

Heartbeat

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

25th Annual Harvest Auction exceeds \$120,000 goal

“It’s been fun to watch,” said Jill Thompson of Grafton, referring to the 25-year evolution of the Unity Medical Center Foundation Harvest Auction benefiting Unity Medical Center. “It’s been fun to donate items, it’s been fun to shop, it’s been fun to gather. It’s been a wonderful fundraiser.”

The Foundation celebrated its 25th anniversary with silver Lucky Charm wine charms and surpassed its \$120,000 fundraising goal by the end of the night Nov. 10 at the Minto Community Center.

Thompson helped organize the very first event in 1999 with the help of board members including Rita Amiot, Joyce Kingsbury, Art Oihus and Stephen Rice. She was unable to attend this year but recorded a video played at the event to recognize the event’s anniversary. Thompson also donated a cooking class at her new business The Little Kitchen.

This year, Harvest Auction proceeds will go toward a new medication mixing room for UMC’s pharmacy (\$70,000) and 25 new IV pumps (\$50,000). To reach that goal, donors graciously provided 89 silent auction items and 20 live items,



Nick Ziegelmann won the first round of Last One Standing with his white paddle. PHOTO BY ROCK TWETEN which were auctioned off by Resource Auction’s David Gorder.

Darrin Wollitz won the Lucky Charm drawing, and he and his wife Paige chose the Golf Lovers’ Vacation Home donated by Dr. Anil Potti of the North Dakota Cancer Center. Other popular live auction items (based on dollars raised) included the 2023 Honda Pioneer 500 donated by UMC; the Halliday Holiday on Cape Cod donated by Ken Halliday;

the \$3,000 travel voucher donated by UMC; the Winnipeg Jets trip donated by Chris and Jenn Thompson, Barry and Leah Kingsbury, and Brian and Jill Petersen; the GirlFriend Getaway Package donated by TruStone Wealth Management; the UND Hockey & Dinner package; and the Ultimate Yeti Package donated by Alan & Mary Jane O’Neil. In total, the live auction raised nearly \$35,000.

SEE HARVEST AUCTION on page 3

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Dear friends,

As we pass Thanksgiving and head toward the holidays, it is a good time to reflect on what we are thankful for and what we are hopeful about in the future.



On the thankful side, a big heartfelt thanks is in order for the wonderful Harvest Auction that was held recently. The financial support was tremendous, and it was quite an entertaining evening with everyone who was in attendance. I also want to thank all the folks who helped with the planning and preparation.

If you have driven by the south side of the clinic and hospital lately, you have likely noticed all of the construction activity that is taking place on the premises. The Grafton Family Clinic and the Unity Medical

Center dietary department are both expanding. This project was necessary because of increased growth in both the clinic and hospital. The clinic expansion will be two stories tall, adding 13 additional treatment rooms to the facility. The first floor will be used by UMC providers, while the second floor will primarily be used by outreach specialists who are traveling to Grafton to provide care. There will also be an elevator for accessing the second floor.

The outreach specialists who primarily come from the North Dakota Cancer Center, Altru Health System and Sanford Health provide necessary services to our patients and help to minimize the travel to Grand Forks or Fargo. The contractors are making great progress, partially thanks to the great fall weather we had. Assuming the good weather continues, which it is supposed to for a while, the project should be completed this coming summer.

General Surgeon Dr. Michael Bittles has launched his practice in our region. He is now seeing patients in the clinic and performing surgeries here at UMC. He and his wife Pattie relocated to the area about a month ago. Having a general surgeon back on our team is a welcome addition as it is an integral part of our care team.

Also, some exciting news in our Surgery Department: UMC has acquired a state-of-the-art surgical robot. Robotic-assisted surgeries have become very common in larger urban hospitals, such as Sanford. UMC is proud to be the first critical access hospital in North Dakota to acquire one of these surgical robotic systems. Thank you to all of our patients and supporters who make this possible.

Happy holidays to all of you, and thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,

Alan O'Neil
Chief Executive Officer
Unity Medical Center



Swing Bed Program



Ensuite Bathroom



Private Courtyard



Activity Room



Wheelchair Transport Van



Private Room

Amenities

- Private second floor rooms with large windows
- Ensuite bathrooms
- Sleeper sofas for family
- 55" smart TV in each room
- Activity room with dedicated activity professionals
- Homemade meals and snacks
- Wheelchair transport van
- Private courtyard
- Occupational therapy kitchen
- Laundry service available

Patients hospitalized outside of Grafton have the right to request a referral to Unity Medical Center swing bed program. Call Heather at 701-379-3032.

Heather Narloch, LSW | 701-379-3032 | hnarloch@unitymedcenter.com | 164 West 13th Street, Grafton, ND 58237

Harvest Auction:

Continued from page 1

UMC CEO Alan O'Neil detailed expansion plans for Grafton Family Clinic and UMC's cafeteria, as well as awards that UMC had recently won, including a second consecutive Modern Healthcare Best Places to Work award. He also introduced UMC's newest general surgeon Dr. Michael Bittles, who will practice in Grafton as well as First Care Health Center in Park River and Pembina County Memorial Hospital in Cavalier.

Popular silent auction items included the Wine Country



When you see Denny Schneider heading toward your table during the live auction, get ready to be entertained! PHOTO BY ROCK TWETEN

gift basket donated by UMC Central Supply Area staff and Kody Stark's ribs and picnic donated by five UMC staff members including Kody's wife Priscilla.

Raffle winner Mary LaHaise won \$400 in Grafton Bucks from the Grafton Chamber of Commerce. Cash prizes of \$250 went to Carissa Klug, Kelly DeSautel, Karalynne Price and Stephanie Collette, while Kristen Pastorek was the \$1,000 winner. Nick Ziegelmann wisely chose white during the first round of Last One Standing and received a \$500 gift card donated by Grafton True Value. Barb Dusek won the second round of the game and received a \$400 gift card to



UMCF Executive Director Jessica Sobolik welcomes Dr. Michael and Pattie Bittles to the community. PHOTO BY ROCK TWETEN

Hugo's Family Marketplace and a \$200 gift card to Hugo's Wine & Spirits. The crowd also sang happy birthday to UMC's Director of Environmental Services Terry Demester.

The reverse auction aimed to raise \$50,000 for new IV pumps recently purchased by UMC. The new pumps can administer

more than one medication at a time unlike the old pumps leased from an equipment company at a higher cost. UMC can also customize the medication library on the machine and pause medication delivery easily when patients need to step away from the pump. Thirty-four donors participated in the reverse auction, led by a \$10,000 lead gift from Bill and Jody Tibert. A total of \$53,870 was raised during that portion of the event.

Last year's auction featured an impromptu tie auction, and this year Rita Amiot graciously donated more ties worn by Dr. Jared Marquardt and Physician Assistant Matt Massmann. Together, they raised another \$2,000.

UMCF Executive Director Jessica Sobolik thanked Beth Sundberg for catering and Cathy Tweten for playing piano music during the social hour.



UMC CEO Alan O'Neil details expansion plans at Grafton Family Clinic. PHOTO BY ROCK TWETEN



Jody and Bill Tibert kicked off the reverse auction with a generous \$10,000 gift. PHOTO BY ROCK TWETEN

The end of the calendar year is always a busy time at the Unity Medical Center Foundation. As you have probably already read in this



newsletter, we wrapped up this year's 25th Annual Harvest Auction, which was incredibly successful. In fact, it was the most successful auction in the

past five years, which includes two years online during COVID, so no surprise there. According to our records, only the 2018 Harvest Auction was more successful. While the main goal of any fundraising event is total dollars raised, I more so hope everyone who participated felt good about supporting their local health care provider Unity Medical Center during the event. Unity Medical Center (UMC) will now be

able to deliver important medications more efficiently, and in a safer environment for patients and staff.

Shortly after the Harvest Auction, the UMC Foundation participated in Giving Tuesday, a national day of giving following Black Friday, Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday (Nov. 28). Even though we were just coming off our largest fundraiser of the year, we still received a number of generous gifts that totaled over \$1,000. Even Wally DeSautel, who wasn't feeling well that day, called our office to let us know he would bring us a gift as soon as he was feeling better. How impressive is that?

Then UMC hosted the Tree of Lights Community Remembrance Service on Dec. 3. Monetary donations received during last year's Tree of Lights event were used to create bereavement kits given to families when they lose a loved one at UMC (see Page 7). The UMC

Foundation also provided \$500 from its Programs Endowment for the project. We hope that these kits give families a sense of peace during a difficult time in their lives. I personally have received similar kits from Altru Health System, so I understand how important it is to have them from that perspective.

Now that these events have passed, the Foundation office will turn its focus to Giving Hearts Day, a regional giving day coming Feb. 8. The Foundation board had yet to select the fundraising purpose for the 2024 event at the time this newsletter went to print, but I am certain that, with your support, we'll continue to bolster health care delivery at our rural facility that is growing every day (see Alan's CEO Update on Page 2 for Grafton Family Clinic expansion information). It's so exciting for all of us to see this growth and be a part of it. We are glad that you are on this journey with us!

Jessica Sobolik
Executive Director
Unity Medical Center Foundation

Open House

February 8, 2024

8:30 a.m.-7 p.m.

Unity Medical Center Foundation
147 W 13th St, Grafton

Visit with Unity staff about the new
Cardiopulmonary Rehab.

Refreshments will be served.

Interested in being a matching gift donor?
Contact us before Jan. 22.

GivingHeartsDay.org
#givingheartstoday



UMC adds several providers, new services

Unity Medical Center (UMC) has expanded its services and added several new providers and staff lately.

Dr. Michael Bittles and his wife Pattie recently relocated to rural North Dakota from Indiana. Dr. Bittles began his health care career as a paramedic before starting medical school in Indianapolis at age 30. His initial eight years of practice were with a large provider network in northern Indiana. He then moved to rural Nebraska, where he worked in small critical access hospitals like those in rural northeast North Dakota. He moved back to Indiana in 2019, where he was working at a larger hospital prior to the move to North Dakota.

“I am looking forward to returning to a more rural type of practice and meeting new patients and friends in North Dakota,” Dr. Bittles said. “I am excited to rekindle my interest in fishing and owning that snowmobile I have always wanted!”

He sees patients and performs surgical procedures at UMC, as well as First Care Health Center in Park River and Pembina County Memorial Hospital in Cavalier.

Sam Mburu, FNP-C, is originally from Kenya and now a resident of Grand Forks, N.D. He earned his Doctor of Nursing Practice degree as a family nurse practitioner from

the University of Mary in Bismarck in 2023. Prior to becoming a nurse practitioner, he journeyed through different areas of health care as a nurse, including home health care, psychiatry, med/surg and critical care.



Sam Mburu

Sam sees patients at Grafton Family Clinic. He is committed to providing exceptional care to his patients while empowering them with health education and including them in a plan of care that is compatible with their values and best interests.

Unity Medical Center’s Rehabilitation Services department has expanded with the addition of in-house occupational and speech therapy available to patients of all ages. Both therapy services offer co-treatment options as needed.

Amy Groves, MOTR/L, CLT, and Kelsey Sherry, MOTR/L, offer skilled occupational therapy (OT) services from pediatric to geriatric with various diagnoses that include, but are not limited to, sensory processing disorder, emotional dysregulation, developmental delay, orthopedic, lymphedema, upper extremity



Amy Groves

impairments and cognitive impairments. OT staff can also complete wheelchair fittings and home safety assessments.

Hannah Laxdal, MS, CCC-SLP, provides speech and language therapy from pediatric to geriatric with various diagnoses including, but not limited to, language delays and disorders, articulation and phonological disorders, fluency disorders, pragmatic language disorders, strokes, traumatic brain injuries, voice disorders, dysphagia, Childhood Apraxia of Speech, Down Syndrome and autism spectrum disorders.



Hannah Laxdal

UMC’s Rehab Services also now has a large, private pediatric therapy gym that provides an engaging and motivating atmosphere for children to build their skills.



Kelsey Sherry

If you would like to make an appointment with Amy, Kelsey or Hannah, please call the Rehab Services Department at (701) 352-9398. If you would like to make an appointment with Dr. Bittles or Sam, please call Grafton Family Clinic at (701) 352-2000.



Unity Medical Center built this festive display at Leistikow Park in Grafton. Hot Cocoa is served there every Thursday through Sunday, 5-9 p.m.

Why to Consider a Donor-Advised Fund for Charitable Giving

From the desk of Mark Presteng, Private Wealth Advisor

Often people with significant wealth – like pro athletes, movie stars, business moguls, and those that are charitably inclined – will set up a foundation



or a family foundation. While there are some advantages of using a strategy like a foundation, the financial means are often not large enough to justify the cost and maintenance.

Giving generously can have both charitable and tax benefits. However, what is the right way to go about it? This will depend on your personal values, goals, and current financial situation.

One tool to consider for charitable giving is the Donor-Advised Fund (DAF). Allow me to explain what this financial strategy is and why you should think about incorporating it into your financial plan.

About Donor-Advised Funds

A Donor-Advised Fund is a charitable giving vehicle or a private fund for philanthropy. It is administered by a third party and created for the purpose of managing charitable donations on behalf of a family, an individual, or an organization.

Some third parties may have minimum contributions, but they can be as low as \$1,000 to \$10,000. Generally acceptable contributions can be cash, stocks, mutual funds, privately held stock, real estate, and bonds, as well as other investment instruments, depending on the

third-party restrictions. DAFs have been around since the early 1930s, but the first commercial DAF became available in the early 1990s. The Pension Protection Act of 2006 added further definition and regulation of DAFs.

According to National Philanthropic Trust's 2018 Donor Advised Fund Report, DAFs have grown in popularity over the past decade, accounting for 10.2% of total individual giving. There are now over half a million DAFs with \$110 billion in assets, and donors who have a DAF are giving away nearly \$20 billion per year. So, why should you consider one? Let's dive in.

Why to Explore a Donor-Advised Fund

The first reason to consider a Donor-Advised Fund is the tax incentive. The donor makes an irrevocable contribution to the DAF and can take an immediate tax deduction. The DAF can hold these contributions, reinvest them, or diversify a possible heavily concentrated stock position into investment options that fit the investor's timeline and risk tolerance. The owner of the DAF can choose to make grants to charities at their discretion.

Contributing to a DAF in a tax year where income is higher can help with tax planning. The DAF can help you avoid capital gains taxes by contributing highly appreciated securities or assets. Establishing and contributing to a DAF can also help avoid potential future estate taxes that may be owed. Once assets are

contributed to a DAF, they are removed from the value of an estate and avoid probate.

Another advantage besides receiving the upfront charitable deduction and potential for your gifts to grow over time is that you get to decide when and how to give to the charities from the DAF. There are no requirements on how many grants you can or can't make in a year from your DAF to a charity.

You are also able to set up successors to your DAF so that your family member or successor owner can continue your DAF, or you can choose to have it split up to 10 of your favorite charities after your death. Passing on the DAF to your successors can be a great way to teach the next generation the importance of generous giving. What a way to leave a legacy for your family!

Donor Advised Funds are very simple to set up and establish, as they are low cost to maintain and don't require legal fees to set up, but may have some limitations on investment options. A DAF may be a charitable giving vehicle that is appropriate for you. To learn more about DAFs, request a consultation with our team at TruStone Wealth Management.

Mark Presteng

CFP®, BFA™, APMA®, CLTC®, ChFC®, CKA®

Mark Presteng is a Private Wealth Advisor with TruStone Wealth Management, a private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC in Grafton, ND. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies, and has been in practice for 20 years.

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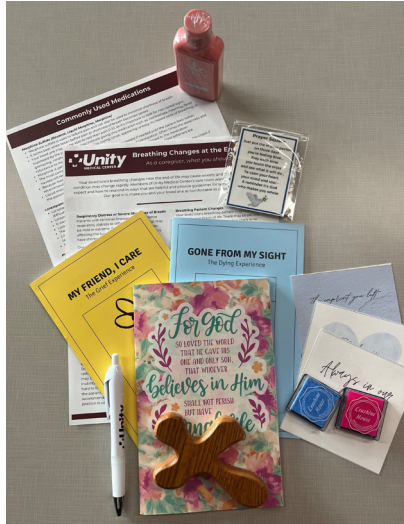
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Tree of Lights Ceremony Honors Area Loved Ones

Unity Medical Center hosted its Tree of Lights Community Remembrance Service on Dec. 3.

“Because memory is a fickle thing, there are traditions that we as humans have developed to memorialize people,” said Pastor Chris Gaule, also a nurse at UMC, during the event. “There are ways in which we remember, to give a little bit of concreteness to our sense of absence, and we are going to do a few of those things tonight.”



The group of roughly 40 attendees sang Lean on Me and Silent Night, decorated ornaments, enjoyed cookies and refreshments, viewed luminaries, and talked with UMC staff about their loved ones. Over 200 names of deceased loved ones were read.

Last year’s donations given in memory of loved ones went toward bereavement kits that were on display (pictured) at the event. The kits include wooden prayer crosses, a prayer quilt square, lotion, keepsake fingerprinting kits and additional bereavement support materials. The kits will be placed in a commemorative box and given to families who have lost loved ones at Unity Medical Center, either on the in-patient floor or in the emergency room.

The Tree of Lights ceremony can be viewed on the Unity Medical Center Facebook page or by scanning the adjacent QR code.



The first memorial bench, in memory of Frances Boulduc, was recently installed at Unity Medical Center along Western Ave. on the west side of the new hospital addition. Additional benches are available for personalization. Contact the UMC Foundation office if interested.

UMC joins Breast and Cervical Cancer Coalition



Quality Health Associates of North Dakota (QHAND), in collaboration with the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services, is providing support services to increase breast and cervical cancer screening rates in primary care clinics for the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.

Unity Medical Center (UMC) has partnered with QHAND and is now part of its Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Coalition. Through this partnership, QHAND staff help UMC to set goals and provide tools to stay on track in meeting those goals. There are five different milestones to meet, and UMC has already completed the first milestone: copper.

UMC supported Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which is every October. This year, the UMC coalition team designed t-shirts using the statewide campaign theme, “Stronger Together,” which more than 80 UMC staff purchased. A strong marketing push encouraged area women to schedule their mammogram during the month of October, and those who did received a breast cancer awareness compact mirror and were entered into a weekly drawing for a fleece blanket. A special drawing was also held for UMC staff who received their mammograms in October, and three staff members won pink-themed prize packages.

This initiative is funded by the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services Women’s Way Program.

Memorials and Thank You To Donors (Aug. 29 - Nov. 28, 2023)

The Unity Medical Center Foundation would like to take the opportunity to thank all of the donors who have donated to UMCF over the past years. It is because of donors like you that UMCF can continue to focus on their mission of supporting Unity Medical Center and improving patient experiences. Every effort is made to include all names accurately. Please notify UMCF if you discover any errors or omissions.

Sue Ellen Bateman

Ina Raumin

Elton Brekke

Sonia Midgarden

Dale Brown

Tula Kirsch

Irene Carpenter

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Sonia Midgarden

Sharon Mlcoch

Marlene Olmstead

Ina Raumin

Sandra Sackett

Denny & Sally Schneider

David & Linda

Schumacher

Ryan & Jessica Sobolik

Kody & Priscilla Stark

Mike & Melanie Suda

Shirley Suda

Beverly Thompson

Chris & Jennifer

Thompson

Harlan Thompson

Lloyd & Claudia

Thompson

Ralph Tucker

Rosalee Wendelbo

Marilyn Zimny

Foundation Mission

To financially support
Unity Medical Center, ensuring
quality health care close to home.

Philanthropic Priorities

1. Patients
2. Providers/staff
3. Programs
4. Facilities
5. Priority needs (unrestricted)



Donate Now

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