

Be well

SPRING 2016

Health care
that's all wags
and whiskers
p10

Empowering
students
to **make a**
difference

*Hello
humankindness!*

p20



Helping you to *Be Well*

Dear North State Community Members:



Welcome to *Be Well*, where we write about ways to keep you in good health. In this issue, you'll find stories about some of our programs, such as our new community clinic. You'll meet one of our NICU heroes and discover the Catherine McAuley Circles—plus so much more.

When we write *Be Well*, we always strive to live up to the title. After all, being well is about more than just knowing where to go for health care. It's about understanding the options available to you and your family.

At Dignity Health North State, our goal is to help everyone in our community, not only by sharing but also by listening. We understand that strong communication about you and your health is just as important as the state-of-the-art equipment that our hospitals provide for treatments, just as important as the care we provide. It's all part of our mission, and we appreciate the trust you place in us for all of your health needs.

If you've recently been admitted to any of our facilities—Mercy Medical Center Redding, St. Elizabeth Community Hospital, Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta, or one of our clinics or medical group practices—I encourage you to register for our online patient center, which allows you to securely review your medical information. This includes care instructions, current medications, and more. As always, I invite you to visit our websites for more information about your health and to enjoy this spring issue.

It's all part of helping you *Be Well*.

Sincerely,

Mark Korth
President, Dignity Health North State
President, Mercy Medical Center Redding



Connect with us
on Facebook and on the web!

FIND US ON FACEBOOK AT:



Dignity Health Mercy Medical
Center Redding



Dignity Health St. Elizabeth
Community Hospital



Dignity Health Mercy Medical
Center Mt. Shasta

CHECK OUT OUR INTERACTIVE WEBSITE:
mercy.org.

Our website is the perfect place to:

- Find a physician
- Log on to the patient portal
- Register for classes and events

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Investing IN OUR future

We want the North State to be a healthy, vibrant place to live for years to come. So we're making big plans for our future. Here's a peek at what's on the horizon for Dignity Health North State.

Focusing on wellness

Nearly \$1 out of every \$5 in the U.S. economy goes toward health care. Finding ways to control those costs is important. It's a key reason

health care systems like Dignity Health are changing the way we think about our services, says Chief Strategy Officer Jordan Wright.

"In the past, we were paid to treat people who are sick," he says. "In the future, we'll be paid to keep them healthy."

To help make that shift in the North State, Mercy Medical Center Redding plans to open a new wellness center in the heart of Redding.

It will be a one-stop center, where people can find services like primary care, cancer care, and health classes. It will also act as a much-needed hub for senior care.

As part of the project, Dignity Health also wants to enhance access to the Henderson Open Space, adjacent to the proposed location right on the Sacramento River. Plans even include parking for a kayak launch.

"We want it to be a very open space, making the most of the river and natural surroundings," Wright says.

Plans are underway to begin construction by 2018.

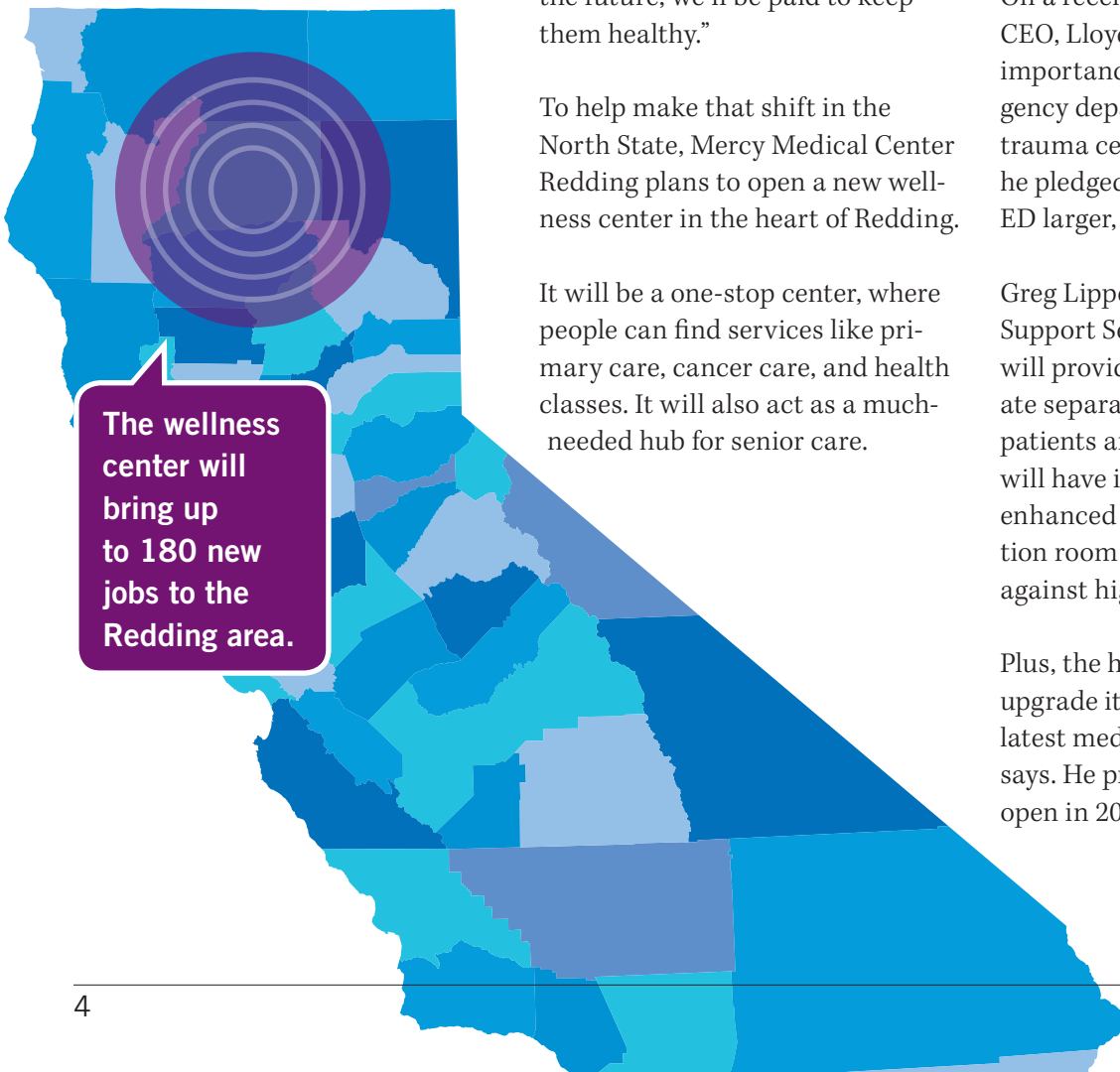
Preparing for emergencies

Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta may be the smallest Dignity Health hospital, but our commitment to rural health care is big.

On a recent visit, Dignity Health's CEO, Lloyd Dean, saw firsthand the importance of the hospital's emergency department (ED). It's the only trauma center within 65 miles. And he pledged \$4.9 million to make the ED larger, safer, and more private.

Greg Lippert, Senior Director of Support Services, says the upgrades will provide added privacy and create separate entrances for walk-in patients and ambulances. The ED will have its own waiting area with enhanced security. And a new isolation room will act as a safeguard against highly infectious diseases.

Plus, the hospital will be able to upgrade its equipment with the latest medical technology, Lippert says. He projects the new ED will open in 2018.



Our

HEALING ministry



Find out how you can support the Works of the Sisters in the North State. Call Mercy Foundation North at 530.247.3424 or visit our website, supportmercynorth.org.

Honoring our founders' values

At each of our hospitals, Dignity Health North State is committed to furthering the healing ministry of Jesus. Here are a few ways we live that promise each day.

A sacred place of comfort and beauty where everyone is welcome. That's how Sister Brenda O'Keeffe, Vice President of Mission Integration and Spiritual Care Services, describes the Healing Garden at Mercy Medical Center Redding.

Nearly 14 years ago, the garden was a neglected bit of land. "There were rocks and shrubs, that's all." But O'Keeffe looked at the barren spot and imagined a place of renewal. And in 2012, thanks to generous donations, her vision became a reality.

Walk through the garden today, and you'll find a host of "rooms" to explore. You can rake the sand in the

Zen Room, for example, or relax to the sounds of the Waterfall Room.

"It's an oasis for anyone—a patient, a visitor, a doctor—to find peace," O'Keeffe says.

Healing beyond our walls

Every year, St. Elizabeth Community Hospital awards thousands of dollars in grants to local agencies.



"The sisters' tradition of compassionate healing is very much alive."

"This hospital is dedicated to improving the health of whole communities throughout Tehama County," says Sister Patricia Manoli. She's the senior director of Mission Integration, Spiritual Care, and Community Health Services.

The money helps those in need—from women in abusive relationships to people with depression.

"You'll find our staff regularly volunteering to help provide health care for the poor and underserved," Manoli says.

Continuing the legacy

For the first time in nearly 30 years, Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta has no Sister of Mercy on its staff. Still, "the sisters' tradition of compassionate healing is very much alive," says Tom Miller. He's the senior director of Mission Integration.

The hospital provides compassionate care for those who can't afford it. And last Thanksgiving, the staff contributed 1,500 pounds of food to a food pantry.

"People are on fire with the mission here," Miller says. "When considering a new policy, hospital committee members will inevitably ask, 'What would the sisters do?'"

And the answer? "Let compassion guide us," Miller says.



Circles of giving

When the women of the Catherine McAuley Circles meet, it's a power lunch of the very best kind: the power of giving.

 **To find out how you can join the Catherine McAuley Circle in your area, call Mercy Foundation North at 530.247.3424.**

Like the meeting two years ago, when the Circle at Mercy Medical Center Redding bought new lounge chairs for the hospital's chemotherapy unit. Or last year, when the Circle at Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta helped fund a portable ultrasound for the emergency department. The St. Elizabeth Circle purchased an ultrasound cardiac output monitor that uses sound waves to assist the physician in determining if a patient has a cardiac or vascular abnormality.

The Catherine McAuley Circles are donor

clubs named after the founder of the Sisters of Mercy, who used her inheritance to help women in need. There are three Circles—in Redding, Red Bluff, and Mt. Shasta.

Every year, each group uses its donations to fulfill one of its hospital's wishes.

Generosity in action

Each Circle sets a minimum donation for its members. They range from \$250 to \$1,000 a year. Then members meet three times a year for lunch.

1 "The first gathering is about networking," says Alisa Johnson, Development Officer for Mercy Foundation North and the facilitator of the Circle in Mt. Shasta.

2 At the second lunch, hospital doctors and staff pitch their projects. And then the women vote on what they want to support. "By the time they leave the second lunch, they know where their money is going," says Michelle Martin Streeby, Senior Development Officer for Mercy Foundation North in Redding.

3 The third and last lunch is all about celebration. "The doctors return and bring the new equipment," says Kristen Gray, Development Officer for Mercy Foundation North and the facilitator of the Circle in Red Bluff. "They talk about how many patients it has helped, how many people have been trained on it. Everybody loves this final luncheon."

A widening membership

Since the Circles began several years ago, word has spread. And more women join each year.

"It's just a joy," says Marion Nebergall, a founding member of the Redding Circle. "Everybody in the Circle has the same objective," she says. "We get to choose where our money goes. And we all work together to do the best thing for our hospital."

Beyond *the* BASICS

Skill you can trust, people you know

If you've ever traveled out of the North State for surgery, you might be surprised to learn this: Nearly a dozen surgeons perform more than 2,200 procedures a year at Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta.

And according to The Joint Commission—an independent group that evaluates hospital safety—they're among the best in the nation.

Life on your terms

"A lot of people can't drive to Redding or Medford for care," says Director of Surgical Services Larry Hand, RN. That's why the medical center offers a full range of procedures close to home.

After nearly 27 years at the hospital, Hand knows just how much a person's life can be improved by the right surgery at the right time. Whether it helps people walk without a cane or see to drive, surgery gives them the chance to live life normally again, he says.

From common to complex

Mt. Shasta's surgeons specialize in areas such as:

General surgery. These doctors provide lifesaving trauma care and preventive care, like colonoscopies.

OB-GYN care. This includes C-sections and other women's surgeries.

Orthopaedic surgery. These experts do things like:

- Total hip and knee replacements
- Hip resurfacing
- Rotator cuff and ACL repair

Spine and neck surgery. Mt. Shasta's surgeons can operate on any part of the spine. "And we have a complete pain management program that works along with that," Hand says.

Eye surgery. These physicians use some of the most advanced technology in the North State to perform cataract surgery and other eye procedures.

Great people, great results

Many of Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta's doctors, nurses, and staff grew up in the community. And they're proud to be making a difference here. "We're taking care of people that we know," Hand says. "That drives us to give our best every day."

Recently, The Joint Commission named Mt. Shasta a Top Performer for surgical care, says Quality Director Sharon Piva. It's a distinction that recognizes the medical center's commitment to patient safety. Hospitals earn the award by routinely following practices that have been shown to make patients safer.

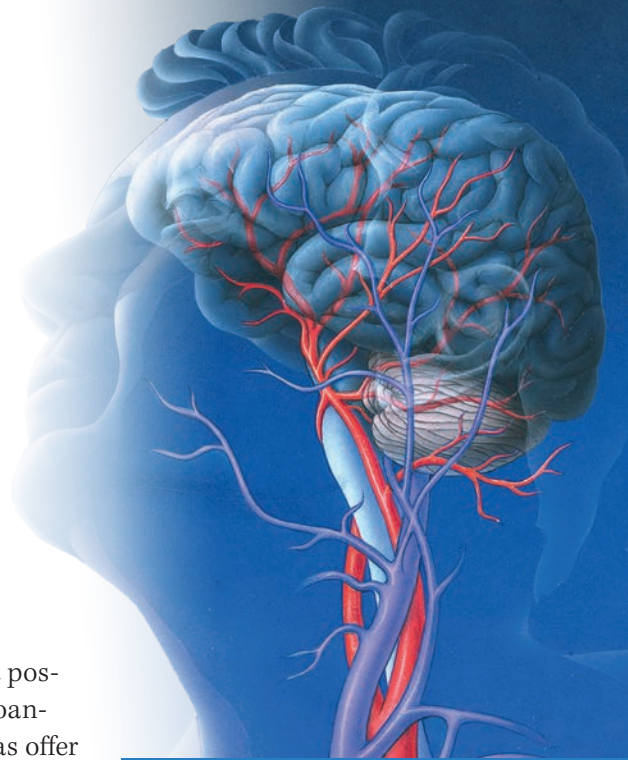
"We want to do the right thing, each and every time, for every single patient," Piva says. "That's something we believe in."



Want to see a Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta surgeon? Call 888.628.1948 for a referral.



A new age in stroke care



There's something of a revolution going on in stroke care. And Mercy Medical Center Redding is about to bring a game-changer to the North State, says Deborah Wedick, RN, Stroke Coordinator and Telemedicine Manager.

Racing the clock

Most strokes are caused by a clot blocking blood flow to the brain. Medication can break up the clot, but it must be given quickly—within a few hours. Outside that window, surgery is often the best option to get blood flowing again and keep brain tissue from dying.

In the past, patients who needed that lifesaving procedure, called a thrombectomy, had to go to Sacramento. There, special equipment allows doctors to remove a clot up to 12 hours after symptoms begin.

But soon, Mercy Medical Center Redding will offer the same level of care.

“That will make us the only medical center from Sacramento to Portland to perform that

procedure,” says Kevin Baird, RN, Stroke Program Coordinator.

Pinpoint precision

The equipment that makes it possible is called a biplane neuroangiography system. Its cameras offer a detailed view of blood vessels in the patient's head and neck.

Using those images, doctors can see exactly where the stroke is happening and check for brain tissue that's still living. Then a specialized surgeon can insert a small tube into an artery and take the clot out.

If you think someone may be having a stroke, call 911 right away. Don't wait!

“It revolutionizes the care of stroke,” Baird says. “You can actually see the patient improving right there.” And he adds that 1 in 4 people who have

The biplane suite is expected to open in June. Watch your local paper for open house details.

this procedure comes out of it with little or no long-term disability.

Leading the way

The new equipment is part of a five-year plan to become a comprehensive stroke center. That includes “a big push to bring in the best and the brightest,” Wedick says.

The medical center recently hired an endovascular neurologist, a surgeon with the skills to operate the biplane unit and remove clots. There are plans to add other experts to the staff as well. And the hospital has built a new neuro-intensive care unit.

“We're leading the way in neuro care,” Wedick says.



From left: Luke Rawlings, MD; Assembly member Brian Dahle; Deborah Wedick, RN; Jesse Wells, MD; and Kevin Baird, RN.

You're **family** here

Community clinics: Routine care near home

Dignity Health North State's three hospitals are here for you in a medical emergency.

But what about your everyday needs? Did you know we also offer urgent and primary care at our community clinics in Shasta, Siskiyou, and Tehama counties?

The clinics provide primary care for all ages and stages of life. You can get walk-in treatment for minor illnesses or injuries. Or you can schedule time for routine preventive care, such as checkups and vaccines.

Now serving rural Tehama County

In 2016, St. Elizabeth Community Hospital will open the newest

community clinic, Solano Street Clinic, in Corning. It will offer much-needed access to primary care in rural Tehama County.

"Our bilingual staff will be able to see at least 5,000 children and adults the first year," says Kristine Kuebli, Director of Rural Health Clinics with Dignity Health.

Appointments are easy to make. And the clinic is closer to home than the hospital for many.

Patients will still have access to all resources. "The clinic is 25 miles from St. Elizabeth, but the electronic health records connect them," Kuebli says. This makes it easy for your care team to share information and help you get the care you need.

Find a clinic near you



Juan Sarmiento, PA-C,
Solano Street Clinic

For walk-in and primary care in Shasta, Siskiyou, and Tehama counties, visit the Dignity Health Community Clinic nearest you. All our clinics are open Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm.

- **Opening May 2016! Solano Street Clinic**
2126 Solano St., Corning
530.824.4002
- **Dignity Health Pine Street Clinic**
408 Pine St., Mt. Shasta
530.926.7196
- **Mt. Shasta Community Clinic**
912 Pine St., Mt. Shasta
530.926.7131
- **Lake Shastina Community Clinic**
16337 Everhart Drive, Lake Shastina
530.938.2297
- **Mercy Family Health Center**
2480 Sonoma St., Redding
530.225.7800
- **Dignity Health Medical Group—North State Care Centers**
 - ▶ 2510 Airpark Drive, Suite 301, Redding
530.242.3500
 - ▶ 1755 Court St., Redding
530.247.8800
 - ▶ 2528 Sister Mary Columba Drive, Red Bluff
530.528.6100
 - ▶ 2526 Sister Mary Columba Drive, Red Bluff
530.528.6150



More about Solano Street

Solano Street Clinic's health care team can help with:

- Physicals for work, school, or sports
- Well-child exams
- Immunizations

- Minor surgeries
- Women's health care

And there's a convenient draw station on-site if you need follow-up tests.

The clinic accepts Medi-Cal,

Medicare, Veteran's Choice, and commercial insurance plans. And there's a sliding fee scale for those without insurance.

Sit. Stay. Visit.

Humankindness
+ puppy love
= a great team

When Debbie Laxague, RN, adopted a dog from a Redding animal shelter several years ago, she thought she was picking out a pet. But she was also picking out a volunteer gig.

Laxague and her dog, Moon, are the first pet therapy team at Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta. They visit patients in the hospital and at local assisted living centers.

Laxague provides the conversation. Moon provides the unconditional love.

The dog did it

So what prompted a retired obstetrics nurse to join the world of pet therapy?

“It was the dog,” she says. “Moon is such a people dog. He has a way of charming them. And people just really respond to him.”

Mercy Medical Center Redding already had a successful pet therapy program. So Laxague began making the case for a similar program at Mt. Shasta. In the meantime, she and Moon were certified by Pet Partners, a national animal therapy group.



Debbie Laxague, RN, and her dog, Moon.

Laxague and Moon are the first members of Mt. Shasta’s team and are hoping others will want to join.

A doggie treat

During their most recent visit, a nurse asked Laxague if she and Moon could visit a patient in the intensive care unit who’d been talking about how much she missed her own dogs.

The pair were happy to oblige.

“The woman was obviously very ill, but she was so glad to see a dog,” Laxague says. It was a rewarding experience for everyone—including the charming pound hound.



Unleash your talents! To learn about volunteering with the pet therapy program, call 530.926.6111. Ask for the auxiliary.

Shedding some light on Moon



Moon agreed to answer a few questions for *Be Well*. Interestingly, this big dog of unknown heritage speaks with a hint of a British accent.

Q. What is your go-to ice breaker with patients?

A. I’ve learned that if I do this little twirl with my head and tilt it sideways, it warms up even the most resistant person.

Q. What do you like best about visiting with patients?

A. My favorite thing is when they lean their heads down so that I can snuggle their ears.

Q. If Hollywood made a movie about your life, who should play you?

A. Lassie...unless Hugh Grant played a dog at one time.

Get where **YOU NEED** to go

Let the Shasta Senior Nutrition Program help you on your way

When Beverly Burks

needs to see her doctor, she calls us. When Delores Mitchell volunteers at the Anderson Historical Society Museum, we get her there.

Who are we? A transportation service provided by Dignity Health's Shasta Senior Nutrition Program. With just 24 hours' notice, our vehicles can pick up people ages 60 and older—and others with special needs—and take them where they need to go.

Door-to-door service

"We go nearly a mile beyond where the city bus goes," says Transportation Manager Lisa White. "We pick up people at their door and take them shopping, to visit friends—pretty much anywhere they want."

A \$2 donation is suggested for most one-way trips. But the service is available to everyone, regardless of ability to pay. Vans with wheelchair lifts are available too.

"I use their service a lot," says Beverly, 82.



Now serving **44,482**

During the fiscal year 2014–2015, our dining centers served a total of 44,482 meals. And our transportation system provided 19,513 rides.

"Sometimes I take the van two or three times a week. It picks me up right at the door. It's super."

For Delores, also 82, the service represents independence. She doesn't drive anymore. She has family in the area, but they're often busy. "It makes me feel good that I don't have to call on them all the time," she says.

Lunch, anyone?

For those who'd like a little company and a healthy midday meal, the vans make regular stops at Shasta Senior Nutrition Program's four dining centers in the area.

The suggested donation is \$3 per meal. But everyone is welcome, regardless of ability to pay.

"The food is really good. I've always liked it," says Delores. She usually lunches at the dining center in Redding. But on special occasions, she'll take a van out to the Anderson center.

The other two centers are located in Burney and Shasta Lake.

"I'm glad to take the seniors to the lunch centers when they want to go or get to medical appointments when they need to," White says. "They say that if it wasn't for transportation services, they couldn't get around."

"I just feel like I'm well taken care of," Delores adds. "It brings a lot to my life."



Need a lift? Call 530.226.3075 to set up a ride. Or call 530.226.3060 to learn more about the services offered by the Shasta Senior Nutrition Program.



Lunch is served Monday through Friday to adults ages 60 and older. After their meal, seniors can enjoy activities like live music, dancing, or bingo.

He weighed just **19.5 ounces**



When Travis Arledge was born, he weighed just 1 pound, 3.5 ounces. One person gave his frightened parents hope: Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Nurse Joann Thorpe, RNC, of Mercy Medical Center Redding—the winner of the 2015 national NICU Heroes Award.



Chelsea Arledge went into labor at 23 weeks pregnant in July 2008. Her baby wasn't due until November.

It was a beautiful day in Redding that July, sunny and warm, but this first-time mother was afraid. When her water had broken at 20 weeks, doctors told her the baby couldn't survive; he needed more time.

In pain and frightened, convinced she was going to lose her baby, Arledge felt helpless and hopeless. That's when Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Nurse Joann Thorpe, RNC,

came into the delivery room and took her hand.

"We're going to do everything we can to save your baby," Thorpe said.

"She was the first person to say that," Arledge remembers, "and I immediately trusted her."

The tiniest patient

Travis was born weighing just 1 pound, 3.5 ounces. At just over 23 weeks' gestation, his lungs weren't developed. He would need to be on a ventilator for the first two months of his life. For eight days, he lived in the

‘The best reward’

Joann Thorpe, RNC, became a neonatal nurse 27 years ago, a few years after her youngest daughter, Jodie, was born with respiratory distress, which made a stay in the NICU necessary. She remembers the terror and uncertainty; she knows well how hard it can be to understand the medical terminology. A nurse helped her understand, and she paid it forward.

She’s now a grandmother, and admits to thinking about retiring. But she can’t imagine not caring for babies and not being an advocate for the parents.

“Every day when I go to the hospital, there’s another family, another crisis,” she says. “Another baby to help. That’s why I do what I do.”

It’s also why Thorpe is a natural recipient of the third annual NICU Heroes Award, sponsored by Hand to Hold, a national NICU parent support organization, and Mead Johnson Nutrition Company, a leader in pediatric nutrition. Thorpe elected to have her \$2,500 award go to Mercy Foundation North to purchase rocker devices that can help soothe drug-exposed infants in Mercy Medical Center Redding’s NICU.

“I am so unbelievably honored to be recognized,” she says. “Helping babies and their families, becoming part of their lives forever, is truly the best reward.”

Thorpe’s daughter Jodie is now 31 and has two daughters, Shannon and Reagann. When Reagann turned 4, Chelsea and Joseph Arledge; Travis; and his little sister, Ava, were all at the birthday party.

◀ There’s a special connection between Travis Arledge and Joann Thorpe, RNC.

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Mercy Medical Center Redding, often attended to by Thorpe.

“Travis was on the edge of viability,” Thorpe explains. “But he fought for life from the moment he was born.”

She also watched over Arledge and her husband, Joseph, who was serving in Iraq at the time and had been granted emergency leave. Thorpe knew they all had a long road ahead.

When a baby is born prematurely, it can tear a family apart. The fear and stress of watching a child struggle

with every breath is overwhelming. There are medical decisions to be made, medical jargon to decipher.

“People need to know what’s ahead, what the baby will go through,” Thorpe says. “They also need to know that there’s hope, especially when dealing with the greatest crisis of their lives.”

A very special connection

She encouraged the parents to take pictures of Travis, to document his life and his progress. At one point, his dad’s wedding ring fit all the way up Travis’ tiny arm. It was



▲ Close-knit: (front row, from left) Ava and Travis Arledge, (back row, from left) Joseph and Chelsea Arledge, and Joann Thorpe, RNC.

44 days until his parents could hold him, and by then he had been transferred to a highly specialized NICU that could help his lungs develop more. But it was Thorpe who helped teach them how to change Travis’ diaper and helped them survive.

When Travis was finally released from the hospital, he weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces. Today, he’s 7 years old and is in the first grade. Though still small for his age, and a bit of a finicky eater, he’s healthy.

And his mom is paying the hope forward, studying to be a neonatal nurse. She wants to provide other frightened parents with the support and love—the hope—she first received one day in July 2008 from a nurse named Joann Thorpe.

The good life

Adult Day Program gives seniors a helping hand to live their best

“I have one of those blessing jobs.”

That’s Kay Hudelson talking. She’s the program director for Dignity Health’s Golden Umbrella Adult Day Program and Adult Day Health Care. And she absolutely loves her job.

The Adult Day Program serves up meals, activities, and daytime care for people with Alzheimer’s disease and other conditions. Adult Day Health Care provides medical treatment, like nursing care, family support, and speech and physical therapy.

More than 400 people have taken part in the two programs since 2008. Their average age: 82.

“Our whole goal is to help seniors live as independently as possible

for as long as possible,” says Hudelson. “We pick them up at their homes and keep them active in as many ways as we can.”

At the Adult Day Program, that includes playing bingo and other games, gardening, and doing crafts. There’s a beauty shop on-site as well. And both programs provide healthy meals.

Maybe the best description of what these programs do came from a nurse who noticed a

former patient of hers taking part in the Adult Day Program. The patient used to need extensive care at home. Now the woman was feeding herself again with special utensils provided by the program. She was playing bingo using an easel adapted for her eyesight.

“I finally realize what you do here,” the nurse told Hudelson. “You give them back their lives.”



Call 530.226.3004 to learn more about enrolling in the Adult Day Program or Adult Day Health Care.



Under the Golden Umbrella

Golden Umbrella is a social service agency that reaches out to seniors and adults with disabilities.

Some of its programs and services are designed to help people stay at home and avoid going into a skilled nursing facility. Other programs give seniors the opportunity to share their knowledge and experience with people in need.

Golden Umbrella can help low-income seniors pay their power bills. It can provide a friendly voice on the other end of a daily phone call. And it can offer families the reassurance they need that, while they’re out taking care of life’s duties, their loved one is being cared for with compassion and skill.



From paper to PEOPLE

The spirit of humankindness reaches beyond our walls

The work of the Community Health program starts on paper, says Alexis Ross, Community Benefit and Strategy Manager for Dignity Health. But it doesn't stay there.

Project ideas spring from a report written every three years about the current health needs in our community. But in the end, it's about people. Community Health provides a safety net for people in our area who need services most.

Here are a few ways we put Community Health dollars to work in 2015.

'Healthier Living' workshops

Mercy Medical Center Redding sponsors workshops to help people with chronic diseases learn to manage their health. They're free to Shasta County residents with type 2 diabetes, heart disease, or fibromyalgia.

As a teacher, Ross sees firsthand the power of learning. "People really change and grow," she says.

Cancer support services

Thanks in part to a \$64,000 Susan G. Komen grant, a nurse navigator is on hand at St. Elizabeth Community Hospital for patients with lung and breast cancer. She helps with everything from tracking test results to getting people to their appointments.

"Having a nurse navigator for

support is crucial for our patients," Ross says.

Health education

At Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta, health education is the priority. Funding also supports screenings for cancer, diabetes, and heart disease.

When people understand their medical conditions, Ross says, that empowers them to take charge of their health.



Interested in applying for a Dignity Health community grant? Learn how at dignityhealth.org.



It all adds up

In fiscal year 2015, Mercy Medical Center Redding, St. Elizabeth Community Hospital, and Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta provided \$59,369,819 in patient financial assistance, unreimbursed costs of Medicaid and Medicare, community health improvement services, and other community health benefits.



Lunch for kids and much more

Together, our three hospitals provided \$275,216 in grants to local non-profits. Some of the projects funded were:

- **The 211 phone service.** Mercy Medical Center Redding helps support the United Way's free phone line. It connects people to services like food banks and crisis resources.
- **Family counseling.** St. Elizabeth Community Hospital helped fund the Wraparound Counseling Program. It's a service of Northern California Child Development, Inc. The low-fee program helps families build on their own strengths to improve their lives.
- **A children's lunch program.** Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta helped fund Great Northern Corporation's summer lunch program. Kids who participated in the program also received healthy snack bags during school holidays.



What we do

The pulmonary rehabilitation program helps improve the quality of life for people with chronic pulmonary conditions like Vern Klein's. The six-week program teaches people how to conserve energy—and thus breathe—how to deal with indoor and outdoor pollution, how to travel, how to know if you can exercise, and how to use controlled breathing techniques.

Pulmonary rehabilitation program

Learning to breathe again

Vern Klein became a firefighter at 18. He loved the adventure, but more than that he loved the idea of helping people. So he became an EMT at Mercy Medical Center Redding, transporting emergency patients to the hospital.

Klein also had asthma, not a good combination when fighting fires, and by 2012, he was sick and had difficulty breathing. Like so many of the patients he had transported over his 30-year career, he soon found himself at Mercy, where doctors discovered a tumor on his right lung and he was diagnosed with cancer. When he underwent surgery to remove a lower portion of the right lung, his doctors also discovered severe damage to his left lung. In fact, his breathing capacity was at only 33 percent.

A grim diagnosis

Klein had lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

For the next three years, he was in and out of the hospital every three or four months, each time requiring a four- to five-day stay. He could no longer work, and even ordinary house chores took forever. Changing the sheets on his bed could take over an hour. He was getting discouraged.

He learned to breathe again in the pulmonary rehabilitation program.

But in March 2015, his outlook became brighter. That's when Mercy Medical Center Redding opened its pulmonary rehabilitation program, and Klein became the first patient.

Many little steps

In his rehabilitation program, Klein learned how to take a shower. "The heat and steam from a shower constricts breathing," he explains. "When you get short of breath, you panic. Now I know to take a shower when the room is completely vented."

He learned how to eat small meals instead of the big three. "It just

takes up too much space to eat a big meal, and I can't breathe."

He also learned how to stop himself from going into a COPD episode. When he feels his breath start to constrict, he instantly recognizes it and can now put his mind somewhere else instead of focusing on the fact that he's starving for air. He has even learned how to go for a walk. When he started the program, he couldn't walk down the sidewalk. After the program, he could walk the length of Shasta Dam without any issues.

100 percent improvement

The prognosis for someone with COPD is never good, because it never gets better. But life with COPD can change for the better. Previously, Klein was constantly hooked to an oxygen tank. Now he uses oxygen only at night. His life has improved 100 percent, according to him, all because he learned to breathe again in the pulmonary rehabilitation program at Mercy Medical Center Redding.

Lung cancer screening

Put your **Worries to rest**

If you've ever been a smoker, chances are you've thought about lung cancer: *Could I have it?* Today there's an opportunity to screen for it to help answer that question—and hopefully give you peace of mind.

The screening—called a low-dose spiral computed tomography (CT) scan—can find lung cancer in its early, most treatable stages. And it's available through a program launched last fall at St. Elizabeth Community Hospital. You can get this screening at St. Elizabeth Community Hospital by obtaining a referral from your primary care doctor.

"It's quick and painless and it saves lives," says James O'Brien, Supervisor of Imaging Services. The scan can help find cancer before it spreads. So it's the only screening that lowers the risk of dying from lung cancer.

In fact, experts suggest that CT scanning might help prevent more than 20,000 lung cancer deaths in the U.S. every year.

Should you be screened?

If you've ever had a pack-a-day habit—even if you've quit since—the screening may be right for you. Experts recommend that longtime smokers ages 55 to 74 get a yearly screening. If you have other lung cancer risk factors as well, screening may start as young as 50.

If this describes your smoking history, most health insurance plans cover the cost, says Jaci Franseth, RN, the program's nurse navigator. But financial help may also be available if you need it. "We're committed to saving lives," she says.

Beyond screenings

The lung cancer screening program offers more than just answers—it's about support too.

For example, if you're ready to quit smoking, we'll refer you to a free program that can help you kick the habit.

And if a CT scan finds something abnormal:

- Within two days, you'll learn the results. And so will your primary doctor.
- Within two weeks, you'll meet with a lung cancer specialist—an oncologist or a pulmonologist. This doctor can explain your options for further screening and treatment.

And you'll have the support of the nurse navigator. "I'll be available to answer your questions and help arrange any care you need," Franseth says. From treatment through recovery, we'll always be here to help.

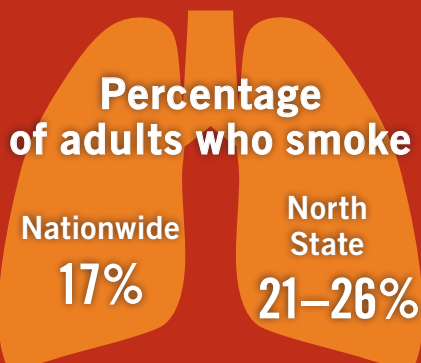


Jaci Franseth, RN,
Nurse Navigator

 **Screenings for lung cancer save lives. Call 530.529.8247 to find out if it's right for you.**

The local picture

Finding lung cancer early is especially crucial in our area, where smoking rates are higher than in the rest of the nation. Smoking is the leading cause of death from lung cancer.



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Meet the helpers

Volunteers make a healing difference every day

If it's a Tuesday morning, chances are the first person you'll see as you enter Mercy Medical Center Redding is Donna Leistinger. And you can count on a welcoming smile.

Since 2010, she's volunteered almost every Tuesday at the Information Desk, greeting patients and their families. "I'm the face of the hospital when you walk through the door," she says. It's a privilege she takes seriously.

"I try to let everyone know they're in a safe, caring place," says Leistinger, who is also president of the Mercy Guild, the volunteer arm of Mercy Medical Center Redding. "It's my job to spread some kindness during what is often a stressful time."

That's a good job description for all the people who lend a hand at Dignity Health North State's three hospitals. All told, nearly 400 people volunteered tens of thousands of hours last year alone.

A glimpse at giving

Volunteers contribute in countless ways. They drive patients to and from medical visits. They surprise new mothers with homemade baby blankets. And they update

family members about a loved one's condition.

They work behind the scenes too. You'll find them filing papers and answering phones to help each hospital run smoothly. "Where there's a need, we'll help fill it," says

Linda Ezzat, who serves on the St. Elizabeth Community Hospital Auxiliary Board of Directors.

Many volunteers also help out with fundraisers—from modest used-book sales to large community events.

The money raised helps provide everything from medical equipment, like CT scanners and fetal monitors, to touches of comfort, like plate warmers for patients' meals.

The common thread? "We help deliver exceptional care," Ezzat says.

Generosity has rewards

As much as they give, Dignity Health volunteers say they receive even more. They form lasting friendships. And often, they develop new skills.

But most important, "we have the chance to make a positive difference in people's lives," says JoAnn Caskey, a volunteer at the Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta

"We have the chance to make a positive difference in people's lives."



Libby Hall, Mercy Mt. Shasta Gift Shop Volunteer, gives out kindness every day.

Join our team

There's a volunteer opportunity to match every interest at Dignity Health North State. To learn more, call:

Deanna Gunter
Mercy Medical Center Redding
530.225.7550

Kristen Behrens
St. Elizabeth Community Hospital
530.529.8038

Marina Facchin
Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta
530.926.7147

Gift Shop for nearly 10 years. "And though we're not looking for anything in return, we're paid back in priceless ways—with smiles and gratitude."

CHARITY

When temperatures were **soaring**, so was **compassion**

It was late summer in 2015 when one of the chemotherapy nurses from the oncology department at Mercy Medical Center Redding, leaving the hospital at the end of her shift, discovered a young girl in the parking lot, half asleep and lying on the sidewalk in 100-degree weather.

It turned out that the girl had just come from the hospital emergency department, where she had been diagnosed with a urinary tract infection. She was homeless. She had no food, no water, and no way to get her prescription filled. The nurse immediately went back to the hospital; got a wheelchair; and brought the girl to her workplace, the outpatient cancer clinic.

All for one

Other nurses worked together to get the girl cooled off. They gave her food and—more importantly—water, and had her prescription

filled at Owen's Pharmacy within 20 minutes.

But of course they didn't want the girl to go back out into the city alone. What was there to do? They called a social worker, who found the girl a room at the Good News Mission. The nurse navigator got her a taxi to take her to the mission. It was there that they discovered that the girl had come to Redding a year ago with her boyfriend, who had then left her. The nurse navigator called the girl's mother in Colorado. The mother immediately sent money for her daughter to travel home, which she did the next day.

Because of the oncology nurse, the entire outpatient cancer clinic staff, the nurse navigator, the social worker, and the people at Good News Mission, a homeless girl who was found suffering in the hospital's parking lot is homeless no more.

Hello humankindness!



Want to make someone's day? You have the power to make a real impact on the health and well-being of the people around you. We all do. Look for ways each day to spread a little kindness.



READ A STORY. SHARE A STORY. Acts of humankindness can inspire and heal each of us. Visit dignityhealth.org/stories.

The Great Kindness Challenge

Helping students discover the power of humankindness

Smile at 25 people. Slip a nice note into a buddy's backpack. Help your teacher. Sit with a new group of kids at lunch.

None of this is typical homework. But in the last week of January, the 238 students of Mt. Shasta Elementary School brushed up on more than their ABCs. That's when the school—along with more than 6,000 other schools and 3 million students nationwide—participated in the Great Kindness Challenge, sponsored in part by Dignity Health.

It's an annual event in which students try to complete 50 acts of kindness in a single school week. Launched by the nonprofit organization Kids for Peace, its purpose is to help create a culture of compassion in elementary, middle, and high schools.



Fired up with kindness

The kids at Mt. Shasta Elementary School were up for the challenge. "Together, they performed thousands of acts of kindness," says Principal Leeanna Rizzo. "They took this on and really embraced it—and not merely during the school day."

Encouraged to continue the challenge at home, they surprised siblings with compliments, gave parents extra hugs, and did chores without being asked.

"This is such a wonderful opportunity for children," says Rizzo. "If you sow the seeds of kindness, it becomes part of a child's makeup. And a kind child will grow into a kind adult."

A whole county steps up

Karla Stroman, Administrator for Expanded Learning Programs with Tehama County's Department of Education, agrees. Some

13,000 Tehama County students participated in this year's challenge.

"This is one of the most exciting and important events I've ever been involved in," Stroman says.

Schools kicked off the week with kindness rallies. Kids kept kindness journals and sent "kindness grams" to fellow students. They even sent get-well cards to patients at St. Elizabeth Community Hospital. And the city of Red Bluff proclaimed Jan. 25 through 29 "Great Kindness Challenge Week" for the entire town.

Nationwide, thousands of Dignity Health doctors and employees also took part. They made special efforts to spread kindness at work. "Just one act of kindness creates a chain reaction that doesn't end," says Stroman. "This is such a powerful way to build character in young people."

Hello humankindness!

Want to make someone's day? Let another shopper jump ahead of you in line. Smile at a stranger. Help a child who's struggling at school. Look for ways each day to spread a little kindness.

COOL MOVES

5 tips for exercising in the heat

Whether you're out for your daily run or a power walk, be smart in the heat. As the mercury rises, so does your risk of getting painful muscle cramps or feeling light-headed when you exercise—or even becoming so overheated that your life is at risk.

And while hot weather can make anyone sick, it's particularly risky for people who work out in it. A key reason: Both exercise and high temperatures increase your core body temperature.

You don't need to skip warm-weather workouts. But protect yourself from a heat-triggered illness, including heatstroke, a potentially deadly medical emergency. These safeguards are especially important when it's humid. Humidity keeps sweat from evaporating, which is how your body cools down in the heat.

"Acclimatization is extremely important to the safety and success of all athletes including competitive, industrial, and recreational," says Dale Mendenhall, DPT, with the Physical Therapy and Wellness Center in Red Bluff, California.

Now, here are the specifics:

1 Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate. Don't wait to drink until you're thirsty. By that time, your body is well on the way to becoming dehydrated, which makes it hard to sweat and cool down. Generally, it's a good idea to drink 7 to 10 ounces of fluid every 15 to 20 minutes during exercise. Water is fine. But if you exercise continuously for more than an hour or two, you need a sports drink to replace lost electrolytes. Check with your doctor about



how much fluid to drink if you take water pills or you've been advised to limit fluids.

2 Use common sense. Work out in the cooler parts of the day, either early in the morning or early in the evening. When it's hot out, also dial back the intensity and length of your workouts. And strongly consider moving your workouts inside—to a gym, for example.



Dale Mendenhall, DPT

3 Dress for the weather. Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.

4 Ease into the heat. Not used to exercising in high temperatures? Then give your body time to adjust by gradually increasing how active you are over 7 to 10 days.

5 Pay attention to your body. Stop all activity and get to a cool place if you feel faint or weak.

Sources: American College of Sports Medicine; American Council on Exercise; American Heart Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Take heat-related illnesses seriously. Call 911 or come to our emergency department if you suspect someone is sick from the heat.

Calendar of events

Mercy Medical Center Redding



Call **888.628.1948** to register, or register online at **Redding.Mercy.org** for classes offered at Mercy Medical Center Redding. Seating is limited, and registration is strongly encouraged. Classes and support groups are FREE unless otherwise noted.

Advance Health Care Directive Class

Discuss the process for creating a legal document recording your care and treatment preferences.

Annual Adopt a Senior

Help spread holiday cheer and keep seniors in our community healthy, independent, and warm. For more information on how to participate, call Golden Umbrella at **530.223.6034**.

Bereavement

For anyone who has suffered a loss

Closed group; eight-week sessions
Tuesdays, 10 to 11:30 am

Mercy Hospice, 1544 Market St.,
Redding

Free; registration required. Call
530.245.4070.

For children and teens

Closed group; scheduled based
on need; five-week sessions.

Registration required. Call
530.245.4070.

New Beginnings: Widows Support Group

Third Thursdays, 11 am to Noon

Mercy Oaks Senior Nutrition
Center, small dining room

FREE; no registration required. Call
530.245.4070 for information.

Spousal Loss

Every Tuesday (except the fifth
Tuesday of the month),
2:30 to 4 pm

Mercy Hospice, 1544 Market St.,
Redding

Four-week sessions. Registration
required. Call **530.245.4070**.

Childbirth Preparation and Breastfeeding Classes

These free classes are held
monthly. Days and times vary to
accommodate busy schedules.
For more information, please call
888.628.1948.

Complimentary Spine and Joint Replacement Patient Education Class

Twice monthly, Noon to 2 pm and
5 to 7 pm

Mercy Medical Center,
Auditoriums C and D

To learn more, please call the
Center for Joint and Spine Health
at **530.225.7314**.

Light Up a Life, Presented by Mercy Hospice

Honor and celebrate loved ones
who are no longer with us. Enjoy
music, readings, prayer, and the
lighting of the Tree of Life. Make
a donation in memory of a loved
one, which includes a light on the
tree and inclusion in the Book of
Remembrance. Mercy's lobby will
display the Tree of Life and Book
of Remembrance throughout the
holiday season. For more informa-
tion, please call **530.245.4070**.

Living Well With Better Nutrition/Diabetes

Meets twice a month for
two-hour sessions

Learn more about nutrition,
diabetes, and habits for a
better life. For more information
and to register, please call
888.628.1948.

Quit for Good—Free 4-Week Smoking Cessation Course

Tuesdays and Thursdays,
2 to 4 pm, four-week sessions

Floyd Morgan Family Cancer
Resource Center

For more information and to reg-
ister, please call **888.628.1948**.



St. Elizabeth Community Hospital



Call **888.628.1948** to register, or register online at **RedBluff.Mercy.org**, for classes offered at St. Elizabeth Community Hospital. Seating is limited, and registration is strongly encouraged. Most classes are FREE and support groups are FREE unless otherwise noted.

Bereavement

Thursdays, 3 to 4:30 pm

Coyne Center

For anyone who has suffered a
loss. For more information, please
call **530.528.4207**.

Childbirth Preparation

Thursdays, May 19 and 26,
6 to 9 pm

Thursdays, July 14 and 21,
6 to 9 pm

Mondays, September 12 and 19,
6 to 9 pm

Mondays, October 17 and 24,
6 to 9 pm

Thursdays, December 8 and 15,
6 to 9 pm

Coyne Center, Columba Room

This two-class series helps prepare
women and their partners for labor.





Community BLS

Second Tuesdays, 6 to 10 pm
Coyne Center, Columba Room
For more information or to register, please call **888.628.1948**.

Crab Feed

Early January
Community Center
Come out to the crab feed fundraiser to support the auxiliary. For more information, please call **530.824.6410**.

Diabetes Support Group

First Mondays, 6:30 to 8:30 pm
Coyne Center
No need to register.

Earth Day Celebration

Join us in celebration of Earth Day and learning how to protect Mother Earth. To learn more, call **530.529.8201**.

HIRE (Head Injury Recreational Entity)

Mondays, 10 am to 2 pm
Coyne Center, Wright Room
For more information, please call **530.529.2059**.

Light Up a Life

Wednesday, December 14, 7 pm
Coyne Center, Columba Room
This event honors loved ones who have passed away. To learn more, call **530.528.4207**. No need to register.

Living Well With Better Nutrition

Last Wednesday of every odd month, 1 to 3 pm
Coyne Center, Columba Room
This class is for people who want to learn more about nutrition and habits for a better life.

Living Well With Diabetes

Last Wednesday of every odd month, 3 to 5 pm
Coyne Center, Columba Room
This is a comprehensive overview of diabetes: medications, glucose monitoring, and meal planning.

Lupus/Fibromyalgia Support Group

Tuesdays, 5:30 to 8:30 pm
Coyne Center, Columba Room
For more information, please call **530.529.3029**.

McAuley Circle

Meets three times a year: summer, fall, early spring
This women's philanthropic group meets for three special luncheons to learn about new developments in local health care and specific projects, equipment, and services in need of financial support. Each member is asked to contribute \$1,000 a year to pool together to support a project chosen by vote during the February luncheon. For more information, call **530.528.8016**. Turn to page 6 for more information.

Overeaters Anonymous

Wednesdays, 6:30 to 7:30 pm
Coyne Center, Russell Room
For more information, please call **530.528.8937**.

Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta



Call the numbers below to register for classes at Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta. Seating is limited, and registration is strongly encouraged. Classes and support groups are FREE unless otherwise noted.

Castle Crags Century Bike Ride

Saturday, June 18, ride begins between 5:30 and 10:30 am
Mt. Shasta City Park
Hosted by the Mt. Shasta Rotary Club and Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta. Start times between 5:30 and 10:30 am, depending on which course you ride. For more information, visit **castlecragscentury.com**.

Childbirth Class

Tuesdays, quarterly, 6 to 9 pm
Shasta Room
Please call **530.926.6111, ext. 331**, to register or for more information.

Dinner With Heart

Saturday, Aug. 20
Mt. Shasta City Park
Annual hospice volunteer fundraising dinner and auction. Call **530.926.6111, ext. 455**, to learn more.

Grief and Loss Support Groups

- Good Grief
- Growing Through Grief
- Hope and Healing

To learn more, please call **530.926.6111, ext. 455**.

Light Up a Life

Thursday, Nov. 17, 6 pm
Hospice Tree, front of hospital
Please call **530.926.6111, ext. 455**, to learn more.

McAuley Circle

Meets three times a year: summer, fall, early spring
This women's philanthropic group meets for special luncheons to learn about new developments in local health care. They select specific projects, equipment, and services, which they support financially. Each member is asked to contribute \$250 to \$1,000 per year. For more information, please call **530.926.9318**. Turn to page 6 for more information.

Orthopaedic Preoperative Class

Thursdays, 9 to 11 am
Please call **530.926.7144** for more information.





**Need a
doctor?**
Call us any day,
anytime, at
888.628.1948.

You could be reading this at home. Instead of in the waiting room.

Online ER Waiting Service™

No one likes waiting, especially in the ER. That's why, at the three Dignity Health North State hospitals, Mercy Medical Center Redding, St. Elizabeth Community Hospital and Mercy Medical Center Mt. Shasta, you can spend less time in the waiting room through our partnership with **InQuicker™**. You can even wait at home. Because when you're not feeling well, being at home is always the kinder option.

Visit mercy.org and click on the **Online ER Waiting** link to get started.

Hello humankindness™

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InQuicker is intended for individuals with non-life and non-limb threatening medical conditions.