



LIVING HEALTHY

In Sonoma County | TOGETHER WE BUILD HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Dessie Mae Burns,
lung cancer survivor and
Santa Rosa Memorial
Hospital patient

WORLD-CLASS SURGERY CLOSE TO HOME

Innovative procedure speeds recovery
and reduces pain for lung cancer patients

SPRING 2009



House Calls nurse practitioner Laura Rodriguez cares for seniors in their homes, offering them compassion, love, and dignity

"Many seniors have debilitating conditions and can't leave their homes or advocate for themselves," says Laura Rodriguez, N.P., a nurse practitioner with House Calls, one of the Community Benefit programs offered by St. Joseph Health System–Sonoma County. "By treating them at home, we help keep them out of emergency rooms and avoid hospitalizations."

House Calls has been providing at-home medical care to older residents of Sonoma County since 1996. Overseen by Medical Director Stephen Sheerin, M.D., and staffed by nurse practitioners, registered nurses, and a medical assistant, House Calls serves seniors who are uninsured, underinsured, have transportation challenges, or have a

physical or cognitive impairment.

Rodriguez, who has been with House Calls for five years, is deeply committed to her work. "The care we provide is very patient-centered," she says. "We take into account our patients' physical, psychological, and social health, in an environment that is familiar to them. House Calls provides a phenomenal service that our elders deserve."

As a skilled nurse practitioner, Rodriguez is responsible for patients' initial physical assessments and helps develop their treatment plans. "Most of our patients are over 80 and have multiple issues, including type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart problems," says Rodriguez. "It can take several visits to get the whole head-to-toe evaluation done

and a plan established." Once the initial assessments are completed, Rodriguez helps determine the patient's follow-up needs and coordinates additional services with other agencies, such as Meals on Wheels and food banks. Perhaps most important, though, Rodriguez provides a consistent source of loving, compassionate support to people who otherwise might not have any.

"I give them time, I listen, and I preserve their dignity," says Rodriguez. "And if you have your dignity, that counts for a lot." In addition, says Rodriguez, the patients aren't the only ones who benefit. "I have tremendous job satisfaction," she says. "I am blessed and honored to do this work. As far as work goes, this is my purpose on earth."



New President and CEO
Kevin A. Klockenga

Dear Neighbor,

These are difficult times for organizations and individuals across our great nation and healthcare is not immune. The morning headlines only add to an atmosphere of uncertainty, including concerns about the future of healthcare in Sonoma County.

As the new president and CEO of St. Joseph Health System–Sonoma County, I assure you our health system will continue its dedication to providing the most compassionate care, progressive treatments, and advanced procedures available. I pledge to lead our hospitals and other local services in the constant pursuit of being best in patient care, best in employee satisfaction, and the best places for physicians to practice.

It is a tremendous honor to serve an organization that is part of such a wonderful community. My wife, Millie, and I have come to deeply appreciate Sonoma County, along with our incredible staff members, physicians at Santa Rosa Memorial and Petaluma Valley hospitals, and the friends and neighbors we have come to know.

Faith, foresight, and flexibility guided the Sisters of St. Joseph when they brought our ministry to California nearly a hundred years ago with nothing more than a pocketful of change. In these disquieting times, we recall with gratitude their ability to cleave to their mission, vision, and values in pursuit of compassionate healthcare for all. St. Joseph Health System–Sonoma County continues that legacy today.

I look forward to the future with a sobering understanding of the short-term challenges ahead and with great optimism for what lies beyond. We are a great nation, we are a great healthcare system, we will remain true to our mission and values, and we will continue to serve you—our friends and neighbors—for decades to come.

Sincerely,

Kevin A. Klockenga
President and CEO



Helping Hands: Spiritual Care Volunteers

If you or someone you know has the gift of caring for those in need, consider volunteering. St. Joseph Health System–Sonoma County's Department of Mission Integration offers training for individuals interested in becoming a spiritual care volunteer. Spiritual care volunteers provide comfort and support for patients and their families through communication and listening, understanding and spirituality. As a volunteer, you will help bring solace to those most in need. During a 30-hour curriculum provided by SJHS–SC Hospice Services and the Spiritual Care Department, trainees learn pastoral skills: how to listen empathetically, respond appropriately, and pray with patients and their families when requested. The next training for spiritual care volunteers begins in September. People from all traditions, lay or ordained, are welcome. No previous experience is necessary.

For more information on becoming a spiritual care volunteer, contact Reverend Denise Turner, staff chaplain, at (707) 525-5300, ext. 3489 or denise.turner@stjoe.org.

One-Stop Care for Neurological Disorders

The full-service Neurological Rehabilitation Clinic at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital specializes in the evaluation and treatment of neurological disorders and injuries including but not limited to stroke, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, vestibular disorders, and traumatic brain injuries.

The clinic, which recently moved inside the hospital from its former location on Sotoyome Street, is unique to Sonoma County in several ways. It offers:

- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Pathology
- Multidisciplinary Patient-Focused Treatment
- Gait-Assisted Treadmill for Mobility
- Computerized Balance Assessment and Treatment

- Pre-Driving Assessments
- Community Reintegration Assessment and Support
- SAEBO Upper Extremity Orthotics Program
- Lee Silverman Speech Treatment for Parkinson's Patients
- Radiological Swallow Evaluations and Treatment

The Outpatient Neurological Rehabilitation Clinic consistently receives high scores for patient satisfaction—92.35 out of a possible 100 score on the most recent Avatar survey, a tool used to measure patients' feedback. For more information about the clinic, please call (707) 525-5388. For this and other rehabilitation services at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital, visit www.StJosephHealth.org and click on Services.



Our Mission

To extend the healing ministry of Jesus in the tradition of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange by continually improving the health and quality of life of people in the communities we serve.

Our Vision

We bring people together to provide compassionate care, promote health improvement, and create healthy communities.

Our Values

The four core values of St. Joseph Health System—Dignity, Service, Excellence, and Justice—are the guiding principles for all we do, shaping our interactions with those whom we are privileged to serve.

New Hours for Urgent Care

St. Joseph Urgent Care Centers have new hours of service and are open to the public from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily. If you or a loved one needs prompt attention for illnesses and injuries such as cold and flu symptoms, infections and burns, sprains and fractures, St. Joseph Urgent Care is here to help. Our two Urgent Care Centers offer convenient access to a wide variety of medical care, as well as on-site X-ray and lab services. No appointment is necessary. St. Joseph Urgent Care Centers are located in:

Santa Rosa

9 a.m. to 7 p.m., seven days a week
Closed on holidays
1287 Fulton Road
(707) 543-2000

Rohnert Park

9 a.m. to 7 p.m., seven days a week
Open on holidays
Rohnert Park Healthcare Center
1450 Medical Center Drive
(707) 584-0672

St. Joseph Health System—Sonoma County • 1165 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa, CA 95405 • (707) 546-3210 • www.StJosephHealth.org • President and CEO: Kevin Klockenga • Manager of Publications and Community Relations: Vanessa DeGier • Produced by



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Making Kids Smile

When Victoria Lynskey, DMD, MDS, set up her orthodontic practice in Sonoma County in 2003, she quickly realized that she could help fight a serious local problem: dental decay among Sonoma County's disadvantaged children.

"I was appalled to learn how many kids are in such bad shape," says Dr. Lynskey. "Many families can't afford regular dental care, and I saw a real need for increased education, outreach, and preventive care." Indeed, a recent assessment by St. Joseph Health System—Sonoma County's Mighty Mouth program reveals that 46 percent of Sonoma County's preschool children have urgent or emergent dental needs.

To address this problem, Dr. Lynskey created Make Someone Smile, a Santa Rosa-based fund-raising program dedicated to supporting St. Joseph's Dental Clinics, which provide dental care to low-income, uninsured, and underinsured children. "I wanted St. Joseph's Dental Clinics to be our partner organization because they offer such an important service in this area."

St. Joseph's Dental Clinics and programs have been offering dental care in the community since 1990, helping 6,000 patients annually, from the ages of birth to 16. The clinics consist of a fixed-site facility—staffed with a pediatric dentist, oral surgeon, and several general dentists—as well as a mobile clinic. They also offer school-based educational programs and a course for mothers-to-be.

"Tooth decay is a highly preventable disease," says Stacey Stirling, dental operations manager for St. Joseph's Dental Clinics, "but in Sonoma County, it has become a silent epidemic. Dr. Lynskey chose to work with us because she is committed to prevention and education, and those are critical concerns for us, too."

To support Make Someone Smile, or for more information, visit www.makesomeonesmile.org.



Eat Healthy, Stay Calm

Healthy eating is one of the first good habits to go by the wayside when times get tough. Recent economic troubles have raised stress levels for many families. With less money in our pockets at the supermarket, families may find it difficult to wheel full grocery carts up to the checkout stand. When parents work longer hours or second jobs, they have less time and energy to cook when they get home. They may decide it's easier to give in to their kids' requests for fast food and snacks than to insist on a healthy, well-balanced meal.

"But stressful times are when good nutrition is most important," explains Tricia Marrero, M.S., R.D., manager of Nutrition Services at Petaluma Valley Hospital. "Sticking to a healthy diet can do a lot to reduce stress and improve the atmosphere around the house. If the family can sit down to enjoy a balanced meal together, that's even better. They can use mealtime as an opportunity to relax, talk, and help each other cope with the stress that everyone feels."

The negative effects of stress are compounded when we let it push us into poor eating habits. Higher intakes of salt and sugar, from prepackaged and fast foods, increase the incidence and severity of high blood pressure and diabetes. Increased alcohol consumption may make it harder to sleep soundly and can also reduce the inclination to cook and eat healthy meals. And empty calories from snacks and alcohol increase the incidence and severity of obesity.

There are "silent" complications of poor nutrition as well. "Vitamin and mineral shortages often go unnoticed until they are severe. We don't tend to crave them because they usually have no taste and don't contribute to feeling full," nutritionist Marrero explains. "But the negative impact of vitamin and mineral deficiencies on mental and physical health is well-documented and serious, both short and long term."

A Revolution in Lung Cancer Surgery

Minimally invasive procedures offer lung cancer patients more options for surgery—with less pain and quicker recovery

Spry, spirited, and 84 years young, Dessie Mae Burns is back to working eight hours a day, seven days a week, as an in-home caretaker for a woman who's two years her junior and in ill health. Burns still drives and keeps up her own home in Windsor. No mean feats at her seasoned age, to be sure, but even more remarkable considering she had lung cancer surgery at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital (SRMH) just a few months ago.

Today, Burns says she's feeling fine and fortunate. She's the first to credit her successful recovery to the state-of-the-art care she received at SRMH and to Samer Kanaan, M.D., the thoracic surgeon who performed her procedure. "I told Dr. Kanaan, 'God sent you to me to save my life,'" she recalls. "I said to him, 'I just want you to go in there and get the cancer out of there,' and that's just what he did."

When Less Is More

To fully appreciate Burns' good fortune, one needs perspective on the status quo in the overall battle against lung cancer and how well she's positioned to beat the odds. "I don't think that most people know that lung cancer is the leading cause

of cancer death for both men and women," observes Burns' surgeon, Dr. Kanaan. "More people die from lung cancer than from colon, breast, or prostate cancer combined. That's because most patients present with advanced-stage cancer, when surgery is not an option. Unfortunately, we're just not catching lung cancer early enough."

Burns' early-stage cancer was diagnosed after doctors saw a suspicious spot on X-rays taken to assess an unrelated health problem. Not only did surgery turn out to be an option for her, she was offered a leading-edge procedure. What's more, it was performed at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital, close to home.

Generally referred to as VATS (video-assisted thoracoscopic surgery) and more typically the province of big-city, university-level hospitals, Burns' particular procedure involved the use of three incisions (the largest only a few centimeters in length) that allowed Dr. Kanaan to access her right lung; view the surgical field via a small, inserted video camera; and remove the upper lobe, including the tumor and several lymph nodes. This minimally invasive approach contrasts with conventional open surgery, which involves a long incision, extending from the shoulder blade to the chest and slicing muscle, plus removing, cutting, or moving ribs—all of which require the patient to be of sufficient health to endure the procedure and the arduous recovery.



Dessie Mae Burns is pleased with the outcome of her recent lung cancer surgery and with her thoracic surgeon, Samer Kanaan, M.D.

At SRMH, lobectomy (Burns' procedure) and wedge resection (removal of the tumor and a margin of lung tissue) are offered as a VATS or an open surgery procedure. Dr. Kanaan is

clear that not every lung cancer patient is a candidate for a minimally invasive approach, but in appropriate cases the benefits are significant. "VATS procedures represent a mini-revolution," he says, "because we can treat people who would not otherwise be treated surgically—including older patients or people who have other health conditions who wouldn't



VATS will become the standard of care in lung cancer, says Dr. Kanaan.

be candidates before—and help them to recover faster because they have less pain and fewer complications after surgery."

Dr. Kanaan is also clear that the availability of VATS at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital is a huge advantage to the local community. "People should feel reassured knowing that they can receive state-of-the-art, minimally invasive care for lung cancer right here instead of feeling that they have to travel to San Francisco or somewhere else to receive that care. It's good for the patients and their overall care."

Looking to the Future

As enthusiastic as Dr. Kanaan is about the current use of VATS procedures, he's even more optimistic about prospects for future

FIND MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about minimally invasive lung cancer surgery at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital:

> **Listen to an audiocast interview** with thoracic surgeon Samer Kanaan, M.D., on www.StJosephHealth.org.

AUDIOCAST
www.StJosephHealth.org



uses and sees a growing embrace of VATS in lung cancer treatment, much like the arc of acceptance for minimally invasive procedures witnessed in other types of surgery. "For instance, we used to take out the gallbladder with a big incision, and with time, the surgeons and their training programs started switching to laparoscopic procedures. And now that's the standard of care," he says. "I think lobectomy done with video assistance is approaching the same level. Studies are starting to show that it's just as effective and just as safe. It should be the standard of care today, but it may take 10 to 20 years before it is offered at every hospital across the country."

In the meantime, medical science will persist in efforts to push the envelope in this and other treatments for lung cancer, as well as in diagnosis and prevention. A large national study is under way, for example, that explores the potential for using low-dose CT scans for lung cancer screening. On the prevention front, smoking remains a key culprit and a key target for physicians and health educators. "About 87 percent of lung cancers can be attributed to smoking," explains Dr. Kanaan. "I tell people the best thing they can do for their health is to quit."

While doctors and scientists try to work out all the lifesaving details, Dessie Mae Burns will continue to count herself among the lucky ones. "I have no complaints, and I am so thankful. I still have a lot of living to do," she says with a chuckle, adding, "And you know what? I want to retire one of these days. That's what I'm really looking forward to."



Welcome,

Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees

2009 Board of Trustees

Did you know that a handful of community leaders are helping to make decisions that will shape the future of healthcare in Sonoma County? When you think of hospital volunteers, you probably imagine the hundreds of people at our hospitals who care for sick patients and comfort family members during difficult times.

Our boards of trustees are also volunteers, and these generous and highly qualified professionals have chosen to devote their time and talents to helping St. Joseph Health System—Sonoma County navigate its most important issues and decisions, which in turn affect the entire community.

We thank the following trustees who serve on our boards:

Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital

- Jim Adams
- Sister Sharon Becker, CSJ
- Herbert Castillo
- Sister Judith Dugan, CSJ
- Logan Faust, M.D., Chief of Staff
- Bill Finley, M.D., Incoming Chief of Staff
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Petaluma Valley Hospital Board of Trustees



Preventing Sports Injuries

Exercising a little precaution goes a long way when it comes to avoiding sprains and strains

Spring is in the air, and as the weather improves, so do the opportunities to exercise in the great outdoors. But for most people—whether you are a disciplined athlete or just trying to get in shape after hibernating all winter—ramping up your activity level also increases your risk for sports-related injuries. The good news is that with a little knowledge of how to prevent and care for sports injuries, you can minimize the chances you'll be sidelined with a sprain, strain, or other problem.

First, you need to know your risk for injuries. According to physical therapist Chris Ryan, manager of the Outpatient Orthopedic Physical Therapy Program at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital, a few key factors impact your likelihood of being injured. "One, if you have a history of an injury, the affected part of the body may be vulnerable to new injuries," says Ryan. "Another factor

is if you have exercised on consecutive days, because your body may not have had enough rest. Finally, if you are not in good enough shape for the activity you choose, your risk is greater."

Prevention Pointers

Some of the most common sports injuries are sprains and strains, swollen muscles, knee injuries, and Achilles tendon injuries. Many of these can be avoided by exercising a little precaution—and using common sense. Ryan offers the following tips:

- Know—and abide by—the rules of the sport you're playing.
- Always wear the appropriate protective gear.
- Get plenty of rest between workouts.
- Warm up before exercising or playing a sport.
- Know your body's limits—and don't push them.

When to Seek Help

If you become injured, stop exercising right away, advises Ryan, and monitor your symptoms closely. Seek medical attention if you experience severe pain, numbness, tingling, or comparative weakness in one part of the body.

If the injuries are minor, they can often be treated at home with the RICE method (rest, ice, compression, and elevation), which is effective in relieving pain and reducing swelling. "But if your condition has not improved in 48 hours," says Ryan, "I recommend seeing a physician."

Besides RICE, other treatments for sports injuries include pain relievers, immobilizing the injured area, rehabilitation, and surgery.

With spring here, it's hard to resist the urge to go out and play. But play it safe—and you'll be able to enjoy the sports you love.

Classes and Programs

Relaxation and Guided Imagery

Imagery is an integral part of mind/body medicine. In this one-day class, you will learn to differentiate between stress and relaxation responses, experience and practice mind/body medicine principles, and use imagination and guided imagery to influence the body and help control pain.

Fee: \$90

Contact: (707) 525-5285

Dates and time: May 21, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Place: Life Learning Center, 1144 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa

Touch Therapy for Pain Management

Discover how a caring presence and touch are essential for effective pain management. This one-day class explores the key role touch therapy plays in managing physical pain. Through discussion and clinical practice, you will learn six flow patterns that can be used simply and effectively.

Fee: \$90

Contact: (707) 525-5285

Dates and time: May 27, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Place: Life Learning Center, 1144 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa

Yoga

Please wear comfortable, loose clothing, and bring a yoga mat or blanket to class.

Fee: \$10

Contact: (707) 525-5285

Dates and time: Mondays, 4–5:15 p.m.; Fridays, 5:45–6:45 p.m.

Place: Life Learning Center, 1144 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa
or

Dates and time: Wednesdays, 4–5 p.m.

Place: Groverman Hall, 400 North McDowell Blvd., Petaluma

Pilates

Please wear comfortable, loose clothing, and bring a yoga mat or blanket to class.

Fee: \$10

Contact: (707) 525-5285

Dates and time: Mondays, 5:30–6:30 p.m.; Fridays, 4:30–5:30 p.m.

Place: Life Learning Center, 1144 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa



Special Events

Ready – Set – Race! Human Race 2009

Hospice of Petaluma and Memorial Hospice invite you to be a part of "Team Hospice" and participate in Human Race 2009, a nationwide community fund-raising event for nonprofit organizations. The Human Race is the largest collaborative fund-raising event in Sonoma County, featuring a 3K and 10K run and walk through Howarth and Spring Lake Parks. Organizations and businesses recruit walkers/runners/pledge-gatherers to raise funds. The run and walk is open to all. To sign up with "Team Hospice" and support their services, visit www.humanrace.kintera.org/hopmh or call Cheri Plattner at (707) 778-6242.

Date: Saturday, May 9

Info: humanracenow.org

James B. and Billie Keegan Leadership Series

The Leadership Series seeks to inspire others to serve our community as James & Billie Keegan so generously did for more than 50 years. This annual spring luncheon brings education and information to Sonoma County through local and national public speakers. Each year, outstanding community leaders are recognized who exemplify James and Billie Keegan's philosophy of "giving back" to the community. This year's honoree is Bill Friedman and the featured speaker is Tommy Smothers. Funds raised will directly benefit the James B. & Billie Keegan Palliative Care Unit at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital.

Date: Thursday, May 21

Place: Doubletree Hotel, Rohnert Park

Fee: \$75, please contact the Foundation, (707) 547-4680, to reserve your seat.



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Just beyond these doors, there's so much to look forward to.

When something unexpected happens, you want to get back to your life as soon as possible. With the region's Level II Trauma Center, the highly skilled physicians and nurses of Santa Rosa Memorial are ready to care for you with the most advanced treatments and technologies available. From surgery to recovery and rehabilitation, and community programs on injury prevention, we're always here with comprehensive, compassionate care.

StJosephHealth.org

**The Regional
Trauma Center** 
at Santa Rosa
Memorial Hospital
Your health. Your future. Our passion.