Announcing the

CAYUGA WELLNESS CENTER

SURVIVING A HEART ATTACK | NEW LEADERSHIP AT SCHUYLER | WELLNESS TIPS
Changing of the Guard
Late in 2015 I learned that Andy Manzer, president and CEO of Schuyler Hospital, had accepted the position of chief operating officer for Bassett Healthcare Network in Cooperstown, New York. Andy and I have worked closely together since the early collaborations between Schuyler and Cayuga Medical Center. He knew what was needed to sustain Schuyler Hospital and was instrumental in making the Cayuga Health System an integrated, successful entity, committed to providing excellent care. I know you all join me in wishing Andy the very best as he takes on this new challenge. He is moving to a larger health care system, which will benefit from his expertise and winning way. We will miss Andy’s in-depth knowledge of health care and his genuine affection for the community he has served so well, and we congratulate him on his great accomplishments at the helm of Schuyler Hospital. I will miss him as a trusted colleague and friend.

At this time I am very pleased to announce that Andy will be passing the torch to Jim Watson, a talented hospital administrator who will capably build upon the established momentum at Schuyler Hospital. You can read more about Jim in this issue of the magazine.

Building on momentum to advance excellence
I truly believe that excellence is a journey, not a destination. Cayuga Medical Center, Schuyler Hospital, and now the Cayuga Health System have been on just such a journey toward excellence, striving to steadily improve the quality of care we provide. Nothing is more important to us than being able to provide outstanding care to our families, friends, and neighbors. Whether you are seeking treatment for acute illness or injuries, or are looking for strategies to maintain a healthy lifestyle, we want to do our best to serve you.

Year after year our focus has been on identifying essential new services and providing the best possible care for the communities we serve. We are always looking ahead, working steadfastly on new developments. Pursuit of evolving best practices is the constant state of affairs as we promote excellence within our organization.

Over the last ten years both of our hospitals and the Seneca View Skilled Nursing Facility have made extensive renovations to their physical plants. This has included new operating rooms at both Cayuga Medical Center and Schuyler Hospital, as well as our new maternity unit, Cayuga Birthplace, the wound center, laboratory, Emergency Department, Intensive Care Unit, and the Cayuga Heart Institute at Cayuga Medical Center, to name a few. The Cayuga Heart Institute has been working closely with the Emergency Department and Intensive Care Unit to provide the highest quality of cardiac care for our region.

You can read in this issue of our magazine how this high-quality cardiac service is now working with Schuyler Hospital to bring that same level of excellence in cardiac care to this community.

The last ten years have also been focused on improving the health of our communities through wellness programs. We have developed many of these wellness efforts through numerous programs in the newly named Cayuga Wellness Center, located in Ithaca’s West End along the waterfront trail. The Cayuga Wellness Center houses several health, fitness, and lifestyle services: Island Health & Fitness; one of Cayuga Medical Center’s physical therapy clinics; the Cayuga Center for Healthy Living, which includes cardiac rehabilitation; Cayuga Sports Medicine and Athletic Performance; and Rasa Spa.

These new facilities and other innovative programs are all the result of our thoughtful planning for the future. But the journey is not over. The Cayuga Health System will continue to look to the future to ensure that we are providing the highest quality of care to our region, with a focus on improving the health of all members of the communities we serve.

Bringing in the best
We can’t continue this journey without the highest quality of health-care providers right here in our community to serve you. Within the Cayuga Health System, we have been successful in recruiting and retaining the finest physicians, nurses, and other clinical staff. Our success in this regard has been impressive over the years. With their talent, expertise, and dedication, we have been able to develop and expand on the services we provide. Two recent additions to our talent pool are Deb Raupers, RN, vice president of patient services at Cayuga Medical Center and chief nursing officer for the Cayuga Health System, and Dr. Deana Bonno, a specialist in epileptology from the University of Rochester. Dr. Bonno is bringing us new capabilities in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with epilepsy. Did you know that one in 26 people develops epilepsy over the course of his or her lifetime? You can read more about Dr. Bonno and her work in this issue.

Another key part of advancing excellence within our organization has involved building clinical alliances with respected major medical centers to continue to advance the care we provide right here in our community. Forging these relationships has fostered the growth and sophistication of local health care services and given our patients the added benefit of direct, easy access to tertiary-care services when they need them. Strong clinical relationships with Roswell Park Cancer Institute, the Sands-Constellation Heart Institute of the Rochester General Health System, the Neurosciences Department at the University of Rochester Medical Center, and Mayo Medical Laboratories all strengthen our own health care system and help us in our pursuit of excellence.

Health is one of the core elements of a strong community. The Cayuga Health System is committed to leading the way in supporting the well-being, vitality, creativity, and productivity of the people we care most about: you.

John B. Rudd, President and CEO
Cayuga Medical Center and Cayuga Health System
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Schuyler Hospital Welcomes New President
Jim Watson

“I’m really pleased to be joining Schuyler Hospital and the Cayuga Health System. The very first time I walked through the doors at Schuyler Hospital I was impressed by the friendliness of the people I met and the warm, welcoming environment,” says Jim Watson. A lifetime resident of New York State, he succeeds Andy Manzer as president of Schuyler Hospital and vice president of the Cayuga Health System.

As the former president and chief operating officer of Arnot Health–Ira Davenport Memorial Hospital in Bath, New York, Watson comes to his new position with deep understanding of and appreciation for the role of a small community hospital. “In a community like this, the rural hospital and affiliated nursing home are essentially the nexus for all health care in the region they serve. Our special challenge is to keep our financials in shape while preserving an array of services at a high quality level,” says Watson. “I hope to be a good community resource,” he adds. “I’ve always enjoyed meeting and talking with people in the community about the organization, specific local services, and what’s going on in general in health care.”

“We are extremely fortunate to have Jim join Schuyler Hospital and the Cayuga Health System,” says John Rudd, president and CEO of the Cayuga Health System. “He has extensive experience in the small hospital environment and he is highly respected in the field of health care administration. He brings an established track record of achievements in the development of effective affiliations and the integration of services among partner organizations. Jim has in-depth knowledge of both acute hospital care and the field of skilled nursing facilities, which makes him ideally suited to take on this new role.”

Kyle Tuttle, chairman of the Board of Directors of Schuyler Hospital, says the board is looking forward to working with Watson. “We are very pleased that Jim Watson is so knowledgeable about what it takes to run a successful community hospital. Under his leadership I’m confident that Schuyler Hospital will continue to thrive and grow to meet the special needs of our community.”

Under Watson’s leadership as chief executive officer, Ira Davenport Memorial Hospital developed a successful affiliation with Arnot Health, providing the residents of Steuben County with acute hospital care, outpatient services, and a 120-bed skilled nursing facility. In addition to 30 years of experience in health care management, Watson holds an MBA in health services from Union College. He has served on the Hospital Association of New York State Board of Directors and was president of the Rochester Regional Healthcare Association from 2012 to 2015.
At the age of 12, Deb Raupers dressed up in a red-and-white candy striper pinafore and arrived at Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre, Pennsylvania, where she spent the summer delivering water, snacks, and books to patients and playing with children in the pediatric ward. She enjoyed volunteering so much that she returned as a candy striper for the next three summers. “I think I fell in love with patients and people in a time of need, and I learned how I could help them,” Raupers says. “It definitely influenced me.”

Her early passion for nurturing patients led Raupers into a 30-year career that has included working as a surgical nurse, director of nursing education and research, and chief nursing officer at several regional hospitals. In October she became vice president for patient services at Cayuga Medical Center, where she is responsible for overseeing 400 nurses working at the medical center, Convenient Care at Ithaca and Cortland, and the Cayuga Endoscopy Center. Raupers is also the chief nursing officer for the Cayuga Health System.

Raupers says her main goal is to elevate the practice of nursing. She wants to see an increased focus on evidence-based practice, including having nurses publish their research and give more presentations at professional organizations. She also wants structures in place that engage the front-line nurses so that they are involved in decision making. “When we look at our policies and procedures, we want to make sure that our practice is consistent with the best practices in the country,” she says.

John Rudd, president and CEO of Cayuga Medical Center and the Cayuga Health System, says he is confident Raupers will help the hospital successfully achieve its goals for patient care. “Deb has an energy level and a passion for nursing that’s hard to beat. In the short time she’s been with us she’s already having an impact,” Rudd says. “She is very collaborative, she’s committed to providing our patients with the best care possible, and her enthusiasm is contagious.”

After earning a degree in nursing from Elmira College, Raupers completed a master’s in nursing at the University of Phoenix. She began her nursing career at Crouse Irving Memorial Hospital in Syracuse and then transferred to Robert Packer Hospital, where she was director of nursing education and research. In 2009 she became vice president and chief nursing officer at Guthrie Corning Hospital and helped design the $143 million replacement hospital that opened in 2014.

Raupers says she looks forward to working with the medical center’s senior leadership team to advance the nursing system. “Nurses throughout the organization should perceive that their voices are heard, their input valued, and their practice supported,” Raupers says. “I am the nurses’ advocate, and I always want to create the best practice environment for them to give care in.” And that, of course, leads to the best environment for patients of all ages, as she learned almost 40 years ago.
Cayuga WELLNESS CENTER

A Regional Destination for Health and Fitness
We envisioned a state-of-the-art center that would provide a wide range of health and wellness services for our community and the surrounding region. Our goal was to bring together a group of professionals across several disciplines—people who were both knowledgeable in their fields and genuinely committed to our concept of helping clients reach their personal health goals. Today this beautiful building houses five outstanding services: Island Health & Fitness, the Department of Physical Therapy, Cayuga Sports Medicine and Athletic Performance, Cayuga Center for Healthy Living, and Rasa Spa. We all work cooperatively to provide a continuum of care for people seeking different types of help. I believe that ours is a model example of how to provide the maximum benefit to our clients.

—Kristen Verrill, PT, director of health and human performance
Franklin Henry Jr. is not the type of person who likes to ask for help. Yet when his world was reduced to the space between his bed and his chair—and even that small distance made him struggle to catch his breath—he realized he could no longer handle his health problems on his own.

A bass guitarist active in the Ithaca band circuit, Henry had begun smoking as a teenager and had developed a pack-a-day habit. Although he had been operated on for a collapsed lung and had been diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease—a progressive condition that makes it hard to breathe—he could not seem to quit.

Last spring, while facing hip replacement surgery, Henry decided to seek help from the Cayuga Center for Healthy Living, located in the Cayuga Wellness Center in Ithaca’s West End. “We want to help people reach their goals,” says nurse practitioner Marie Harkins, FNP-BC. When Henry visited the center last April, Harkins helped him create a plan to stop smoking and work on his weight-management issues. “We got him started and provided him support so he could make changes in his life,” she says, “and sometimes that’s all people need.” Following his surgery Henry returned to the center for physical therapy to help regain his mobility. Within six months he was tobacco-free, walking two or three times a week, and playing again with his band, NEO Project.

Franklin Henry is among the thousands of residents from the region who have taken advantage of Cayuga Wellness Center programs since the center opened its doors ten years ago. “With our help people like Mr. Henry are making enduring lifestyle changes,” says Kristen Verrill, PT, director of health and human performance at the Cayuga Wellness Center. “Our country has serious health concerns relating to tobacco use, obesity, and lack of exercise. We are here to help people in our community make changes to their lifestyles and make these changes a lifelong habit.”
The Cayuga Wellness Center was the product of a collaboration between Cayuga Medical Center and a pair of local developers, Tim and Terry Ciaschi. Hospital administrators were already exploring ways to improve the overall health and well-being of community residents when the Ciaschis approached Cayuga Medical Center with their concept of creating a medically based fitness center.

“The timing was coincidental but perfect,” says John Rudd, president and CEO of Cayuga Medical Center and the Cayuga Health System. “Together we looked at how we could integrate services in one comprehensive facility that included physical therapy, health and fitness, sports medicine, cardiac rehabilitation, and massage therapy.”

As the hospital and the Ciaschis pursued the creation of a medically based fitness center, the hospital began work on a health and wellness program to help people make lifestyle changes and improve their health through stress management, proper nutrition, weight loss, exercise, and tobacco cessation. The resulting program became the Cayuga Center for Healthy Living, which would over time complement and integrate well with the services planned for Island Health & Fitness.

Networking provides added value

When the 65,000-square-foot complex first opened, the programs at Cayuga Wellness Center operated independently, focusing on their own specialties while they evolved. The programs have since integrated their services to create a more holistic approach. A physical therapy patient can easily transition into an exercise class at Island Health & Fitness and receive weight-loss counseling at the Cayuga Center for Healthy Living (CCHL). An athlete being treated for an injury at Cayuga Sports Medicine and Athletic Performance can conveniently schedule a medical massage at Rasa Spa to help with the healing process and be referred for evaluation and treatment by a board-certified physical therapist. Networking reaps clear benefits for everyone, as the data show that nearly 18,500 people used services at the center last year.

“I think it’s a significant accomplishment that the various entities in the building are collaborating so successfully now that we have a strong foundation,” says Rachel Hogancamp, managing partner at Rasa Spa. “Most spas function quite independently. The possibilities for partnerships in the Cayuga Wellness Center are a big part of what makes this location so appealing. I’m very excited about what’s to come.”

“It’s true,” agrees Christine Cummings, general manager of Island Health & Fitness. “People coming to our center can take advantage of one-stop shopping for all of their fitness and wellness needs. Our clients enter a continuum of care and support because our professional teams are communicating with one another.”

As the five entities have grown over the past decade, it has become easier to offer integrated programs at the Cayuga Wellness Center. The physical therapy program, for example, has more than doubled in size, with 13 therapists now offering such specialties as aquatic therapy, women’s health, strength and conditioning, spine care, hand therapy, and manual therapy. “We have enough people with the right specializations and experience here to help drive the collaborative nature of the center,” says physical therapy director Brian Lee, PT, OCS, CSCS. An additional eight physical therapists, two physical therapy assistants, two speech therapists, and an occupational therapist staff the Brentwood therapy office, providing rehabilitation for orthopedic and neurologic conditions.

The Cayuga Wellness Center is all about collaboration and teamwork. “Our collective goal at Cayuga Wellness Center is to keep people healthy,” says Dr. Andrew Getzin, clinical director at Cayuga Sports Medicine and Athletic Performance. “Look at the things you need to be healthy: you need to eat right, get sufficient sleep, and exercise. Those are the three most important things, and we can help you with them here.”
Raising the Bar at the Cayuga Wellness Center

This innovative program helps people with chronic health challenges make productive lifestyle changes, such as quitting tobacco, losing weight, or managing diabetes. Services include

- Individual and group counseling sessions with a medical team
- ADA-approved diabetes self-management education classes
- Classes to help develop healthy habits
- Follow-up clinic visits to help people stay on track
- Co-management, with your physician, of chronic illness such as heart disease and diabetes
- Cardiac rehabilitation
- Medically supervised weight-loss programs prior to bariatric (weight-loss) surgery

Island Health & Fitness

This state-of-the-art fitness center offers the latest strength-training and cardiovascular equipment along with highly skilled professionals to support you in achieving your fitness goals. The fitness center is for people of all levels of experience, from age 14 up. Services include

- Individualized personal training by highly qualified exercise specialists, utilizing 150 pieces of leading-edge cardiovascular and strength-training equipment
- Small group training classes
- Aquatics center with a lap pool, warm-water hydrotherapy pool, and whirlpool spa, offering individual and group classes
- Over 100 group fitness exercise classes per week
- New membership includes fitness assessment and orientation to exercise equipment

Two locations:
Cayuga Wellness Center and Community Corners on Hanshaw Road

Cayuga Center for Healthy Living

This state-of-the-art fitness center offers the latest strength-training and cardiovascular equipment along with highly skilled professionals to support you in achieving your fitness goals. The fitness center is for people of all levels of experience, from age 14 up. Services include

- Individual and group counseling sessions with a medical team
- ADA-approved diabetes self-management education classes
- Classes to help develop healthy habits
- Follow-up clinic visits to help people stay on track
- Co-management, with your physician, of chronic illness such as heart disease and diabetes
- Cardiac rehabilitation
- Medically supervised weight-loss programs prior to bariatric (weight-loss) surgery

Rasaspa

This full-service holistic health care spa offers a wide range of healing therapies tailored to each client, whether the client is seeking therapeutic care, relaxation, or a place to escape the outside world. Services include

- Massage, including sports, deep tissue, prenatal, hot stone, physical therapy, and therapeutic medical massage
- Private, small group, and full class yoga sessions
- Facials and waxing
- Open group meditation classes
- Body treatments, including scrubs, wraps, and acupuncture
- Spa memberships, packages, and day passes

Two locations:
Cayuga Wellness Center and Community Corners on Hanshaw Road
A team of 13 physical therapists and two physical therapist assistants provides therapeutic and rehabilitation services for both active and recuperating clients of all ages. Services include

- Aquatic therapy
- Strength and conditioning
- Rehabilitation for all orthopedic conditions
- Rehabilitation for athletes and performing artists
- Rehabilitation for pelvic pain and incontinence

**Physical Therapy**

The team of three sports medicine physicians and seven certified athletic trainers provides sports and exercise medicine to help individuals attain and maintain lifestyle, exercise, and sports goals. This program can help athletes recover from injury and improve their performance. Services include

- Diagnosis and care of sports-related injuries
- Specialized sports medicine support for all levels and ages, from novice to elite athletes
- A running clinic to assess form and efficiency

**Cayuga Sports Medicine & Athletic Performance**

**For competitive athletes seeking new levels of success:**

- Physiological tests to assess cardiovascular fitness and determine appropriate training zones
- Unique multidisciplinary clinic for shortness of breath in the athlete to diagnose and treat breathing limitations with sports
- Coaching classes for aspiring and experienced triathletes and endurance athletes

The team at the Cayuga Center for Healthy Living is pleased to welcome Dr. Donna Sandidge in her new role as medical director. She moved from Nashville to the Finger Lakes 15 years ago, drawn by Ithaca’s focus on health and the many resources for outdoor activities.

“I have been aware of the Cayuga Center for Healthy Living since its inception and have always been interested in the concept of this program,” says Sandidge. “CCHL promotes ways to have a positive impact on one’s own individual health by focusing on a healthy lifestyle rather than just dealing with health problems once they develop.

“I feel especially positive about the team of really great people at CCHL, which includes nurse practitioners and registered nurses, dietitians, health educators, exercise and weight-loss specialists,” Sandidge continues. “The Cayuga Wellness Center is a beautiful facility and I’m impressed with how all of the programs there fit together so well.”

Sandidge has special expertise in plant-based eating and looks forward to sharing her knowledge with CCHL clients who are interested in learning more about it. “My husband and I follow a plant-based diet,” she says. “We see it as a way to have a positive impact on our own health and I have incorporated it into my medical practice.”

Dr. Sandidge is certified with the American Board of Internal Medicine, is a member of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine, and is currently completing requirements for certification with the American Board of Obesity Medicine. She is a graduate of the University of Alabama School of Medicine in Birmingham. She completed three years of internal medicine residency at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, served as chief resident in her final year at Nashville’s Saint Thomas Hospital, and returned to Vanderbilt University Medical Center to complete a fellowship in allergy and immunology. Since 2001 she has been an allergy and immunology specialist at the Guthrie Clinic.
New interdisciplinary programs
The collective staff at the Cayuga Wellness Center now includes approximately 225 specialists from many health and wellness fields, which encourages creative cross-pollination in the development of new venues and services. Island Health & Fitness has become such an important community resource that a 12,000-square-foot satellite location opened at Community Corners in 2011 to serve the east side of Tompkins County. A year later Rasa Spa began offering massage therapy and other body treatments in the new facility.

In just the past two years specialists at the Cayuga Wellness Center have developed two new interdisciplinary programs.

Cayuga Coaching
Launched in 2014, Cayuga Coaching was developed in response to an unmet need for local community coaching services. Dr. Andrew Getzin, clinical director at Cayuga Sports Medicine and Athletic Performance, helped form the program because the Ithaca area lacked support for aspiring triathletes who wanted experienced coaching. “It was a void in the community and I thought it would be valuable for us to fill that void,” says Getzin, who is an experienced triathlete. “I saw a group of athletes who had goals of completing a triathlon; they were trying to build and maintain their skills without sufficient guidance.

“Athletes who join the Cayuga Coaching program can now take advantage of a wide range of services, including individualized coaching, running assessments, a swim analysis, and bike fitting,” explains Getzin. “They can also attend triathlon-specific classes offered at Island Health & Fitness, meet with a sports nutrition specialist at CCHL, or schedule a sports massage at Rasa Spa.” Getzin was one of the founders of the annual Cayuga Lake Triathlon, sponsored by Cayuga Medical Center.

Osteoarthritis clinic
The Osteoarthritis Clinic, which brings together specialists at all levels of osteoarthritis care, was launched in 2015. Clients receive an assessment and tailored treatment plan at Cayuga Sports Medicine and Athletic Performance. Depending on the needs of the client, that plan may include medical management, physical therapy, weight-loss counseling, massage, personal training at Island Health & Fitness, or ultrasound-guided joint injections. Participants with advanced osteoarthritis are referred to collaborative partner Orthopedic Services of CMA to discuss possible joint replacement surgery.

“Our goal is to catch people not just when they need surgery but years before, so that they can continue to be mobile and exercise in a pain-free manner,” Kristen Verrill says. “The more people with osteoarthritis can exercise, the better success they will have losing weight and keeping the weight off. This will allow them to remain mobile and high-functioning for more years without joint replacement surgery.”
WELLNESS TIPS

Be Sweet to Your Heart

By Krista Mugford, MS, RDN, CDN
Dietitian at Cayuga Center for Healthy Living

March is National Nutrition Month, so take this opportunity to be sweet to your heart! Focus your efforts on creating healthy lifestyle behaviors that strengthen your heart health. For success, choose positive habits that are realistic for you and can be maintained in the long-term. To boost your heart health, try a few of these simple ideas:

1. **Prepare a heart-healthy meal at home.**
   Try cooking techniques of grilling, baking, or roasting. Make half your plate fruits and vegetables and limit the high-fat sauces. When eating at home you have better control over the ingredients used in your meals.

2. **Spend quality, active time with family and friends.**
   Plan a special activity: bundle up and go hiking, skiing, or ice skating. For indoor fun play tennis, join a fitness class, or go swimming.

3. **Substitute foods.**
   Choose heart-healthy unsaturated fats such as olive oil instead of saturated fats like butter and high-fat dairy.

4. **Say no to trans fat.**
   When buying prepackaged items, check the nutrition facts label and leave on the shelf any foods that list trans fat or partially hydrogenated oils.

5. **Limit sodium (salt).**
   Better food choices have 120mg or less sodium per serving. Flavor foods with other herbs and spices.

6. **Limit stress.**
   Try yoga or meditating. Donate your time with a local organization—giving back to others is a wonderful way to boost your mood and help beat stress.

7. **Slowly bump up your fiber.**
   Choose foods that have higher levels of fiber. Great food sources are fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains. Daily fiber goals are 25g for women and 38g for men.

8. **Consume omega-3s.**
   Omega-3 fatty acids are beneficial to your heart. Try to eat fatty fish such as salmon, mackerel, herring, lake trout, sardines, and tuna at least twice a week. Other foods include flax, walnuts, and omega-3 fortified foods.

9. **Be smart when eating out.**
   Start your meal with a salad. For your entrée, consider sharing with others. Choose lean meats, order sauces on the side, and ask about vegetable options. Split the dessert.

10. **Need a sweet?**
    Choose a sweet piece of fresh fruit instead of chocolate and candies.

11. **Cut back on added sugars.**
    Limit beverages and foods with added sugars.

12. **Moderation is best.**
    If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. That means no more than one drink per day if you’re a woman and no more than two drinks per day if you’re a man.

13. **Say good-bye to tobacco.**
    Tobacco use and second-hand smoke increase your risk of cardiovascular disease. Throw tobacco out the door; your body (and others) will thank you!

Need help in developing the best heart-healthy lifestyle game plan for yourself? Contact Cayuga Center for Healthy Living to work with our supportive and experienced practitioners. Call today at (607) 252-3590.
Our lives are filled with many decisions every day, some more crucial and long-lasting than others. The decision to seek immediate medical attention if you or someone you are with might be having a heart attack can actually save a life.

By simply picking up the phone and calling 9-1-1, residents in the southern Finger Lakes area quickly enter a network of specially trained care providers. Emergency medical technicians (EMTs) arriving in an ambulance can begin diagnosis and treatment within minutes. If you are having a heart attack, they will know what to do for you and where to take you for the best care. If it turns out that you are not having a heart attack, dialing 9-1-1 is still a smart call because ruling out a heart attack requires technology and a level of medical training that most of us don’t have.
A Race against Time

Jason Lodeski’s mother and brother came to visit over the weekend of July 4, 2015, to help him move from Van Etten to Montour Falls, New York. The move would put the 43-year-old closer to Watkins Glen International, where he works on the maintenance crew. “I had been lifting stuff all weekend and on Monday my shoulders were a little sore,” says Lodeski. “I didn’t think anything about it.”

There was a car club event at the racetrack the following Monday and Lodeski was asked to mow one of the big parking areas. It was an especially hot day, he recalls, and around 10:30 a.m. he stopped mowing. “The pain hit me like a truck in my chest, neck, jaw, and back and I got really dizzy,” he recalls. “I went inside, sat down, and drank some water. The security guard told me I didn’t look good and he called an ambulance.” Because it was an event day at the racetrack, ambulances were standing by and EMTs arrived immediately. They performed an EKG and transported him to Schuyler Hospital straightaway.

Lodeski’s family has a history of heart disease. His father suffered his first heart attack at the age of 38 and had three subsequent open-heart surgeries. Nevertheless, Lodeski admits he had no idea that what he was experiencing at the racetrack was a heart attack. “I eat right and take care of myself. I didn’t know I was having a heart attack until I asked someone at Schuyler Hospital,” he says. “They told me that I was having a serious heart attack and that a helicopter would be there in a couple of minutes.”

The type of heart attack Jason Lodeski suffered is called an ST-elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI). These heart attacks are very serious and can be readily identified on an EKG by people who know what to look for. When the ST segment of a patient’s EKG is elevated, it means that the blood flow to a portion of the heart is partially or completely blocked; immediate life-saving action must be taken.

“The people in Schuyler County did a phenomenal job. The EMS crew, the staff in the Emergency Department, and the helicopter crew all responded quickly. It was a very smooth operation,” says Paul Stefek, MD, FACC, FSCAI, director of interventional cardiology, Cayuga Heart Institute.

“Dr. Stefek was on the copter pad waiting for me when I arrived. He was explaining the procedure to me as he helped wheel me into the hospital, and he talked to me the whole time he was working on me.”

The procedure that Stefek performed is called percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI). The right artery that travels down to the bottom of the heart was 100 percent blocked and required the placement of two stents to restore blood flow. “As soon as Dr. Stefek got the last stent in, it felt like whoosh—the pain totally disappeared,” says Lodeski.

Heart attack diagnosis to heart saving: 83 minutes

From the time the ambulance pulled up to the Emergency Department at Schuyler Hospital to the time the artery in Jason Lodeski’s heart was opened at the Cayuga Heart Institute in Ithaca, only 83 minutes had elapsed. This included stabilization at Schuyler Hospital, helicopter transport to Cayuga Medical Center, preparation for PCI, and restoring blood flow to the patient’s heart. This time interval is significantly better than the national standard of care for the treatment of an acute heart attack.

Recovery

Lodeski went from the cardiac cath lab to the Intensive Coronary Care Unit, where he stayed for two days, followed by one day in the adult medical-surgical unit. His heart attack was on Monday morning; by Friday afternoon he was walking at the racetrack with his family. “My mother couldn’t believe it,” he says.

What is percutaneous coronary intervention?

Percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) is a procedure performed by an interventional cardiologist to open blocked arteries and quickly restore blood flow to the heart. During PCI, a thin wire is advanced past the completely blocked or critically narrowed spot inside the artery. A tiny balloon or stent is then advanced over the wire to the blockage. The balloon is inflated briefly, opening the artery and thereby reestablishing brisk blood flow.

We got him up to the cardiac cath lab immediately and everything went like clockwork.”

— Paul Stefek, MD, FACC, FSCAI, director of interventional cardiology, Cayuga Heart Institute.

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“Dr. Stefek told me I needed to walk every day . . . and we went to the wine fest that weekend.”

At the end of September Lodeski returned to work at Watkins Glen International. He has a new understanding of the genesis of his heart attack, which relates primarily to genetics and family history. Still, he continues to watch his weight, exercise, and avoid processed foods. He consumes lots of fresh produce, chicken, and fish, enjoying red meat only occasionally.

“If you’ve got heart disease in the family, you should get checked regularly, because no matter how well you take care of yourself, you’re at risk,” advises Lodeski. “I’d been feeling run down for a couple of years. I didn’t realize just how bad it was until after the procedure on my heart. Too bad it took a heart attack to start feeling better, but now I feel great!”

Recognizing Heart Attack Symptoms

The experts agree: if you suspect that you or someone you are with might be having a heart attack, don’t wait more than five minutes to call 9-1-1 for help.

1. Symptoms can occur in the center of the chest from the bottom of the ribs to the neck; they may also involve the throat, arms, jaw, and back.

2. The sensation can feel like pressure, heaviness, burning (similar to indigestion), an ache, or a feeling of tightness.

3. The symptoms don’t go away—they are constant.

4. The symptoms may be accompanied by shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, sweating, and fatigue.

5. Patients often describe these symptoms as discomfort, rather than severe pain. Not everyone has the “Hollywood heart attack” of chest-clutching pain. Women may have milder symptoms, such as overwhelming tiredness, weakness, stomach discomfort, or anxiety, which is why they tend to delay seeking treatment.

Taking Action

Within the Cayuga Health System, caring for patients with heart attack symptoms is all about teamwork. It starts with a call to 9-1-1.

1. While you wait for the EMS team to arrive by ambulance, chew a baby aspirin if you are not allergic to the drug and are not bleeding.

2. Sit or lie down and try to remain as calm as possible.

3. Have someone unlock the front door so the team can easily enter the house. If there is a protective dog in the house, confine it in another room.

4. If you are with someone having heart attack symptoms and the person stops breathing, perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). If you don’t know CPR, the 9-1-1 operator can talk you through it.

Don’t delay treatment because you aren’t sure that you’re having a heart attack or you think you’ll feel foolish if it turns out to be something else. It is far better to be safe than sorry.
Emergency Medical Community: At Your Service

Both Schuyler County and Tompkins County have emergency service agencies with a combination of paid and volunteer staff members. Both fire department and ambulance personnel can provide timely and skilled emergency medical services at the scene; however, it is the ambulance crews that transport patients in need of hospital care.

In Schuyler County
Members of the Schuyler County Volunteer Ambulance Association (SCVAA) respond to all 9-1-1 calls from residents living in the county. According to Tony Longbucco, president of SCVAA, the team includes two full-time paramedics, three part-time EMTs, and many part-time per diem employees, totaling 36 staff members. Nine volunteers complete the SCVAA, says Longbucco, who encourages prospective volunteers to find out more about this important community organization.

First-response rescue units are dispatched at the same time as the ambulance, and whoever arrives first on the scene begins the patient assessment. Automatic cardiac defibrillators to treat cardiac arrest arrive with fire department responders and the ambulance crews. “When SCVAA arrives we can do a 12-lead EKG in the field,” says Longbucco. A 12-lead EKG (electrocardiogram) represents the heart’s electrical activity. It shows disturbances in heart rhythm and can help detect heart muscle damage from a heart attack. “Our paramedics are certified to read them and they can administer drugs and start IVs. If the first team to arrive is a basic life support ambulance and the patient’s condition requires us to load quickly and go, we’ll meet up with a paramedic en route who will join the team in the ambulance.

“Our protocol is to go to the closest appropriate medical facility unless the patient is stable and requests to be taken to a specific hospital,” Longbucco continues. “We work closely with the emergency departments at both Schuyler Hospital and Cayuga Medical Center. While moving, we radio in a report on the condition of the patient and convey to the physician the patient’s symptoms, an update of the EKG, everything that has happened, and our estimated time of arrival.”

Regular quality assurance (QA) reviews and evaluations help keep ambulance crew skill levels well tuned. “We are critiqued on our patient assessments and on whether we followed appropriate protocols,” says Longbucco. The QA reviews also provide team members with updates on changes to protocols, which is crucial to doing the job well.

In Tompkins County
Tompkins County is served by four ambulance companies: Bangs Ambulance, Dryden Fire Department and Dryden Ambulance, Groton Ambulance Association, and the Trumansburg Volunteer Fire Company. Bangs Ambulance, the largest of these, is the only private, commercial provider in the county, with a fleet of ten ambulances and two additional response cars.

All 75 responders working for Bangs are certified at one of three levels: basic EMT, critical care technician, and paramedic. Every ambulance is staffed with at least one paramedic when it is dispatched. If the call is for a suspected heart attack victim, an additional “fly car” carrying a second paramedic is sent as well. According to Tim Bangs, president of Bangs Ambulance, the volume of cardiac-related calls is steadily increasing as baby boomers age.

“All of our cardiac monitors have the capacity to perform 12-lead EKGs, and our paramedics can interpret those,” Bangs explains. “We transmit the EKGs simultaneously to the Emergency Department, the cardiac cath lab, and the interventional cardiologist on call so they know—before the patient comes through the door—what the status is.” Similar to SCVAA, Bangs Ambulance often sends fully equipped paramedics in response cars to meet other ambulances coming in from outlying areas.

“We have a very close working relationship with the emergency departments (ED) in this area,” Bangs continues. “We train with the ED at Cayuga Medical Center and perform quarterly simulated patient transports. We are building two new ambulances to meet the special needs of heart attack patients being transported for percutaneous coronary intervention, and we’ll be looking to the Cayuga Heart Institute for some additional staff training when the ambulances are completed.”
Michael Ronald, NP, is the associate clinical director of the Emergency Department at Schuyler Hospital. Affiliated with Cayuga Medical Center since 1990, Ronald moved to his new role in September 2014. He has experience in intensive and coronary care, emergency medicine, and neurosurgery. He explains that the care providers in the Schuyler Hospital ED include nurse practitioners, physician assistants, registered nurses, and technicians. “We do consultations with our on-call doctors for patients needing admission or transfers and in cases where we have a question,” Ronald explains. “But in the vast majority of cases, we take care of everything that comes through the door.

“When an ambulance calls in about a potential heart attack, the ED staff has time to prepare,” Ronald continues. “EMTs on site typically conduct an EKG, interpret it, and convey the results to us while en route to the hospital. If the EKG looks like a STEMI, the ambulance will bypass us and go straight to the nearest cardiac center—unless there is an overwhelming reason they can’t, such as the patient is unstable or has an airway problem. In those cases we prepare the patient in our Emergency Department for immediate transfer. If the helicopter is available, that’s often our best option, though sometimes ground transport is more efficient.”

Patient navigator and clinical educator Pearl Jayne, BSN, RN, has worked in the Schuyler Hospital ED for 30 years. “We take all chest pain seriously,” she says, “whether or not you come by ambulance. We have a really good crew here, we’re able to move things right along, and we meet all of the national standards of care for heart attack patients. We also have a good working relationship with the ambulance crews. If they call us about a patient with a critical complaint, we know from experience that they are spot on in their assessment.” In addition to direct patient care, Jayne helps ED staff members stay current in their skills through staff training, literature searches, online education, and certification classes in advanced cardiac life support and pediatric advanced life support.

“While there are different causes of chest pain, early identification of a heart attack is very important because the longer you wait to restore blood flow to the heart, the more heart tissue dies,” says Ronald. “We’d much rather have someone come in for something that is not serious than to stay at home and die of a heart attack.”
The introduction of percutaneous coronary intervention and the establishment of the Cayuga Heart Institute in 2010 required new protocols for handling STEMI patients coming into the ED at Cayuga Medical Center.

“Whenever we prepare to introduce a new patient-care process like STEMI, we use a tool called the failure mode and effects analysis (FMEA),” says Amy Mathews, RN, director of the ED at Cayuga Medical Center. “We bring together a group of people to look for the ways in which we could possibly fail. Then we identify the barriers to success and determine how to overcome them.” FMEA is a systematic approach promoted by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, perhaps best known to the public for its “5 Million Lives Campaign,” aimed at identifying and spreading the use of best practices among health care organizations.

“Once the process is developed, we train with our ED staff and the EMS community,” Mathews continues. “We drill it over and over to see how we can be better and how we can shave off time while providing safe patient care.” The arrival by ambulance of a STEMI patient begins with a loud alarm, alerting the ED staff to the incoming EKG fax from the ambulance crew. “We check the fax and immediately make the call to pull the STEMI team together. It’s a whirlwind of activity when we have a suspected heart attack patient coming in,” explains Mathews. “We do door to EKG in ten minutes.”

Director of emergency medicine Drew Koch, DO, and Mathews have been working together for a number of years. They have high praise for both the EMS community and their own ED staff, from the admitting receptionists to all of the caregivers patients encounter. “When someone walks up to our registration desk with chest pain and shortness of breath, the call comes back immediately for an EKG at registration,” explains Koch. The technicians in the ED perform EKGs on incoming patients and alert doctors to the results. “One of the reasons we’re so successful here is that our techs and hospital aides are very good at picking up STEMIs on the EKG. They have great intuition.”

“We work as a team and the process flows smoothly,” Mathews adds. “Our nurses have been trained in critical thinking: they look, they assess, and they ask the right questions, multitasking as they gather test results and crucial information, listening to the patient, and providing comfort. We work hip to hip with each other.”

“When we know that the patient coming in by ambulance is a STEMI and the team is on site and assembled, our interventional cardiologists want to bypass the ED and get the patient right up to the cardiac catheterization lab,” adds Koch. “This is fine because it shaves off time.”

“Our goal in caring for STEMI patients is to get the person to the cardiac cath lab as quickly as possible so our team can open the coronary artery and stop the heart attack,” says CHI director Amit Singh, MD. “The cardiac cath lab team is a group of highly trained vascular imaging and nursing professionals who assist the interventional cardiologist. The team is on call 24/7.”

“We all want to give the best care we possibly can,” says Mathews. “It takes a lot of work, coordination, and practicing with EMS, the ED, and the cath lab team. It’s really a huge work of art!”
In 2006 Cayuga Medical Center and Rochester General Hospital entered a clinical relationship to expand and enhance cardiac care in this region. Ron Kirshner, MD, is the chairman of cardiac services and cardiothoracic surgery at Rochester General Hospital's Sands-Constellation Heart Institute (SCHI). “Both of our institutions were looking to expand what we were doing,” says Kirshner. “Cayuga Medical Center had strategic initiatives that coincided with ours.”

The invasive cardiac care program at Cayuga Medical Center had grown steadily since the introduction of cardiac catheterization in 2001. With the support of a major cardiac center, Cayuga Medical Center would be positioned to initiate local, life-saving cardiac services. At the same time, Rochester General Hospital would benefit from referrals of patients from a larger service area who needed a higher level of care than Cayuga Medical Center could offer, such as valve-replacement or coronary artery bypass surgery. “We are at our best here when we are treating a high volume of patients because we get better through repetition,” says Kirshner. “We have protocols and processes in place that require us to move at a fairly fast pace, and a high volume allows us to exercise these skills frequently.”

As cardiac specialists from the two hospitals learned more about each other, they found that in many ways they were like-minded in how they took care of patients. “Both of our institutions were very concerned about quality management,” says Kirshner. “In 2006 the cardiac program at Rochester was further ahead in the science of quality management because Cayuga Medical Center started this journey a few years after we did. So we were able to share with them what we had learned, and we enjoyed their feedback because it helped us get better at what we do here.”

In addition to his surgical expertise, Kirshner is a recognized expert in quality management technique, which is predicated on the standardization of a process, making it possible to understand where variations occur and to eliminate waste. “We look at efficiency as a good thing here,” says Kirshner. “We do our operations in about half the time it takes others. This means that our patients’ chests are open for a shorter period of time, they spend less time on the bypass machine, and this translates into better results.

“We are extremely fastidious and careful about patient care,” Kirshner adds, “and we have a system here that is both efficient and patient-focused. Cayuga Medical Center is similar and cares very much about the patient experience. It’s been a very healthy relationship.”

Growing together

The introduction of percutaneous coronary intervention in 2010 was a natural progression of services at Cayuga Medical Center, according to Kirshner. “If you want to do PCI at your hospital you have to go through the complicated, difficult learning phases of developing a great higher-level program,” he explains. “Many places talk about wanting to be great, but it’s a whole other thing to do what is required to actually achieve certain goals and become great at what you do. As we laid the groundwork to develop PCI at Cayuga Medical Center, we were very confident in the doctors and staff there.

“We spent a lot of time with the team at Cayuga Medical Center to orchestrate a process that gets patients from Cayuga Medical Center to Rochester as rapidly as possible when needed,” he continues. “Doctors in Ithaca make one phone call to us and we move—it’s just that simple. This is an in-depth relationship—we have knowledge of each other’s systems and we really trust each other.

“It’s a testament to the quality of doctors and staff at Cayuga Medical Center that I cannot think of a single instance when the team there made an inappropriate decision about whether or not to transfer a patient to us,” Kirshner adds. “They have done some very complicated cases at Cayuga Medical Center but they have all been within everyone’s comfort zone. They know when to operate there and when to send patients to us.”

The Cleveland Clinic connection

The Sands-Constellation Heart Institute is a Cleveland Clinic heart surgery center. Kirshner says that initially the affiliation enabled the heart surgeons in Rochester to learn from one of the best cardiac institutions in the country. Lately, though, the relationship has become more bi-directional.

“We continue to learn from the Cleveland Clinic—they get some very interesting cases and their doctors are very approachable,” explains Kirshner. “However, over the last number of months several of their people have come to our hospital to learn from us because we have become very efficient in the operating room and in taking care of our patients. Quality management is part of the culture of our organization. We are very proud of that.”

Close colleagues

Gerald Gacioch, MD, FACC, MMM, is the chief of cardiology and director of the cardiac catheterization lab at the Sands-Constellation Heart Institute. In addition to his responsibilities there, Gacioch serves on the medical staff of Cayuga Medical Center. He has treated patients at the Cayuga Heart Institute and works very closely with the interventional cardiologists there—Paul Stefek, MD, FACC, FSCAI, and Marc Sodums, MD, FACC—as well as their colleagues.

One of the advantages of this close working relationship is the availability of immediate consultation during complicated cases. “While the patient is on the table, we can consult with each other,” Gacioch explains. “The images are transmitted electronically so we can see them at the same time and talk about them. It’s very collaborative. And in those instances when a referral is necessary, the transfer of care from Ithaca to Rochester is seamless.”

Peer review is also a collaborative process between Rochester and Ithaca, led by Stefek. On a quarterly basis Gacioch meets with staff members at the Cayuga Heart Institute to review processes and complicated patient cases. “It’s part of continuous improvement and it is part of our goal to have a transparent system,” Gacioch explains.

“The staff in Ithaca is extraordinarily good,” he adds. “They are well trained, can-do, nice people. The cath lab there is 2016-ready and the protocols in place work well.”

Coming soon to a cath lab near you!

Through close collaboration between Gacioch and Amit Singh, MD, FACC, FASNC, director of the Cayuga Heart Institute, the two medical centers are working toward a heart valve clinic in Ithaca this year. As a result, patients of the Cayuga Heart Institute with aortic stenosis will not have to drive to Rochester for their preliminary testing. Instead they will be able to have their heart catheterizations, echocardiograms, and other diagnostic tests performed in Ithaca.

“The valve clinic will help us determine if a patient is best treated with open-heart surgery or with transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR),” Gacioch explains. TAVR is a new, minimally invasive surgical procedure that repairs the damaged heart valve in patients who are considered too high risk for open-heart surgery. “We are very pleased to share the benefits of our latest technology with patients in Ithaca.

“It’s been a win for the Sands-Constellation Heart Institute to have a broader reach, and we like getting complex patients referred to us,” Gacioch adds. “It’s a win for the cardiologists at the Cayuga Heart Institute because they have so many colleagues here in Rochester, and it’s great for their patients to be able to get care close to home that is state of the art.”
Please join the Cayuga Health System family as we welcome three talented specialists to our medical staff.

**RHEUMATOLOGY**

**Robert J. Meador Jr., MD** | Cayuga Medical Associates | 1301 Trumansburg Road, Suite R | Ithaca, NY | (607) 257-2920

**Certification:**
American Board of Internal Medicine, Rheumatology

**Medical School:**
University of Texas Medical School at Houston (Houston, TX)

**Internship and Residency:**
University of Texas Health Science Center (San Antonio, TX) – Internal Medicine

**Fellowships:**
University of Texas Health Science Center (San Antonio, TX) – Geriatrics and Palliative Care; University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, PA) – Rheumatology

Dr. Meador comes to Cayuga Medical Center from Garland, Texas, where he practiced rheumatology for 13 years. In Garland he received recognition awards for his high-quality patient care, service to the community, and volunteerism. He has served on several not-for-profit boards and has spoken regularly to both physician and patient groups, providing them with education on clinical rheumatology topics. He has also participated in research, and his work has been published in professional medical journals including *Arthritis & Rheumatology* and *JCR: Journal of Clinical Rheumatology*.

**PEDiatrics**

**Yonit Estrin, MD** | Northeast Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine | 10 Graham Road West, Ithaca, NY | (607) 257-2188

**Certification:**
American Board of Pediatrics

**Medical School:**
Technion American Medical School (Haifa, Israel)

**Internship and Residency:**
Winthrop University Hospital (Mineola, NY) – Pediatrics

Dr. Estrin received the Certificate of Commendation for Excellence for her medical doctor thesis. Prior to entering medical school, she graduated cum laude with a bachelor of arts in biology from Yeshiva University in New York, where she also earned an associate degree in Judaic studies. She is fluent in English and Hebrew.

**PsYCHIATRY**

**Timothy P. Lowry, MD** | Behavioral Services Unit | Cayuga Medical Center | Ithaca, NY

**Certification:**
American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology

**Medical School:**
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine (Pittsburgh, PA)

**Residency:**
Cambridge Hospital of Harvard Medical School (Cambridge, MA) – Adult Psychiatry

**Fellowship:**
Austen Riggs Center (Stockbridge, MA) – Psychodynamic Psychotherapy

In addition to his medical degree, Dr. Lowry pursued graduate studies in the Department of Neuroscience at the University of Pittsburgh. He also holds a master's degree in biophysics from the University of California at Berkeley, where he was a National Science Foundation graduate fellowship honoree. A board member of the American Board of Medical Specialties, he sees patients in the medical center’s Behavioral Services Unit.
Expanding Options for the Treatment of Epilepsy

Dr. Deana Bonno, a neurologist at Cayuga Neurologic Services of CMA, arrived in Ithaca last July with a mission: to advance the level of care for patients diagnosed with epilepsy. She also wanted to begin treating epileptic patients who have uncontrolled seizures with dietary therapy, a treatment that has been shown to effectively manage the disorder.

This spring Bonno will begin supervising an epilepsy monitoring unit being built on the third floor of Cayuga Medical Center. The unit will allow her to evaluate electroencephalograms of brain waves and videotapes of patients’ body movements on a 24-hour basis, which will help her determine the type of epilepsy they have and the type of treatment to recommend.

Cayuga Medical Center will be the only hospital in the Southern Tier to have an epilepsy monitoring unit. Once it is opened, “patients in the region won’t have to travel two hours to Rochester or up to Syracuse,” says Bonno, who will oversee the unit in collaboration with the University of Rochester Medical Center (URMC).

Bonno first became interested in epilepsy in high school, when a girl in her class had several epileptic seizures. “I was scared as a teenager because I didn’t understand the disorder,” says Bonno. “I guess in some way that was a motivation to educate other people so they won’t be scared of it.”

After graduating from Union College, Bonno worked in clinical research for a group of neurologists but decided she wanted to interact more with patients. She then attended the University of Connecticut School of Medicine and completed her internship and residency in neurology at URMC. She also did two one-year fellowships in clinical neurophysiology and epilepsy there.

An assistant professor of clinical neurology at URMC, Bonno runs a clinic one day a month at the Strong Epilepsy Center, which evaluates patients in the epilepsy monitoring unit. After the results of the testing are reviewed, she works with a team of physicians, including other epileptologists, neurophysiologists, and neurosurgeons, to recommend a treatment plan.

Epilepsy is a neurological disorder that causes a person to have unprovoked seizures, which occur when electrical activity in the brain’s nerve cells is disrupted. Two million people in the United States are affected by it, and 150,000 new cases are diagnosed each year.

Two-thirds of people with epilepsy are able to control their seizures and lead a normal life. But one-third are still coping with seizures that do not respond to medication. For this last group of patients, other types of treatment are used, including nerve stimulators, surgery, and diet therapy.

At the Strong Epilepsy Center Bonno is focusing on treating patients who want to use diet therapy to control their epilepsy. There are three diets she uses—the modified Atkins, the ketogenic, and a low–glycemic index diet. According to Bonno, each approach has been shown to reduce the number of seizures in epileptic patients by 50 percent.

“Typically, diet therapy is something for children with epilepsy who have not completely responded to medications and aren’t necessarily candidates for surgery,” Bonno says. “What I want to do is expand the options for dietary methods for adults as well.”
KUDOS

Schuyler Hospital: Top Performer on Key Quality Measures
Schuyler Hospital was recently recognized as a Top Performer on Key Quality Measures® by the Joint Commission, the leading accreditor of health care organizations in America. Schuyler is one of only 1,043 hospitals out of more than 3,300 eligible hospitals in the United States, and just one of 29 out of 198 hospitals in New York State, to achieve the Top Performer distinction.

The recognition came as part of the Joint Commission’s 2015 annual report, “America’s Hospitals: Improving Quality and Safety.” This report critically evaluates hospital performance on evidence-based care processes for treating conditions such as heart attacks, pneumonia, and stroke, with an emphasis on increasing healthy outcomes.

“Delivering the right treatment in the right way at the right time is a cornerstone of high-quality health care. I commend the efforts of Schuyler Hospital for their excellent performance on the use of evidence-based interventions,” says Mark R. Chassin, MD, FACP, MPP, MPH, president and CEO of the Joint Commission.

Cayuga Heart Institute Earns Another Accreditation
Cayuga Medical Center has earned accreditation in a number of clinical areas. The latest is from the Intersocietal Accreditation Commission, recognizing echocardiography of the Cayuga Heart Institute. An echocardiogram is a type of ultrasound test used to determine how healthy a heart is.

New York State Cancer Registry Recognizes Schuyler Hospital
For the fourth year in a row, Schuyler Hospital has been recognized by the New York State Cancer Registry for “completeness and timeliness of cancer reporting.”

The recognition specifically praises the hospital’s Medical Records Department for meeting the requirement of reporting every six months on the number of cancer patients admitted or observed by Schuyler Hospital. According to the NYS Cancer Registry, having facilities report complete, accurate, and timely data allows cancer researchers, planning agencies, and public health professionals to accurately assess the burden of cancer on the people of New York State.

Emergency Room Flex Space Opens
Mental health patients arriving at Cayuga Medical Center’s Emergency Department are now being treated in the new Flex Space, a unit where they can be monitored until they are either released or admitted to the hospital. Opened last November, the space includes four beds in a quiet area adjacent to the Emergency Department. Currently, about 2,000 mental health patients are treated in the department every year.

“I think this was something that needed to happen to get people with mental health concerns evaluated in a better environment,” says Dr. Drew Koch, DO, FACEP-D, medical director of emergency services. “We also needed to free up rooms in the Emergency Department, and it’s quicker.”

Since the unit opened, the average amount of time it takes to clear a mental health patient from the Emergency Department has been sharply reduced, from 184 minutes to about 120 minutes.

The number of mental health patients seen in the Emergency Department has risen dramatically over the past decade as community resources for the mentally ill have declined and as people have struggled in the recession, says Dr. Henry Gerson, chairman of the hospital’s Department of Psychiatry. Creating a special unit to monitor these patients is a practice that many hospitals have adopted, he adds.

“This removes mental health patients from the stressful environment of the Emergency Department,” he says. “They’re given more personal space that’s less stimulating. It also provides more privacy around the issues of mental health evaluation and protects them from exposure to the drama of an emergency room.”

Dr. Henry Gerson in Cayuga Medical Center’s new Flex Space
Gold Achievement Fit-Friendly Workplace Award
Supporting the health of Cayuga Medical Center employees has been a continuous focus for a number of years. These efforts have included many programs, including our Island Health & Fitness subsidy, our “Healthy Choice” Café options, and our smoking-cessation support, to name a few. All of this hard work was validated when we were recognized by the American Heart Association with its “Gold Achievement Award.” Organizations that receive the Gold Award must meet standards that include physical activity, good nutrition, and a culture within the organization that offers and promotes a healthy lifestyle to its employees. Kudos to the Cayuga Center for Healthy Living, Nutrition & Dining, Island Health & Fitness, Rasa Spa, and many other departments and services that have supported our efforts.

CLASSES

Certified Nurse Aide Program at Schuyler Hospital
For those interested in starting a rewarding career in the nursing field, Schuyler Hospital’s Seneca View Skilled Nursing Facility is now interviewing for candidates to enter a certified nurse aide (CNA) training program. All expenses are paid, including tuition, books, and training. Full-time and part-time work is available upon completion.

Candidates must be motivated, caring, and committed, and enjoy working with people in a team environment. Successful completion of a certification exam is required.

Once candidates finish the course and pass the exam, they will receive a raise. Schuyler Hospital offers an excellent wage and benefits package. (Even part-time employees are eligible for insurance.) Additionally, bonus pay is offered for extra shifts worked, reimbursements are offered for scrub purchases, and quarterly time-off bonuses are available.

Sign-ups are being accepted now for the spring session, so send inquiries today to jobs@schuylerhospital.org.

Living Well and Optifast® Meal Replacement are weight-loss strategies to help you manage your weight and learn to eat well on your own.

Exercise Transition Program helps you start being active if you have difficulty due to pain, atrial fibrillation, or other medical problems.

Aquatic Exercise helps improve strength, flexibility, balance, and cardiovascular function in the water, a medium that aids mobility.

Diabetes Education topics cover an overview of diabetes, complications, exercise, self-monitoring, medications, and nutrition to better manage your type II diabetes.

Tobacco Cessation Support Group—“Staying on the Right Track” meets monthly for anyone thinking about quitting, or trying to maintain their quitting.

KidFit is a 12-week program with Island Health & Fitness that provides a supportive environment for overweight kids (ages 8 to 12) to improve exercise and nutrition.

Call (607) 252-3590 for CCHL class dates, information, and fees.
Note: Fees for some classes may be covered by insurance.

CAYUGA CENTER FOR HEALTHY LIVING WINTER 2016

SILVER SERVICE LECTURES

Free and open to the public.
2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.
DeWitt Clinton Auditorium, Kendal at Ithaca

March 11
“Hand Therapy and the Treatment of Common Hand Conditions”
Mark Malys, PT

April 15
“Ouch! Why Does That Hurt and What to Do about It: An Update on the Science of Pain”
Michael Costello, PT, DSc, OCS, MTC Coordinator, Orthopedic Clinical Residency

May 13
“The Importance of Meaningful Activity for Aging Gracefully”
Eleanor Liebson, OT

For those newly diagnosed with cancer or in treatment for cancer:

Cayuga Medical Center
3rd Tuesday of each month
Cancer Resource Room
5:30 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

Ithaca Convenient Care
4th Tuesday of each month
Conference Room
Noon–1:30 p.m.

For all cancer survivors:
Schuyler Hospital
2nd Thursday of each month
Lower Level Conference Room
5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.
November Splendor

The Schuyler Health Foundation has announced that its annual fund-raising event raised over $25,000 for the hospital and Seneca View Skilled Nursing Facility. “November Splendor” was hosted by the foundation and the Schuyler Hospital Auxiliary at the Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel on November 13, 2015.

The event featured dancing to the music of Atlas, a photo booth, and a live auction led by Matt Hayden. In addition, the 250 attendees took their chances on raffle packages filled with locally donated items that were valued at approximately $12,000.

Proceeds from this year’s event will support new hospital beds, cardiopulmonary testing equipment, and enhancements to the Seneca View facility.

Hospital president Andy Manzer is grateful for the outpouring of support. “As Schuyler County’s sole provider of hospital and long-term care, we know our success depends upon the support of the community. The level of generosity at this event, as well as throughout the year, demonstrates how much the community values the services we provide.”

November Splendor is the signature event of the foundation’s annual Friends and Family Campaign. Donations to this year’s campaign can be made by contacting the Schuyler Health Foundation at (607) 210-1950 or online at schuylerhospital.org.
Treating Symptomatic Uterine Fibroids without Surgery

Fibroids are benign tumors that grow within the muscular wall of the uterus. They vary in size, sometimes growing larger than a grapefruit. It is estimated that 20 to 40 percent of women have uterine fibroids, with up to a quarter of those women experiencing troubling symptoms.

A nonsurgical treatment is now available locally. The sterile procedure, called uterine fibroid embolization (UFE), is approved by both the American College of Radiology and the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology as an effective treatment for symptomatic uterine fibroids.

What are the symptoms of uterine fibroids?

The symptoms, which most commonly affect women in their forties and early fifties, typically include pelvic pain and heavy menstrual bleeding. Some women additionally suffer from anemia and fatigue due to low red blood cell count, frequent urination from bladder pressure, pain during sexual intercourse, painful bowel movements, and an enlarged belly. Among younger women, uterine fibroids can cause complications during pregnancy, including a greater risk of caesarean section.

What is UFE?

UFE is a minimally invasive procedure for treating symptomatic fibroids. It is performed with advanced imaging technology that enables an interventional radiologist to see inside the body and provide treatment without surgery. For women who require treatment for fibroid symptoms but do not want to undergo surgery, UFE is an option that may work well. Your gynecologic care provider can refer you to an interventional radiologist for additional information as you consider the various treatment options.

What happens during UFE?

UFE is performed under conscious sedation to keep patients comfortable during the procedure. After numbing a small area of skin with lidocaine, an interventional radiologist makes a tiny nick in the skin of the right groin area. Using ultrasound and X-ray guidance the doctor then accesses the common femoral artery. From this artery it is possible to create detailed images of the pelvic arteries and ultimately place a small catheter into the arteries of the uterus. Tiny inert gelatin particles are then injected into these blood vessels, thereby blocking the flow of blood and essentially starving the fibroid. The procedure typically takes about 90 minutes.

After UFE the only external evidence of the procedure is a small adhesive bandage covering the nick at the right groin. Patients are admitted overnight for observation and in most cases are discharged around lunchtime on the following day. Because UFE involves sedation and subsequent medicine for pain management, patients must arrange in advance for transportation home.

Depending on the amount of physical exertion required at work, most women are able to return to their jobs within one week. The national success rate of UFE is 80-90 percent overall; however, our success rate locally is higher due to a very careful patient screening process.
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