

March 16, 2015 Vol. 16 Issue 11

Information for the Oklahoma Nursing & Health Care Professional Published Weekly. Locally Owned and Operated by Metro Publishing L.L.C.



Oklahoma's

Faith is an intrinsic guality of nursing, says Sue Gibson, RN, nurse manager of Mercy Home Health, Oklahoma City and Midwest City.

#### by James Coburn Staff Writer

Sue Gibson was ready for a change in her nursing career before she found her niche with Mercy.

"Fate brought me here. This is where I was meant to be," said Gibson, RN, nurse manager of Mercy Home Health, Oklahoma City and Midwest City.

shares her values when she first interviewed at Mercy with one of the hospital's vice presidents, she said.

"He opened the interview with a prayer," Gibson said. "At that point, I knew I was home. They really focus on the patient. That's the most important thing. We've lost that a little bit in corporate America. It boils down to She discovered that Mercy money sometimes and Mercy

has made it all about the patient."

Gibson has seen how faith can reinforce a person's resilience in life, adding to its texture and quality.

Gibson was a licensed practical nurse in 1978 when she decided to go back to school to earn her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree in California. Her husband was in the military, which brought

her nursing career to many places.

"I've worked medsurg, orthopedic. In Germany I worked in the emergency room there for three years," Gibson said. "I flew with the Medevac crew and went out with the ambulance crew."

## having a good time. It's easy to see this is just one of the

teachable moments that Marbell shares. Watching from the side is a pretty teenager, Thava, listening to the music and waiting for Ladik to finish so they can play air-hockey. Marbell is one of the Therapy nurses at the Pediatric

Medical Rehab Unit at the Children's Center Rehabilitation Hospital; where goals are made and lives are changed. This is where miracles happen.

Marbell comes from a family that has multiple members in the medical field. "I have three aunts and a grandmother that are nurses, an uncle and a brother that are dentists



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Joe Marbell, LPN and Ladik check out their Karaoke skills at the Pediatric Medical Rehab Unit at the Children's Center Rehabilitation Hospital.

Walking back to the therapy unit, I meet Joe Marbell,

LPN. I am watching him interact with one of the children

that he cares for, a cheerful boy named Ladik. The two of

them are in the sound room doing Karaoke. Ladik sings as

Marbell plays the keyboard. It looks like both of them are

#### story and photo by Vickie Jenkins

See GIBSON Page 3



#### GIBSON Continued from Page 1

Gibson worked in home health in California twice, serving the farmlands and diverse metropolitan areas. She has worked in home health for 21 years in Oklahoma, where she has encountered a diversity of weather conditions.

"Even this week when you have ice, or when you're having tornadoes, they're out in this all the time," Gibson continued. "They're so committed. No matter what's going on -- no matter the environment -- it's not like working in the hospital where everything is clean and everything is a certain temperature."

"Home health is not for everyone," she said. "It's difficult sometimes. You're driving in weather, getting bit by dogs and things -- things of that nature, and you have to love what you do by having that faith and being able to pray with your patients."

Mercy Home Health pays close attention to the weather forecast, sometimes five days before turbulence arrives in Oklahoma. They begin to prepare the patients to have enough medicine and food in the house. This is to ensure the patients will be alright if an ice storm prohibits travel or delays a visit, she said.

"Some of them are on oxygen and they have to have extra oxygen bottles. We have to make sure the company that provides that -- we would contact them and make sure they can provide that."

If a patient is in a place where there is a prolonged black-out of electricity, the nurses make sure the patient can stay with a family member or go to a community center, Gibson said.

This commitment to outstanding patient care is reassuring to Mercy's home health patients. Some patients that she has gotten to know do not have anyone else in their lives but themselves and a friendly home health nurse bringing some home and cheer into their lives.

"The only person they may see that week is the home health people," Gibson said. "So you really play such an important role in their well-being and their recovery."

Mercy Home Health nurses share a common thread of faith in what they are doing, she said. Her confidence was instilled long ago when she considered a nursing career.

"I guess I don't remember not wanting to be a nurse. I grew up around my grandparents. You know care giving was just what you did," she explained.

Being a nurse is a calling and those who think of it as merely a job are in the wrong business, Gibson continued. What keeps her dedication primed in home health is a continuity of care, not a snap-shot of a patients life that comes with working in a hospital, she said.

"When they're home, they're in their own environment," Gibson noted. "And that's where the healing kind of takes place."

Home is a place where nurses can offer one-on-one care and witness a difference in a patient's recovery. Sometimes there are patients who do not get better, who can be offered palliative care and comfort measures as they transition, Gibson said. Mercy Home Health has a seamless relationship with Mercy Hospice when a terminal illness presents itself.

"It makes it an easier transition for the patient," she said.

Gibson also brings her caring

## spirit to the love of leading a full life.

"You know I'm kind of an outdoors person," she said. "I hunt. We have property in southwestern Oklahoma where I hunt with my husband and my son."

It's not the act of hunting that she enjoys. It's being on a deer stand before daylight, watching the sunrise beckoning a new day of possibilities, Gibson said.

"It's just a calm, quiet time with all the animals coming out," she said.



#### Oklahoma's Published each Monday And Locally Owned And Operated by Metro Publishing L.L.C. JOIN US www.oknursingtimes.com Phone (405) 631-5100 ON Fax (405)631-5103 Jursing Times facebook P.O BOX 239 MUSTANG, OK 73064 Editor and Publisher, Steven R. Eldridge - News@okcnursingtimes.com Advertising Director Annette Deckard - Annette.Deckard@usnursingnews.com Advertising Services Lisa Weigel - Advertising@okcnursingtimes.com Writers: James Coburn, Bobby Anderson, Vickie Jenkins Send all news, story requests, letters to the editor and press releases to news@okcnursingtimes.com Articles and advertisements in Oklahoma's Nursing Times do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the newspaper or Metro Publishing, L.L.C. We do not assume responsibility for statements made by advertisers. The acceptance of advertising by Oklahoma's Nursing Times does not constitute an endorsement of the products, services or information. We do not knowingly present any product or service, which is fraudulent or misleading in nature.

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# **CAREERS IN NURSING** FRIENDLY FACE, GOOD HEART: LPN HELPS PRESERVE QUALITY OF LIFE by James Coburn - Writer/Photographer

The smiles on the residents' faces as they walk down the hall of the Lakes Care Center keeps John Cupp in the field of nursing, he said.

Cupp was hired by the Lakes Care Center in December, he brought years of experience to the arena of long-term care and skilled nursing.

Today he serves as the staffing coordinator for the Lakes Care Center in Oklahoma City. He has been a licensed practical nurse for almost 20 years and graduated from the bygone DeMarge College in Oklahoma City, he said.

He learned about the opportunity of working at the Lakes Care Center from his sister, Karen Shelton, who works in the human resources department.

"Oh, I love working with the elderly," Cupp said. "It's a passion. You've got to have the right mentality to work with people living with dementia as well. It takes a special person."

Cupp is in charge of hiring new

Care Center. He must ensure there are enough nurses and other staff members for the three shifts of work at the Lakes Care Center.

"I try to keep everybody happy as far as the residents and staff," he said. "The residents get to know the staff as well. If something is wrong, they'll let the staff know about it."

At places where there is continuing new staff coming in, it takes a while for the residents of those places to warm up and get used to them, he said.

There are neighborhood councils. And when a staff member goes in to a room to perform routine checks, residents always have opportunities to express themselves, he said.

"The CNAs know if their head hurts or they're not feeling good," Cupp said. "Then they'll go and let the nurse know and the nurse will go in and check them out and figure out what's going on."

Whenever there is a nurse who is

employees and staffing at the Lakes sick, he will work on the floor quite said. a bit.

> "That's the only way you are going to know the residents," he said. Many of them tell them about what has been important in their lives through their many years.

> "Some of them are very special and unique on how they grew up," he said. "They didn't have anything but what they had on their back as they worked in the fields to get their food."

Cupp said he is gratified to see the nursing staff working well together as a team for the common goal of optimal patient care.

"They are dedicated," he said. "As for nurse-wise, I don't have any complaints as far as not happy. You've got to love the elderly and you've got to be dedicated to want to care for them."

Nursing is not a field to enter with the expectations of becoming rich, he said.

"You come in to help people," he

Twenty years ago, Cupp embarked on a nursing career with the inspiration of his mother, who was also a nurse. She worked as an LPN at South Community Hospital. She provided many opportunities for Cupp to learn about being a nurse during his formative years.

"So I decided to follow in her footsteps and become a nurse," he said.

He has always served in nursing homes. When he first graduated from school, Cupp worked in Wyoming for almost five years as a nurse on an Indian reservation before moving to Oklahoma.

"You are always going to need nursing. It's part of life," he said of why it's a good time for people to consider a nursing career.

"Baby boomers are getting older," he said. "There is much demand for nursing right now."

A good attitude is an essential

Continued on next page



**Tommy** was more like my brother than a cousin. We played together when we were little, went to the movies, and I even got to ride his horse, Silver. Tommy was sensitive, caring and positive. He enjoyed writing and singing his own songs, pursuing his musical dream as far as Nashville. He always performed at local events, including the Blackberry Festival in McLoud, where he lived for more than 12 years. I got a call from the hospital when Tommy passed away, and that's when I found out he had chosen to be a donor.

Since then I have also marked my Driver's License to be an organ and tissue donor. We miss Tommy and his love for family, friends and music.

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. If you don't have a license or state ID card and do not have internet access, call 800-826-LIFE (5433) and ask for a donor registration card.



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John Cupp is in charge of staffing at the Lakes Care Center in Oklahoma City. The LPN enjoys the team spirit at work.

quality for a nursing career, he said.

"If you have a good attitude, and the residents see that, then they'll have a good attitude and will be more willing to get up and get out, participate in therapy and get stronger," Cupp said.

He likes spending his time off from work with this wife and children, he said.

"We goof off, play around the house. It's family time," he said. "On Sundays I love my Nascar. And then in April I plan on going to the Texas Motor Speedway."

There's a difference between going to the races and watching it on television," said Cupp, who has been a Nascar fan for 15 years.

"You get a totally different aspect of how much power those cars have, when you're in the stands, than from the television," he said.

At the Lakes Care Center, Cupp is still trying to see who are the football fans, Nascar fans and which residents prefer something else other than sports.

#### THERAPY Continued from Page 1

and a brother that is a Physician in Guyana, West Africa. When I was young, it was pretty much determined that I would grow up to be in the medical field. I knew it," he says with a laugh. "I wasn't sure but I knew that I would end up caring for others. I've been a nurse since 1999. My first job was in private practice, taking care of a gentleman that was an actor. His sister was one of the first Zig Field Follies. It was a very interesting job at the time," he comments.

Marbell got his LPN at Moore, Norman Technology. He is currently working on his Associate from Rose State and plans on going to UCO in the fall to further his education.

Asking Marbell what three qualities make a good nurse, without hesitation he replies, "A nurse has to be loving, first and foremost. Second, a nurse has to be flexible and third, a nurse has to be focused." "What is your best quality as a nurse? " I ask. 'Oh, it's definitely being disciplined. I have to stay disciplined to myself."

Asking Marbell what his most rewarding part of his job is, he replies, "I don't have any regrets about my job and I have never dreaded coming to work. In fact, I look forward to waking up and coming to work each day. I look forward to working as a team and seeing the kids progress each and every day," he answers with a look of assurance about him. "I can honestly say that I love my job."

"How would others describe Smiles a you?" I ask. One of his co-workers, me,' co Micah, volunteers to give his opinion a great about Joe. "You couldn't ask for a happen.

better guy. Joe is a hard worker. Working with the kids, he pushes kids in a way that entertains them, pushing them towards a goal. The kids are always smilin' and laughin' around Joe. Joe is disciplined for himself and others, motivating to achieve greater things. He is really into fitness too," Micah adds. "Not only for the patients but also for the staff if they want to join in. Joe keeps us in line. The only time I don't want to see Joe is when I'm eating something I'm not supposed to," Micah says with a laugh.

"Are you into any sports?" I ask Marbell. "I'm into Martial Arts. I'm also into exercise. I am a bit into both of those. Most of all, I love spending time with my family." Asking Marbell what inspires him, he replies, "My biggest support is my family. My wife is such an encourager about everything I do here. The nursing, speech, PT, OT and dietary. I feel like I have to reach out to these children and I see things evolving more each year. I see the progress growing all the time."

"What advice would you give to someone going into the medical field?" With a sincere answer, Marbell replies, "I would tell that person to follow their heart and do their job for the right reason. Don't do it for the pay or the hours, just make sure they care about what they are doing; do it for the patients they are caring for. Follow your heart, first and foremost. Everything else is just a bonus."

Watching Joe and Micah interact with the children is quite a treat. Karaoke, air-hockey and high-fives. Smiles and laughs and 'Joe watch me,' come from Ladik. What a great place to watch miracles happen.

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# OKState Dance Marathon Raises More Than \$134K for Oklahoma's Kids

*Gift to benefit Children's Hospital Foundation and its work to improve the health of children* 

Oklahoma State University students participating in OKState Dance Marathon raised \$134,304.15 for Children's Hospital Foundation, an affiliate of Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. The event kicked off Sat., Feb. 21 at 10 a.m. and concluded at 10 p.m. Students were up on their feet dancing the entire 12-hour event to raise money to help Oklahoma's kids.

"If I had to sum up this year's OKState Dance Marathon into one word, it would definitely have to be historic. We not only had more than 1,500 people register and increased our fundraising by 79%, but we also managed to create a one-of-a-kind event that has outdone anything else at Oklahoma State University. The best part about this year was the team's dedication to the kids at every point

Oklahoma State University students<br/>cicipating in OKState Dance<br/>rathon raised \$134,304.15 for<br/>ldren's Hospital Foundation, an<br/>liate of Children's Miracle Networkof the journey. With keeping the kids<br/>as the main focus through everything,<br/>we were able to make history at OSU,"<br/>said Chris Stockton, executive director,<br/>OKState Dance Marathon.

During the opening ceremonies, students formed a long tunnel for each Miracle Kid to run through. A total of eight Miracle Families, families with children who have received care through programs supported by Children's Hospital Foundation, attended the event. Activities for the kids ranged from dancing, playing basketball and jumping on giant inflatables to making craft projects.

Attending the event for the first time was Miracle Kid Ryder, 5, from Edmond. His family describes him as

See GIFT page 11



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# OU STUDENTS GO ABOVE AND BEYOND FOR OKLAHOMA'S KIDS Soonerthon Raises Over \$561,000 to benefit Children's Hospital Foundation



Soonerthon Morale with Miracle Child Brock Hart

The 19th annual Soonerthon, presented by The University of Oklahoma Campus Activities Council and Love's Travel Stops held on Saturday, March 7, raised a record-breaking \$561,268 to benefit Children's Hospital Foundation.

"This year was record breaking for Soonerthon; the official Dance Marathon of the University of Oklahoma. Due to the combined efforts of over 2,500 students we have catapulted to the top Dance Marathon in the Big 12 and the 8th largest Dance Marathon out of over 300 colleges across the nation," said Jessica Freeman, Soonerthon chair. "We appreciate everyone who helped make this year such a success, and we cannot wait to continue striving for the kids."

While nonstop dancing kept the students entertained, interaction and activities with Miracle Children kept them inspired. For 12 straight hours, students participated in a spirit tunnel, a Miracle Kid's talent show, morale dance, children's carnival and rave to name a few.

While the participants of Soonerthon strive to set record-breaking totals, they never lose sight of the true purpose of the event, which is to stand for kids who can't. Soonerthon is able to raise awareness for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals and all the families of children who are impacted by life-threatening illnesses.

## The Many Faces of Multiple Sclerosis March is National MS Awareness Month

Multiple sclerosis is a disease of the central nervous system and is the most common neurological disorder diagnosed in young adults, but it affects men and women of all ages and all walks of life.

This disorder damages or destroys the protective covering (known as myelin) surrounding the nerves, causing reduced communication between the brain and nerve pathways. Common symptoms include visual problems, overwhelming fatigue, difficulty with balance and coordination, and various levels of impaired mobility. MS is not contagious but is often misunderstood and may lead to a disability.

The Multiple Sclerosis Association of America recognizes March as MS Awareness Month. In an effort to help raise awareness here locally, INTEGRIS is sponsoring a Faces of MS event.

The event will be Tuesday, March 24th from 9 a.m. to Noon at the James L. Henry Auditorium at INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center, 3300 NW Expressway. A physician panel of neurologists Husain, Porter, Masih and Salins; psychiatrist Murali Krishna; urogynecologist Arielle Allen; sleep disorder specialist April Merrill; and fitness expert Nancy Shidler will all speak and answer questions.

Topics will include cognitive disorders; urological and sexual issues associated with MS; how MS affects your mood and can cause depression and how mindfulness and relaxation can improve these symptoms; positive effects of exercise on fatigue caused by MS; sleep disorders and strategies for managing sleep issues with MS; and infusion therapy and possible side effects.

The event is free and open to the public. For more information or reservations, please call the INTEGRIS HealthLine at 405-951-2277.

### Oklahoma's Nursing Times Hospice Directory

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"Mary, I'm just having one more pint with the lads. If I'm not home in 20 minutes, read this message again."

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They sent me back a pack of Seeds, and suggested that I just start Over.

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If you would like to send a question to Vicki, email us at news@okcnursingtimes.com

Q. I'm confused about why I get this strange feeling when I am talking to one of my co-workers. She has created chaos at work and seems to set people up, then act like she has no idea what is going on. I think my gut is trying to tell me something. Is that possible?

**A.** The "gut feeling" you are talking about is indeed trying to tell you something. It could be saying:

she is lying, stay away from her, danger, limit your conversation with her and do not share your personal information with her.

That feeling is your intuitive voice alerting you that something is not right. It happens for a reason, a very good reason. We don't always see danger coming especially in people. They can be very good at hiding their true selves.

Most of us have had that "gut feeling" but dismissed it or did not really connect with what it was trying to tell us. It is our body alarm. When your alarm goes off around your co-worker it is definitely happening for a reason. Not everyone we work with is our friend, even though we may think it is a friendship. So you have this intuitive part of yourself to help you out.

It does not go off unless something is wrong. Notice the next time it goes off. Take an inventory of what is going on. What is happening at the time you feel it? What is your co-worker doing or saying? Since it is a warning system, something is not right.

This gut feeling scenario plays out in many different ways. Linda got this gut feeling when she "all of a sudden" needed to check her husbands cell phone records. Mark "all of a sudden" needed to check the balance in the checking account. Donna "all of a sudden" received a phone call from a woman she did not know. All of these people received information that was upsetting and damaging to their relationships. They all had a "feeling" something needed to be checked out.

It is possible that we get this feeling and purposely ignore it. We may need to make a plan about what to do or we may not know what to do. In the work place it is not always easy to remove yourself from someone who is toxic but you can avoid sharing too much about yourself and try to limit some of your interaction.

The good news; this alert is designed to warn us of impending danger, pay attention.

# OMRF scientist develops new method for diagnosing bladder pain syndrome



Rheal Towner, Ph.D.

An Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist has made groundbreaking strides in research using models developed by his colleagues at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center that could ultimately lead to a reliable diagnostic method for a painful bladder disease.

In a paper published by the Journal of Urology, lead author and OMRF scientist Rheal Towner, Ph.D., reveals an innovative method to diagnose bladder leakage, which is a major symptom for patients with interstitial cystitis, also known as "bladder pain syndrome."

Towner said doctors normally look for about 20 different clinical signs that point to the presence of the condition. But, as of now, there is no reliable method for diagnosing interstitial cystitis. It is often misdiagnosed as a urinary tract infection.

Towner and his colleagues are out to change that by taking a new approach to an old method of testing.

Towner took a chemical agent that is currently being used to enhance contrast in an MRI image and injected it directly into the bladders of rodents, rather than

administering the contrast agent intravenously, which is the standard method.

"After injecting it directly into the bladder through a catheter, we look for any leakage of that contrast agent," said Towner. "If the bladder wall is permeable, then that contrast agent will leak out into the peritoneal cavity, and that helps identify a key symptom of the disease."

Following positive results in laboratory experiments, clinical trials were launched in human patients under the direction of Robert Hurst, Ph.D., at OU's Stephenson Cancer Center.

The research, which has been underway for two years, was done in collaboration with OUHSC's Hurst and Amy Wisniewski, Ph.D., of the Department of Urology; Abbas Shobeiri, M.D., Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology; and Beverley Greenwood-Van Meerveld, Ph.D., director of the Oklahoma Center for Neuroscience.

Bladder pain syndrome affects an estimated 4 million people in the U.S. and is primarily found in women. It can seriously impact quality of life; in addition to chronic pain, the disease can force some people to urinate as often as 60 times per day. The condition can take months or even years to diagnose.

"When children are born with non-functioning bladders or people lose their bladder due to cancer, it has a major impact on their quality of life," said Towner.

The research scientists are also working on additional projects using the new technique with OUHSC researchers Bradley Kropp, M.D., and H.K. Lin, Ph.D., who are studying bladder regeneration.

"Disease-relevant research takes time and hard work, and fresh ideas like this can open doors to a wide range of possible discoveries that have us excited for the future," said OMRF Vice President of Research Paul Kincade, Ph.D. "We are enthusiastic about these findings and the impact they could have for treatment."



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#### ER **Continued from Page 8**

"a huge OSU fan." Although Ryder has Spina Bifida, nothing slows him down. Throughout the event, Ryder played basketball, interacted with students, blew bubbles and more. Ryder's parents, Brian and Christy, shared his story with the crowd. They encouraged everyone to stay on their feet and keep dancing. The National Dance Marathon motto is to "stand for kids who can't" and that is exactly what the students did for Ryder.

"We are grateful for the tremendous passion and energy these OSU students displayed," stated Kathy McCracken, executive director, Children's Hospital Foundation. "To see such a commitment and such a genuine spirit of philanthropy was truly inspiring."

This was Oklahoma State University's fourth Dance Marathon event. Students helped to raise the money throughout the year by hosting silent auctions, benefit nights, two-stepping events, letter writing campaigns and online fundraising.

Sponsors for the 2015 Dance Marathon included: Integrity Audiology and Hearing Center, Aspen Heights, OSU Student Alumni Association,



Miracle Kid Ryder puts his "guns up" with some of the OSU cheerleaders.

Keystone Food Service, Dough Pokes, Oklahoma State University Resident's Hall Association, Stillwater Flats, Renaissance Schools, Whataburger, Edward Jones- Matt Hull, Sudden Link, Oklahoma State University Fraternity & Sorority Affairs, WW Builders Inc., The Odyssey, Oklahoma State University Campus Recreation & Wellness, Madison Miles Media and Oklahoma State University Student Government Association.

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