

OCTOBER 2018



BREAST
CANCER
AWARE-
NESS
MONTH



\$100 Scans

Mammo and DEXA Scans Discounted to \$100 for October

HOSPITAL MAIN LINE: (760) 446-3551

   RRH.ORG

DEAR Friends

As we head into the final quarter, it is a time for reflection. 2018 has been a busy but exciting year and we are determined to end it on a high. It has been a big year for technological advancement and we are so grateful to our board of directors who continue to allow us to invest in new equipment. Our board has approved major projects including the total replacement of our IV pumps and defibrillators throughout the hospital, helping us keep our commitment to improving patient outcomes, efficiency and safety.

By continuing to invest in new equipment and enhance our current services, we recognize the need to cater to our growing community. As a result, the relocation project of the South Medical Plaza to our Sydnor building is on track and due for completion this fall, creating the space to meet increased demand for more physicians in town. We are also expanding our services through a partnership with Mercy Air to now offer a full-time air ambulance program for the city and surrounding areas, as well as the launch of a new Pain Management Clinic to further diversify our specialty clinics.

SAY Hello

TO OUR NEW RRH FOUNDATION DIRECTOR

After four amazing years serving as the Executive Director of the Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Development Foundation, Tamara Tilley has decided that it is time for her to change career paths within the hospital. Tamara has worn many hats during her long tenure with RRH and although she will no longer be the Director of the Foundation, she will still be involved as a consultant. With Tamara moving to another office, Kim Metcalf has stepped in as the new Foundation Director.

Kim was born and raised in Ridgecrest and has a long history of community involvement. She is currently the Community Service Director for the Rotary Club of China Lake. Through her community service work with Rotary, her involvement with fundraising coupled with her over thirty five years working in the legal field, she brings to the position a longtime relationship with our community and many years of community service and fundraising knowledge. Kim is excited to move forward carrying on Tamara's commitment and to build on the foundation that Tamara has laid.



James Suver

CEO/President - Ridgecrest Regional Hospital

Looking back, a major achievement has been the launch of the Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Cancer Center. Almost one year from launch, the center is going from strength to strength and we are seeing a number of patient success stories as a result. We hope that you will find inspiration and hope in the survivor story featured in this issue.



"I am grateful and thankful for the opportunity to step into a position that I believe can make a difference not only in our community but in the lives of each and every resident. Living in a small community we have the privilege of seeing what a huge difference we can make on a daily basis - no matter how big or small our contribution is. I have huge shoes to fill and I hope I can live up to the legacy Tamara leaves behind."

Kim is assuming the position of Executive Director at a time when the Development Foundation continues to focus on the hospice home. With a goal of \$300,000.00 it is looking more and more promising in that with the support and generous donations from the RRH employees and the amazing community, the Foundation is approximately one-third of the way there. 2018 hosted the second annual Wine Gala - An Evening Under the Stars, which is the signature event of the Foundation and a major fundraiser for the hospice home. It is very clear that big things are happening and this is made possible with the very charitable giving from this community.

If you would like to be a part of the things to come please contact Kim Metcalf at (760) 499-3955 or by email at Kimberly.Metcalf@rrh.org. Check us out on the web at www.rrh.org.



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IN THIS ISSUE

Meet the
Cancer Center Team
Cancer Center Lookback
Survivor Story
"What About My Hair?"
Women's Imaging
Relay for Life
Introducing Dr. Hughes
Senior Services

Meet THE CANCER CENTER TEAM



Everard Hughes, M.D.
Medical Oncologist and Hematologist

Shantell Utley, MSN, RN
Clinical Manager

Vicki Rios, RN
Patient Navigator

Sandra Brown, MA
Oncology Clinic

Stacie Fisher, BSN, RN, ONC
Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Infusion Nurse

Donna Ingle, BSN, RN, ONC
Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Infusion Nurse

Mindy Olsen, RN, ONC
Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Infusion Nurse

Lori McGee, RN, ONC
Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Infusion Nurse

Audri Arndt, RN, ONC
Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Infusion Nurse

RRH Cancer Center
Outpatient Pavilion
1011 N. China Lake Blvd.,
Phone: (760)-499-3360/3361
www.rrh.org/cancercenter

CANCER CENTER LOOKBACK SINCE LAUNCH

In 2016 Ridgecrest Regional Hospital completed a Community Needs Assessment. This is an assessment that goes out to community members and asks important questions regarding the healthcare available in their community. The goal is to identify any deficits that may be felt community wide. One of the top 5 identified needs was the fact that Ridgecrest needed a locally based Cancer Care Center. Soon after this need was identified, the Executive Team at Ridgecrest Regional Hospital reached out to UC Davis for help in creating a rural cancer care program, with the strength of a university based program.

Not long after the talks began, we jumped in with both feet ready to run and minds ready to be challenged. The team got busy training, planning, building, and recruiting for a Cancer Center. We were able to

recruit a very experienced Medical Oncologist/Hematologist, Dr. Everard Hughes. With the help of the entire team from the Executive leadership to the nurses, pharmacy, Informational Technology, Clinical Informatics, Clinic Staff, Environmental Services, Quality, Risk, Safety, and really the entire hospital we spent one very busy year preparing.

Just one year after starting the process, in early November 2017, the Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Cancer Center saw its first Oncology patient. The patients can see a local Oncologist and also receive their chemotherapy or biological therapy infusions on the same campus. Patient-centered care is the teams focus and main priority. The Cancer Center team realizes this may be one of the hardest periods in an individuals and their family's lives. These patients need special attention, care, and time to deal with the process of becoming an Oncology patient.

One key area that is pivotal in our Cancer Center is our RN Navigator. Vicki Rios, RN, joined the team as we were still in the building stages. She

brings with her a wealth of knowledge, experiences as a nurse, personal experience in this area, and the best part- a heart that is larger than our campus. It takes a very special person to be an RN Navigator for a Cancer Center and she is the poster nurse for this position. She truly loves her patients and guides them through from the very beginning of the journey to treatment completion and beyond. As a result, Vicki is able to help an Oncology patient navigate the entire process, answering any question they might have along the way.

Additionally, all of the Chemotherapy and Biotherapy infusion nurses have received specialty training in the area of chemotherapy and biotherapy infusion. All of the Infusion Registered Nurses are experienced nurses with a large wealth of knowledge to draw from. They are members of our community and really care about providing the best possible experience for all of their patients.



"When I think about what makes our team the most proud of our hospitals' cancer center I keep coming back to this- we are a small Critical Access Hospital with far fewer resources than the large university based hospitals but the quality of care you receive here is the same care you would receive at the larger university based facilities. If there is a treatment we are unable to provide we are honest about our abilities and are happy to facilitate getting the patient to the correct place for treatment. It really is all about the patient and getting them the care you would want for your own family member. The center is small enough that we know each patient and they are all very special to us."

Says Shantell Utley, MSN, RN, Clinical Manager.

What makes the RRH Cancer Center special is that we are small enough to know you personally but large enough to give you highest quality and nationally recognized standards of care that you would get at a large facility.



SURVIVOR *Story*

BY: SHIRLEY HEATON

My name is Shirley Heaton, and I would like to share my journey of being diagnosed with cancer. In December 2012 I had a colonoscopy for minor rectal bleeding and ended up in a general surgeon's office with a diagnoses of colon cancer. I was able to remove part of my colon, which removed all of the cancer. I did not need radiation or chemotherapy, which was a blessing. Life went on as normal for several years.

Then to my surprise at my GYN appointment my doctor found a suspicious mass and I was referred to a cancer facility. To my physician's surprise and mine the test came back positive for ovarian cancer. I underwent a robotic hysterectomy and found out I would need chemotherapy. "What would that entail?" I did my research and found a new cancer infusion center in Ridgecrest, Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Cancer Center.

I made my appointment and was in to see the doctor and his staff within days. At my first appointment I felt welcomed and knew I had found the right place for my treatments. Leaving my appointment I felt that I was now a part of the team and we were all in this together. The doctor's staff sent a referral for a power port to be placed, (which is a long term port under the skin in my chest) to receive the toxic chemo therapy drugs. I was also scheduled for an appointment with the nurse navigator and pharmacist to go over the medications and possible side effects. I was given a binder with educational materials about my medications and treatments as well as a detailed calendar

to map out my treatments, labs and doctor visits, which helped me schedule the rest of my life activities. The nurse navigator reviewed the side-effects of the treatments and strategies to help with the side-effects. Any medications I needed for home use were ordered.

Once the port was placed and I was ready to start treatments I would have labs drawn and visit the doctor, where he and his nurse would review everything and answer any questions I had. A couple days later I went to the Outpatient Pavilion (OPP) and had a private room where the infusion nurses and pharmacist would review my meds and answer any questions I had before treatment. After medications were reviewed and we discussed my questions, the infusion nurse would make sure I was comfortable to start the infusion process.

My infusions would take several hours and the infusion RN would always check on me to see if I needed anything. The infusion nurses were always upbeat, cheerful and helpful. The day after treatment I would receive a follow-up call from the infusion nurses which meant the world to me, they were there to listen to my concerns and worries. I went through 8 cycles of chemo therapy which was about 7 months of working with my oncology team.

I was never afraid because I knew my team cared about me as a person and they were there 24/7 if I needed help or if I had any questions. Going to the RRH Cancer Center was a blessing to me. I never felt alone, because my team was there to cheer me on. Cancer is a very scary diagnosis but no longer is it a death sentence. There are so many new treatments and support available. I cannot begin to sing the praises enough for Ridgecrest Regional Hospital's Cancer Center services.

BUT WHAT ABOUT *My Hair?*

Being diagnosed with Cancer is overwhelming, giving you a sense of fear of the unknown. Not only does the patient have to endure cancer medications and radiation that ravage their bodies, they also have to deal with the side effects of treatment. One of the biggest side effects that affects women is the loss of their hair. Here at Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Cancer Center we are lucky to have a licensed beautician, Karen Davis, who volunteers her time to help women feel and look beautiful through this difficult journey.

Karen volunteers her time by appointment to help women select the right color and style to resemble their natural hair. She also takes the time to make sure the wig is a correct fit. Once fitted with the wig she will cut and style to your preference. Karen finds the perfect wig at no cost to the



patients. Once the appointment is made she will meet with you at Up Town Curl salon where she makes the magic happen in a one on one appointment. With this session the patient is able to feel a sense of self, and once again feel beautiful.

With the diagnosis of cancer we will always have hope, support and the belief you can survive this overwhelming diagnosis. As women helping women we can be strong, encouraging and supportive to help others during this journey.

For further information & appointments, please call Karen Davis at (760) 377-3357.

RELAY FOR LIFE 2018



The hospital is very excited to once again participate in Relay for Life, benefiting the

the American Cancer Society. Last year, the Cancer Center was not yet open and so this year will be the first opportunity to provide this important community service, now that the center is fully operational.

Tera Moorehead, Outreach and Community Director and Shantell Utley, MSN, Cancer Center Manager are Co-Captains for Ridgecrest Regional Hospitals' team this year.

We are pleased to announce our new team name, thanks to our very creative staff at the hospital. Many suggestions were submitted and the winning team name for this year is "RRH Curesaders" submitted by Nirzari Desai.

This event is a really large focus for this community and the hospital. There are so many great things planned to make this day a special celebration for those touched by cancer. Please stay tuned for more updates from the hospital and around town on all of the happenings with Relay for Life.

For more information on Relay for Life and the American Cancer Society, please visit www.cancer.org.

Women's IMAGING SERVICES

Choose Ridgecrest Regional Hospital's Women's Imaging Center for your annual mammogram and enjoy:

- Quick and easy telephone scheduling.
- One location providing a comfortable, private atmosphere.
- State-of-the-art imaging technologies including 3D Mammography, ABUS (Automated Breast Ultrasound Screening), DEXA bone density screening, and Ultrasound.



\$100 Scans

Mammo and DEXA Scans Discounted to \$100 for October

CALL WOMEN'S IMAGING TO MAKE YOUR APPOINTMENT TODAY: (760) 499-3820

Ridgecrest Regional Hospital Women's Imaging Center is proud to be ACR (American College of Radiology) accredited.



introducing DR. HUGHES MEDICAL ONCOLOGIST

Everard H. Hughes, M.D. was certified in Medical Oncology in 1980 with voluntary recertification in 2005. Dr. Hughes was trained in hematology and oncology at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) in Bethesda, Maryland.

After 4 years at the NCI, Dr. Hughes and his family decided to remain in the Washington D.C., area for 15 years as East Coast Kaiser Permanente's first Medical Oncologist. While in Maryland he obtained a degree in computer sciences.

In 2005 Dr. Hughes established an office in western Kansas. Then, after 7 years working with South Wind Oncology Associates, he decided to retire. However, he soon discovered an irresistible need to continue practicing cancer medicine.

Dr. Hughes has forty years of hematology and oncology experience practicing in Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Arizona and California.



BREAST CANCER EDUCATION

BY: DR. HUGHES

In 2018 the improvement in survival from breast cancer has evolved from an understanding of the biology of its multiple varieties and from early detection by imaging with mammograms or other breast imaging techniques. If you have a first degree relative (mother, sister) who has had breast cancer

and you are female you need to plan to obtain your first mammogram when you reach age 40. If you have no family history, plan to obtain your first mammogram at age 50 and subsequently obtain your mammogram every 2 years, as recommended by the American Cancer Society.

It is important to realize that there are multiple types of breast cancer. Each type has a distinct treatment plan based on the presence or absence of proteins on the breast cancer's cell surface. These proteins control the breast cancer's biological functions. To date, researchers have found that breast cancer cells have hormone receptors (estrogen and progesterone) and growth factor receptors. These cell surface proteins function to control the rate of cell growth, control characteristics of its spread to other parts of the body and control the cancer cell's ability to survive the body's attempt to destroy it.

Presently there are four (4) types of breast cancer based on proteins that can be measured on the breast cancer cell surface:

1. Hormone receptors present + growth factor receptors absent.
2. Hormone receptors absent + growth factor receptors absent (so called Triple Negative breast cancer).
3. Hormone receptors present + growth factor receptors present.
4. Only growth factor receptors present.

Now, most types of breast cancer require some form of surgery. However, the important concept to grasp is that each of the four types of breast cancer mentioned here has additional therapy that is distinctly different from the other types that leads to improved survival. For instance, patients who have hormone receptors absent + growth factor receptors absent (so called Triple Negative breast cancer) are treated with chemotherapy. Another example is patients who are over age 70 with breast cancer that has hormone receptors present + growth factor receptors absent often will not require chemotherapy, but instead can be treated with estrogen blocking tablets that control the growth and spread of their hormone receptor positive breast cancer. Also, patients with only growth factor receptors present are

treated with growth factor blockers (trastuzumab, Herceptin®).

There are new cancer therapies approved by the FDA monthly. Some of these new therapies have to do with an understanding of cellular processes occurring on the cell surface or within the breast cancer cell itself. For example, triple negative breast cancer will very soon likely be treated with medications that enhance the body's ability to destroy the triple negative breast cancer cells by immune mechanisms. (Cancer 2018 May 15; 124(10):2086-2103).

The bottom line in 2018 is our anxiety level may not be so high when we discover a lump in the breast or find out we have a diagnosis of breast cancer.

TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT, PLEASE CALL THE CLINIC OFFICE AT (760) 499-3360 OR 3361.



SENIOR *Services*

Senior Services is a relatively new program to Ridgecrest Regional Hospital, we are just approaching our third year and these past two years have proved to be successful for our community seniors. Partial funding for this program comes from the Kern County Department of Aging and the hospital graciously funds the rest of the program. The program consists of three different components which are:

1. Case Management

2. Information and Assistance

3. Homemakers

During our second year we served a total of 543 clients in our homemaker program or an average of 44 clients a month. Our homemaker program assists with general housekeeping skills, grocery shopping, and socialization. We provide services to those living in Ridgecrest and Inyokern and of the 44 folks we provide services to, 39 are homebound and are heavily reliant upon the services we provide.

Our Case Management program provides more intense services, we assist folks with applying for low income utility programs, assist them with paying their bills, applying for proper benefits and ensuring that they have a primary care physician and that they are seeing them on an ongoing basis. This component works closely with some of the local physicians and with the ACO (Accountable Care Organization) which has helped to lower inpatient admissions.

SENIOR SERVICES
Ridgecrest Regional Hospital

The Information and Assistance component is available either by phone or walk-in. People often stop by or call looking for information regarding Alzheimer's support group, placement support, how to rent or donate durable medical equipment, and transportation issues. We also do monthly outreach events to different organizations.

All of our services are provided at no cost to seniors 60 and over, however we do ask for monthly contributions for homemaker services and when people can oblige, they always do. We also work closely with other organizations such as Valley Caregiver Resource Group and the Alzheimer's Association to try to ensure that individuals have access to resources that may benefit them.

If you have any questions regarding the services we provide or if we can assist you, please call us 760-371-1445.

Mobile HEALTH UNIT

In a partnership developed between Ridgecrest Regional Hospital and the Sierra Sands School District, the Mobile Health Unit provides affordable and accessible medical care for students, their families and school staff.

SERVICES:

- Well child exams
- Immunizations
- Health education: nutrition/physical fitness
- Treatment of minor injury and illnesses
- Hearing & vision screening
- Sports physicals

HOW TO SCHEDULE:

- For appointments, please call Rural Health Pediatrics at (760) 499-3853.
- Walk-ins are welcome, but please coordinate directly with the scheduled school.
- A release form will be sent out via the school and will need to be turned in at the time of the student receiving treatment.



UPCOMING SCHEDULE:

MON.	Mesquite High School 8:00am-1:00pm	THURS.	Pierce Elementary 9:30am-2:30pm
TUES.	Burroughs High School 8:00am-2:00pm	FRI.	Inyokern Elementary 8:30am-2:00pm



FLU VACCINE CLINIC

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM INFLUENZA THIS FLU SEASON!

Seasonal influenza is a serious viral illness that can affect anyone, from infants to older adults. It can cause a serious infection that can sometimes result in hospitalization or even death. Some people, such as older people, young children, and people with certain diseases are at higher risk for serious flu complications.

We get the flu from touching something that someone with the flu has touched, then touching our eyes, nose or mouth. Or we get it by being close to someone who has the flu and is coughing.

HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM GETTING THE FLU:

- It's not too late to get a flu shot! Getting vaccinated is the best way to prevent getting the flu.
- Wash your hands OFTEN with soap and water.
- If you become sick, practice "social distancing".
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth; and avoid contact with sick people.
- Antibiotics are NOT effective against the flu. Using antibiotics inappropriately can lead to antibiotic resistance.
- Avoid the emergency room unless you are suffering from more serious flu symptoms.

SCHEDULE YOUR FLU SHOT TODAY!

Southern Sierra Medical Clinic: (760) 446-6404
Rural Health Clinic: (760) 499-3855