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December 13, 2021 Vol. 22 Issue 50

St. Ann's shines with Christmas spirit ADON gives his best



Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City has been named a Best Hospital for Maternity by U.S. News & World Report for its dedication to providing high quality, safe delivery experiences for mothers and babies. Mercy is the only hospital in Oklahoma City to receive this recognition. This is the second independent organization this year to name Mercy Oklahoma City a "best maternity hospital."

Mercy Oklahoma City is one of the 237 hospitals on the U.S. News & World Report inaugural ranking of Best Hospitals for Maternity. That places Mercy among the top 10% of more than 2,700 hospitals across the country that offer maternity services.

Earlier this year, Newsweek and The Leapfrog Group, an independent watchdog group, together named Mercy in Oklahoma City to its list of Best Maternity Hospitals for 2021.

"Our Mercy Birthplace team is laser focused on best practices and the needs of our patients, and this recognition as a best maternity hospital

Michael Matthews, LPN, ADON, brings a smile to his daily routine of greeting the residents at St. by James Coburn - staff writer

Michael Matthews, LPN, communicates with his eyes and smile when talking about St. Ann's Skilled Nursing and Therapy located in Oklahoma City. It comes naturally with a friendly heart. Matthews serves as St. Ann's assistant director of nursing.

"It's the family environment. I feel like I'm at home with my parents, and when I'm working with my coworkers, I feel like they're

MATHEWS Continued from Page 1

my brothers and sisters," Matthews said.

He knows to treat the residents as if they are his parents. Doing things right for people he loves motivates him to be a leader with new employees and the residents.

"I'll see if I can inspire them to be the same," he said.

The nursing staff works as a team to make sure everything runs properly, he said, by picking up slack when their coworkers are in need. Nurses and their aides rise to the occasion. Newly hired staff trained during the pandemic entered the heat I had never seen someone treat of COVID without missing a beat, he said.

"They helped the people in need. That was one of my biggest inspirations," Matthews said.

He recalled thinking that an elderly resident was going to pass away leading up to being transferred to a hospital. But the woman was stubborn. She was on a ventilator and the hospital staff thought she would die.

"She got there with COVID, but she came back. To this day, this lady still gives me a hard time every time I go into her room," he chuckled. "She still has spunk after going through all that. She's an invalid you have to do everything for her but she still stays present because she loves life."

His own journey to become a nurse sparked in 2009 when his mother was terminally ill. At the time, Matthews supervised a phlebotomy center He wanted to improve the plight of other patients. He was visiting his mother at the hospital when a nurse entered the room.

"The nurse was totally rude like a patient the way he treated my mom," Matthews said. "I told my mom that day I was going to be a nurse. I would show them how to be compassionate toward somebody's loved one."

Matthews graduated from Metro Technology Center in OKC to become an LPN in 2013 after a brief career of being a 3rd and 5th grade teacher. He decided to go to nursing school when working part-time in a doctor's office. He's been with St. Ann's for Ann's. He recently did a gig for nearly two years.

He helps to hire and train the staff, does quality control. Matthews makes a point to greet all the residents when he enters the building and takes people on tours.

"In nursing if you don't have compassion, it's not where you're supposed to be," he said. "If you love people and you love taking care of people, and you feel like you have a calling, then this is where you're supposed to be."

Some people get into nursing for the wrong reasons. It's not about a paycheck. Nursing is about serving others.

"They think you're going to make all this money. Money isn't everything. And in some nursing jobs you don't get paid a lot of money to be a nurse. You know, you must love the job. If you don't love the job, those are the ones you see burn out."

He gets to know each of the residents and they in-turn learn more about him. Matthews works as a DJ at the Starlight Lounge or weddings when he is not on the job at St.

Amazon on Black Friday at their local headquarters.

"I was out there in the cold DJing at the place while people went into the building," he said.

He also has a son in graduate school at Oklahoma State University where his major is in psychology.

Matthews prepares himself for his transition back to work by getting ready for the daily staff meetings at St. Ann's. They discuss daily events in the facility and focusing on patient centered care. They focus on staffing by making sure enough nursing staff is present in the building.

"If not, a management team member like one of us will step in to take that place. No one is above the team, even the administrator. Our administrator passed the CNA test, so she works on the floor. She keeps us relevant. Everybody on our team works on the floor. We have fun around here. I just love the patients and they love me."

For more information about St. Ann's Skilled Nursing and Therapy call (405) 728-7888 or visit: https://stannsok.com/



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MERCY Continued from Page 1

reflects their dedication," said Dr. Chad Smith, Mercy OB-GYN and chief medical officer. "Our care team provides compassionate care and a special experience for patients welcoming babies into the world which has led to exponential growth in the number of moms choosing to deliver at Mercy."

The hospital's labor and delivery and postpartum services have been at capacity for years, limiting Mercy's ability to serve more patients. Work is underway on the new Love Family Women's Center on the campus of Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City. The 175,000-square-foot, four-story facility, expected to open in fall 2023, will serve women and children. When construction is complete, the facility will have a total of 73 patient rooms, increasing the capacity for deliveries by 40%.

The Best Hospitals for

Maternity evaluation examines hospital data relating to uncomplicated pregnancies (non high-risk pregnancies) and five different factors: scheduled early deliveries, C-section rates in low-risk women, newborn complications, rate of exclusive breast milk feeding and the option for vaginal births after a cesarean.

"All families deserve to be hospitals informed on how perform on key indicators of quality, which is why U.S. News has compiled and published a trove of maternal health data from hospitals across the country," said Ben Harder, managing editor and chief of health analysis at U.S. News & World Report. "Hospitals that performed well had fewer newborn complications, fewer early deliveries and fewer C-sections compared to other hospitals across the nation."

ient Mercy Hospital Jefferson in for Missouri was the only other Mercy hospital named to the Best for Hospitals for Maternity list.

INTEGRIS Health Holds Food Drive Benefiting the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma

The holiday season is a time to count your blessings, but we are painfully aware that many Oklahomans are struggling to provide the basic necessities for their families. For this reason, INTEGRIS Health has teamed up with the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma to hold a food drive just in time for Christmas.

The event will run from Wednesday, Dec. 1 through Friday, Dec. 17 and is targeted towards INTEGRIS Health caregivers, though it is open to the public as well.

There will be six metro drop-off locations: INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center N.W. Expressway INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center Portland Ave. INTEGRIS Canadian Valley Hospital INTEGRIS Cancer Institute INTEGRIS Health Edmond INTEGRIS Southwest Medical Center List of Most Needed Items: Tuna, Beans, Brown Rice, Canned Fruits & Vegetables, Salmon , Soup, Pasta, NO Homemade or Glass Items, Chicken, Sauces and Peanut Butter.

Or if you would prefer, monetary donations are always welcome. Four meals are donated for every \$1 contributed. Go to: https:// feedok.regionalfoodbank.org/c/integris-health-2021-food-drive or call 405-972-1111 to learn more.

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LTC Industry Urges Americans to Get Vaccinated, Boosted to Protect Seniors During Holiday Season, Against Omicron

With the holiday season well underway and the new Omicron variant emerging across the United States, it is critical that members of public do their part to minimize the spread of COVID-19 to protect themselves and our nation's most vulnerable citizens – long term care residents.

The latest data released yesterday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows the progress nursing homes are making with vaccination efforts, including administering booster shots to residents and staff. As of December 5, 87 percent of residents and 79 percent of staff are fully vaccinated. Of those fully vaccinated, 51 percent of residents and 22 percent have staff have received their booster shot or an additional primary dose.

Booster clinics are well underway

in long term care facilities, as boosters for all three vaccines were approved in late October. Nursing homes and many assisted living communities are coordinating these clinics with their partnering long term care pharmacy, educating residents and staff about the importance of the booster, gathering consent forms, organizing staff schedules, and more to ensure these clinics are successful. Similar to the two-month timeline required to conduct 15,000 on-site clinics last year when the vaccines were first approved, industry leaders anticipate it may take until the end of December to see the majority of nursing homes complete an on-site booster clinic. However, ongoing access to the vaccines will be necessary for new patients and initially hesitant individuals.

High vaccination rates in long term care are key in protecting residents and staff from the ongoing global pandemic. However, vaccinations in long term care alone cannot fully prevent outbreaks in these congregate facilities. Independent research from experts has consistently shown that community spread is the top indicator for outbreaks in nursing homes, including



among staff members. Breakthrough infections may become more common as new, more contagious variants like Omicron circulate in surrounding communities, eventually finding their way into long term care facilities. The federal government does not allow nursing homes to require that visitors be vaccinated to enter the property. Therefore, the See OMICRON Page 5



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OMICRON Continued from Page 4

industry is encouraging all Americans to help curb the spread of the virus and minimize possible outbreaks in long term care.

"We need members of the public to protect their elderly or immunocompromised parents, grandparents, and friends this holiday season," said Dr. David Gifford, chief medical officer for the American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/ NCAL). "If you haven't gotten vaccinated or your booster shot yet, now is the time to roll up your sleeve. These safe and effective vaccines are all the more important in the face of Omicron and as we head indoors to gather with family and friends. Even if you're not worried about getting sick from COVID, you can still pass the virus onto others, including someone who lives or works in a nursing home. Get vaccinated and follow the advice of your local health officials to prevent the spread of COVID. The holiday season is about spending time with the ones you love-let's do it safely."

Registration Underway for Faith Community Nurses' Conference

Registration is Underway for 15th Annual Faith Community Nurses' Conference, titled "Growing Our Faith Community Nursing Ministry." This online and in person conference, to be held March 2-3, 2022, will provide spiritual practices needed to guide nurses and health ministers in revitalizing or beginning their faith community nursing ministry. A resource fair will be held Thursday evening to assist the faith community nurse in exploring available resources for the faith community. Friday's conference will include practical ideas and resources to rekindle the ministry, passion and priorities of the faith community nursing ministry.

Registration information and brochure available at http://www.fcnaok.org/. Registration is available only online at https://forms.gle/ z3heauE9UpWzu8AM9. FCNA OK is approved as a provider of continuing nursing education by the Kansas State Board of Nursing. This course is approved for 6 contact hours applicable for



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At Oklahoma Children's you can also expect to gain a host of specialized skills in any one of our three focused areas. These areas include a 96-bed NICU where we care for extremely premature infants with high frequency ventilation and surfactant delivery. We have a recently renovated 34-bed PICU where the focus is to treat acutely ill infants and children. We have also expanded our CVICU to 25- beds where the focus is caring for patients with congenital heart defects. We encourage our RTs to join the ECMO team as well.

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At OU Health you can expect to gain a host of specialized skills by rotating through our service line critical care areas, which include Trauma, ortho/surgical, cardiovascular, Neurosciences, transplant and medicine ICU's. We encourage and support our RTs to perform in specialty roles such as the COPD navigator, Daily assessor, Smoking cessation advocate, Diagnostic Bronchoscopy and we have staff that are part of the ECMO specialist team as well.

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December 13, 2021



What do you admire about the nursing staff you work with?



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Our black belt angel. No amount of words can describe the love that Austin gave to our lives. Shortly before he died, we were discussing a friend's little girl that was on the heart transplant list. I asked Austin and his 16-year-old brother if they wanted to be donors. Austin's response was, "I won't be needing them any more, so sure!" That conversation gave us the courage to honor his wishes a few months later. Working out with friends, he collasped with a heart condition we never knew he had. At 12 years old he left this world too soon, but showed us how to live every day to the fullest. After 4 years in karate he had just received his red belt, and after his death his instructor honored him with his black belt. We are so grateful to be able to call him our son. He will always be our "black belt Love, Dad, Mom and Dillon angel."

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OU leading nursing renaissance

As Covid-19 threatened nursing education in 2020, the collective minds at the University of Oklahoma Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing decided to use the historic event as a learning tool.

From collecting Covid-19 swabs to administering vaccinations, OU's College of Nursing found a way for students to not only learn but be a part of the solution throughout the pandemic.

"Ever since last fall I've been talking about the clinical renaissance we can be a part of in nursing," said Senior Associate Dean Melissa Craft, PhD, APRN-CNS, AOCN, FAAN. "After the last great plague in the Middle Ages, there was a renaissance. My point all along has been how best to positively use this experience for the betterment of patients and for us as nurses."

The focus has not only been on students simply emerging from the pandemic but flourishing, armed with experience and a new set of skills.

From a nursing education standpoint, the pandemic has taught a

number of lessons.

"Going back to Florence Nightingale, formalized nursing was birthed because of a war and nurses' responses in stepping into that situation," said Craft. "Florence Nightingale was a scientist, she was an advocate for social justice, a leader in healthcare management, and at the core, she was dedicated to individual flourishing.

"To me (what the pandemic) has taught us as a college is what we do as nurses is infinitely needed. What the pandemic has taught everyone is the knowledge and skill of nursing as scientists, as advocates, as leaders in healthcare management, and at their core, dedicated to human flourishing is incredibly essential in our society."

The pandemic not only validated to Craft that what is currently being done to prepare nurses for their profession needs to continue, but it also allowed introspection and an opportunity to revisit if the profession is doing everything it can as a science and advocate for social justice.

The pandemic also served to further highlight the underlying disparities in



(405) 936-3324



community vaccination clinic.

our healthcare system.

"As nurses, as nursing students, and as a college we can't be blind to that," Craft said. "We really have to look at it as an opportunity. Again it's the renaissance which was all about going back into learning, wisdom, discovery and exploration."

As in-person nursing education ground to a halt around the country, the OU College of Nursing sought out opportunities to engage students and help them learn during these unprecedented times.

One of those opportunities came out of the Swab Pods, where students staffed Covid-19 testing stations in Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

The students loved it, especially in a time where they were taken out of face-to-face classroom and the clinical learning settings.

"The core of what nurses do is they lean into situations," Craft said. "It's like firefighters run into a burning building, nurses run into taking care of people. When we started looking at (the swab pods) it was clinical, it was community and reaching out to where our community needs us. It was sort of a rethinking of what it does mean to do clinical work. It doesn't all have



to happen in an acute care setting. In fact, we need to recognize that "the majority of patients' lives don't occur in an acute-care setting." Therefore we need to be where the patients are and our students need to learn where the patients are.

The university also leveraged its partnerships with OU Health as well as the Oklahoma City County Health Department and the Oklahoma City VA Health Care System to identify other student learning opportunities.

"What we've done as a college is to look at every opportunity not to continue what we've always done but ascertain what the OU College of Nursing can do now to make a difference," she said. For more information visit: https://nursing.ouhsc.edu/

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SITUATION UPDATE: COVID-19

COVID-19 Cases:	681,346
New Cases Today	3,003
New Cases 7 day Average	1,561
Active Cases	14,131
CDC/NCHS Provisional Deaths	12,070
Acute Care OSDH Licensed	Recent 3 day Ave. Hospitalizations
Facilities/Location**	Cases (ICU)
Region 1 (NW)	33 (9)
Region 2 (NE)	36 (13)
Region 3 (SW)	64 (15)
Region 4 (EC)	25 (8)
Region 5 (SE)	25 (7)
Region 6 (Central)	67 (22)
Region 7 (Tulsa)	180 (66)
Region 8 (OKC)	156 (49)
Total	586* (189)
Other Types of Facilities	
Focus Facilities	15 (5)
Rehabilitation Facilities	2 (0)
Tribal Facilities	13 (2)
Other Facilities Total	30 (7)

*Includes 15 hospitalizations in pediatric beds.

**Focus, Rehabilitation and Tribal Facilities numbers are not assigned to a specific region as their patient populations reside across the state. Information provided through survey of Oklahoma hospitals as reported to HHS as of the time of this report. Response rate affects data. Facilities may update previously reported information as necessary.

Data Source: Acute Disease Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health. *As of 2021-12-10 at 7:00 a.m.

Midwest City Free Holiday Lights Spectacular Now through Christmas night at Joe B. Barnes Regional Park

Story by Darl Devault, Contributing Editor



Midwest City's Holiday Lights Spectacular creates a free holiday drive-through wonderland of twinkling lights celebrating the magic of the season with more than 100 animated light displays.

"The City of Midwest City is excited to bring Holiday Lights Spectacular back for the 2021 holiday season," said Josh Ryan, communications and marketing director. "The lights are an important holiday tradition for families in eastern Oklahoma County. Despite the many challenges we had in getting the show running this year, we knew it was a challenge we had to overcome."

The lights at the popular destination giving visitors plenty of the Christmas spirit to enjoy shine brightly each night through Christmas night (Dec. 25). The holiday light's shimmer will be viewable from the comfort of personal vehicles in a driving tour from 6-10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and from 6-11 p.m. Friday-Saturday and 6-11 p.m. Christmas Eve and Christmas day.

Joe B. Barnes Regional Park comes alive with secular and religious displays featuring the vibrancy of a majestic 118-foot Christmas tree Illuminated with more than 9,000 LED lights and topped off with a dazzling 8-foot star.

Visitors can enjoy driving through more than one million sparkling lights, many of which are animated. This seasonal celebration of animation is the hallmark of the display's dazzling winter wonderland claim to fame.

The lights of every color spectacular

features the animated illumination celebration of a dancing forest light show performing to traditional holiday music. Visitors tune their vehicle radio to a specific frequency to hear the holiday music that accompanies the animation.

The one-of-a-kind Santa fly fishing in a 20-foot-tall waterfall with gliding fish and prancing animals is a unique feature of the loop through a quiet wooded area. Elves are seen baking their Christmas confections in the animated Candy Cane Company.

The Park is transformed into a lighted wonderland where visitors can see anything from the Nativity scene to Santa playing soccer. Visitors drive through the park and experience the displays while in the warmth of their car. The estimated drive time for completing the tour is 20-30 minutes.

This family tradition began in 1995 with just 44 displays and has grown to be what at one point was the largest animated lights display in a five-state region.

The Park, 10 minutes east of OKC at 8700 E. Reno Ave., is easily found from I-40. Head north on Douglas Blvd. to find the lit snowflakes heading west on SE 15th St. to the entrance south on Century Blvd between Midwest Blvd. and Douglas.

Admission is free, thanks to the Midwest City Chamber of Commerce and many merchants. The Holiday Lights Spectacular runs on sponsorships and donations. Donations are appreciated onsite or contact organizers.



With easy access from I-40 and just 10 minutes east of Oklahoma City, visitors and their family will want to make this an annual tradition for years to come.

For group arrangements for the light show, including guided group

tours and itinerary planning and more general information call 405-739-1289 or visit Holiday Lights Spectacular Midwest City Oklahoma. Organizers thank sponsors for their support that allows them to present this community service to the public.



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Arbor House of Midwest City Arbor House of Mustang 405-455-3900

4501 W. Main St. Norman, OK 73072 405-292-9

9240 E. Reno Ave. MWC, OK 73130 850 N. Clearsprings Rd. Mustang, Ok 73064 405-376-2872

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