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# Taking a hike



photo by provided

ICU nurse Chris Houck is currently somewhere along a 211-mile hike to the top of California's Mt. Whitney.

by Bobby Anderson, Staff Writer

The vents. The alarms. The difference between life and death measured in respirations, milliliters of fluid and micrograms of medication.

For the next three weeks all of that will be gone for ICU nurse Chris Houck.

Houck flew out last Friday and began a 211-mile hike this week on the John Muir Trail on the Sierra Nevada mountain range of California, passing through Yosemite, Kings

Canyon and Sequoia National Parks.

Along the way, Houck will see temperatures ranging from the high-30s overnight to the 80s during the day. For every thousand feet he goes up in altitude the temperature will drop five degrees.

The pinnacle of the trip is Mt. Whitney, elevation 14,505 feet. Houck will get up around 1 a.m. the morning of his final ascent, trekking in the darkness with only his head lamp to

See HIKE Page 2

## INTEGRIS Names New President

INTEGRIS, Oklahoma's most comprehensive health care system, announces the selection of Timothy Pehrson as its president and chief executive officer following completion of a national search. Pehrson comes to Oklahoma from Intermountain Healthcare in Utah where he most recently served in a dual role as regional vice president/CEO

See PEHRSON Page 3

## 918 Nurses' Night

Experienced RNs are invited to 918 Nurses' Night, a social event sponsored by Saint Francis Health System. Come mingle with fellow nursing professionals while enjoying wine, beer and appetizers, and a beautiful view of the Tulsa skyline from Tulsa Country Club. Door prizes will be awarded throughout the evening.

Representatives will be on hand to answer any questions you may have about working for Oklahoma's largest healthcare provider and the region's only locally owned and operated health system. Learn more about our comprehensive range of services and locations—including our newest, Saint Francis Glenpool—and discover nursing opportunities throughout the health system.

### About Tulsa Country Club

Country Club is only five minutes away from downtown Tulsa, which offers a variety of unique bars, restaurants and hotels. 918 Nurses' Night is great reason to plan a night out and reconnect with fellow nurses.

918 Nurses' Night will be at Tulsa Country Club, 701 North Union Avenue, on Thursday, June 28 from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. RSVP and learn more about the event at [saintfrancis.com/918nursesnight](http://saintfrancis.com/918nursesnight) or call 918-771-0678.



## HIKE

Continued from Page 1

light his way, in order to make it to the summit just as the sun rises.

It's a life-changing experience.

A few years ago Houck started a Facebook group - Norman Outdoor Adventurers - for those who wanted to get moving outdoors. It was originally meant just for hospital employees but has branched out to anyone in the area.

"It's not just about hiking," Houck explained. "We've organized kayaking trips, overnight camping trips to the Wichita Mountains. It's just for anybody who wants to get outside."

Houck, 36, has been an ICU nurse for Norman Regional for the past 12 years.

Numerous hikes, starting out with day hikes then working his way up to overnight hikes have come along the way.

He began thinking about doing the John Muir Trail, a 211-mile trail that runs from Yosemite Valley to Mt. Whitney in California, after watching the documentary, Mile Mile & a Half.



Houck then hiked the John Muir Trail by himself in just 19 days last July.

It was still "early season" for the hike and the path had its largest snowfall since the 1980s so Houck had to be careful as he

hiked the snow-covered path.

"I hiked eight miles in snow on one of the days. I couldn't even see the path—I had to just learn it on the fly," Houck said.

This year, Houck is setting out to hike the trail again. He planned to hike this time with his 16-year-old daughter, Raelee, but unfortunately she injured her shoulder during track season and can't go.

Houck's wife, Keri, who also works at Norman Regional, was originally hesitant about Raelee going on the hike, but now she's sad for her, Houck said.

Houck said his manager and director fully supported him taking the time to chase his dreams. He'll be gone for three weeks.

"As long as I've still been working hard and make sure they have plenty of notice, I'm able to take these trips. It's wonderful that Norman Regional fosters that type of environment—it keeps employees around," Houck said.

Houck says hiking - upwards of 20 miles per day - is the easy part. An immense amount of planning occurs months before.

He lost 10 pounds on his last trip - eating a 3,800-calorie diet. A lot of time and research went into meal planning this time which includes not only selecting but cooking, measuring, dehydrating, packing and then mailing food to various supply drops along the

way.

Those points are post offices off the trail. He hikes off usually 10 miles or so, picks up his supplies, checks in with the family on his cell and then hikes back onto the trail.

It keeps him from having to carry a trip's worth of food but also keeps him on a tight schedule.

Once he reaches the summit it's a 10-mile hike to the Mt. Whitney portal entrance.

"Mt Whitney doesn't have a parking lot," Houck laughed. "There's a little restaurant there you hitch a ride out to Lone Pine."

There's a hostel in Lone Pine where he'll grab a shower, a real bed and then a bus to Reno, Nevada the next morning and an airplane ride home.

"It's tremendous," Houck says. "It's one of the reasons I've tried to encourage my coworkers. I think medical personnel and first responders - the mental stress we go through with our jobs and the things we see the entire society would be better people if they went and did things like this more often. When you get back the things that bothered you before may not bother you now."

"It kind of puts it into perspective and makes you grateful for what you have. You appreciate how great things can be when you get back."



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## PEHRSON

Continued from Page 1

for the North Region and vice president of continuous improvement for Intermountain Healthcare.

Like INTEGRIS, Intermountain is widely recognized as one of the most innovative, high-quality health systems in the country. In his role as CEO of the North Region, he was the market leader of a five-hospital region in Utah and Idaho, responsible for integrating the efforts of physicians, hospitals and health plans to improve care for the communities Intermountain served. In addition to his role in charge of regional operations, as vice president of continuous improvement he led the enterprise-wide improvement efforts across Intermountain Healthcare to drive caregiver engagement and strong performance in safety, quality, patient experience, access, caregiver engagement, costs and growth.

"Tim distinguished himself throughout the interview process with his impeccable record of accomplishment, an impressive understanding of not only today's health care industry and its challenges, but more importantly his insights into areas of opportunity for

sustainability, affordability and even greater success," said INTEGRIS Health Board Chairman Pete Delaney, who added, "Tim's strong physician and employee focus and his genuine enthusiasm for the possibilities that exist here make him the right choice to lead INTEGRIS."

"I am both humbled and pleased to be joining INTEGRIS, a health system also recognized nationally for excellence, pioneering medicine, innovation and commitment to community," said Pehrson. "The physicians, clinical professionals and employees at INTEGRIS are some of the most accomplished anywhere. Professionally and personally, my family and I are excited to be making the move to the Oklahoma City area and being part of a growing community that offers an excellent quality of life." He succeeds Bruce Lawrence, who retired last December, and Pehrson officially steps into his INTEGRIS leadership role Aug. 1.

Pehrson's career at Intermountain began in 2000 as operations officer at one of its hospitals, and he was named that hospital's CEO in 2004. Prior to his career at Intermountain, Pehrson worked for United Healthcare, Samaritan Health and Henry Ford Health System.



Timothy Pehrson, president and chief executive officer of INTEGRIS.

Tim earned his B.A. in history from Brigham Young University and his master's in health services administration from the University of Michigan.



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# Hillcrest Medical Center First in Tulsa to Achieve Baby-Friendly Designation

*Peggy V. Helmerich Women's Health Center at Hillcrest Medical Center receives international recognition as a Designated Baby-Friendly birth facility*

Hillcrest Medical Center is the first hospital in Tulsa to receive international recognition as a Designated Baby-Friendly birth facility for its commitment to breastfeeding mothers and their babies. Baby-Friendly USA, Inc. is the U.S. authority for the implementation of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, a global program sponsored by the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The initiative encourages and recognizes hospitals and birthing

centers that offer an optimal level of care for breastfeeding mothers and their babies. Based on the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, this award recognizes birth facilities that offer breastfeeding mothers the information, confidence and skills needed to successfully initiate and continue breastfeeding their babies.

"To be recognized for our commitment to serving the mothers that trust us to care for them and their babies in this most precious stage of life is incredibly meaningful to our entire team,"



said John Tucker, service line administrator of the Peggy V. Helmerich Women's Health Center at Hillcrest Medical Center. "We strive to provide an environment of support for our mothers that breastfeed, including lactation consulting and other resources to help breastfeeding moms and their babies thrive."

There are more than 20,000 designated Baby-Friendly hospitals and birth centers worldwide and 527 active Baby-Friendly hospitals and birth centers in the United States. The award is maintained by continuing to practice the Ten Steps as demonstrated by quality processes.

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# Senior Living Associates in Tulsa Named 2018 Caregiver of the Year *Oklahoma Assisted Living Association recognizes Joe Canaan and Brenda Cox*

Sagora Senior Living proudly announces that two of its associates working in Tulsa, Okla., have been named 2018 "Caregiver of the Year" by the Oklahoma Assisted Living Association (OKALA). Bellarose Maintenance Director Joe Canaan was named Maintenance Caregiver of the Year and Aberdeen Heights Certified Nursing Assistant Brenda Cox was named Direct Care Caregiver of the Year.

OKALA, which is dedicated to excellence in care for Assisted Living residents, conducted a state-wide search to recognize associates that have positive & inspiring attitudes and go above and beyond to improve quality of life for their residents.

Canaan has provided excellent service at Bellarose for more than two years. "Joe goes out of his comfort zone to help residents and families to ensure we are well taken care of, wherever and whenever he is needed," one Bellarose resident noted. "With his great personality, Joe is a go-to person for just about anything I need in my apartment," wrote another.

Cox has delivered exceptional care to residents and families for more than eight years at Aberdeen Heights

Assisted Living. "Brenda is reliable, dependable, patient and Johnny-on-the-spot—she isn't pushy, and she doesn't rush me," wrote one Aberdeen Heights resident that nominated Cox. "She stands out! Brenda jokes with me and goes out of her way to care for me," wrote another.

"We are extremely proud of our associates for receiving these prestigious accolades," said Sagora Senior Living President Bryan McCaleb. "Brenda and Joe emulate the Sagora philosophy of 'resident first' every day, and we are so glad their hard work and dedication is being recognized in the senior living industry."

Bellarose Senior Living offers a true continuum of care through independent living, assisted living and memory care in a dynamic environment where residents receive the appropriate level of compassionate care specific to their needs. Located at 18001 East 51st Street, the pet-friendly community has 135 comfortable apartments.

Aberdeen Heights Assisted Living at 7220 South Yale Avenue, boasts 80 apartments in a caring, pet friendly environment that offers privacy and independence with the benefit of 24-hour support and access to care.



Brenda Cox (C) is congratulated on receiving the 2018 Direct Care Caregiver of the Year award from Gara Wilsie and Jim McWhirter.



Joe Canaan (C) receives the 2018 Maintenance Caregiver of the Year award from Gara Wilsie, Remedi Senior Care who sponsored the awards, and Jim McWhirter, OKALA Board Chair.

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Click or call 918-807-6048 to RSVP or learn more.

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Soon to open elegant, assisted living community on the campus of St John Broken Arrow is seeking an exceptional RN leader. Skilled in utilizing positive management, extraordinary communication skills, geriatric nursing and sense of humor! Prairie House Assisted Living & Memory Care 2450 N Stone Ridge Dr, Broken Arrow, OK 74012

**We are seeking an Registered Nurse. Part Time to join our team!**

You will be responsible for the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of assigned patients. Autumn Wood Memory Care 2700 N. Hickory St, Claremore, OK 74017

**We are seeking a dedicated Registered Nurse to work in our Skilled Nursing dept.**

Inverness Village is seeking a dedicated Registered Nurse (RN) to work in our Skilled Nursing department. As an RN, your responsibilities will include but not limited to providing direct nursing care to residents as well as supervising day-to-day nursing activities. Successful candidates must be dependable, compassionate, have good time management and communication skills and have a desire to work with the elderly. They must also have the flexibility to work various shift times to include: evenings, weekends, holidays and nights. Associates receive free access to our on-campus gym, on-going training opportunities, and a work environment rich in our philosophy of valuing associates. Working at Inverness Village can provide you with rewards that extend far beyond pay and benefits. You can be fulfilled both personally and professionally. 3800 W 71st St, Tulsa, OK 74132

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# Oklahoma's NURSING TIMES

## Special to the Nursing Times

# RN Considers Ethics in Legislation SQ788

Opinion by Pamela Street, RN

In my search for who will apply ethics to medical bill legislation when SQ788 is passed, I am reminded of ethics applied in nursing. Nursing considers the person unique and addresses the whole person without judgement or discrimination, empowering the patient to knowledge and autonomy. Most service professions have a code of ethics or mission statement guiding the profession in true purpose, to be revisited frequently.

When I approached the OSMA, politicians, law enforcement, professors and professional associations, asking, is it ethical for the HHS Committee to make decisions on medical issues without the guidance of an Ethics Committee, most replied "interesting question". Some stated "the system is not set to change" some guided me to the Ethics Commission.

The Ethics Commission mostly addresses conflicts of interest in finances, campaigns and lobbying versus the morals of caring and equality. SQ788 advocates have made reports to the Commission based on two Senators on the HHS Committee, one invested in pharmacies and pharmaceutical services the other claiming competency to guide medical legislation, being an MD.

The Physicians Code of Ethics suggest that physicians should advocate for patients in changing laws and to allow ethics to supersede law in certain circumstances. Limiting kinder medicine to only 5 diagnoses borders on discrimination considering patients

asked for 788 as written, to work with their physician of choice.

To call SQ788 a recreational measure is a judgement and misapplication of ethics when so many Americans have safe access to cannabis and are replacing dangerous RXs in medical states. To judge the risk of a child ingesting a non-lethal gummy bear as more important than the child that had to leave friends and family in OK, to be seizure free, is an important moral and ethical consideration.

Are we to blindly trust that our political and spiritual leaders are informed, or more importantly, want to be informed? Will they in the face of a successful OK medical program apologize for their poor leadership and ask for an Ethic Committees participation in writing medical legislation in the future? Will we learn from the past?

In the late 1930's when cannabis prohibition was set, the medical association at the time, warned against removing cannabis from medical use as they were facing their own opiate crisis in history. Two years later Hydrocodone was introduced and the rest is history.

*Pamela Street graduated at UCO 94-95 and has 15 plus yrs home health case management, 5 yrs Clinical Outcomes research. In retirement she follows legislation that may effect patient rights and should always consider ethics. Pamela Street is a member of the American Cannabis Nurses Association and has been an active advocate for kinder medicine since 2013. She has seen cannabis miracles and resides in Shawnee OK*

## Men in Nursing Profession Earn More Annually Than Women

*Salary data was gathered from Nurse.com by OnCourse Learning study of 4,500 nurses*

In a profession dominated by women, men in nursing earn more than \$6,000 more a year than their female counterparts, according to a Nurse.com by OnCourse Learning survey of more than 4,500 nurses across the country.

The Nursing Salary Research Report, which included registered nurses from all 50 states, showed men earn an average of \$79,688 compared to \$73,090 for women. Men make up almost 12% of the U.S. nursing workforce.

"Even taking into account total hours worked, years of nursing experience, age, education level and certification status, men still are making more money than women," said Robert G. Hess Jr., PhD, RN, FAAN, Nurse.com by OnCourse Learning's Executive Vice President and Chief Clinical Executive, Healthcare. "And from our robust research, salary is the most important job factor for nurses across all demographics."

### Reaction to salary gap

The fact that men earn higher salaries is something Brent MacWilliams, PhD, MSN, RN, APNP, APN-BC, president of the American Association for Men in Nursing, would like to see change.

"Traditionally, men have gravitated toward acute care, high-paid specialties and to management/administration, which are all higher paying," he said. "Based on this survey, it seems clear men are being paid significantly more than women in the profession doing comparable work. I would call on employers to assess their current workforce for gender gaps and raise salaries to create parity."

### Negotiation is key

One important aspect of earnings is men are more likely to negotiate their salaries, the survey found. While 43% of men "most of the time or always" negotiate, only 34% of women do so.

"This could account for higher salaries for men in nursing, as well as other professions," Hess said.

Millicent Gorham, MBA, FAAN, executive director of the National Black Nurses Association, said closing the pay gap is critical.

"I want to see an equitable solution," she said. "My main takeaway from this survey is that women need to learn to negotiate for everything."

### Lifelong learning

Fifty percent of overall respondents said pursuing higher education, certification or training to boost salary was a consideration or goal.

"It is heartening that the survey found many nurses are planning on pursuing higher levels of education, which is what the Institute of Medicine called for in its 2010 report on the future of nursing," said Susan C. Reinhard, PhD, RN, FAAN, senior vice president and director, AARP Public Policy Institute and chief strategist, Center to Champion Nursing in America. "Research has linked greater levels of education for nurses with safer, high-quality care. Higher degrees also give nurses more career choices and can lead to better-paying jobs."

Attaining professional certifications is one way female nurses can close the salary gap. Survey results showed men with specialty certifications had a salary only \$1,252 higher than certified female nurses.

### Survey methodology

The survey data, which was analyzed by a doctorally-prepared nurse, was made available to registered nurses via an email campaign and social media posts. The overall audience sample is representative of each state's percentage of RNs compared to the overall U.S. nursing workforce.

The survey has a 95% confidence interval and a 1.5% margin of error on its sample size.

Nurse.com by OnCourse Learning publishes a popular blog, along with relevant nursing content in its award-winning digital publications and various nursing survey studies annually. This content is shared with a social media audience of more than 550,000 followers.

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## SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital Welcomes Susan Ogden, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, to SSM Health Medical

SSM Health St. Anthony is pleased to welcome Susan Ogden, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, to SSM Health Medical Group.

Ogden earned an undergraduate degree in health and exercise science from the University of Oklahoma. She then went on to complete a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Doctorate of Nursing Practice from Oklahoma City University.

SSM Health Medical Group, located at 7221 West Hefner Rd., in Oklahoma City, focuses on family care treating adults, and pediatric patients six years of age and older.



Susan Ogden, DNP, APRN, FNP-C.



**Vicki L Mayfield, M.Ed., R.N.,  
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*If you would like to send a  
question to Vicki, email us at  
[news@okcnursingtimes.com](mailto:news@okcnursingtimes.com)*

**Q. This column is about choices. We all make them every day. But why do we continue to make choices that have an extremely negative impact on our health?**

A. Did you know the United States is the only country that advertises medications on TV? So while you are relaxing and enjoying your TV program, the commercial for the latest anti-depressant flashes on the screen. The once depressed person is now singing, dancing and really enjoying life. Did you also see the little blurb in the corner of the screen that these depressed people are actors? People who are paid to sing and dance and probably have no idea what the drug is that they are so happy about.

But it gets your attention..... big pharmacy propaganda!! Too bad it is not followed by a commercial promoting the benefits of walking, playing basketball, riding your bike, singing.....but wait that is not going to happen because there is nothing to sell except the benefits of physical activity.

When the diabetic medication commercial is followed by the Pillsbury cinnamon roll commercial; is this not the antithesis of good health. Is the message, eat your cinnamon roll and then take your diabetic medication? Lets think about this for a minute. How many sabotaging choices do we make that send our health into a tail spin?

People often say that they can't afford to eat healthy. "It is too expensive to buy the more nutritional hot dogs, bread, salad dressing, etc." Some items are indeed more expensive but its a trade off. Plus there are shopping tips that can make it affordable.

What are you spending in pharmaceuticals that just might not be necessary if you were eating healthier? I am definitely not telling anyone to stop taking their medications. I am encouraging you to look at how you are spending your money.

The amount of people who are suffering from gut related issues is staggering. What are people putting into their guts? WE ARE WHAT WE EAT!!!! This is no joke.

Start reading labels if you don't already. If you see something with HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP put it back. Be aware of ketchup, salad dressings, mayonnaise, etc. The body has no need for fructose. But we can become addicted to this sweet additive.

Beware of Canola Oil. It is genetically modified. It works well as an industrial oil and has been used in candles, soaps, lubricants, etc. It is also found in many packaged and processed foods.

There is not enough room in this column to educate and inform about this issue. The main point is please take the time to value your health. Don't be fooled about drugs and food. Read about healthy eating, moving your body and just maybe you won't need big pharmacy to con you into believing you need them.

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# NURSE + TALK

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*What's your idea of a perfect summer day? Integris Southwest Family Care Clinic*

*My perfect day is a day at the beach. We're going to the Dominican in July with the family.*



Tiera Manowski, LPN

*Probably going out to eat at Lake Hefner.*



Carter Connell, LPN

*Each week we visit with health care professionals throughout the Metro*



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*Laying by the pool drinking a beer.*



Marilyn Blattler, PSR

*Probably going to the beach with my family at Bellows in Hawaii.*



Melissa Geraschi, BSN, CCRN

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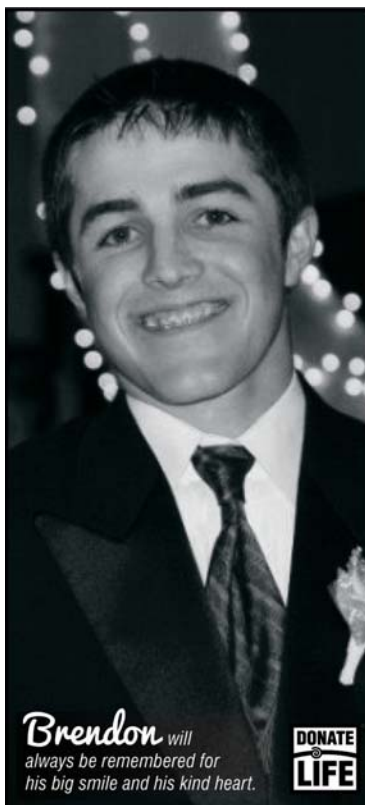
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*Brendon will always be remembered for his big smile and his kind heart.*



Kind-hearted, loyal, selfless, funny, giving and passionate are all words one could use to describe Brendon. He was your all American 16-year-old boy, starting on the Perry High School varsity baseball and football teams. Wakeboarding, water skiing and hunting were a few more of his passions.

Brendon will always be remembered for his big smile and his kind heart. He was a blessing to all of those around him during his short 16 years, and continues to be a blessing to those he gave the gift of life.

We continue to find comfort in Brendon's favorite Bible verse. "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

Organ, eye and tissue donation saves lives. Please make your decision to donate life and tell your family. Register to be an organ, eye and tissue donor on your Oklahoma driver's license or state ID card or register online at [www.LifeShareRegistry.org](http://www.LifeShareRegistry.org). You may also call 800-826-LIFE (5433) and request a donor registration card.



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