Learn about 2009's 403b options

Skiff Medical Center employees are invited to learn about their options for 403b tax-sheltered annuities in 2009.

Three informational meetings will be held in the Inservice Room at these times:
• Tuesday, Dec. 9 from 7:30-8:30 a.m.
• Tuesday, Dec. 9 from 6-7 p.m.
• Thursday, Dec. 11 from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Representatives from The Hartford will be in attendance for the daytime meetings on Dec. 9 and 11, while representatives from Edward Jones will attend all three meetings. If you have a 403b plan [or would like to know more about them] please attend one of these meetings.

A day in the life of a home health nurse

By Phyllis McDonald, RN BSN MSN

It's been three years, and what a road I've traveled as a nurse since becoming one of the home health team members at Skiff Medical Center. I had heard that the computer/paperwork was overwhelming, that there were hours long at times and that the clients could be challenging. Hmmm …

The clients are where this story begins. At Skiff Home Care, we wanted to showcase the experience of a home health nurse to show the diverse roles of our nurses in the community.

We are more than nurses who assess our clients’ health in the home. We network with a vast array of resources such as Meals on Wheels, physical/occupational therapies, social workers, Aging Resources of Central Iowa, Willowbrook, Lifeline, and much more. Our cars are full of bags: nurse bag, computer, scales [adult and baby], Accu-check, oximeter, phototherapy, “papers” bag and usually a lunch bag.

Our goal is to help keep our clients in their own homes for as long as possible, to maintain health independence and freedom.

Skiff Trader: easy to promote local events, buy or sell things

Have a car to sell? Looking for a good used treadmill? Give the Skiff Trader a try, doing business with a network of friends and coworkers.

Since the Trader was launched in August, more than 100 items have exchanged hands through this free online service. “I've sold several kids’ toys and pieces of furniture through the Trader,” said Laura Essen, COTA/L, of Occupational Therapy. “All you have to do is send an e-mail to the Trader and pretty soon, people are calling you.”

The Trader can be found on the Skiff Intranet. You can submit an ad by clicking on the provided link and including a description of the item you are selling [or seeking]. You may submit photos, as well.

Only have your information in hard

So, I invite you to tag along for a day in the life of a home health nurse:

It begins at 8 a.m. when I look over my case load, check e-mails and make calls to clients who will be seen for the day. I check the outbox for orders that need to be signed and sent on to the doctors, and notify any support entities who will be helping with the care of my clients (such as their healthcare provider, physical therapist or the social worker).

Then it’s off to the 8:30 a.m. staff meeting. First, we hear from the on call nurse, LeAnn Schwickerath, who reports on the weekend events. Then Diane Larson, our supervisor, goes over the schedules, making the necessary adjustments and reporting various updates. Rhonda McCray, the team leader, passes out new patient admissions and reminds everyone about the flu clinic for pediatrics to take place from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. tomorrow.
Skiff birthdays

Judy Orr          Dec. 4
Molly Grober      Dec. 5
Joan Munoz        Dec. 6
Dr. Frank Butera  Dec. 6
Suzanne VonSeggern Dec. 7
Stephanie Alexander Dec. 8
Jessica [Loveland] Iverson Dec. 9
Scott Pline       Dec. 11
Kris Baumgart     Dec. 12
Maryellen Faircloth

Mindi Dodd        Dec. 12
Janice Richmond   Dec. 14
Jim McVey        Dec. 14
Veronica Chance   Dec. 15
Sue Crook         Dec. 15
Melissa Herndon   Dec. 15
Sharon Gilbert    Dec. 17
Cindy Harms       Dec. 17
Jane Altenhofen   Dec. 18
Janice Schmitz    Dec. 18

Thanks to float helpers

We would like to show special appreciation to Bob Webster, Judy Chance and Linda Harrelson for all their hard work in helping with the float. Special thanks to everyone who donated candy, money and costumes or walked with us.

– The float committee

Patton piloting LifeFlight

Congratulations to Bill Patton of Facilities Management, whose son, Mark Patton, is now flying a helicopter ambulance for Iowa Methodist Medical Center. A veteran pilot, Mark made his first LifeFlight trip to Skiff Medical Center on Dec. 2.

Cupples completes forensic nursing training

Congratulations to Sandy Cupples, RN, who has completed a forensic nursing program through Kaplan University, and is serving as an assistant to Jasper County Medical Examiner Gautam Kakade, MD.

• Skiff’s Deb Swihart, RN, is also in the process of completing her forensic nursing training and plans to assist Dr. Kakade in the future.

Skiff contributes to United Way

Bruce Hoffmeier and Carolyn Sullivan, co-chairs of Skiff Medical Center’s 2008 United Way employee campaign, present a check to Paula Siason Watson, Executive Director of the United Way of Jasper County. Skiff employees exceeded their goal of raising $25,000 for the United Way, which provides needed health, safety and human services for residents of Newton and Jasper County.
New Skiff employees

Kelli Dunkin, RN
Surgical Services

Emily Lynch, RN
Obstetrics

Lorna Marter
ED-SCU

Sileen Pringle, ARNP
Occupational Health

Jenna Rickley, CNA
Medical-Surgical

Julie Hauber of Radiology inserts a digital x-ray plate into one of the department's new Kodak CR readers.

New CR readers for Radiology Department

The Skiff Radiology Department has installed two new CR readers for its filmless PACS (Picture Archiving and Communication) system. The CR readers, which convert traditional X-ray images into digital format, will replace readers that were seven years old and at the end of their usable lifespan. When Skiff radiologic technologists take X-ray images, they record the images on a digital “plate.” These plates are fed into the CR reader, which produces crystal-clear diagnostic images in a matter of seconds. The computerized images are immediately available to physicians and others who are responsible for the patient’s care.

“The new CR readers are faster and give us better images than the ones we had before,” said Radiology Director Jane Hettinger. “It means quicker and better diagnostic images for our doctors, and overall better care for our patients.”

Employees, start your engines!

The “race” is on to celebrate and commemorate the completed Standards of Behavior! Sign your agreement and have your picture taken with the “official” Skiff race-car before or after each of the upcoming Employee Forums.

We are going to distribute several copies of the completed Standards of Behavior to each Department Director in the next few days. This will provide you an opportunity to read and review the standards prior to the forums. Members of the Standards of Behavior Team and the Administrative Team will be on hand to answer questions, take pictures, and serve racing snacks!

New, improved form for direct deposit

Beginning with the next pay period, employees who have elected direct deposit for their pay will notice a new and improved form. Skiff will no longer print the remittance statement on the form that looks very similar to an actual check. Individual pay remittances will be printed on paper and have a different look that will allow employees to see their benefit available hours, earnings, withholdings and net pay in easy-to-read columns. Taxes and deductions will now be broken out for your reference. The remittance will continue to be printed and secured in a sealed envelope for privacy.

An image of a sample form is available to be viewed on the Skiff Intranet.
Wellness Department hosting Holiday Food Fair

Wondering how you will survive the endless pot lucks, parties and offers to share snacks this season? We can help! The Wellness Department is hosting the annual Holiday Food Fair today [Thursday, Dec. 4] from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. in the Wellness Conference Center. The fair will feature favorite holiday foods with a healthy twist. Come sample food and pick up recipes to help you survive the holiday season feeling good about your health!

This is one of the last Wellness Activities planned for the year, if you still need credits on your current report card, make sure to attend! This will also be your first chance to pick up a 2009 report card. See the story below for more information.

Updates on Healthy ‘U’ Wellness Program

All employees participating in the Healthy “U” Wellness Program are reminded that current Healthy “U” report cards are due by Dec. 31 to stay enrolled and continue the $25/month incentive.

New employees hired after June 1 and other employees not currently enrolled [employees who did not participate in the health screen in May] can enroll in the Healthy “U” program now to begin incentives in January.

To enroll in the program, just pick up a 2009 Healthy “U” report card from the Wellness Department and return the attached card with your signature and incentive selection. Employees can choose to receive $25 per month off their insurance contribution or a lump sum payment for six months’ participation, [paid twice during the year and subject to tax]. Employees in Dental Vision, Employee plus 1 or family level will be able to apply the $25 incentive to those plans in 2009, which is a new option and is pre-tax. If you have questions, please call Deb Nilles at Ext. 4341 or the Human Resources department.

Advice from the Safety Committee

When traveling, make sure your car is winterized. This includes checking your tires for wear and battery aging. You’ll want to ensure that your car is equipped with antifreeze, wiper antifreeze, a full tank of gas, an ice scraper and a winter kit. The latter should consist of, but not be limited to, jumper cables, a blanket, a small snow shovel, kitty litter or Oil Dry, a flashlight with functional batteries and a roadside flare.

The best tip for driving in winter storms is to slow down. It’s better to get there late than not at all.

Telephone seminar to address personal finances

With the current state of the economy, your finances may be causing you to look at your money differently. You may be wondering how you can reduce your credit card debt, pay your mortgage, or afford groceries. On top of it all, the holidays are quickly approaching and you may be wondering how you are going to be able to celebrate the holidays.

In light of these challenges, CIGNA and CLC, Incorporated presents, “Making Money Work for You in Today’s Economy,” a telephone wellness seminar where you will:

• Discuss how hard it is to pay off debt and how to reduce your debt
• Address the current mortgage situation
• Learn ways to improve your credit score
• Start thinking about planning for the holidays

The seminar is available to listen to beginning today [Thursday, Dec. 4] at 3p.m. and will be available through Dec. 13.

To access the call, dial [888] 348-4629 and enter passcode 705423.

Volunteer: Have a good time doing good

People volunteer for a lot of different reasons, from helping others, to networking to learning new skills.

No matter what your reason, you can find the right opportunity. Log on to your EAP/Work-Life Web site to read one of the articles about volunteering. While you are there, use the locator to find volunteer opportunities in your community.

Visit www.cignabehavioral.com, log on using your company’s employer id and choose the “Find work/life resources” link to access these resources and materials.
Skiff Trader (continued from page 1)

copy, such as a poster or flyer! That's fine, too. Just drop it off in the IT mailbox and it will be scanned and included.

Ads are displayed for two weeks at a time, or until the seller notifies the Trader that the item has been sold.

So far, Trader ads have featured cars, trucks, motorcycles, tires, toys, electronics, clothing, boats, furniture, shoes and other items. Skiff employees have also used the Trader to find day care, Halloween costumes and clients for a teenager's dog-walking service.

The Trader also provides a way to publicize local events in which Skiff employees and their families are involved. For instance, you can publicize an upcoming concert at your child’s school, a fundraiser for an organization you belong to, or a sign-up period for a sports league. For more information about the Skiff Trader, log on to the Skiff Intranet and click on the Trader link.

[Special thanks to Misty Smith of IT and Stephanie Alexander of Public Relations, who maintain the Trader ads.]

Employee forums set for Dec. 13-17

To share the latest information about Skiff Medical Center and its Journey to Excellence, Skiff President Kris Baumgart will host a series of employee forums from Dec. 13-17.

All employees are asked to attend one of the forums (see dates and times at right).

“It’s just a chance for us to catch up with each other, hear what’s happening with our journey, and make sure everyone understands where we’re headed,” said Baumgart.

The forums will include a recap of the Leadership Development Institute that is scheduled for Dec. 10 and 11, during which Skiff managers will learn more tools to use on our journey.

Forum dates and times

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, Dec 13</td>
<td>7:30 a.m. – Inservice Room A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, Dec 15</td>
<td>7:30 a.m. – Inservice Room A</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:30 p.m – Inservice Room A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5:30 p.m. – Inservice Room A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, Dec 16</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. – Inservice Room A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11:30 a.m– Inservice Room A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:30 p.m. – Inservice Room A</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5:30 p.m. – Inservice Room A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, Dec 17</td>
<td>7:30 a.m. – Wellness Conference Room</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 a.m. – Wellness Conference Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 p.m. – Wellness Conference Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5:45 p.m. – Wellness Conference Room</td>
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’Tis the Season...to slip and fall

So far this fall we’ve been very lucky with unseasonable warmth and low moisture. The past weekend’s weather brought that to an abrupt end.

We need to be mindful that winter weather requires extra vigilance in walking and driving. Please wear appropriate footwear when outside during snow, freezing rain or sleet. Keep in mind that old snow may have melted the previous day and presents a sheet of ice the following morning.

The Safety Committee recommends that staff purchase a product that helps prevent slips outside. YacTracs are a coiled wire, stretchable strap that fits around your shoe or boot. These can be purchased at local shoe stores or farm implement stores for about $20. A similar product is sold at Menards for about $15. Once inside, remove these products and dry your shoes on the mats provided.

Many of our entrances lead to a vinyl or stone floor. Again, use caution when crossing these surfaces as moisture may cause a slip & fall. When leaving at the end of the day, especially around dusk, be careful of refreezing ice patches. Please contact Plant Operations at Ext. 2215, if you find ice or slippery areas.

– The Skiff Safety Committee
Home health nurse (continued from page 1)

Vos, our quality manager, alerts nursing staff to clients’ recerts and therapy conferences, and shares additional information to keep us in the know. There is an inservice on products presented at the meeting today.

The meeting adjourns at 10:15 a.m. and the nurses disperse into the community to see their clients and possibly to work at the various scheduled flu, blood pressure, and foot clinics around the county (or even a school audit).

My day begins with a three-week check on a baby who is in our Empowerment program. I evaluate the progress of the infant, make notes about some issues to call to the physician’s attention, and instruct the mother to make an appointment with her pediatrician for further evaluation.

Then after finishing my charting, it’s off to the next stop to check in on a client who is wheelchair-bound. I assess her vitals and skin status, and follow up on issues related to a recent urinary tract infection. The home health aide is there to give personal cares, which are supervised by the home health nurses. The visit is completed after I set up the client’s medications. She thanks me for keeping her in her home another week.

At my next stop, it’s time to discharge a client after receiving orders to discontinue the IV therapies and pull the PICC line. I complete an assessment, and take time to educate the client on how a proper diet will help with his ongoing blood sugar issues, and help the healing process after his recent toe amputation. The client wanted me and the other nurse to know how much he appreciated our help during the past 45 days, which involved drawing Vanco labs, monitoring his infusion process, blood sugars, surgical incision and toe wound.

Then it’s back to the office to attend therapy clinic at 3:30 p.m. in regards to one of my clients who needs a social worker’s intervention. My day is nearing an end, but there is one client left to see who needs her insulin syringes filled for the week and her blood sugars assessed. I give more education to the client about hyper/hypoglycemia, and explain how making proper food choices can prevent extreme highs and lows. I review with the client her blood sugars since her last skilled nurse visit. We discuss why some are low or high, and how she must strive for a balanced diet to prevent inappropriate ranges that are endangering her health. The client is grateful for the help, and she thanks me for sticking by her.

I can speak for all the staff at Skiff Home Health when I say that it is our clients and their families that we serve who make this job so rewarding.

This has been just a small snapshot of what one home health nurse does in a day. Skiff Home Care is comprised of a 27-member staff which includes 14 nurses, eight clerical workers and six home health aides.

Diane Larson is our director, Bonnie Vos is our quality manager, and Rhonda McCray is our team leader. Our staff nurses are Carol Hammer, Barb Kaldenberg, Jean Ferguson, Susan Murphy, Chris Larson, LeAnn Schwickerath, Phyllis McDonald, Tiffany Ahn, Brenda Steenhoek, Ginny Colville and Kristy Axtell.

The clerical staff includes Sandy Dean, Janelle Maasdam, Kelli Maher, Sharon Neef, Jonna Sweeney, Lori Korte, life line and Joanne Rossler, Disaster Preparedness Assistant. The home health aides are Sheila Bills, Linda Kepler, Beth Nichol, Megan Tindle, Paula Baltisberger, and Dena Gearhart.
Good news about handwashing, flu vaccination campaign

National Handwashing Awareness Week is Dec. 7-13. You can help protect our patients from infection by using good hand hygiene. Remember our motto: Every Patient – Every Time.

There is still flu vaccine available. The team at Skiff Medical Center has surpassed its goal of 89 percent of health-care workers vaccinated against the flu. We are currently at 93 percent – WOW! We have several departments that are at 100%, and are eligible for a pizza party.

If you would like to schedule an appointment for a flu shot, call Centralized Scheduling at Ext. 3070. If you have any questions about the department pizza party, call Vicky Norrish, Infection Control, at Ext. 4871.

Please remember: If you are NOT getting a flu vaccine, you must make an appointment with Occupational Health to sign a Flu Declination form.

2008-2009 Flu Vaccine Teams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>RN &amp; LPNs on Med/Surg</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>CNAs &amp; Unit Secretaries on Med/Surg</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>PM&amp;R &amp; Sports Rehab Clinic</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>Nutrition Services</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>Facilities Management</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>Home Care</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>Hospice &amp; Administration</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>ER &amp; SCU</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>Surgery &amp; Materials Management</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>Clinic Administration, Baxter, Colfax and Monroe Health Services, OHS, Dr Butera's clinic, Dr Stanislav's clinic, and Respiratory Care</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>Nursing Administration [Including WOCN], OB, &amp; ER Physicians</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>Human Resources, Radiology, &amp; Social Services</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>Laboratory &amp; HIM</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>Business Office, Pharmacy, &amp; IT</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments from satisfied Skiff patients

Here are just a few of the many positive comments we receive each quarter on Skiff’s patient satisfaction surveys:

• The nurses and doctor were very friendly and nice.
• Nurse was very careful when starting my IV.
• Everyone made sure Nicholas was comfortable and well taken care of. Very gentle and caring.
• They made sure I was always informed about what they were doing for my son.
• Thank you for taking such good care of my child.
• The hospital social worker was very nice and very respectful.

Great news from Diana Olson!

Hi Everyone,

Want to thank everyone for all the support and prayers. John’s surgery was completed about 2:30 this morning. He is doing better than expected by the nurses, using very little blood pressure meds [which is a great thing]. His blood sugars are good. His eyes are open and not yet responding to commands, but that will come slowly because of being on sedation for so long. The liver was working immediately.

So we are over one big hurdle and have quite a few to go, but he is strong and strong-willed, so God willing we will make it.

Please keep praying for us.

Diana Olson
Nursing Service