

Cortland leads in telemedicine

Cortland Acres and Davis Memorial Hospital are partnering on a new telemedicine initiative that uses state-of-the-art technology to improve patient outcomes while also reducing health care expenses.

The collaboration, unique in West Virginia, allows physicians at Davis Memorial Hospital to use iPads to evaluate Cortland

residents with real-time video and audio. The system already is active thanks to the support of the Davis Health System Foundation and Cortland Foundation. In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture recently announced a grant of \$74,189 that will assist Cortland as well as two other long-term care facilities in the Davis Memorial Hospital service area.

"This is a very exciting development, and I want to thank all of those at Cortland and Davis Memorial who have made it possible," Cortland Administrator Beth Clevenger said. "Most important, of course, is that this new technology will help our residents. Our nursing

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WVHCA recognizes Martha Nichols

Former Cortland Acres resident Martha Nichols, who passed away in late 2013, posthumously received the "Remember Me" award from the West Virginia Health Care Association. Family members accepted on her behalf during a special ceremony at the state Capitol complex in Charleston.

Three children of Martha and J. Pat Nichols – a current Cortland Acres resident – attended the Jan. 22 event along with numerous Cortland officials and friends. Pat A. Nichols, Kevin Nichols and Mary Leavitt were present in Charleston



Kevin Nichols holds a poster created in memory of his mother for the West Virginia Health Care Association's Remember Me event in Charleston. Nichols, who died in late 2013, was a resident at Cortland Acres in Thomas when she was one of six people selected statewide. With Kevin Nichols are Sen. David Sypolt, Sen. Bob Williams, Pat A. Nichols, daughter Mary Leavitt, and Delegate Randy Smith.

to represent the family.

Attending from Cortland were

Administrator Beth Clevenger along with Bobbi Grinnan, Marie Grafton, Cindy Helmick, and board members Dan Bucher and Chris Stadelman.

Although the sun was shining into the great hall at the Culture Center, the temperature was about 4 degrees. During his introduction of the event, which included a total of six honorees from across the state, WVHCA CEO Patrick Kelly said the Tucker County delegation greeted him by saying, "Man, is it warm down here!"

Pat A. Nichols is the president of the

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Nichols

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Cortland Acres board, his father was a founder of the long-term care facility and his mother was a founder of the volunteer group Friends of Cortland Acres.

"Martha Nichols was an amazing person who did so much for the Tucker County community as well as Cortland Acres," Clevenger said. "We're blessed to have had her and so many family members as a part of the Cortland Acres family."

Nichols is the sixth Cortland Acres resident to receive the "Remember Me" award in the past six years. Following is the nomination submitted by Activities Director Marie Grafton.

An outstanding volunteer extraordinaire for over 33 years is Martha Nichols. She has been the backbone of the Friends of Cortland Acres since 1980, when she was one of the founding members. Throughout the years she served as the Vice-President from 1981-1984, President from 1984-1988, and then as the Secretary two times from 1992-1996 and 2000-2004 and was honored in 1989 as the Outstanding Volunteer for Cortland Acres.

Over the years she has assisted in raising thousands of dollars to enhance the quality of the lives of the residents of Cortland Acres by providing for numerous all-expense paid trips, a beautiful courtyard and pavilion, handicap-equipped buses, various equipment, mattresses, chairs, stereo, big-screen TV, dementia sensory items, a well-equipped beauty shop, and assisting with a variety of activities including tea parties, trips or outings, crafts, apple peeling, apple butter stirring and canning, and cleaning of those odoriferous

ramps for dinners to name a few. There have been many a spaghetti dinner where she could be found tossing the noodles on the wall to see if they would stick and thus be ready to dish it up.

Martha is a person who likes to see projects through to completion. In addition to her volunteering at Cortland she has over the years been very active in the Thomas and Canaan Valley Women's Clubs. While a part of the Thomas Women's club, they were instrumental in getting the Gentle Slope trail built at Blackwater Falls making it possible for handicapped people from all over the world to come and see the mighty rushing water of the Blackwater.

Martha has also been very involved in her church, first at St. Veronica's and more recently at St. Thomas Aquinas. Martha until the past few years spearheaded the September monthly birthday party at Cortland, which is sponsored by the Ladies Guild from her church, and she assisted the Priest with the monthly Mass services gathering and encouraging all the Catholic nursing home residents to come participate. When her 6 children were in school, Martha was very active with the Athletic and Band Boosters and of course the PTA. This helped to make Mountaineer and Tucker County High School ball teams and bands forces to be reckoned with.

Martha's father emigrated from Yugoslavia before WW I and then following the war he was able to send for his family. They first settled in Maryland then moved to the little coal mining town of Pierce, WV where Martha was born in 1928. She graduated from Thomas High School as one of the top

six of her class at the age of 17 in 1945.

After hearing several ladies from the town of Pierce describe their love of nursing, Martha decided to follow suit and went to the University of Maryland. Though she did get a little homesick for the hills of West Virginia, she graduated as a Registered Nurse in 1948. She then worked as an RN at the University Hospital in Maryland, Sacred Heart in Cumberland, MD, McGuire Hospital in Richmond, VA, and at the Veterans Hospital in Clarksburg.

While at the VA Hospital she learned the definition of flower vases. One of the patients asked for a vase and she being the naive young nurse asked what size his bouquet was. The patient was trying to request a urinal in a polite manner.

Martha interrupted her nursing career to marry the love of her life, J. Pat, and after her children were in school, Martha returned to assisting the Tucker County Health nurse with a variety of prevention clinics.

Martha has done numerous needlepoint projects that elegantly grace the Chapel at Cortland and St. Thomas Aquinas Church. She continues to be an avid reader even stepping into the technology age using a Kindle. She listens to the ball games of her grandson and tabulates his scores – and he calls his grandma as soon as the games are over for a full report.

This traveler to Ireland to kiss the Blarney stone, to Israel, the Vatican, and the land of her ancestry, came from humble, ordinary beginnings, but what a faithful, get-'em-done life she has lived. They just don't make them like the super, thoughtful, ready-to-serve volunteer Martha Nichols anymore.

Telemedicine

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staff can connect with physicians at Davis Memorial to conduct virtual examinations using durable iPads. The use of video displays and electronic stethoscopes will help doctors determine whether the patient can be treated in-house or whether a trip to the hospital is necessary."

Pam Smithson, RN and director of clinical programs for Davis Memorial Hospital, spearheaded the effort. She works closely with Dr. Steven Toney, MD, who works with Cortland Medical Director Dr. Margaret Kasier to coordinate health care for Cortland's residents and rehabilitation patients.

"While I arrange a couple of days per month to spend at the rural long-term care and skilled nursing facilities in the area, there are days when I cannot make it due to weather or if there is an emergency," Dr. Toney said. "This type of health care initiative is vital to help physicians improve patient outcomes and increase quality of care for our patients."

The growing cost of medical care and gaps in coverage are creating enormous pressure on providers to identify new strategies for delivering cost-effective and quality care to all citizens. Telemedicine uses a web-based system that makes it possible for physicians to perform examinations, diagnose or prescribe treatments for patients even though the physicians and patients are located in separate areas.

Clevenger said she's pleased to have Cortland be on the leading edge of health care delivery to rural West Virginia residents.

"Over the past 35 years we have taken pride in our dedication to providing outstanding care for our residents, and that includes the use of new technology when available and appropriate," Clevenger said. "This is a great example of two health care organizations working together to improve overall outcomes for everyone."



Floyd Crawford of Keyser was the Valentine King at Cortland, while Queen was Betty Lane of Elkins and Baltimore. Cindy Helmick was the Candy Man, and volunteer Alexis Roth was an M&M. The theme was Candyland Sweethearts Valentine Banquet, and residents really enjoyed the Candy "Bar" with lots of different choices.



The residents of Pineview Apartments had their monthly dinner Feb. 14 in honor of Valentine's Day. Along with dinner and fellowship, they exchanged Valentine's and special treats, the residents have a monthly dinner with different themes depending on the holiday in each month and also celebrate residents' birthdays once a month.



Shahan receives certification

Barbara Shahan, RN., Nurse Manager, earned certification as a Resident Assessment Coordinator, sponsored by the West Virginia Health Care Association. The session was offered by the American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordinators (AANAC). Shahan completed seven core courses, and three elective courses to successfully pass the final exam. Committed to the interdisciplinary approach to resident care, the AANAC is a non-profit professional organization that provides support to clinicians involved in the Resident Assessment/Minimum Data Set process.

Shahan is responsible for assisting MDS coordinator, Mary Teets RN., in completing MDS assignments and assists Robin Eye BSN, RN. Her assignments also include infection control and needle-stick reporting, and she oversees the daily responsibilities of the nursing department in all aspects of resident care.

Barb has been employed at Cortland for 25 years. She is married to Bill Shahan and they are the parents of three children: Bill II, Tyson, and Melissa, and six grandchildren: Abigayle, Tyler, Trystan, Hannah, Haley and Hadley.



Brian Cunningham of Laneville carved a bear with a chainsaw in front of Cortland Acres. Many residents checked his progress during the 90 minutes it took.



Cortland Acres
39 Cortland Acres Lane
Thomas, WV 26292
304.463.4181
304.463.4190 (fax)
www.cortlandacres.org

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