

The Health Care Connection

Marias Medical Center welcomes Dr. Tracy Lords

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Dr. Tracy Lords, a 1998 graduate of Belt High School, started her practice at Marias Medical Center on July 5. We are pleased to have a full-time anesthesiologist on board. "We're very fortunate to have Dr. Lords as she is the first anesthesiologist that has worked for MMC," states Mark Cross, MMC CEO. He adds, "She is a great addition to our medical staff, especially for expectant mothers in helping with any discomfort during delivery."

Lords received her undergraduate degree in Biology at Concordia College in Moorhead, MN, and then was off to medical school in Iowa at the Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine. As part of her school's curriculum, students are required to complete a residency for the subject that they are most focused in. She completed one year of internship in Fargo, ND and three years of residency in Indianapolis for Anesthesiology. "Residency is really where you branch off and learn your specialty," Dr. Lords said.

Though living in a big city like Indianapolis may entice some to stay there, Dr. Lords preferred to raise her children, Danica and Madison, in a smaller town. "It seems like everyone keeps an eye on your kids in small towns," she said. "They have small classes which is really nice. I think kids have more opportunities to do what they want to do because there are not too many kids. So if they want to play basketball instead of trying out and not making the team. They may not play all the time but at least you can

be a part of the team." Dr. Lords also thinks that you get to be more of a part of the community when it is smaller. "You go to all the basketball games and football games and get to know everyone." She continues, "In a big town, you just feel like a small fish."

Her position at MMC was exactly the type of job that she was looking for. It involves a wide variety of tasks. She does sedation for Gastro-Intestinal procedures with Dr. Liechty, eye surgeries with Dr. Boes and general surgeries with Dr. Mortenson. She also works with Dr. Haight providing support for oral surgeries, often time with younger children. She really enjoys working with pediatrics and dental cases. She also enjoys Obstetrics, the specialty that deals with women's pregnancy, childbirth, and prenatal care. "They do obstetrics and pain management procedures for OB," she said. "I like OB. Some small towns don't do that anymore so I was glad that MMC does." Marias Medical Center has also acquired equipment so that Dr. Lords can give epidural steroid injections for certain types of back pain. She is able to operate real time x-ray to help complete procedures for people suffering from herniated discs or ridiculer



Dr. Tracy Lords prepares to give anesthesia to a patient at the Marias Medical Center last Thursday. Dr. Lords started work at the MMC as an anesthesiologist on July 5th. She is very excited to be working at the hospital and raising her children in Shelby. Photo by Chris Muller

pain. "This procedure will help reduce swelling and inflammation around the nerves and help out with their pain," she said.

A balance schedule at MMC where she gets adequate time off has enabled Dr. Lords to read up on the newest updates for anesthesia and spend some more time with her children. "During training, your work 80 hours a week so I feel like I haven't been the best mom," she said. "Here I can volunteer, still do the work I like, but be family-oriented. Dr. Lords recently helped out with coaching the youth soccer program for ages 6 and under and is eager to learn what she can help out with regarding school.

Her husband, Tim, farms at a ranch near their hometown of Belt

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Lords ...

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that he bought from his parents. "He doesn't mind the commute," she said, "It's any easy drive. Farming is what he's always wanted to do." In just the short time that her family has been in Shelby, she has become very attached to the community. "Everyone is so nice and friendly," she continues, "This town has everything that I want. I love coffee and there are several coffee shops. It has cute little restaurants and a lot of recreation opportunities. I know the Roadrunner recreation trail in and out and the civic center has a lot of nice activities. Shelby has a lot to offer for a small town."

"Tree of Lights"

The Toole County Health Foundation will be holding their first annual "Tree of Lights" Ceremony. The TCHF will be decorating trees to be displayed in Marias Healthcare, beginning on December 1.

Individuals can then "light" the tree in memory or in honor of a friend, loved one, or member of the armed services. Donations are suggested, but not obligatory. There is no limit to the number of names that one can submit.

For more information, please contact Jessica at 434-3246 or stop in and view the trees and names at Marias Healthcare (clinic).

On Monday, December 13th at 7:00 pm, we will read the names of the individuals remembered or honored. We will also enjoy the music of Wylie Gustafson and refreshments.

Local Physicians Achieve Board Certification

The American Board of Family Medicine, Marias Medical Center, and Marias Healthcare Services, Inc. are pleased to announce the successful completion of its Recertification Examination by Michele Marler, MD and Chuck Marler, MD. Board certification confers a standard of excellence in knowledge and practice to physicians who not only certify via the examination process, but who also work diligently on the maintenance of these skills during the seven-year cycle between examinations.

To achieve recertification by the ABFM, a family physician must verify the completion of 300 hours of acceptable continuing medical education over the past six years; possess a full and unrestricted license to practice medicine in the United States; and successfully complete a one-day, written examination of cognitive knowledge and problem-solving abilities. This examination covers the disciplines of the specialty including, but not limited to: adult

medicine; care of newborns, infants, and children, and adolescents; maternity and gynecological care; community medicine; care of the older patient; human behavior and mental health; and care of the surgical patient.

The American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM), one of twenty-four Member Boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties, is the second largest medical specialty board in the United States. Founded in 1969, it is a voluntary, not-for-profit, private organization whose purposes include improving the quality of medical care available to the public, establishing and maintaining standards of excellence in the specialty of Family Medicine; improving the standards of medical education for training in Family Medicine, and determining by evaluation the fitness of specialists in Family Medicine who apply for and hold certificates.

Additional information regarding the American Board of Family Medicine may be obtained from its website at www.theabfm.org.

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Christmas Special

20% off one item at the Marias Medical Center Auxiliary Gift Shop.

Valid through December 23, 2010.

Toole County Health Foundation's Fetal Heart Monitor Campaign ends successfully!

The Toole County Health Foundation (TCHF) has successfully completed its campaign to raise funds to purchase a fetal heart monitor for Marias Medical Center with the help of the Marias Medical Center Auxiliary. The fund-raising effort for the monitor began back in April, with the Black Tie and Blue Jean Affair, followed by the primary fundraiser, the TCHF annual golf tournament which was held at Marias Valley Golf and Country Club on the 28th of August. The event was well attended with 23 teams and netted over \$4000. The Foundation also raised funds at the Bear River Boogie and Sunburst Centennial Event. The MMC Auxiliary also donated funds from the 2010 Annual Parade of Homes.

Marias Medical Center has purchased and received two fetal heart monitors that track the baby's heart tones and response to labor as well as the mother's vital signs. The remote monitor system should arrive in a few weeks which will allow us to visualize the fetal heart and contraction tracing out at the nurses' station for more than one labor-

ing patient. This means much safer care for mom and baby. It also does valuable things such as archiving, alarm for set parameters, etc., which again is an important safety feature.



2010 Branding at Certain Creek Ranch

To round off the fundraising efforts, the Foundation received a check in the amount of \$609 for the sale of a calf, donated by Kelly Mothershead and Maggie Nutter. For more information regarding the Toole County Health Foundation Brand (MMF), contact Jessica at 434-3246 or tchfoundation@mmcmmt.org or on the web at www.toolecountyhf.org.

Text4baby program

The Text4baby program is a free mobile information service that provides timely health information to women from early pregnancy through their babies' first year of life. The program was launched in February 2010 by U.S. Chief Technology Officer, Aneesh Chopra. It was developed through a public-private partnership that includes the National Healthy Mothers; Healthy Babies Coalition; Voxiva; CTIA-The Wireless Foundation; the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and other Federal and non-federal stakeholders. Text4baby aims to use one of the most widely used technologies-the mobile phone- to promote maternal and child health. The service sends health tips that are timed to the mother's stage of pregnancy or the baby's age. Women who voluntarily sign up for the service by texting BABY or 511411 receive three free SMS text messages each week timed to their due date or baby's date of birth. To find out more about Text4baby, visit www.text4baby.org or find the link on our website at www.mmcmmt.org under education.

Marias Healthcare Services Inc.

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CEO Report

by Mark Cross



As we begin our winter season with a blast of cold and snow it is important to give thanks for the many blessings we receive throughout the year. Thanksgiving is upon us and we at Marias Medical Center are working hard to maintain our current levels of quality service, improve on those and grow with new challenges. All in all, we are very fortunate to have the many good people who work at Marias Medical Center which includes Marias Heritage Center, Marias Extended Care Center, and Marias Hospital and is supported by Marias Healthcare Services, Inc.

Over the last several months, we have welcomed the addition of Doctor of Anesthesiology, Tracy Lords, D.O. We are the only facility in the area from Havre, Great Falls and Kalispell that offers this professional level of service to our community. As well as providing for our general anesthesia needs, including pain management, Dr. Lords is also providing the services that our expectant Moms have asked for and come to appreciate with her availability. With four physicians who can do OB care, no other facility in the area can compare to Marias Medical Center. Our facility continues to be committed to providing women's health care needs such as digital mammography. For this we are very thankful.

Marias Medical Center is also replacing basic radiological equipment for flat panel X-rays and fluoroscopy services and we are in the process of upgrading the scope Dr. Boes uses for cataract surgery. We currently provide cataract surgery for 20 or more patients per month. Dr. Haight, DDS provides oral surgery for members of our community as well as the surrounding communities. Most importantly,

Dr. Haight provides dental care for patients with or without insurance and those with Medicaid. In the past, those who were on Medicaid went without dental care or had to travel a distance to receive any care at all. However, now they can come to Dr. Haight and receive their care locally. For this we are very thankful.

One of the biggest challenges that all hospitals are currently faced with is the transition to electronic medical records (EMR). If facilities do not transition to EMR they will be faced with a 33% reduction in federal reimbursement by 2015 and this will increase by another 33% by 2016. There are no penalties after this as they will either make it by then or not. At Marias Medical Center, we have been working towards this since our transition to Meditech (software name to run hospital billing system) in 2007 and Marias Healthcare Services, Inc.'s transition to Next Gen about the same time. Both software programs work well together and are each one of the top software programs in their respective industries. As of the end of October, we are "live" with EMR for our Lab department. We are working on our Radiology depart currently and pharmacy is following in early 2011. In addition, it should not

be overlooked that our Extended Care Center with its own software is very close to being completely electronic. For this, Marias River Electric, good communication lines for transmitting data, and the people behind all of this, we are very thankful.

In closing, our facility is has good utilization by our community. All of the positive thank you's for services provided have consistently mentioned the human touch that is provided by all of our staff. It is by no accident that our best assets are our people who work here at MMC and MHSI, something that I am very proud of and thankful for.

Thank you for allowing me to be your CEO,

Mark A. Cross, CEO

Birthday Labs

Health Panel - \$50

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For information call Cindy at 434-3237

Marias Medical Center

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Winners of the Marias Healthcare Scholarship

Malia VandenBos, a 2010 graduate from Valier High School was recently selected as one of the recipients of the Marias Healthcare Services, Inc scholarship. She received \$500 to be applied toward a degree in Nursing. Malia currently attends the Montana State University-Northern in Havre, MT. She says that she chose the field of Nursing because she genuinely cares about people and would like to promote health for all people. She continued, "Nursing provides such a range of jobs, and I believe that it would be a very satisfying career." She has many mentors in the nursing field that also influenced her degree choice, including her aunt, Kimberley Barker, a Registered Nurse and Blair Borgen, RN. She also spent many hours at Marias Medical Center job shadowing various departments through the school-to-work program. She encourages the program to others considering a career in the healthcare field. She also interned at Blackfeet Community Hospital. She added, "Both of these programs have truly offered me an unforgettable experience as well as an opportunity to see what would fit me best in a medical and hospital atmosphere."

Samantha Boumans, a 2010 graduate from Valier High School, also received a \$500 2010 Marias Healthcare Services, Inc. scholarship. She also applied it toward her degree in Nursing. Samantha is currently attending Montana State University in Bozeman, MT. She says that she chose to pursue a nursing degree because she always enjoyed learning about science and finds the human body fascinating. She took six science classes during her high school career and noted that she enjoyed every one. She added, "I love helping people and being around people." She continued, "The field of nursing would be a challenging



Malia VandenBos

career that I would have to work hard to succeed in. It would be a field where I could work towards a goal and push myself to do better." Her greatest influence was her biology and anatomy teacher. "He saw the excitement that I had for sciences and encouraged me to follow those studies." She would like to continue on her studies and become a nurse practitioner.

Marias Healthcare Services, Inc and Marias Medical Center wish both of the girls the best as they pursue their college dreams.

Safety Summit will be Dec. 7

Toole County/Shelby Community Transportation Safety Summit. It will be held Tuesday, December 7th from 6:00 to 9:00pm at the Shelby Civic Center. The evening will involve discussion on two focus areas. The areas of discussion are Distracted Driving and Alcohol-related Accidents. We invite and encourage the community to take part in the discussion and offer input into creating a safer community.

MMC Auxiliary NEWS

The Marias Medical Center Auxiliary held their monthly meeting on Friday, November 5, 2010 at 1:30 in the Marias Medical Center conference room.

The ladies discussed the success of the Parade of Homes and the generous donation from U.S. Bank of \$1000. Thrivent will also be making a donation.

The following people were nominated for officers. Voting will be held at the December meeting. Susan McFerrin for President, Lucille Smith for Vice President, Jessica Brusven for Secretary, and Jamie Brownell for Treasurer.

A proposal was made to change the monthly meetings from the first Friday of each month to the first Wednesday of each month. The time and location will remain the same. The process to amend the by-laws will begin with a proposed start day of Wednesday, January 5.

Vice President, Marleigh Bollinger asked for volunteers to chair the gift shop. There are no volunteers at this time, so the group will continue to look.

Nancy recommended that all members stop and take a look at the new sign at the Cedar Closet. They have made many changes over there, and have had a very successful month of sales. The ladies discussed procedures to keep the facility and items clean and sanitary. They will be taking extra precautions. They would also like to remind citizens that it is very helpful if the items are clean, mended, and ready to be displayed when they are dropped off, due to the limited time of the volunteers.

The Cedar Closet is currently looking for a donation of a microwave, chest freezer and a step ladder to be used by the facility. Nancy pointed out that they have had a lot of very generous donations lately from area citizens. She had also given some puzzles

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MMC & MHSI upgrade to electronic medical records

Marias Healthcare and Marias Medical Center are excited to announce their upgrade to electronic medical records. This opportunity is exciting for providers and patients. It will allow our facilities to offer e-prescribing, lab interface, graphing of labs, recalls, health maintenance programs, stronger compliance, and more. Marias Healthcare will be transitioning the Valier, Sunburst, and Shelby clinics from December through March, 2011. Starting the end of March, we will be recording clinic visits on the electronic record. The paper charts will remain here in the clinic for reference. As a patient, it will not change your care, but provide more information to you and your providers.

Marias Medical Center is proud to provide progress toward a system of electronic medical records. Julia Drisinski, RN, Director of Nursing, noted, "It is actually more secure than paper records due to the fact that we can restrict access on the electronic system."

The American Recovery and Reimbursement Act was signed into law on February 17, 2009. This act was to encourage providers and facilities to start the transition to the required law. The law requires providers and facilities to adopt and implement a certified Electronic Health Record, E.H.R., by 2015 or face penalties in order to continue to care for Medicare and Medicaid patients. A certified E.H.R must meet "Meaningful Use." Meaningful use is initially described by the legislation to include the following:

- The use of a certified E.H.R with e-Prescribing capability as determined appropriate by the Secretary of HHS.
- The ability to report on clinic quality measures as specified by the Secretary.
- The use of E.H.R technology that allows electronic exchange of patient health information.
- Further information with re-

gard to required standards, reporting, and connectivity levels will be determined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Marias Healthcare and Marias Medical Center are working together to minimize disruption of patient care. Our current timetable for implementation is as follows:

- MMC Lab transitioned to E.H.R October, 2010 (Way to GO!)

- MHSI clinics chart abstraction and staff training from Nov. 2010 to March, 2011

- MMC Lab and Radiology interfaces development and testing November-December, 2010

- MHSI clinic "Go Live" date is set for March 15th-17th, 2011.

- MMC will continue to add and build other departments over the next year.

Currently, the clinics of Sunburst, Shelby and Valier, the Heritage Center, the dental office, care center and hospital are all linked through the use of a dedicated T1 line. It offers wonderful access to patient reports. MMC has completed the installation of a wireless system through the main facility to allow for laptops to be used in patient care. They have created secure networks that only allow providers and staff to use the connection. Our E.H.R will not allow for outside agencies or people to remote or access our system. We currently backup and will continue to backup the system throughout the day every day and complete external backups and offsite backups as part of our emergency planning. Maintenance has patient care systems wired to a generator in the event of power loss.

It is exciting to be part of such a large change for healthcare as a nation. It is the goal of Marias to offer our patients the quality care and continue to provide access in rural areas. We are

pleased to have strong support from our providers, staff, boards, and patients to make this large transition. I personally would like to thank nursing, billing, reception, and Lab for their positive and energetic contributions to making this a success. Marias is confident that they will meet the mandated timetable for compliance and serve our communities at a higher level of care. Please don't hesitate to stop by if you are interested in learning more about the process and electronic health records.

Wishing everyone good health and happy holidays,

Jamie Brownell, CEO

Marias Healthcare Services Inc. &

Mark Cross, CEO

Marias Medical Center

Auxiliary ...

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to the veterans. The Cedar Closet will be having an open house on Thursday, December 2, 2010 from 11-5pm. They plan to serve cookies and punch.

The Gift Shop will also be offering a 20% off coupon (one item) that will be valid through December 23.

The Cedar Closet and Gift Shop will be closed November 25, 26, and 27 to allow the volunteers extra time with their families.

Finally, the women discussed the Auxiliary Christmas Luncheon to be held, Friday, December 3 at 12:00 in the Marias Medical Center conference room. Guests welcome, but please RSVP with Susan at 434-3222, as a lunch provided by TLC will be served.

Check out our website at

www.mmcmmt.org