“This too shall pass...”

See page 3 to find out what these are and how WMH’s Dr. Lynne McCormick can lessen the pain of getting rid of them.
We are very excited to welcome three new physicians to our community in the next couple of months. Dr. Arthur Luka (Infectious Disease Specialist/Hospitalist) arrived this month. Dr. Celine Rivera (Internal Medicine) will arrive in August, and Dr. Belisario Arango (Oncologist) will arrive in September. The arrival of these three physicians will mean that patients will have better access to specialty care here in Sault Ste. Marie and less wait time to see a physician.

We are also excited to be honored as an MHA Ludwig Award winner for 2014 for our Road to Recovery Program. WMH was one of 18 Michigan hospitals who applied for the award so we are very pleased to have been selected. The program provides daily rides for patients who need radiation oncology services in Petoskey.

Finally, we are close to completing our Emergency Department project and will officially open the renovated area in mid August. This will bring many benefits to our community, staff and physicians. The new space will provide private rooms for all of our ER patients to insure confidentiality and is designed to help us be as efficient and effective as possible when taking care of patients. We are very excited to see the completion of this project. I would like to thank our community, our employees and our physicians for their support and understanding during this construction and renovation process.

Road to Recovery receives state award

Road to Recovery, the program that provides transportation for cancer patients obtaining radiation therapy in Petoskey, received the 2014 Ludwig Community Benefit Award from the Michigan Health & Hospital Association.

The award is presented annually to healthcare organizations that demonstrate community benefit by improving the health and well-being of their communities through healthcare, economic or social initiatives. The award criteria strongly favor those programs that can demonstrate effective outcomes in their community.

“We are thrilled to receive this prestigious award from the Michigan Health & Hospital Association on behalf of the many volunteers and donors who have made the Road to Recovery program a reality,” said CEO David Jahn when learning of the award.

WMH officials received the award, as well as a $3,000 stipend for use by Road to Recovery, on June 26, 2014 at MHA’s Annual Meeting on Mackinac Island.

Road to Recovery was launched at WMH in 2009 in cooperation with the American Cancer Society. It is funded almost entirely by donation and is staffed by volunteer drivers who make the 180-mile, round-trip trek daily.

“Without the 35 volunteer drivers who make the 180 mile round trip to Petoskey each day, all year round, this wouldn’t happen for patients. They are so grateful and the community gives generously to make sure the Road to Recovery will be here,” said Teresa Dwyer-Armstrong, the WMH coordinator for the program.

A recent change in state regulations will now allow a radiation oncology program in Sault Ste. Marie and efforts are underway to bring that service to WMH in the future.
Making (Sound) Waves
Local treatment for kidney stones

Some people have called them the second-most painful medical condition after childbirth and sometimes pain medication doesn’t solve the problem. That’s why WMH has brought lithotripsy to the Eastern Upper Peninsula for the treatment of kidney stones.

Each year, roughly 20 million Americans seek treatment for these hard, crystalline mineral materials formed within the kidney or urinary tract.

The technology is known formally as Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripsy (ESWL) and it uses sound waves to break up the crystals.

Dr. Lynne McCormick, urologist at WMH, is introducing the treatment to her patients and compares it to the old “is it live or is it Memorex” television commercials, when sound waves from an opera singer shattered crystal stemware.

“It is a sound wave that travels through the body and breaks up that crystalline stone into smaller fragments that can more easily be passed,” she explained.

ESWL is a pricey piece of technology, topping the $1 million mark, which is why the State of Michigan determines what regions have enough demand to warrant the purchase of ESWL. Thankfully, WMH is able to bring the treatment via a mobile unit that will be scheduled once monthly in Sault Ste. Marie.

Dr. Lynne McCormick

Lithotripsy is covered by most insurance and has only minor side effects, according to the doctor. Patients who visit with Dr. McCormick will discuss treatment options as well as future prevention, as kidney stones can reoccur.

“Before patients would get sent out of town for lithotripsy or they could have a scope surgery, which was a longer, more complex procedure that required more anesthesia at a higher risk,” McCormick said, comparing WMH’s new approach to previous options.

Kidney stones are an equal-opportunity condition – impacting all ages and both genders. The doctor indicates that the first, most important step to avoiding them is drinking lots of water.

“Dilution is usually the solution for most people,” she said. Diet choices can also help, although people get different types of kidney stones so understanding the chemical composition of their stones would impact the type of preventative measures recommended.

Q: What can I do to help prevent kidney stones?
A: Hydrate!

Doctors recommend drinking 2-3 liters of water per day to help prevent kidney stones.
Small-town life appeals to Dr. Luka, who also enjoys the outdoors. “I did my residency in New York City and it is a good place to train but in the long run I wanted something quieter. I’m a big fan of the outdoors and this is a beautiful environment,” he explained.

Dr. Luka was also impressed with the environment inside the hospital. “Everyone was very nice in my time there. The hospital is well equipped with basically all the testing equipment and everything you need as a physician. For more advanced needs, you can transfer patients but that’s rarely necessary unless a complicated procedure is required. I was impressed with the staffing and the hospital.”

Romanian-born Luka began seeing patients in late July at War Memorial Hospital, where he will spend part of each month as a hospitalist and the remainder in his outpatient infectious disease practice.

“The hospitalist is an internal-medicine doctor who coordinates the care of patients while they are in the hospital. You are an extension of the primary care provider and in charge of the plan of care for the patient while they are in the hospital,” he explained.

Dr. Luka is board certified in internal medicine and board eligible in infectious disease, with certification anticipated in October.

“I think having an infectious disease specialist is valuable to the community and something that you don’t know you need until you have it. Sometimes people think it is only about antibiotics but it is much more complicated,” the physician explained.

For example, dialysis is a service that is critical to the region, but does not support itself. WMH’s is the only remaining dialysis unit in the EUP, with nine chairs that are continuously busy. Nonetheless, the unit operates at a loss. Kalchik indicates that WMH is committed to providing services like dialysis, so finding creative ways to offset expenses can only help.

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California Teaming
Purchasing affiliation expected to bring half million in savings

Thanks to a newly-forged relationship with a California-based hospital, WMH is striking gold, at least in terms of cost savings, with a purchasing affiliation expected to save nearly $500,000 in expenses.

St. Joseph Health of Orange, located in Irvine, California, is WMH’s newest buying partner, teaming up to get better prices on a variety of items, including surgical supplies and implantable medical devices.

“We have been working hard to reduce costs within the organization,” explained CEO David Jahn. “This agreement means we will join their purchasing group to gain reduced costs on supplies.”

In the healthcare industry, it is a well-known fact organizations that buy supplies in a higher quantity garner a better price. Enhanced purchasing power is the benefit of this new agreement.

Chief Financial Officer Kevin Kalchik says the savings will come at an important time.

“Reimbursements in many areas are already being decreased. This savings allows us to continue service lines that we may lose money on but that are necessary to provide to the community. This savings won’t reduce any costs to patients, but it will allow us to continue to offer the same wide range of services,” he explained.

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WMH connected to the California hospital through its group purchasing organization. Kalchik indicates finding a larger hospital that wasn’t direct competition allowed them to maximize the relationship. Even so, War Memorial isn’t required to purchase all items through the agreement. In fact, some purchases will be negotiated directly between the hospital’s purchasing department and vendors at a better rate.
Off-site physician consultation just got easier

Thanks to a donor’s generosity, War Memorial Hospital is deploying the JEMS Telehealth System in its emergency room, behavioral health center, and intensive care unit.

Using JEMS, medical professionals can send live streaming video to a specialty physician via an iPhone, iPad or Android-based phone or tablet. The specialist will be able to review the video on their smart device in real time and respond with care instructions. JEMS is easy to use and relies upon a HIPAA complaint data transmission system to keep patient information secure and private.

At WMH, the technology will also be used at the Drummond Island Medical Center (as part of the hospital’s joint operating partnership) as well as with local EMT providers to provide a mobile JEMS system for enhanced emergency care.

“Connecting physicians and first responders to specialists in real-time will help patients get critical care quickly and reliably,” said hospital CEO David Jahn. “This access to expertise further differentiates War Memorial for patients seeking the very best in healthcare.”

Dr. Paul Sorgi, the medical director at WMH Behavioral Health Center, says JEMS will allow him to consult on patients who arrive in the Emergency Department with a psychiatric condition.

“It will allow me to be at the hospital without really being there,” he explained. “And with the ease of a tablet or mobile phone, I can see the patient and speak with them from any location where cellular coverage is available.”

With BHC located in Kincheloe, Dr. Sorgi sees other applications as well. “If our patients at BHC need a consult with one of the hospital specialists, they can have that access without making the trip to Sault Ste. Marie.”

War Memorial is beginning the process of rolling out the JEMS Telehealth System and expects full implementation by fall 2014.

The hospital received the equipment thanks to a generous donation of $190,000 from the R.W. Considine Foundation. This Pellston-based philanthropic organization has shown support to a number of Eastern U.P. and northern Lower Michigan health and educational institutions.

With the donation, WMH is receiving three mobile units to be placed in WMH facilities and one “rugged” unit that can be used in an ambulance.

“War Memorial can now offer their patients an expert medical consult, anytime, anywhere regardless of ailment,” said Kevin Lasser, CEO of JEMS Technology, which is headquartered in Orion, Michigan.

Michelle Betcher, RN (left) and Maddie Carley, RN intern, familiarize themselves with the new JEMS unit in the Emergency Room.
Scoping out cancer

Colonoscopy and endoscopy at WMH

It is one of the few cancers that people can actually avoid but prevention of colon cancer begins with something people often needlessly delay: a colonoscopy.

“We can physically see it before it turns into a cancer. You can see the polyp and remove it and that makes it really preventable,” explained Dr. Paula Rechner, one of the surgical team at Advanced Surgical Care. “If a patient gets screened properly, it’s very unusual that they would get colon cancer,” she added.

Two procedures - colonoscopy and upper endoscopy – allow physicians to see the full extent of the digestive tract. In Sault Ste. Marie, five physicians perform these procedures in the WMH surgical unit:

- Dr. Paula Rechner
- Dr. Joseph Cipriano
- Dr. James Adair
- Dr. Kim McCullough
- Dr. Timothy O’Connor

The procedure is typically a two-step approach, with good reason. Patients first schedule an office appointment with the doctor to review their general medical condition, the preparations for the procedure and any related considerations, like medications. The procedure is performed on a different day, when the prep has been completed.

Dr. Rechner can name several reasons why a physician would want to see the patient in the office prior to the procedure. For starters, she wants to make sure the patient is fully able to perform the steps that will clean out the digestive tract. If the patient hasn’t prepped properly, the doctor cannot see with accuracy and the procedure is ineffective.

“It’s also important to explore any underlying medical problems that might impact anesthesia and to review what medicines they should continue or stop before the procedure. Seeing the patient gives us the chance to make sure we are fully aware of any health considerations but it also gives the patient a chance to feel comfortable with the doctor,” she added.

The standard recommendation for colonoscopy is to have one at age 50 and every 10 years after if they have no polyps, no family history of colon cancer, and no family history of polyps. If a family history exists, the schedule moves to once every five years.

Upper endoscopy is performed as a result of symptoms. Patients who have heartburn, difficulty swallowing, nausea, anemia, blood in the stool, and a variety of other symptoms may need an endoscopy. Both endoscopy and colonoscopy can be used for diagnosis or treatment of other ailments in addition to cancer.

Contact information for the physicians listed above can be found on the hospital’s website: www.warmemorialhospital.org

Patients are talking about the great care they received at WMH. Each month we will share excerpts from letters written to our CEO from patients and families:

“My son’s girlfriend needed surgery. I just have to tell you about Dr. Anghel. I am 61 years old and have never seen a surgeon/physician quite like him. That man took an incredible amount of time with his patient. He even faced three old ladies on his own. I am so impressed with his sensitivity and caring.”

“I have not been a patient since I was a little child (now 76) so although I have visited hospitals, I did not know what to expect. Dr. Showers examined me in the ER and ran some tests and said I had pneumonia and got me into a room. Dr. Garlinghouse became my doctor. All of the nurses, aides, and other staff members were great, cheerful and helpful. The care I received was first class.”

“Jessica M. took my grandfather’s blood today. She was so sweet and professional. Jessica even took the time to help my grandfather, who is 91 and blind, to the car. She went above and beyond.”

“I just wanted to say a big thank you (to Dr. Alshab) for caring for my mother. You not only took care of her physically but you motivated her to care more for herself. I loved that you took so much time with her and us. I never felt rushed or that I wasn’t free to ask questions.”
Our War Memorial Hospital Auxiliary is the best.

Not only do these women and men give of their time and talents through so many endeavors that help our patients and our staff, they are ambassadors for WMH in our community.

While most of you probably associate the Auxiliary most with the great Gift Shop in our lobby or the annual Flea Market at Kaine’s Rink, our Auxiliaries do so much more behind the scenes and in our hospital. Each year Auxiliary members donate more than 15,000 hours of their lives to our patients, their families, and our staff. That is a number we can and all should be very appreciative and proud of – it speaks to the kind of community we, fortunately, can call home.

This year the Auxiliary did something a little new. Following the example of Auxiliaries around the country, the WMH Auxiliary committed $105,000 to helping create the right Emergency Department for our community. Our sincere appreciation to this dedicated group of volunteers – for all that they do.

Better than any genie in a bottle, the WMH Auxiliary makes a habit of granting wishes in the form of equipment purchases each year at WMH and 2014 is no exception. This year, this active group of volunteers dispersed $65,021 to hospital departments.

The single largest gift came in the form of a three-year commitment of $35,000 per year to the Emergency Department renovation project.

The Auxiliary also gifted an additional $30,021 to 10 different departments within the hospital. During the hospital’s annual budgeting process, department heads asked for a number of purchases but only a fraction were approved because of financial constraints. Thanks to the Auxiliary, a number of those needs were met as a result of their volunteer hours and community support of their fundraising efforts.

The pharmacy will receive three new computers, the OB department will have a new rocking chair, and the lab will have a new cell washer, thanks to the largesse of the Auxiliary.

Ken Greenfield, Director of Plant and Environmental Services, will see his department soar to new heights thanks to a 2014 gift. The department has rented or borrowed a lift several times each year to address parking lot lights, air handlers, and other work in high places. Greenfield’s request, which the auxiliary granted, was enough money to purchase a used or refurbished unit.

Hospital maintenance crews assist the Auxiliary with the annual flea market each year. “The appreciation for our efforts that the auxiliary has shown in this donation is awesome,” Greenfield said.

Gifts were also made to the intensive care, medical/surgical unit, radiology, diabetes education program, and the behavioral health center.

“We are fortunate to have a team of dedicated supporters in the form of the hospital Auxiliary,” said CEO David Jahn. “They are truly committed to the health of the community.”
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**Bridgeview Family Medicine**
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*J. Garlinghouse, MD*
*J. Peterman, MD*
(906) 253-9374

**Community Care Clinic**
G. Pramstaller, DO
S. Bartz, PA
T. Malloy, NP
D. Rick, PA
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**LSSU Health Care Center**
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**Riverside Medical Associates**
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**WMH Community Care - Kinross**
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**ALLERGIST/ASTHMA**
Great Lakes Allergy & Asthma Center, PC
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**ANESTHESIOLOGY**
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L. Knittle, CRNA
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**BARIATRIC (WEIGHT LOSS)**
Advanced Surgical Care
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**BEHAVIORAL SERVICES**
Blue Water Behavioral Health
L. Armstrong, NP
*P. Sorgi, MD*
D. Wilson, NP
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(906) 495-2209

**CARDIOLOGY**
Soo Cardiology
*R. Alkiek, MD*
(906) 253-2760

**DERMATOLOGY**
I. Siniakov, MD
(906) 253-2652

**EAR, NOSE & THROAT**
Sault Otolaryngology
*M. Wallace, DO*
(906) 259-0244

**ER SERVICES-WMH**
J. Bender, MD
W. Jamros, NP
T. Marino, NP
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M. Oates, MD
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**GENERAL SURGERY**
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**INFECTIOUS DISEASE**
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Lakeview Internal Medicine
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**OB/GYNECOLOGY**
Sault Women’s Healthcare
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**OPHTHALMOLOGY**
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M. Madion, MD
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*indicates WMH admitting privileges