



Home Care Serving All of Western Oklahoma Shepherd Home Health & Hospice LLC

Darlene Cardwell, RN is the Home Health Aide and Certified Med/Aide/Activity Coordinator at Shepherd Home Health & Hospice LLC, located in Clinton, OK.

by Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

For over a decade, Shepherd Home Health & Hospice has provided quality care to residents all over Western Oklahoma. We are a locally owned, small-town home health and hospice agency with the mission of providing the highest level of quality, attention to detail, and comfort levels for our patients.

Shepherd Home Health & Hospice starts by giving you, your loved one, or your patients a

customized care plan to ensure that the best suited services and care are received, even if they change. Our clients know they can trust Shepherd Home Health & Hospice because our entire team is carefully screened and thoroughly trained to provide compassionate, reliable care, whenever needed, where ever needed, even in the comfort of your own home. -Health and Hospice, LLC-

See CARDELL Page 2

OMRF receives \$3.7 million for autoimmune disease research



OMRF scientist Christopher Lessard, Ph.D.

The National Institutes of Health has awarded the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation \$3.7 million to continue research on Sjogren's syndrome, an autoimmune disease.

OMRF scientist Christopher Lessard, Ph.D., received a five-year grant to identify genes associated with the disease. The work will aid in the development of strategies to diagnose and treat the condition.

In Sjogren's, immune cells attack moisture-producing glands, causing painful dry eyes and mouth. It can result in irreversible tissue damage and complications like neurological problems, lung

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MARTINEZ

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One outstanding individual that you find at Shepherd Home Health & Hospice is Darlene Cardwell, RN who serves as the Home Health Aide and Certified Med Aide/Activities Coordinator. Darlene has been a nurse for twenty-nine years and has been with Shepherd Home Health for eight years. "I love working here," Darlene said.

Growing up in Arapaho, Oklahoma, a small town in Custer County, at a young age, Darlene knew that she wanted to be a nurse. "When I was growing up, I wanted to be a nurse and a mother. Looks like I got what I wanted," she said with a smile. "I have always had a strong passion for caring for those in need, especially the older generation. I guess you could say that I was influenced to be a nurse by my grandma, Ruby King. I really enjoy working in home health and being able to assist the patients, allowing them to

stay in the comfort of their own home," Darlene commented.

The biggest reward that Darlene gets from nursing is the relationships that result in the care that she has provided, whether it is directly with the resident or the family.

"I attended nursing school at Western Technology Center in Burns Flat, OK; a small town in Washita County," Darlene said. "My very first job in the medical field was working at Prairie View Nursing Home in Clinton, OK. I have worked in several places in several different towns but I have to admit, I feel very comfortable being here."

Darlene's typical day begins early. "Most of my patients like to start their day early and I always try to accommodate the patient. This way, they get going in the morning! Once I am through seeing patients, I help out at the office if they need anything or I will help other nurses with their patients if they need me to or if they need me to go see one of their patients,"

Darlene said. "Before COVID-19 happened, I would travel to surrounding nursing homes and provide activities and treats to the residents. If I am not working in the office, I usually see thirty to thirty-five patients a week."

When I asked Darlene to describe herself, she replied, "I am a mother of three girls and a grandma to a host of eight awesome grandchildren. When I am not working, I enjoy following my grandchildren's school activities and sports. I enjoy all of the little things life has to offer. I love spending time with my family, going to the grandchildren's sporting events, shopping and watching OU football. Working in the medical field makes me realize how important it is to live life to the fullest and how precious life really is."

What advice would you give to someone going into the medical

field? "It takes someone that has a caring and compassionate heart. Nursing is such a rewarding job but it also has its ups and downs. A nurse needs to make quick decisions and keep their composure," Darlene said.

How has the Coronavirus changed your life? "It is very challenging but even though we wear PPE and take every precaution, along with social distancing, washing our hands constantly, I am still willing to do my part in the community," Darlene commented. "As far as my home life goes, I keep in touch with my loved ones. Family is the most important part of my life and it is nice to be able to lean on each other during hard times and we keep each other's spirits high."

Asking Darlene to sum up her life in three words," she replied, "Blessed, happy and healthy."



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LIFESHARE WINTERFEST AND SNOW TUBING CANCELED

The 2020 edition of LifeShare WinterFest at Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark has been canceled due to the continually shifting climate surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.

"While we are confident in our ability to host a safe and exciting event, there is significant cost involved with preparing the ballpark for LifeShare WinterFest. The uncertainty in the current climate forced us to reconsider holding the event at Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark this year," OKC Dodgers President/General Manager Michael Byrnes said. "Upon speaking with partners, valued customers, and stakeholders in the event, we made the difficult decision to cancel 2020 LifeShare WinterFest."

"We look forward to bringing back this popular community event in 2021," Byrnes said.

The LifeShare WinterFest event had a popular and successful year in 2019, with the most attendees



per session on record. The event features different sized snow slides for all ages, and the ballpark is transformed into a winter wonderland with special holiday lighting and décor.

Although 2020 LifeShare WinterFest is canceled, Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark remains open for events. For more information, please call the OKC Dodgers at (405) 218-1000 or visit okcdodgers.com.

SYNDROME

Continued from Page 1

disease, and cancer. There is no known cure for the condition, which disproportionately affects women and is estimated by the American College of Rheumatology to affect as many as 3.1 million people in the U.S.

"Current treatments for Sjögren's only address its symptoms, and just diagnosing the disease is notoriously difficult," said Lessard, who's been studying Sjögren's at OMRF since 2007. "It shares features with many autoimmune diseases. This can lead to misdiagnosis, which ultimately makes studying the disease challenging."

The grant will allow the researchers to collect and analyze more than 10,000 DNA samples donated by Sjögren's patients from around the world. The samples are available thanks to the OMRF-led Sjögren's Genetics Network, or SGENE, an international network of 26 research groups dedicated to identifying the genes associated with the disease. "Thanks to these international efforts, we've pinpointed 20 genes associated with Sjögren's in recent years. But we suspect there are many more. In contrast,

scientists have identified more than 150 genes associated with lupus, which is another related autoimmune disease," Lessard said.

At OMRF, researchers will use biopsy tissue samples to determine how genetic variations in Sjögren's might change the regulation of genes associated with the disease.

Lessard hopes to separate patients into sub-groups based on individual characteristics of their disease, develop better clinical tools to diagnose patients earlier, identify patients at high risk for cancer and other serious complications, and identify existing medicines to treat the condition by associating the disease to genes involved with other conditions.

"This ambitious work will result in the largest genetic study of Sjögren's to date," said Patrick Gaffney, M.D., head of OMRF's Genes and Human Disease Research Program. "By combining analyses of genetic factors, we should have a much clearer view of the underlying causes of this puzzling disease."

The work is funded by grant number R01AR073855 from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, a part of the NIH.



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SERVING OKLAHOMA & SE KANSAS



Integris CREW cleans up

story and photo by Bobby Anderson, RN, Staff Writer

Trixie Davis, BSN, RN works in advanced endoscopy in the Integris Health System.

But you might also see her working at the zoo, painting houses for needy Oklahoma City residents, working a volunteer medical clinic or tidying up at a local elementary school.

That's because Davis is a member of the Integris CREW, the health system's employee volunteer corps.

Its mission is to improve the health of the people and communities the organization services through compassionate community outreach.

The CREW will provide an improved vehicle to tap into the vast employee resources needed for INTEGRIS Health's participation in community events and projects.

The ICrew is the next iteration of what used to be the Baptist Brigade, which was a popular volunteer group inside the health system many years ago.

"I'm a firm believer in being a volunteer and helping the community

out so I tried it a couple years ago and really liked it," Davis said. "I found it very satisfying."

That first outing for Davis was at the Oklahoma City Zoo. That day Integris volunteers helped prepare a zoo exhibit for new animals coming to OKC.

There was something about being around other Integris employees and uniting for a common cause outside of the hospital walls that really stuck with her.

Any Integris employee can become a member of the CREW. In fact, the hope is to have a huge response from staff members who have an interest in serving others in the community.

All that's asked for is a commitment to the mission, and participation in at least one community project each year.

Employees will have the opportunity to volunteer their time working on Integris community outreach/wellness programs, community development and

enhancement projects (OKC City Rescue Mission, United Way Day of Caring, Regional Food Bank, etc.) and other activities deemed appropriate in all Integris Health communities.

Last year, Independent Sector - a national organization focused on nonprofits and corporate giving programs, released its annual estimate of the value of volunteers.

Independent Sector announced that the latest value of a volunteer hour is \$25.43 - up 3% from the previous year. That figure, estimated from data collected in 2018, shows the incredible contributions volunteers make to their communities and our country.

Currently, about 63 million Americans volunteer about 8 billion hours of their time, talent, and effort to improve and strengthen



their communities.
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See CREW Page 5



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Integris CREW members recently helped clean up the grounds at Stanley Hupfeld Elementary during a volunteer session. Photos provided.

CREW

Continued from Page 4

Time, these Americans are contributing approximately \$203.4 billion to our nation through nonprofit organizations of all types.

"Volunteerism has been a driving force in the strength and power of our civil society since this country's

founding," said Dan Cardinali, president and CEO of Independent Sector. "We know that giving of our time, talent, and effort transforms organizations, communities, and our nation, and also has profound effects on the individuals giving their time. The Value of Volunteer Time gives us just one concrete measure to illustrate the power of individuals to

transform communities."

Davis is celebrating her 18th month with Integris this month. She loves her job and she loves giving back. Put the two together and it's a win-win scenario.

"I have a sense of community," Davis said. "I've been very blessed in the ability to be a nurse and I feel it's very important to reach out to those that need your help. That all stems from my childhood. People helped me when I was in need."

"As Americans, we are remarkable," said Greg Baldwin, CEO of VolunteerMatch. "In 2018, our generosity was greater than the profits of Facebook, Apple, Amazon and Google combined. The freedom to voluntarily associate with the people, groups, and causes we care about is what makes democracy possible, but exercising that freedom is what makes democracies great."

Davis served in the Army National Guard and retired from the reserves 10 years ago after a 25-year career.

The reserves helped get her



through nursing school. She feels compelled to give back.

She did just that when she was activated for medevac duties on May 3, 1999 after the highest wind speeds on record carved a path of destruction through Bridge Creek and Moore.

She met Gov. and Mrs. Keating as they toured the devastation.

"I get a sense of satisfaction in knowing I am helping my community and representing Integris in helping the community," she said. "I have a strong belief we need to be involved in our community and help those in need."

"Love, learn and lead. You really truly can't be a leader if you're not doing what the motto says."

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We Are Seeking Licensed Practical Nurses!

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Small but Mighty Volunteer Team Continues Helping Seniors During COVID

Shirley McKinney, a long-time volunteer at the Harrah Senior Citizens Center, answers phone calls while the kitchen full of fellow RSVP of Central Oklahoma volunteers moves in a swift, almost rhythmic, motion.

Since the pandemic, the Center's five volunteers, all seniors themselves, and four staff members have not skipped a beat. When COVID-19 hit, the Center closed for gatherings, but the small but mighty team shifted into high gear, meeting a big need in their community for seniors now stuck at home—meals.

"We went from serving 60 meals a day before COVID to

preparing 100 meals a day for delivery and drive-by pickup," said Harrah Senior Citizens Center Director Kim Reynolds. "And our volunteers have showed up every day."

In August, the Center served more than 3,200 meals. The ability to meet this continuing need is possible only with the help of the volunteers, staff, and the financial support of the Oklahoma County Nutrition Program, the City of Harrah and Areawide Aging Agency, said Reynolds.

Prior to COVID-19, seniors came to the center five days a week

See MIGHTY page 13



Harrah Senior Citizens Center volunteers and employees did not stop when the pandemic hit. Each day, they prepare 100 meals for pickup and delivery for seniors. Pictured here, l to r, are Shirley McKinney, Kim Reynolds, Caroline Rutledge, and Carol Sowle.

11TH ANNUAL

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Innovation continues at Northwestern

When Shelly Wells PhD, MBA, APRN-CNS, ANEF began developing Northwestern Oklahoma State University's DNP program, she would talk extensively about it with her BSN students.

The division chair and professor would be bringing something new to the school and the surrounding communities.

And for student Christina Erford, BSN, RN, NPD-BC, she wanted to be part of that first class.

Already sold on the program, she carried out her due diligence.

"When I started looking into programs and comparing it you couldn't beat the cost point for a doctorate and you can't beat the staff," Erford said. "The faculty is amazing."

Her ninth and final semester will end this spring. Outside of 192 clinical hours per semester, Erford will have completed the majority of the program online.

She also completed a week-long session in the summer where students check in on a Sunday and spend the week in immersive learning until Friday

afternoon.

When Erford graduates this May she wants to find either a clinic or urgent care to begin her career.

A Nightingale Award of Nursing Excellence recipient from the Oklahoma Nurses Association, Wells takes pride in her low faculty-to-student ratio and the relationships her faculty has forged at healthcare facilities across northwestern Oklahoma. Allowing students to learn in their communities creates a natural draw for students. The NWOSU Charles Morton Share Trust Nursing program is among the top in the state in national RN licensing examination (NCLEX) pass rates.

This year will mark the inaugural graduating class for the BSN-DNP program.

"They're all educated as family nurse practitioners with an emphasis on the

needs of a rural healthcare community," Wells said. "It will be a fairly good sized class - more than we ever anticipated when we first put this together."

Planning for the program incorporated a focus on creating health care for surrounding communities.

"Our focus was to increase primary care access to rural Oklahoma because rural Oklahoma is in such dire straits when it comes to health care providers," Wells said.

There's little doubt the Alva university is educating nurses to provide healthcare to rural Oklahomans for generations to come.

"They are going to be prepared to walk into a primary care clinic or office and care for patients across the life span," Wells said. "They will have leadership skills that excel many peers - I've been told that by preceptors."

With more than 30 years of teaching experience in nursing, Wells has closely followed the national trend calling for more BSN-prepared nurses.

The attraction of Northwestern has

always been a quality, affordable program with the flexibility of offerings.

The RN to BSN completion program is offered online with no campus requirement. With no traditional clinical hours the program can be completed in 12 months.

"It works well for the working nurse," Wells said.

The traditional BSN program is delivered at four different sites in Northwestern Oklahoma with full-time faculty at each site.

Small class sizes and a low faculty-to-student ratio is also a draw. Eighty percent of faculty are doctorally-prepared, a rarity in a rural state.

"We're a busy, dynamic little place up in northwestern Oklahoma," Wells laughed.

For the next step, Wells is helping Northwestern work towards an acute care practitioner certificate.

"That will help round out the health care provider needs for rural Oklahoma," she said. Visit www.nwosu.edu/school-of-professional-studies/nursing



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NURSE TALK



*What is your
favorite
Halloween
candy?*



The Fountains at
Canterbury
The Springs-different
area of facility

*My favorite candy is candy
corn!*



Patricia Cotner, RN,
MS, ADON

*I like to mix candy corn and
peanuts together for a sweet
and salty taste!*



Christina Weeston,
RN, charge nurse

My favorite is candy corn!



Ijeoma Ezeokeke, RN,
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MIGHTY
Continued from Page 8

for exercise classes, card games, snacks, conversation, and lunch. The Center also offers medical appointment and shopping services, which had to be put on hold

we would have lost some of our seniors.”
Shirley McKinney has volunteered with the Center for 25 years. In fact, she says, she started volunteering before she was even a senior herself. She has done a little bit of everything over the years



Pictured here are Harrah Senior Citizens Center volunteers, l to r, are Chuck Brimer, Rosemary Vermillion, Dana Burgin.

for a few weeks. Volunteers make phone calls to check in with the homebound seniors. Some of the programs have recently opened back up—medical appointments and shopping trips, and patio bingo just started. Reynolds hopes that the Center will be completely reopened by early November.
“It is a very important social connection for our seniors,” said Reynolds. “If we weren’t here during this time, I’m concerned

from serving on the board and filling out daily Nutrition Program reports to preparing meals, selling dinner and auction tickets.
“Being here for me and for a lot of the seniors is like having another family,” she said. “It helps people to have a place to go to and get out among people. That’s why it’s been so important to stay connected with our seniors during COVID. The Center helps people to not be so lonely.”

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SITUATION UPDATE:

- As of this advisory, there are 118,409 cases of COVID-19 in Oklahoma.
- There are twenty-two additional deaths identified to report. No deaths were identified in the past 24 hours.
 - * Two in Bryan County, one male in the 65 or older age group and one female in the 65 or older age group.
 - * Seven in Cleveland County, seven males in the 65 or older age group.
 - * Two in Custer County, two females in the 65 or older age group.
 - * One in Delaware County, one male in the 65 or older age group.
 - * One in Garfield County, one male in the 65 or older age group.
 - * One in Lincoln County, one male in the 50-64 age group.
 - * Three from Oklahoma County, two females in the 65 or older age group and one male in the 65 or older age group.
 - * One in Okmulgee County, one female in the 65 or older age group.
 - * One in Pushmataha County, one male in the 65 or older age group.
 - * One in Rogers County, one female in the 65 or older age group.
 - * One in Tulsa County, one male in the 65 or older age group.
 - * One in Wagoner County, one female in the 65 or older age group.
- There are 1,273 total deaths in the state.
- For more information, visit coronavirus.health.ok.gov.

COVID-19 Oklahoma Test Results

Cases	118,409
*Total Cumulative Negative Specimens to Date	1,446,067
*Total Cumulative Number of Specimens to Date	1,578,912
**Currently Hospitalized	907
Total Cumulative Hospitalizations	8,540
Identified Deaths in the Past 24 hours	0
Total Cumulative Deaths	1,273

***The total includes laboratory information provided to OSDH at the time of the report. Total counts may not reflect unique individuals.**

****This number is a combination of hospitalized positive cases and hospitalized persons under investigation, as reported by hospitals at the time of the report. The data reflect a change in calculation and should not be compared to prior data.**

*****The purpose of publishing aggregated statistical COVID-19 data through the OSDH Dashboard, the Executive Order Report, and the Weekly Epidemiology and Surveillance Report is to support the needs of the general public in receiving important and necessary information regarding the state of the health and safety of the citizens of Oklahoma. These resources may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be used in any way that would determine the identity of any reported cases.**

Data Source: Acute Disease Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health. *As of 2020-10-27 at 7:00 a.m.



PREPARE TO BE SURPRISED.

Meet the Maddox family. Their thirteen-year-old daughter, SaNiyah, has cerebral palsy and is confined to a wheelchair. SaNiyah's entire life – her happiness, her health, her every need – all depends on her family and help from the team at Special Care. But they also have two adorable young sons, demanding jobs and – on top of everything else – they foster an infant who needed a home, too. It's more than most of us could handle.

But here's the big surprise. The Maddoxes not only receive help from United Way agencies, they find room in a budget stretched to its limit and they give to the United Way. **Can you?**

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