

life's point

Summer 2007

Focus on Health Care

Colorado Plains Medical Center



Baby on Board

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Baby into the World
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Close to Home** page 7



Dear Friends,

Our community is growing and changing. As a community of different cultures, we as a healthcare organization must make every attempt to reflect that growth and change. Colorado Plains Medical Center has a culture of service and caring that has been a cornerstone for more than 52 years. We have great people here at CPMC, and as our people are our business, they run our business and do a magnificent job of doing so. We are extremely proud of our people and, more importantly, in what they do: "Caring for our Communities" and "Making a Difference."

This quarter's newsletter has just those sorts of things to share with you. First and foremost, we would like to congratulate Betty Baker for being the regional finalist and state recipient of Colorado's Nightingale Award—read more on this wonderfully loving lady and healthcare provider in this edition. We have a lot going on at Colorado Plains Medical Center, including our new Geriatric Behavior Unit; the hiring of Randy James, a certified occupational therapist specializing in pediatrics; the upcoming Women's Health Expo; vascular surgery and ABI procedures by Timothy Ferrugia, MD; pain management by Daryl

Harriman, CRNA; new payment options via CareCredit; and PET scans, which I believe you will find most interesting and intriguing.

Treating people with dignity and respect and caring for people is what we are all about. Our staff and our physicians are focused on quality outcomes, patient care, and safety. Those qualities result in a well-managed organization, and that translates into tending to your health. Enjoy your summer!

Michael A. Anaya Sr., FACHE
Chief Executive Officer
Colorado Plains Medical Center

New Service Line for SENIORS



Mental health plays an important role as we age. Older adults may experience a wide range of mental health issues as they age, including depression, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder, as well as other problems. With this in mind, Colorado Plains Medical Center is proud to announce plans to open its new Geriatric Behavior Unit that will be devoted to helping local senior adults and their caregivers with the emotional and behavioral needs associated with aging.

Opening November 1, the unit will offer acute behavioral health services to the area's elderly population. Services to assist older adults and their families with mental health issues related to aging will include:

- medication management
- individual, family, and group counseling

- 24-hour nursing care
- a safe environment

In addition to these services, this program can assist patients and families with alternative living arrangements if needed.

"Our comprehensive program will allow long-term care centers to admit patients with psychiatric challenges—a previously absent service in the area," says Ken Cochran, RN, CHE, Chief Nursing Officer for CPMC. "We look forward to continuing CPMC's tradition of excellent health care for the community with the opening of the Geriatric Behavior Unit."

For more information about the Geriatric Behavior Unit, please call (970) 542-3304.

BETTY BAKER: A One-of-a-Kind Nurse

Each year, healthcare professionals from around the country nominate nurses for the prestigious Nightingale Award. Colorado Plains Medical Center is proud to have a state winner, Betty Baker, RN, WOCN, 40-plus-year veteran at CPMC, on its team to deliver compassionate and quality care to area patients.

Florence Nightingale was a nurse known for her compassion and dedication to both her patients and the field of nursing. Her namesake award honors nurses like Baker, Case Manager at CPMC, who embody the same qualities of the famous nurse, including Nightingale's passion for care and volunteerism.

"I was very excited to be a finalist for the Nightingale Award, especially since it meant my coworkers appreciated the work I do for patients and the staff," says Baker, who sits on the boards of several local charities. "My goal is to be the best nurse I possibly can be, and I'll continue to do that because that's the best thing for my patients."

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

During the state awards convention, held in Denver on May 12, Baker was honored as a state winner. One of 15 finalists and just six winners, Baker is the first Fort Morgan nurse to win since 1986.

"Upon hearing my name, I was both surprised and excited," Baker says. "There are so many deserving nurses in our state, and I am honored to be considered worthy of this award."

For more information on CPMC's outstanding nurses, visit www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com.



Betty Baker, RN, WOCN, state Nightingale Award winner, is pictured with Kim Christiansen, Channel 9 news anchor, and emcee for the evening's event.



Helping Kids, **HAVING FUN**

Do zipping around on a scooter, bouncing balls across a room, or Hula-Hooping sound like fun ways to spend a day? For Randy James, certified occupational therapist specializing in pediatric therapy at Colorado Plains Medical Center, these activities are all part of a day's work.

While it may sound like fun and games for James, the activities mentioned above are simply part of his repertoire for observing and evaluating fine and gross motor skills in children. As a recent addition to The Center for Rehabilitation and Wellness at CPMC, James works with children who many times are autistic or have learning disorders, developmental disabilities, or other profound medical conditions, such as cerebral palsy or muscular dystrophy.

"I love working with kids," says James. "Sometimes kids' abilities can be increased through adaptive equipment and toys, or by learning daily living skills with alternative methods."

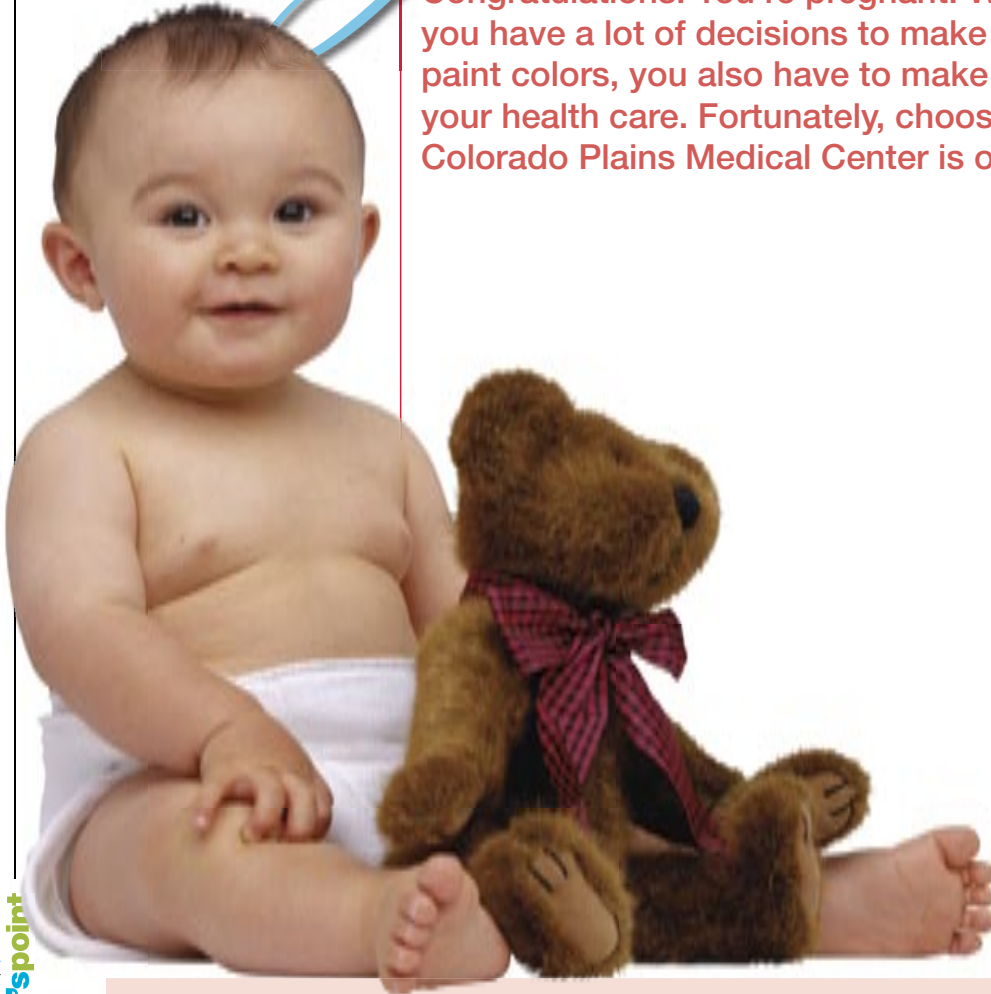
Prior to joining CPMC, James devoted 28 years to working with children through the United States Department of Defense's Educational and Developmental Intervention Services program and the Galveston Independent School District.

"This position at CPMC allows me to continue working with kids," James says, "and I enjoy the challenge of bringing out the best in every individual I work with."

For more information on how your child might benefit from occupational therapy, contact Randy James at The Center for Rehabilitation and Wellness at CPMC at (970) 867-6544.

Baby on Board

Congratulations! You're pregnant! While those words mean you have a lot of decisions to make about names and nursery paint colors, you also have to make important decisions about your health care. Fortunately, choosing to deliver your baby at Colorado Plains Medical Center is one of the easier ones.



From the time you begin your prenatal care with one of our two obstetrician/gynecologists until you're ready to take your new baby home, you're in good hands at CPMC. We can provide every aspect of care for both you and your baby, in a safe, family-friendly environment.

"Having a baby is a special time for a family, and it's important for the mother-to-be that we provide everything she needs so the experience goes as smoothly as possible," says Lois Elliott, MD, OB/GYN on the medical staff at CPMC. "We have a fabulous staff at the hospital ready to serve all the needs of mother and baby, and our Birthing Center is a beautiful environment in which to deliver a baby."

SPECIAL SETTING FOR MOM

The Paul E. Woodward Birthing Center at CPMC provides five family

Getting Ready for Baby

The Paul E. Woodward Birthing Center at Colorado Plains Medical Center is much more than a place to deliver your baby. During the 40 weeks of your pregnancy—and even beyond—you'll find that the Birthing Center can be a great resource, especially if you take part in some of these classes about pregnancy, baby care, and safety:

* **Childbirth classes:** Labor and delivery is hard work, and it's important that you're as prepared for the experience as possible. During childbirth classes, you'll

learn about pain management techniques, delivery options, and basic baby care to ease you through the process. In addition, infant/child CPR and car seat safety are included in the childbirth classes. *Cost: \$60*

* **Breastfeeding classes:** If you're planning on breastfeeding, you'll find all the assistance you need at CPMC. Our certified lactation consultant is here to provide instruction before your baby is born, giving you a better idea of what to expect once your

baby arrives. A one-time 20 percent discount on breastfeeding supplies in the CPMC gift shop is included with registration. *Cost: \$20*

* **Maternity in Motion:** During these classes, learn about safe and appropriate pregnancy exercises that can reduce lower back pain and prepare your body for childbirth. *Cost: \$20*

* **Car seat safety:** Statistics show that more than 90 percent of all child restraint devices are installed incorrectly. Your baby is required



Wendy Molaska, MD, and Loretta Klinger, RN, have experience delivering babies and work to ensure a mother's comfort and safety.



All of CPMC's full-time OB nurses are fetal monitor certified, passing required testing and educational requirements and giving you comfort in knowing we have a highly trained, experienced staff to help you deliver your baby.



Lois Elliott, MD, OB/GYN, has delivered many babies for proud mothers. Isn't this baby just the cutest?

birthing suites, in which the expectant mother will labor and deliver the baby and recuperate. The rooms are pleasantly decorated and offer a comfortable sleep chair so a support person can remain in the room at all times. Each room has all the amenities needed for a safe delivery and provides a soothing environment for the whole family while mom and baby recuperate before going home. The Birthing Center also has four additional private rooms for mothers who deliver by C-section. These rooms are similar in décor and have the same amenities as the five birthing suites.

“The state-of-the-art monitoring system in use in our hospital ensures your baby is safe at all times,” says Michelle Soriano, MD, OB/GYN with Women’s Clinic of the Plains on staff at CPMC. “This means the mother can relax and recover from the birth in one of our suites and know her baby is receiving the best care in the safest environment.”

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTING

While your delivery at CPMC is an exciting event, the time leading up to it is when you need to be as healthy as possible. Here are some tips to help you and your baby remain healthy and happy:

- * **Get prenatal care.** Your healthcare provider will be your greatest resource during your pregnancy, and he or she will examine you regularly to check the progress of both you and your baby. Your physician will also be able to answer all your questions, perform tests, and make recommendations about your health.
- * **Diet and nutrition.** Eating a healthful diet should always be your priority, but it takes on a greater importance when you're eating for two or more. Select a well-balanced diet—including fruits, vegetables, lean meats, whole-grain products, and low-fat

dairy products—and make sure you're getting enough calcium, iron, folic acid, and fluids.

- * **Exercise.** All expectant mothers need at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day. Exercise such as walking, swimming, and yoga help prevent you from gaining too much weight and better prepare you for labor.
- * **Sleep.** Because you'll be more tired than usual during your pregnancy, sleep takes on a whole new importance. Try to get at least eight hours of uninterrupted sleep at night, and nap if you feel tired.

For more tips about how to stay as healthy as possible during your pregnancy, schedule an appointment with one of the OB/GYNs on staff at Colorado Plains Medical Center. Call Lois Elliott, MD, at (970) 867-3885 or Michelle Soriano, MD, at (970) 542-0390.

to ride in a rear-facing car seat until he or she is 1 year old and weighs 20 pounds, so take time to learn about the appropriate installation of his or her safety seat. *Cost: \$20*

- * **Infant and child cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR):** During these classes, instructors will use American Red Cross materials to teach parents and caregivers about proper CPR techniques for saving the lives of infants and children up to the age of 12. *Cost: \$20*

“Whether you have one child or five, every parent can benefit from the

experience of taking prenatal classes,” says Michelle Soriano, MD, OB/GYN with Women’s Clinic of the Plains on staff at CPMC. “Your baby will be safer, and you’ll be better prepared for the entire parenting experience.”

For more information about the Paul E. Woodward Birthing Center at Colorado Plains Medical Center, visit our Web site at www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com. Call (970) 867-3391, ext. 3333 for more information about prenatal classes at CPMC.



Michelle Soriano, MD, OB/GYN, is on staff at CPMC and sees patients at outreach clinics in Sterling, Yuma, Holyoke, and Akron.

Clear the Way

Hardening of the arteries can occur in any artery in the body, not just those in the heart that so commonly make the news. Vascular surgery can restore blood flow when medication and lifestyle changes aren't enough to stop peripheral arterial disease.



Timothy Ferrugia, MD, board-certified general surgeon, can help diagnose and treat vascular problems you may be suffering.

Peripheral arterial disease (PAD) affects 8 to 12 million Americans, but symptoms are often attributed to other conditions, such as arthritis, tendonitis, or nerve damage in the legs caused by diabetes. Claudication—leg pain when walking or exercising that stops when exercise ends—is the most common symptom.

Caused by the buildup of plaque in arteries in the extremities, other risk factors such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, and renal failure often accompany PAD. As with heart disease, lifestyle changes, such as smoking cessation and controlling blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood glucose, can positively impact PAD.

When left undiagnosed or untreated, PAD can lead to amputation. See your physician if you are experiencing a cramping pain when you walk or you have noticed a steady decline in how far you can walk. Your physician can perform simple tests to diagnose the presence and severity of PAD. (See “An Easy Test” for details.) With the knowledge from those tests, your

physician at Colorado Plains Medical Center can provide help.

TEAM UP TO STOP PAD

Grafts or balloon angioplasty may be needed to clear blocked arteries in the legs when conservative treatments have not eliminated symptoms. Performed at CPMC, vascular surgery often yields an immediate improvement.

“Patients usually wake up with their legs feeling better,” says Timothy Ferrugia, MD, board-certified general surgeon at Colorado Plains Medical Center. “Although vascular surgery can eliminate the immediate danger of PAD, it’s up to the patient to adopt permanent lifestyle changes—quit smoking, maintain a healthy weight, and keep blood cholesterol levels, glucose, and blood pressure under control, to ensure long-term vascular health.”

To learn more about your risk for peripheral arterial disease and how it can be treated effectively, call Dr. Timothy Ferrugia at (970) 867-2656.

An Easy Test

The ankle-brachial index (ABI) is a painless test that compares the blood pressure at the ankles with blood pressure at the arms. ABI numbers are obtained using a blood pressure cuff and Doppler ultrasonography.

Readings are taken at the wrist and ankle when the patient is at rest. Measurements are then repeated after five minutes of walking on a treadmill. The ABI results combined with other symptoms the patient may be experiencing can help a physician determine if peripheral arterial disease (PAD) is present and the severity of the condition.

BY THE NUMBERS

Similar blood pressure values at the ankle and arm (an ABI of 1 or 1.1) indicate normal blood flow. Abnormal ABI values include:

Less than .95—
narrowing of one or more blood vessels

Less than .80—
pain in legs during exercise

Less than .40—
symptoms may occur at rest

Less than .25—
limb-threatening PAD is present



A New *Imaging* Option



photo courtesy of Philips Medical Systems

Colorado Plains Medical Center now offers residents of Northeast Colorado a combination positron emission tomography (PET)/computed tomography (CT) scan, the most accurate cancer diagnostic and treatment-planning technology.

This technology, which is available at the hospital twice a month, allows physicians to locate metabolic activity—changes that can indicate cancer—within the body. By using the PET/CT scanner to evaluate these metabolic changes and locate functional problems, physicians can diagnose cancerous areas before any structural damage is evident. As a result, the earlier detection can have a major impact on patient outcomes.

Most commonly, the system can be used in diagnosing cancer when other tests are inconclusive, determining the stage of the disease, and detecting recurrent disease before it spreads through the body. In addition, PET/CT scans also have been shown to help evaluate cardiac disease, skin disorders, and brain disorders.

For more information about this painless imaging study, call (970) 542-3341 or go to www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com.

Colorado Plains Offers **Payment Alternative**

CareCredit is a credit card for health-related expenses backed by GE Financial. There is no activation or annual fee, and no interest will be charged on balances of

\$300 or more if minimum monthly payments are made on time and it's paid in full by the end of the promotional period (up to 12 months). On balances greater than \$1,000, a payment plan up to five years is available at a low interest rate.

"This offers another affordable option to those individuals who experience debt they might not be able to pay for right away," says Jon Stephens, CPMC Business Office Director. "It's a good plan offered by a solid company that has been in business for several years."

For more information about CareCredit or billing, contact Andrea Ramirez, Admissions Supervisor, at (970) 867-3391, ext. 3426.



Renew the Woman in You

Women of all ages in Northeast Colorado will be able to connect, explore, and rejuvenate their minds and bodies at the upcoming Women's Health Expo on August 18. Everything from cooking demonstrations and health news to wellness tips will be part of the inaugural event. To date, more than 16 breakout sessions have been arranged, with several more fun-filled and informative sessions already in the works.

The event will be held at Fort Morgan High School on Saturday, August 18, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. There is no charge to participate. Mothers, daughters, and sisters: this is a great opportunity to treat yourselves to a fantastic experience, learn new things, and become a more vibrant and healthier woman.

For more information, call (970) 542-3346 or (970) 867-3391, ext. 3395.



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Colorado Plains Medical Center
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