

Your Local Providers*Howard County Medical Center***Dr. Angela Brennan****Dr. Dan HARRAHILL****Dr. Jared Kramer****Kelli Platek, PA-C****Dr. Chris Tomhave****Roger Wells, PA-C**

Health Watch

Mission: Howard County Medical Center will provide quality, efficient healthcare.

Leonard Coufal Memorial Exceeds \$386,000

**Leonard Coufal**

Leonard Coufal, son, brother, farmer and veteran, left a very large gift to Howard County Medical Center after his death on Christmas Eve: a memorial exceeding \$386,000. The only surviving son of eight children, he was born, raised and spent most of his life in northwestern Howard County at Davis Creek. He farmed, in addition to raising a few cattle and several hogs.

“Leonard was extremely hard working and frugal to a fault, but very generous with his family members in ways that went unnoticed by most,” states Jerome Simpson, Leonard’s nephew. “He was always interested in what was going on in Howard County, and he took special interest in the remodeling of the Hospital as well as the new

Clinic addition.”

“Leonard stayed attuned to local markets as well as investments on the national level, making investments as he saw fit. I’m sure he would be very pleased that his financial gift would be put to good use,” says Simpson.

“The continued viability of Howard County Medical Center was Leonard’s goal and with this very generous donation, that will happen,” states Arlan Johnson, Chief Executive Officer at Howard County Medical Center.

Howard County Medical Center does promote an educational loan program to current employees. The goal of the program is to encourage and support employees in improving, enhancing and updating their current job skills. Once employees have completed their education, their ‘loan’ is forgiven if they agree to work a pre-determined amount of time.

“We firmly believe that investing in our current staff will only pay dividends moving forward. We want to build on the strengths of our own employees, instead of relying on outside help,” states Johnson. “We are extremely grateful for this memorial and plan on using it in the areas of facility improvement and continued staff education, both of which Leonard requested.”

1st Lunch & Learn Set for May 18th

Howard County Medical Center will be hosting a Lunch & Learn on Wednesday, May 18th! The event will start at noon, and will feature Certified Physician Assistant, Roger Wells. The topic of the presentation will be “Arthritis & You!”

According to the Centers for Disease Control more than 50 million adults have been diagnosed with arthritis, which is 1 in 5 adults in the United States. By 2030 that number is expected to grow to almost 67 million.

Mr. Wells will be discussing risk fac-

tors, medical intervention and tips for daily living!

In addition to the presentation, a free lunch will be provided for the attendees. Interested? Please contact Jean Kehm at 308-754-4421, ext 320 to reserve your spot!

Save The Date!

The annual Run/Walk will be held in conjunction with Grover Cleveland Alexander Days on July 9th at 7:00 am!

Here When You Need Us



Kaitlyn Skibinski

Nine year old Kaitlyn Skibinski felt a sharp pain on her right side one afternoon while playing softball with her friends. “We actually thought that she had pulled a muscle in her side,” states Jodi Curlo, Kaitlyn’s mother. “Over the next couple of days though, she ran a temp and she started to have increased pain to the point where it was unbearable. We knew we had to take her in.”

“Kaitlyn saw Dr. Tomhave, and once I explained her symptoms to him, he immediately ordered a CT scan of her abdomen. After that scan, it was pretty clear that she had appendicitis. They admitted her to the hospital that day and surgery was scheduled for that afternoon.”

“Appendicitis is defined as an inflammation of the inner lining of the vermiform appendix,” states Dr. Tomhave, Family Practice Physician at Howard County Medical Center. “If left untreated, appendicitis has the potential for severe complications. The only curative treatment is an appendectomy, or surgical removal of the appendix.”

“The staff really did a great job of telling Kaitlyn how the procedure would go, what to expect, and how she would feel afterwards,” said Jodi. “Francine Rasmussen and Elaine McClellan came down to her room before surgery and that helped quite a bit. Dr. Schneider came out immediately after he was finished and was able to update us on the surgery. The communication was great on all sides.”

“I wasn’t afraid when I had my surgery,” says Kaitlyn, “because everyone explained everything to me.”

“Approximately 250,000 cases of appendicitis are reported each year in the United States,” states Dr. Tomhave. “Appendicitis can occur at any age; however, the incidence of appendicitis gradually rises from birth, peaks in the late teen years and gradually declines as you get older.

“Classic symptoms include pain in the lower right abdomen, fever and nausea. Due to the tremendous variation in the presentation of acute appendicitis, it is difficult to make recommendations regarding when to come to the clinic or emergency room for evaluation. If there is a concern that you or a family member has an acute appendicitis, it would be advisable to contact your primary care physician so that you can discuss the symptoms and formulate a plan,” noted Dr. Tomhave.

“I would definitely recommend my friends or family to come here. The staff is great, the care is wonderful and they really take the time to care for and explain things to you. That isn’t always possible to do in a larger hospital,” says Jodi.



Summer Tips To Keep You Safe!



Although summer is a fun and exciting time it can also be a time where accidents happen! The Centers for Disease Control have the following tips for people of all ages!

Sun and Heat: You can protect yourself during the time of day when the sun's UV (ultraviolet) rays are strongest – between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. – by wearing long sleeves and pants, and by applying sunscreen and a protective lip balm with an SPF of 15 or higher. Be sure to reapply frequently especially after swimming. Also make sure you drink plenty of water, and when possible, reduce strenuous activities during the hottest parts of the day.

Water Safety: Drowning is the second leading cause of injury-related death for children age 14 and under. Follow these common-sense precautions for safe summer fun in the water:

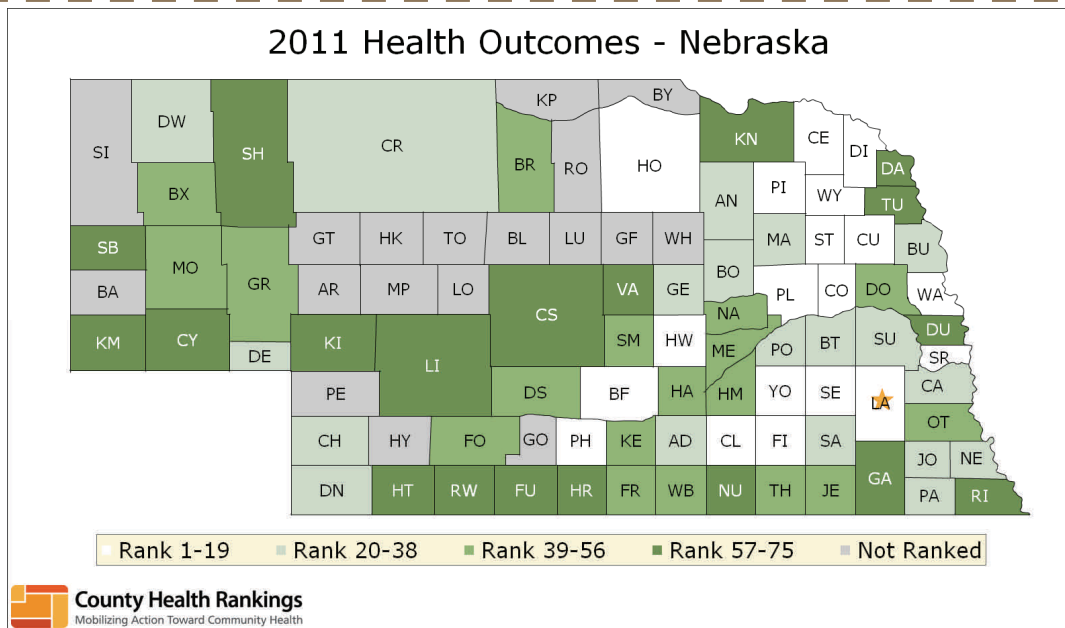
- Always have an adult closely supervise young children any time they are swimming, playing or even bathing in water;
- Never swim alone or in unsupervised locations. Teach your children to always swim with a buddy;

- Never drink alcohol before or while swimming, boating or water skiing and never drink alcohol while supervising children;
- Learn to swim, as swimming lessons benefit adults and children age 4 and up;

Food Safety: The CDC estimates that 76 million Americans get sick from food-related illness every year. Protect yourself and your friends and family in these ways:

- Cook meat, poultry and seafood thoroughly. Ground beef, for example, should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Don't cross-contaminate one food with another. Wash your hands, utensils and cutting boards after they have been in contact with raw meat or poultry and before they touch another food;
- Bacteria can grow quickly at room temperature, so refrigerate leftover foods promptly.
- Wash produce thoroughly to remove visible dirt and discard the outermost leaves of a head of lettuce or cabbage.

Howard County Ranks 3rd for Health Outcomes



Just how healthy is Howard County? On March 30, 2011, the *County Health Rankings* released statistics for the second year and the most recent information shows that Howard County has an overall ranking of third, out of more than 75 counties that were ranked. (Please note: not all counties received a ranking).

According to *Rankings*, researchers used five measures to assess the level of overall health or ‘health outcomes’ by county: the rate of people dying before age 75; the percentage of people who reported being in fair or poor health; the number of days in poor mental health; and the rate of low-birth weight infants. Researchers then looked at factors that affect people’s health within four categories: health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment.

Although Howard County ranks third overall, the county actually ranks first in health behaviors. Health behaviors look at a variety of areas including, smoking, diet and exercise, alcohol use and risky sexual behavior.

“The *Rankings* really show us with solid data that there is a lot more to health than health care,” says Patrick Remington, MD, director of the *County Health Rankings* project.

Rankings reveal that all counties have areas where they can improve, even those that are the healthiest. Some highlights of what counties look like nationally:

- * Unhealthy counties have significantly lower high school graduation rates.
- * Unhealthy counties have more than twice as many children in poverty.
- * Unhealthy counties have fewer grocery stores and farmer’s markets.
- * Unhealthy counties have higher rates of unemployment

“As the health center for Howard County and the surrounding area, we have to be the catalyst for healthy living events and activities in our community,” states Arlan Johnson, Chief Executive Officer. “It will be our duty to provide avenues for better health for all ages of citizens. From Health Fairs to “Lunch and Learns” to the annual Foundation Run/Walk, to the Metabolic Clinic, it is time for us to lead the community down the road to better health.”

Telephone Surveys to Begin

In order to continue to strive for a better patient experience, Howard County Medical Center has implemented a telephone survey program! Each month the focus will be on a different department or medical specialty and a sample of patients will be contacted. “The survey will take 5-10 minutes and we will compile the information in an anonymous fashion,” states Randy Boltz, Quality

Coordinator at HCMC. “After the results are in, we will report it to the appropriate personnel so that we can continue to improve our services.”

“This is not meant to replace the written survey, so we do still encourage patients to fill that out. As always, we do sincerely appreciate patient feedback.”

Howard County Medical Center

1113 Sherman Street
PO Box 406
St. Paul, NE 68873

www.hcchmc.org

A Day In The Life of Dr. Schneider



Dr. Steven Schneider

The life of a surgeon can be incredibly demanding. Add to that owning part of a practice in Grand Island, traveling to Albion and St. Paul multiple times per month, in addition to taking call one day per week,

and one weekend per month, and it is easy to see just how busy life is for Dr. Steven Schneider. Dr. Schneider, who started coming to St. Paul in 1999, performs general surgery and conducts follow-up clinic visits every Wednesday excluding the first Wednesday of each month.

“It’s hard to say what a typical day would be, because regardless of the schedule I have in the morning it very rarely, if ever, ends that way,” states Schneider. “It can be very up and down because I may think I have a light day and it ends up being incredibly long. Last night is a great example. I per-

formed multiple appendectomies, finished at around 2:30 am and started surgery in St. Paul at 7:00 am.”

“If I am working out of our office in Grand Island I am usually up around 5:00 or 6:00 am. Surgeries are scheduled in the morning and I finish with clinic visits in the afternoon. I’m usually home around 6:00 or 7:00 pm. My day will start a little earlier and end a little later if I am traveling to an outreach clinic and typically I will alternate between performing surgeries and seeing patients in the clinic.”

Besides the hectic schedule, what is the hardest part of Dr. Schneider’s job? “I would have to say being the bearer of bad news. We do a lot of biopsies and then we communicate the results to the patients. Sometimes we are letting them know their biopsy was cancerous. That is really tough.”

Schneider, who performs between 30 and 50 surgeries and scopes a week, received his undergraduate education at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. After receiving his Bachelor’s in Biology, he went on to Medical School at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. After graduating from Medical School he completed his gen-

eral surgery residency at the University of Missouri in Kansas City.

“Dr. Schneider has been coming to our facility for over ten years. His expertise has been greatly valued by our physicians and our hospital,” states Francine Rasmussen, RN and Surgery Director. “His surgical technique and outcomes prove to be the best around Central Nebraska.

Family: Karla, Wife

Children:

Jordan, 13

Kami, 6

Madison, 5

Thomas, 2

Favorite Vacation: A hunting trip to Africa

Hobby: Hunting or Fishing

Favorite Restaurant: Uncle Ed’s

Things on your bucket list?

Travel to various college football venues across the United States to see rivalry football games.

Profession if not a Surgeon?

Hunting Guide