Rick Thomason Named Employee of the Year; Retiring R.G. “Chick” Lockard Honored

Three hundred and sixty employees, friends, and family members of Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital (SJMH) met for the 28th annual Awards Dinner on Sat., Feb. 16, at Stonewall Resort, Roanoke, WV. The event is an opportunity to honor employees with years of service awards. The SJMH Employee of the Year, Rick Thomason, was also announced at that time.

CEO Avah Stalnaker welcomed guests to the buffet dinner. SJMH Board of Directors member Gerald Wood provided the invocation and remembered those employees who had passed away in the previous year, including: Velma “Bunny” Corathers, Ellen Straley, and Ruth Ann Johnson.

Stalnaker also noted that the daughter of the late Bunny Corathers had sent a donation to the Hospital for the benefit of the employees at the annual dinner. The dance was funded by this donation because of Bunny’s great affection for the Hospital, the patients, and her co-workers.

Following the meal of baked steak and marinated chicken, Stalnaker honored R.G. “Chick” Lockard, a board member since 1977, who was stepping down from that position. She noted that Lockard had seen many changes at SJMH during his tenure, including the expansion of the facility as well as the recruitment of a number of specialists.

She said, “For 35 years, this same selfless generosity of Chick has been exemplified for the benefit of the Hospital and the people we serve.”

In other presentations, the 2012 Employee of the Year, Thomason, was announced by Stalnaker. She noted that he had joined the military after high school and trained as a combat medic. During his service, he earned the coveted Expert Medical Field Badge.

“I understand that 82 soldiers began the test to receive the Badge and only nine people passed the exam, and Rick was one of them. The test was done to replicate a weeklong, intensive combat situation...hiking 12 miles with a 60-pound backpack. He completed the test with six minutes left. However, the test was so grueling that he had leg cramps and had to be treated with IVs immediately,” she said.

Stalnaker also noted that Thomason had been named Soldier of the Year in Germany. As part of the honor, Thomason had the opportunity to meet General Colin Powell. In 1987, he went into the Army Reserve and started school at Fairmont State College. He then came to SJMH in 1994 as an x-ray technician. Rick is a registered MRI technician and he has also studied nuclear medicine.

Rick had been named Employee of the Month twice at SJMH. He also serves as assistant director of radiology and MRI.

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Rick Thomason Named

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supervisor.

Rick is married to Tammy and they have a son, Austin. Rick’s mother, Sally Frazee, retired from SJMH and was present for the dinner.

In other award presentations, Chuck Chabanik, director of the Maintenance Department, honored Dennis Marple for 35 years of service. Chabanik noted that during his years of employment Dennis was recognized as Employee of the Month twice and was recognized numerous times for perfect attendance back when the Hospital awarded such accomplishments.

He also said, “You would be hard pressed to challenge Dennis’ knowledge of the building. His mechanical and maintenance abilities are to be commended; however, Dennis possesses other traits that bear mentioning and at times outweigh his mechanical abilities. Those traits are loyalty, devotion, and a sense of ownership in the facility. Those traits cannot be taught in any trade school and, in this day and age of employment, it is becoming more and more difficult to find someone with those qualities.”

Chief Operating Officer Kevin Stalnaker honored Rusty Simpson for 35 years of service with a Power Point presentation beginning with what was happening in America when Rusty began work here in 1977. For example, “Eight is Enough” and “Three’s Company” debuted on television. “Saturday Night Fever”, “Star Wars”, and “Close Encounters of the Third Kind” were playing at the movies. The Power Point was very entertaining for the audience.

On a more serious note, K. Stalnaker said that Rusty had received three commendations for meritorious service and was named Employee of the Month in December 1991. He also received at least eight service awards for attendance. At one point in his career, Rusty had missed only four days over a ten-year period.

In conclusion, K. Stalnaker noted that Rusty was “cooperative, hard-working, pleasant and a great asset to the Hospital.”

Radiology Department Director Brenda Tonkin honored Denise Bennett, who has worked at SJMH for thirty years. Denise was a student in the SJMH Radiology program. She was one of SJMH’s first certified mammography technicians. Brenda complimented Denise on her ability to make patients comfortable and “putting them at ease.”

Chabanik honored another maintenance employee, Nick Bakas, for twenty years of service.

He said “Gaven Nicolle Bakas, aka Nick, started his career at SJMH in 1992. He was recognized twice as Employee of the Month. Nick is always willing to accept additional duties and with his infectious personality he has been instrumental in our new program, Reach Patients First. Nick is greatly appreciated by the nursing staff in his response to our code grey and security events.”

Chief Nursing Officer Mary McCartney commented on ED’s Libby Brown and her twenty years of service.

“Libby was recognized for her kindness and willingness to help everyone with her first Employee of the Month award in November 1994 and then again in 2001, where they recognized her initiative and teamwork; always going above and beyond.

In 2003, she received her certification as an EMT-B. She worked at the Lewis County Emergency Squad with her husband for years; this might be where she got her love for the Emergency Dept. She is a wonderful, smart, positive, sweet person who has served Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital for more than 20 years,” commented McCartney.

Materials Management Director George Seyfert honored three of his employees for having twenty years of service.

The first honoree, Ronda Brown, is also the supervisor of the housekeeping department. Seyfert noted that Ronda has a diligent work ethic. She is also kind and considerate of all the employees and patients in the Hospital. She was also named Employee of the Month several times and was honored as 2009 Employee of the Year.

Another housekeeping employee, Roberta Gaines, was also honored for her years of service. Roberta has also been honored as Employee of the Month. She was named 2006 Employee of the Year. He noted that Roberta is a completely dedicated employee who has been known to come in on her days off if a co-worker was sick.

Laundry employee Pat Lowther was also honored by Seyfert for twenty years.

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SJMH took a whole contingency of staff to the WV Hospital Association’s Hospital Day on March 15. Pictured above at the event are staff and WV representatives: left to right, Senator Sam Cann, Rick Thomason, Julia Spelsberg, Derek Garrett, and Delegate Peggy Smith.
Longtime Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital (SJMH) Board of Director member R.G. “Chick” Lockard retired from his position on the Board. He will remain on the SJMH Company.

He was elected to the Company in 1977. In 1982, he was given a position on the SJMH Board of Directors. He served as vice-president of the Board from 1987-1988. Chick also served as president of the Board from 1988-1989, and then again from 1998 to 2001.

He is very proud of the many changes and expansions that the Hospital has undergone over those many years.

“The Hospital has grown and improved so much since 1977,” said Lockard. “I can think of a number of very important improvements over that period from converting the unused space on the ground floor to the rehab, respiratory, medical records departments, and cafeteria to adding a whole administrative wing with a boardroom and a classroom to the second floor of the Hospital.”

The other projects included installation of a 200-space employee parking lot with a large, temperature-controlled storage building. The Hospital also added a helicopter pad and mobile MRI. Perhaps the most significant change to the Hospital has been the addition of many medical specialists for local residents. SJMH has orthopedic surgeons, pulmonologist, general surgeons, OB/GYNs, internists, ENT, urologist, pediatrician, cardiologist, and family practitioners. The Hospital has a variety of offices, including those located in Jane Lew, Buckhannon, and at Market Place Mall.

He is married to Janet Bakas Lockard and has two sons – Jim and Steve, and one stepson, Nicolle Gavin Bakas. He is very proud of his six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. He and Janet are also the proprietors of a farm, which houses many, many cats, four dogs, two ponies, five rabbits, and the neighbor’s horses.
At left, thirty-five year pins were awarded to Rusty Simpson and Dennis Marple, pictured left to right.

A thirty-year pin was given to Denise Bennett.

Libby Brown received a 20-year pin.

Nick Bakas received a 20-year pin.

At left, 20-year pins were awarded to Pat Lowther, Roberta Gaines, and Ronda Brown.
More Pin Awardees from SJMH

Fifteen-year pins were awarded to those pictured at right - Tammy Moody, Tina Burnside, Linda Burns, Donna Brooks, Debra Gum, and Brigetta Fisher.

Ten-year pin winners were, left to right - Keith Chapman, Debra Orsburn, and Sandy Smith.

Five-year pin winners at the annual Awards Dinner are pictured above, left to right: Bryanna Crisp, Martha Hefner, Debbie Fultineer, Kat Ramsey, Eileen McCullough, Renae Sauerwein; back row, left to right, Amanda Rowan, Wayne Schwartzmiller and Ben Riley.
Marilyn McCauley is January Choice

Eileen McCullough, RN, was selected as the SJMH Employee of the Month for January 2013. She has been employed at SJMH since 2007 in the emergency department.

Eileen is originally from Washington, PA, but received her degree in nursing from Alderson Broaddus College, in Philippi, WV. She lives in Elkins.

She has enjoyed a nursing career spanning 42 years. Prior to coming to SJMH, she was director of nursing at Huttonsville Correctional Center; day surgery supervisor at Davis Memorial Hospital; med/surg supervisor at St. Joseph’s Hospital, and spent twenty years in nursing at the former Memorial General, in Elkins.

Her nominations were from a variety of co-workers who wrote: “Eileen is a very hard worker, very dependable, a great nurse…She is a constant in an unpredictable working environment. She takes on the hard patients. She is kind and caring at all times…Eileen is very knowledgeable and a hard worker. She is always willing to do anything and to help her co-workers and patients….Eileen is a great person to help in any way she can. She is always looking out for everyone else before she thinks of herself. She is a privilege to work with…Eileen is always willing to come in on call-offs and does provide excellent patient care…I would like to nominate Eileen as one of the most knowledgeable and resourceful employees I know.”

Eileen was equally complimentary of SJMH and said, “I truly enjoy my work in the Emergency Department. We have a great group of nurses there. It is so interesting to look at the variety of patients we work with young, and old, medical or surgical patients. We see them all.”

Outside of the Hospital, Eileen enjoys bowling, gardening, and spending time with her nieces and nephews in Washington, PA.

Marsha Snyder is Selected for February

Marsha Snyder was SJMH Employee of the Month for February 2013. She has been employed at SJMH since November 5, 2000, in the dietary department.

Marsha is married to Dave Snyder and the couple live in Weston. Her parents are the late Marvel and Nelly Kirkpatrick. She is a Lewis County High School graduate. The couple have three children – David Posey and Amy Posey, of Elkins, and Christina Nicholson, of Weston. They have ten grandchildren.

Marsha had a number of nominators for her honor. They wrote: “Marsha is a very nice person and would do anything to help anyone in need. She deserves to be recognized for her contributions to the hospital. She is very dedicated to her job and is a very hard worker…Marsha is an outstanding worker and deserves to be recognized for her hard work, kindness and good attitude towards everyone….Marsha goes above and beyond her call of duty. She always has a willing hand to help everybody. She gets the job done and more. She is very considerate of her patients and workers…Marsha helps all the time. She covers all positions with great efficiency.”

Marsha normally works as the evening cook. She also prepares for the next day’s needs in the kitchen. Her supervisor noted that she does an excellent job of keeping the cafeteria items prepared and on time.

Marsha enjoys her job at SJMH and noted, “This is a good place to work and everyone is so friendly.”

In her spare time, she enjoys relaxing, puzzle books, reading and, of course, cooking.
Jerry Wood is Selected for March

Maintenance’s Jerry Wood was SJMH Employee of the Month for March 2013. Jerry first worked for several years at SJMH in the early 1990s. He returned here in August 2011. Since his first stint here, he spent time in television production, construction, and as a mechanic in the oil/gas industry.

Jerry has two children – Douglas Gerald Ryan, 22, and Sara Lynn Ryan, 17. Jerry’s parents are R. Gerald Wood, of Weston, and the late Mary Jo Wood. His sister, Jill Kennen, lives in Carolina Beach, NC.

Jerry received a number of nominations for this honor.

In part, the nominators wrote: “Jerry brings knowledge and personal skills to our department in plumbing and other skills and inventive processes. He is a welcome addition to our Hospital and is always polite to our patients and visitors…” Jerry is always nice to people and helpful when you ask for help to have something done or to get something fixed. He goes out of his way to help people find the destination they are looking for…

Jerry has an outstanding work ethic and his customer service skills are exceptional. Jerry is always willing to accept new and additional duties. Jerry has been instrumental in the maintenance department’s Reach Patients First program. Jerry has also played a major role in regard to the patient room renovations. His skills and talents have allowed the maintenance department to complete room renovations without the assistance of a plumbing contractor.”

Jerry still enjoys “rocking” on his drums on Friday nights with his old friends and sings in the choir on Sunday morning with his father.

Tina Burnside Chosen for April

Information Management’s Tina Burnside has been selected as Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital Employee of the Month for April 2013. She began employment at the Hospital in 1997, right out of school.

“I started here after graduation from Fairmont State University in Health Information Management,” Burnside said “This has been my only job.”

She is the daughter of Bill and Hilda Perry, of Weston, and the late Gary Shutts, of Kentucky. She is married to Lee, an employee of Time Warner Cable, in Clarksburg. The couple live at Jackson’s Mill with their three children, Lorrin, 14, Karlee, 11, and Josh, 9.

Tina was an outpatient coder for one year before she began inpatient coding. Presently, she is the assistant director in the Health Information Management Department. Kay Butcher is the director.

Tina received several nominations for the honor.

One nominator wrote, “Tina is very helpful and is a very polite co-worker. She always has a smile on her face and is very knowledgeable. She tries to help everyone out in the office. She is dependable and reliable.”

The other nominator wrote, “She is always very helpful. She is a great example of organization – being the mother of three and juggling work and ballgames.”

Her director, Kay Butcher, noted, “Tina is very deserving of this nomination. She is very efficient, dependable, and knowledgeable. She helps with CORE abstractions and covers for the Utilization Review nurse.”

Tina was appreciative of the nomination and said, “I love it here…especially the people I work with. They are like a second family to me.”

With three children, Tina spends many hours at ballgames. When she does have the time, she spends it reading. She doesn’t mind being at ballgames though: “my kids are my world,” she stated.
THANKS
To Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital, and Katrina Frederick Howes,
Thank you for your donations of ID Kits and supplies for our Health-a-Thon at Troy Elementary. Katrina’s hands-on display was very interesting and informative for the students. We appreciate the time she spent with our children. Thanks again for helping to make our Health-A-Thon a success!

Troy PTO Officers

Many Thanks to SJMH

From the Survey for Pulmonary Rehab…

The information I received from the staff was worth as much to me as the physical exercise.

The Lewis County Chamber of Commerce would like to express our appreciation for the donation for the Christmas Light Fund. Your contribution will assist with adding new decorations which will be displayed during the 2013 Christmas season. In closing, once again we appreciate your contribution, your participation, and your support of the community. Sincerely, Sherry Lambert, Executive Director, LC Chamber of Commerce.

Thanks so much to all the staff who helped with the birth of my baby.

My husband and I would like to extend our gratitude for the care you gave to all of us, while we were staying in the hospital. I am sorry for not being able to name all of you as it was a hectic few days and has been a long month; however, I do appreciate every one of you and the work you do. The main nurse I had was super excellent and very supportive and caring. I appreciate you staying past your time to be there when they did my c-section. You took great care of us. Also, our night nurse, Brittany, I believe was one of the sweetest people I think I have ever met. All of you were excellent. Also, the anesthesiologist, Sharon, I would like to say thank you to as she was very helpful, supportive, and caring. We appreciated all your concern and being there the whole time. Last and definitely not least, Dr. Gibson. I didn’t see you much for my visits but wouldn’t have wanted to have any other doctor delivering my baby. You are a great doctor and person and we are thankful everyday you were with us. Again, thank you all for saving my baby girl and getting her here safely. I hope to see you all again! God Bless!!

Proud Grandparents

Lexie Dean, 9-year-old granddaughter of Ronnie and Lena Bowman, of SJMH, has learned how to shoot an arrow very well.

She placed second in an archery competition for fourth graders in the state of West Virginia, in a contest held at the Charleston Civic Center, on Sat., March 23. She goes to a grade school in Clendeninn, which teaches archery. In May, she is scheduled to go to Lexington, KY, for nationals. Her parents are Kim and Russ Gunnoe.
Our sincere condolences to these members of our SJMH family on their losses:

Dr. William Kelly on the passing of his father;
Jennifer Barnes on the passing of her sister;
and Rick Simpson on the passing of his wife.

We offer you our sympathy.

Dr. M. Kurdi is Recertified in Specialties

The American Board of Internal Medicine has recently announced that Dr. Mostafa Kurdi, M.D., FCCP, has successfully passed recertification in both pulmonary medicine and critical care medicine specialties. Dr. Kurdi is also board certified in sleep medicine by the American Board of Internal Medicine.

Dr. Kurdi specializes in pulmonology, critical care, and sleep medicine.

He received his medical degree from the University of Damascus in Syria. He performed his residency at Wayne State University Saint Joseph Mercy Oakland Hospital, Pontiac, MI, for internal medicine.

He has several fellowships including one in critical care, from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Pittsburgh, PA. His fellowship in pulmonary disease is from Columbia University, Harlem Hospital, New York, NY.

He sees patients at both his Weston and Buckhannon offices.

SJMH Participates In Donate Life Challenge

Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital (SJMH) is participating in the Donate Life WV Hospital Challenge.

“We are competing against other hospitals in the state with a common goal: to get new organ and tissue donor registrations,” said SJMH coordinator Crystal Frazier.

“We started our campaign with an event at the hospital on April 3, 2013. At this event, we had a donor mother speak about her decision to donate her son’s organs. By making this decision to donate life, this young boy was able to help save five people with his organs.”

Others aren’t as lucky as these five recipients. Each day, 18 people die while waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant that never comes for them. Every year, 10,000 to 12,000 people die who are considered medically suitable for organ, tissue, and cornea donations, yet only a fraction of the population donates. SJMH is trying to improve those statistics.

In the first three weeks of the SJMH campaign, 65 new donors have been signed up. The competition will continue through August 31, 2013.

SJMH employees are eligible to win a Kindle Fire if they sign up or show that they are already a donor. Employees who register six new organ donors are entered in a drawing for $200 and the employee with the most new registrations will win $300. Good luck and a big thank you to everyone participating in the challenge.

Officers for Medical Staff

Officers of the Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital medical staff were elected for 2013. They are John Wylie, M.D. – president; Jeremy Williams, M.D. – vice-president; Waid McMillion, D.O. – secretary; and Khalid Mahmoud, M.D. – immediate past president.

Celebrating Hospital Week
May 12 through 18, 2013

The March Uniform Sale organized by Stonewall Home Oxygen Therapy was quite a success. Pictured above, left to right, are Sandy Smith, Beth Wheeler, and Jane Eisenbeis of the SHOT office.
Katrina Howes Wins
Katrina Frederick Howes, of the Social Services Department, recently won a very interesting contest on Facebook.

Shelby Huff, of Brooksville, Florida, is 16 years old and suffers from aplastic anemia. She and her family created a Facebook page – Shelby’s Journey with Severe Aplastic Anemia – that Katrina found online. Shelby was diagnosed with this form of anemia on November 20, 2012. Aplastic anemia is a disease of the bone marrow. The bone marrow stops making enough red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets for the body. Any blood cells the marrow does make are normal, but there are not enough of them. Aplastic anemia can be moderate, severe or very severe. People with severe or very severe aplastic anemia are at risk for life-threatening infections or bleeding.

The contest was for someone to guess Shelby’s ANC on February 4, 2013. She guessed the number to be 570. The ANC is a measurement of the neutrophil granulocytes in the blood. The neutrophils are a type of white blood cells that fight infection. A normal count is above 1500 less per microliter. An ANC less than 500 is defined as neutropenia.

Special Delivery’s Mary Dillon Retires
Nurse Mary Dillon, of the Special Delivery Birthing Unit at SJMH, was honored with a retirement party on Friday, April 19, in the Hospital Boardroom. Friends and co-workers honored her for over twenty years of service to the Hospital. She started at SJMH in July 1992.

SJMH CEO Avah Stalnaker spoke of Mary’s excellent obstetric nursing skills. Stalnaker noted that Mary was a nurse who was well versed in the Hospital’s policies and procedures and made sure staff followed them. She said that Mary was a NALS instructor and a great resource for other nurses...a real nurse’s nurse.

As well as a gift from the Hospital administration, Mary received several lovely presents from the Special Delivery staff, including a bookmark, jewelry box, and charm bracelet.

Dillon lives in Buckhannon with her husband, Richard, an employee of the National Guard. She is originally from Huntington. She received her LPN training at Cabell County Career Center and her nursing degree from Fairmont State College in 1981. During her nursing career, she worked in pediatrics at both St. Mary’s, in Huntington, and Logan General Hospital. She also nursed at St. Joseph’s Hospital, in Buckhannon, and WVU Hospital, at Morgantown.

She is pleased with her career decision.

“Nursing is very rewarding, enriching and always changing,” explained Dillon. “I had to have loved it to stay with it this long. Plus, the people that I have met in the Unit are all very interesting.”

Mary also noted that there have been quite a few changes in OB nursing since she began. For example, there is much more education for families about Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. There is also central monitoring for all mothers in labor. Something which didn’t happen thirty years ago.

“When I began in obstetric nursing, we did not monitor all mothers. It was at the discretion of the physician,” she explained. “We also cross-trained in other areas.

Margaret Blake took first place in her age category at the 6th annual Weston 5K Run/Walk. She was very, very happy!

Sweet Goodbyes were given to retiring nurse Mary Dillon by Gabby Smith and Avah Stalnaker
I would work on med/surg as well as OB. That was just expected of us.” Mary plans to spend more time with her children and grandchildren. She and her husband have two daughters and sons-in-law – Stephanie and Ken Seelinger, and Susan and William Daniel. They also have two grandchildren – Emily Seelinger and Mackenzie Loudin.

She also plans to travel more in her retirement.

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Go Team....Go!!!

Pictured above are the SJMH basketball team and cheerleaders during practice for the big Thunder Cup Challenge against St. Joe’s Hospital, played on Tues., April 30, at Buckhannon-Upshur High School. Over $2,000 was raised to benefit the United Way of Gilmer, Lewis, and Upshur Counties. Front row, left to right, Avah Stalnaker, Jackie Hall, Rick Thomason, Mark Harris, Peter Edgerton, M.D.; second row, left to right, Kay Beane, Tonya Stewart, Matt DeGarmo, Kevin Stalnaker, John Pope, Tom Law, Shawn Hamner, Coach Scott Gannon, Ronda Brown; third row, left to right, cheerleaders Kristi Gannon, Jenette Woods, Nastuasha Wilson, Tina Burnside, Asia Sumpter, and Jennifer Barnes.

“Reach Patients First” Program Initiated

Members of the Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital’s Maintenance Department have been working with Sodexo Healthcare Services to provide great customer service to Hospital patients and guests. The program is “Reach Patients First” and was implemented in the fall 2012.

Maintenance Director Chuck Chabanik, a Sodexo employee, spearheaded the effort here. Three of the SJMH Maintenance staff, Jerry Wood, Nick Bakas, and Ronnie Bowman, have been trained in the plan.

Sodexo’s concept is “Patients are the heart of everything we do.” The “Reach Patients First” program takes a proactive approach to improving the patient experience through face-to-face interactions and visible maintenance service and repairs.

The concept is very simple – make sure that each patient is visited at least once each week; complete all patient requests in 20 minutes or less; and, perhaps most importantly, keep the patient informed of the steps taken.

Chabanik said, “This program gives us the opportunity for patient interaction and to see to the patient’s needs immediately without delay. We can provide a better quality patient experience by using this program.”

Winner of the Dipstick Award at the Annual Awards Dinner in February was Lab’s Asia Sumpter. She is shown above with emcee Rusty
GUESS WHO?
You might not recognize the male cardiac rehab nurse in the picture above. It seems like our bunny rabbit can give good cardiac education and candy, too.

Don’t Forget.....

CORRECTION from Winter General...
SJMH’s Debbie Fultineer brought her daughter, (pictured above) Kristen Fultineer, and grandson, Zaden, (in the middle) to the Children’s Christmas Party. Zaden was not happy to see Santa!