off the wonders of the land.

