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A Journey of Performance Excellence

with Jayne Pope, HCM CEO

With our communities beside us, Hill Country Memorial is honored and humbled to be a recipient of the 2014 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

The award represents the nation’s highest honor for performance excellence through innovation, improvement and visionary leadership in both public and private organizations.

We are indebted to the dedication and support of our physicians, staff and volunteers, and all the citizens in the primary counties we serve—Gillespie, Kendall, Kerr, Kimble, Mason, Llano and Blanco.

What is special about our Hill Country communities is the legacy of hard work, independence, innovation and stewardship. Those same principles are essential to the future of health care—especially for an independent non-profit community hospital. Our commitment to performance excellence is focused on remarkable patient care for the exceptional communities we serve.

On a personal note, my husband Steven and I climb Enchanted Rock several times a week. At some point, the rock and the climb came to symbolize the history of Hill Country Memorial and our team’s challenge in an ascent to excellence. In September, 40 HCM team members decided to re-enact our performance climb on Enchanted Rock. On Page 7 of this issue, you will find a photo and a link to the video.

You don’t win this award for being the best at one thing, or at two or three. For us the award is not the destination. It is a milestone along a journey of performance excellence that we committed to seven years ago. Our national TOP 100 Hospital ranking for three consecutive years (2012–2014) is an example of how we hit our stride and really accelerated our quality performance.

Our commitment to performance excellence and quality achievement extends beyond the walls of a traditional acute care hospital into our communities. Your health and wellbeing is the purpose and the cornerstone of Hill Country Memorial.

Thank you,

Jayne E. Pope, Hill Country Memorial CEO
Buddy, a 35-pound beagle-mix, became a media sensation after word spread about the heroic pooch with a heart of gold.

In October, Mason County emergency medical services (EMS) responded to a call at a Mason ranch, where Buddy lives with his owner, J.R. Nicholson. Nicholson was dizzy and asked a ranch hand to call an ambulance. About halfway into the 40-mile trip to Hill Country Memorial Hospital (HCM), a concerned driver flagged down the ambulance to say a dog was riding the side step. The amazed EMS crew scooped up Buddy and put him in the cab, where he finished the ride to Fredericksburg.

“Dogs aren’t allowed in the ambulance unless they’re service animals, but we couldn’t discard him on the side of the road,” says Emergency Medical Technician Tanner Brown. “So we put him in the back of the ambulance, and he went to sleep.”

HCM staff helped look after Buddy while Nicholson was treated. “He sat there as happy as can be,” recalls Emergency Department Director Karen Groff, MSn, FNP. Both patient and pup returned home later that day and are doing well.

PATIENT-FIRST PHILOSOPHY
Happy endings like this are possible because of HCM’s strong relationships with dedicated county EMS providers. This teamwork enables HCM to care for communities across a wide geographical area, driven by a mutual understanding that remarkable care means always putting patients’ needs first, Groff says.

“I did an interview before I got hired,” Groff says, “and the chief operating officer asked me if I had ever broken any rules. I said I hadn’t but that I certainly might bend them if it served the patient’s best interests. I think that’s what clinched the deal. “Black-and-white rules don’t take into consideration the human element in things,” Groff adds. “If your dog is outside and you’re worried that it’s going to be hit by a car on Highway 16, you’re not going to respond to care very well. What matters is keeping patients comfortable and calm and building trust. That’s what it’s all about.”

TIGHT-KNOT COMMUNITY
Reggie Loeffler, director of Mason County EMS, says teamwork comes naturally in a community where “everybody is familiar with everybody.” He says several EMS professionals work in both Mason County and Fredericksburg. His wife, Cindy Loeffler, RN, is a trauma nurse coordinator/house supervisor in the HCM Emergency Room (ER).

“We’re very rural in Mason County. We have a clinic but no emergency medical facility,” Reggie Loeffler says. “We transport 80 to 90 percent of our patients to Hill Country Memorial because most people in the county feel that’s their hospital. They’ve got the best doctors for a town that size, and we’ve got a great working relationship with everyone in the ER.”

THE RIGHT CALL
So when a scrappy little dog rescued from a shelter hunkers down on an ambulance traveling 60 miles per hour on a one-lane road to be with his owner, people shake their heads — and know exactly what comes next.

Allowing Buddy in the ambulance was the “right call,” Loeffler says. “And if we had to do it over again, we’d do everything the same.”
life-threatening complication of an infection. To stop sepsis, early detection and treatment are critical. Arming EMS crews with a tool that can identify sepsis sooner means that patients are treated faster and have a better chance of surviving.

Emergency Department and laboratory staff at HCM emphasize that for the community, this is a positive step in helping to detect sepsis early, alerting the emergency department that a patient with probable sepsis is en route and ultimately fostering better outcomes when treating sepsis.
CREATE HEALTHY
Oak Tree Café
Granola Bars

Don’t let the munchies catch you off guard. Stock your kitchen, desk, purse or backpack with some nutritious nibbles. These granola bars are perfect to take on-the-go.

Serves 12

INGREDIENTS:
¹∕³ cup maple syrup
¼ cup brown sugar
¾ teaspoon kosher salt
¹∕³ cup extra virgin olive oil
2 cups whole oat old-fashioned oatmeal
½ cup pecan pieces
½ cup dried pumpkin seeds
½ cup roasted salted sunflower seeds
½ cup dried sweetened coconut

DIRECTIONS:
1. Heat oven to 300 degrees. Make a foil sling for a 13” x 9” pan to easily remove the bars. Spray foil with vegetable oil.


3. Transfer oat mixture to prepared pan. Spray a metal spatula with vegetable oil and firmly compress oat mixture in pan until very compact.


5. Transfer to a cutting board and recut bars. Store in airtight container for up to one week.

Welcome Our New ENT Specialist

CM is pleased to welcome Douglas J. Stanley, MD, to our highly experienced team of ear, nose and throat (ENT) specialists.

Dr. Stanley earned his undergraduate degree in biochemistry from Texas Tech University in 2005 and graduated from the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston in 2009. He joined the HCM Medical Group in 2014 and sees patients at HCM Boerne and the HCM Specialty Clinic in Marble Falls.

Q Why did you choose to become an ENT specialist?
A: When I was a medical student on my surgical rotation, a patient who had suffered a terrible trauma to his face was brought to the hospital. The on-call ENT and the ENT residents attending to the patient were caring people who were eager to teach and were so pleasant to work with. That impressed me and influenced me going into the field.

Q What do you find most rewarding about your work?
A: I love the variety. We see all age groups, and the conditions we treat range from chronic sinus problems and ear infections to hearing loss and head and neck cancer. We’re able to really improve our patients’ quality of life, and patients are so grateful, which is very rewarding.

Q What do you enjoy most about practicing in the Texas Hill Country?
A: The people are kind, and because it’s a smaller community I have the chance to get to know patients more personally. This is a great place to raise a family, and the medical community is tight-knit and works collaboratively, which enables us to provide high-quality patient care.

Q How do you like to spend your free time?
A: I enjoy scuba diving, backpacking and hiking—history and travel in general. This past summer, I had the opportunity to travel to Angkor Wat, the ancient temples in the Cambodian jungle, which was truly amazing.
WHAT MAKES A BALDRIGE NATIONAL QUALITY AWARD WINNER?

From our values driven culture to our handpicked specialists, everything we do at Hill Country Memorial makes us more than an award-winning hospital. It makes us a healthy choice for our patients and their families.

HCM’s commitment to excellence has grown beyond the walls of a traditional hospital and into the communities. For the past several years, our journey has been based on the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award criteria—an award we were honored to receive in 2014.

Truly, the journey has yielded more than the award itself. This accomplishment has put us on the national stage while reminding us of the immeasurable support from our communities.

Thank you.

Local filmmaker Jordan Pirch directs HCM team members as they climb Enchanted Rock.

See more at hillcountrymemorial.org/baldrige.
HCM DISTRIBUTES FREE KIDS’ BIKE HELMETS

Volunteers from Hill Country Memorial, H-E-B, the Fredericksburg Police Department and Pedernales Youth Soccer Association distributed free children’s bike helmets on Saturday, October 25 at Oak Crest Park in Fredericksburg.

As part of the Texas Medical Association’s (TMA) “Hard Hats for Little Heads” program, volunteers fit children ages three to 14 with correctly sized helmets.

Organizers emphasized the importance of fitting children with new helmets as they grow to ensure the best protection at every age. HCM encouraged citizens to keep their children safe by getting helmets and ensuring children wear them.

In addition to a free helmet, participants also received a goody bag and safety information.

“Hard Hats for Little Heads promotes fun and safe exercise for children, whether they are riding their bikes, skateboarding or even riding a scooter,” says organizer Kelly DiCuffa, HCM Marketing Director. “Most importantly, we want to keep kids safe and healthy.”

According to the TMA, a properly fitting helmet can prevent almost all head injuries, the most common cause of disability or death in a bicycle accident. Since 1994, TMA has distributed more than 180,000 helmets to Texas children.

HCMH FOUNDATION

“Hearts for Hospice”

APPEAL TO SUPPORT HOSPICE SERVICES

Many people find it hard to talk about end-of-life issues with their parents, spouse and other loved ones. However, the best time to discuss your loved one’s wishes for care is now—before he or she faces a life-limiting health care condition.

Hospice programs strive to relieve the patients’ pain and physical symptoms. They also help family members cope with their grief during hospice and after a loved one’s passing.

In February, the Hill Country Memorial Hospital (HCMH) Foundation sent its Hearts for Hospice appeal to members of the community, with donations going directly toward HCM Hospice and its ongoing efforts.

“Unlike other hospice programs, Hill Country Memorial Hospice can take any patient regardless of their insurance coverage thanks to our generous donors,” says HCMH Foundation Executive Director Amanda Stevens.

Such community support of both time and monetary contributions helps HCM Hospice provide comfort to those who are suffering, calm to those who are overwhelmed and everything from equipment to fully trained staff to serve patients during their time of need.

HCM Hospice is unique in that it does not screen patients to determine if they have funding from insurance or government programs. In this way, HCM Hospice is able to serve a broader range of patients and families.

When loved ones face a life-limiting illness, HCM Hospice provides care and support through nurses, chaplains, social workers and volunteers to care for patients and their caregivers. Additionally, HCM Hospice also purchases medication and supplies equipment as needed.

“Hill Country Memorial Hospice helps people live as fully as they can for the remainder of their lives,” says HCM Hospice Director Melanie Cole. “Just as families rely on hospice’s services during challenging times, hospice relies on strong support from the community.”

Individuals who wish to donate may call 1 (830) 997-1297 or visit giving.hillcountrymemorial.org and select “Hearts for Hospice.”
Gifts are from July 1 through September 30, 2014

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Make a difference in someone’s life by making a tax-deductible donation.

1. You can use the donor envelope enclosed in this issue.
2. You can call (380) 997-1297.
3. You can visit giving.hillcountrymemorial.org.
### Purpose

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### February / March / April

**HCM’s Healthy You Events**

#### Restore

You’ve got memories to make. Put joint replacement behind you. Learn about hip and knee replacement surgery with a presentation and Q&A with Restore orthopedic surgeons. See below for dates in your area.

- **Thursday, February 26 at 11:30 am**  
  First United Methodist Church  
  902 Main Street / Johnson City

- **Thursday, March 5 at 6 pm**  
  Holy Ghost Lutheran Church  
  115 East San Antonio Street / Fredericksburg

- **Thursday, April 16 at 6 pm**  
  Helene House  
  111 Staffel Street / Boerne

#### Age Well

Caregivers and families with aging adults are invited to learn more about age-related health issues like levels of home care, assisted living, insurance and resources to help with the unique issues of aging well.

- **Tuesday, March 10 at 6 pm**  
  Ray & Joan Kroc Community Center  
  201 Holdsworth Drive / Kerrville

#### Well-Informed Woman

Join Michael Campbell, MD, for a free participant-guided discussion on menopause, weight gain and bladder incontinence.

- **Tuesday, March 24 at 6 pm**  
  Helene House  
  111 Staffel Street / Boerne

#### Pain Management

There is no need to suffer. Meet interventionalist Ralph Menard, MD, and discover treatment options for managing your chronic pain.

- **Thursday, April 23 at 6 pm**  
  Kronkosky Rainbow Senior Center  
  17 Old San Antonio Road / Boerne

#### Sleep Well

Insufficient sleep puts you at greater risk for heart attack, stroke and diabetes. Join HCM Sleep Lab Coordinator Theresa Cochran, RRT, for a discussion on the benefits of a sleep study.

- **Tuesday, March 31 at 6 pm**  
  Tealicious  
  216 South Main Street / Burnet

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### Weekly / Monthly Events

#### Cardiac Rehab Support Group

**First Thursday of every month / 12 pm–1 pm**  
Call 1 (830) 997-1357 for details.

#### Alzheimer’s Support Group

**Third Thursday of every month / 2 pm–3 pm**  
Call 1 (800) 859-3169 for details.

#### QuickDraw—HCM’s Low-Cost Lab Testing

**Second Saturday of every month**  
8 am–11 am / Fredericksburg  
hillcountrysmemorial.org/quickdraw

#### New Moms Support Group

**First Monday and Fourth Thursday of every month**  
5:30 pm–7 pm / Call 1 (830) 990-1833 for details.

### RSVP by phone or online!

1 (866) 421-4264 / hillcountrysmemorial.org/events

Visit hillcountrysmemorial.org/events for more events and information.

RSVPs are requested for events with meals. Support groups do not require RSVPs.

Complimentary meal included.