Straight Talk NCH Healthcare System

A weekly update from management on the issues that matter most

November 1, 2012

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The NCH Ball is always a highlight for our community, and at this year's 54th edition, the *"giraffes"* stole the show!

Thanks to the hard work of Chairperson Stacey Herring and her committee, as well as the 450 NCH friends and volunteers in attendance, we were able to supplement the proceeds with a special auction that will allow for the purchase of 10 new, high-tech infant incubators—affectionately known as *"Giraffe Beds"*—at a cost of $40,000 each. Prior to this auction, we watched a video of the Slenn family (www.nchmd.org/hospitalball), whose prematurely-born twin daughters were aided by the one Giraffe incubator we possessed. Now, we will have enough Giraffes to care for all our premature newborns.

Equally important, we also honored the Nurses of Excellence, announced our Physician of the Year, and recognized our current Honorary Chair Mrs. Lavern Gaynor, who shared her parents' early 1950s vision of a hospital existing in Naples. Those early founders would be so pleased with our progress.

The 54th annual Ball focused on development of our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, which will double in size this spring with construction at the North Naples Hospital Birth Place. More than 3,000 babies are born at the NNH Birth Place each year and we have outgrown current space. Our goal of keeping the vast majority of premature babies and their parents close to home remains prevalent. **Dr. Jorge Perez** and his team of neonatologists are in house 24/7, which has greatly improved our ability to care for smaller babies with complicated problems, and his group donated one of the new Giraffes.

CNO Michele Thoman officially recognized the following outstanding nurses and support staff at the Ball:

- **Elita McRae**, RN, 6 North, Thelma Hodges Nurse Mentor of the Year Downtown (DNH).
- **Deborah D'Orazio**, RN, 3rd Floor, Thelma Hodges Nurse Mentor of the Year North Naples Hospital (NNH).
- **Jennifer Hiatt**, RN, 6 South, Rising Star DNH.
- **Amanda Reyes**, RN, 4 East, Rising Star NNH.
- **Nazly Gallego**, Clinical Technician, Gulfview Suites, Support Super Star Clinical Tech DNH.
- **Vanie Cineus**, Clinical Technician, OPIS, Support Super Star Clinical Tech NNH.
- **Alena Sager**, Unit Secretary, ICU, Support Superstar Secretary DNH.
- **Jean Snyder**, RN, OPIS, Nurse of the Year NNH.
- **Marie Mejia**, RN, 6 North, Nurse of the Year DNH.

Physician of the Year honorees were Neurologist **Matthew J. Baker**, Urologist **Stuart Bergman**, Neurosurgeon **Gary Colon**, Emergency Medicine **Alberto De La Rivaherrera**, Pathologist **H. David Greider**, Pediatric Critical Care Medicine **Deborah M. Lopez**, Family Medicine **Vladimir J. Mathieu**, Obstetrician/Gynecologist **Wallace McLean**, Electrophysiologist **Kenneth Plunkitt**, and Pediatrician **C. Todd Vedder**. And this year's coveted Physician of the Year award went to **Dr. Wallace McLean**.

State-of-the-art technology, like our new Giraffe incubators, is certainly important. But our most critical resource at NCH remains the wonderful caregivers—epitomized by those honored at the Ball—providing our community with the highest level of healthcare quality, every minute of every day. Congratulations to our winners and sincere thanks.

Respectfully,

Allen

Allen S. Weiss, M.D., President and CEO

P.S. Feel free to share *Straight Talk* and ask anyone to email me at allen.weiss@nchmd.org to be added.