A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A Changing of the Guard....

As we do each year at this time, the HealthReach Community Health Centers' Board of Directors says goodbye to departing members and welcomes new members to the Board. Board members typically serve three terms for a total of six years of service. This year’s departing Board members have served since 1999 – the first year of HealthReach Community Health Centers’ “stand alone” status. Please join me in giving a fond farewell to the following individuals:

Joseph Irish (past Board Chair & local business man), Dick Willett (past Finance Committee Chair and CEO of Redington-Fairview Hospital), Roger Shannon, MD (past QA Committee member and retired radiologist), Nona Boyink (past Human Resources Committee Chair and CEO of HealthReach Network), Linda Ray (Provider relations – Elder Services), Bob Card (past Finance Committee member and community member) and Joyce Murphy (community member). We appreciate the contributions these individuals have made to our organization over the last several years and wish to extend a heartfelt “thank-you”.

As we bid farewell to some, we welcome others. Six very special individuals have agreed to join the Board this year. Please join me in welcoming the following individuals to the Board as of July, 2005:

Judd Thompson (State Representative), Sophie Glidden (Maine State office of Rural Health), Roger Renfrew, MD (Physician, Redington Medical Associates), Leonard Dow (Chief Operating Officer, FirstPark), Rebecca Kendall (community member) and Eleanor Jodrey (community member).

We look forward to working with our new Board members over the coming years to assure that quality, affordable health care remains accessible to the residents of rural central and western Maine.

- Stephen E. Walsh, MHA
  President & CEO

National Health Center Week (August 7-13):

HealthReach Community Health Centers Celebrates 30 Years!

National Health Center Week is celebrated August 7-13 to recognize the service and contributions of community health centers across the country.

Observance of National Health Center Week comes as health centers nationally celebrate their 40th anniversary. The federal health center program started out as a pilot project in President Lyndon Johnson’s declared “War on Poverty” in 1965. Now health centers are the family doctor to 15 million people across America. No one is turned away for care, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. Study after study documents the effectiveness of health centers in fighting chronic diseases — such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and asthma — by providing affordable and accessible health care.

As the national movement celebrates its 40th anniversary, HealthReach Community Health Centers (HRCHC) celebrates its 30th.

“Over the past 30 years no fewer than 1,000 employees and volunteers have

(See National Health Center Week, page 4)
“I’ve been a patient of Lovejoy Health Center (LHC) since I was a child, and now my four children are patients of the center as well. I appreciate that the providers and staff here truly know their patients and are in-tune with our health care needs,” says community member Heidi Dow. “Having health care available here close to home means we don’t have to travel the distance to the hospital or elsewhere. This was especially important to me during my first pregnancy when I developed gestational diabetes. I needed to have blood tests a few times each week. Having the health center close to home meant I was able to avoid many trips to Waterville and/or buying a machine, which would have been difficult for me to do. As always, the health center was able to accommodate my needs,” she says.

Lovejoy Health Center in Albion, which opened its doors in 1978, continues to expand to meet the needs of the rural communities it serves. In August, the health center is welcoming Andrew Rice, MD (see “Welcome New Providers,” page 4) as a fifth medical provider, joining Drs. Forrest West, David Austin and Paul Forman and Lynn Cote, FNP. In addition to a full range of primary care services for people of all ages, LHC also provides obstetrical, prenatal and postpartum care. Twenty staff members serve approx 5,000 patients annually during 18,000 visits. A community partner, Dr. Knox, is also on-site offering psychology consults and counseling to the health center’s established patients.

Two of Lovejoy’s physicians, Drs. West and Forman, have been at the health center since it opened. Many of the staff members have been there over 10 years, and three have served over 20 years. This longevity offers patients continuity of care. “We are a very stable practice, and this is important to our patients because it is comforting for them to know that we are here for them and their families,” says Practice Manager Lois Bouchard.

“Working with the staff at Lovejoy is enjoyable,” says Forrest West, MD. “We strive to work as a team to help improve the health of our patients. We are constantly evaluating what we do, and are not afraid to make changes when needed,” he says. In this area, the Lovejoy team truly excels. As you may have read in recent issues of Health Center Highlights, Lovejoy is participating in the Bureau of Primary Health Care’s Health Disparities Collaborative on Diabetes Care, a national, multi-year initiative that seeks to determine a more efficient and effective model of care to manage chronic diseases (see related article, page 5). “Our goal is to close the gap between what’s the known treatment and what is the best actual treatment, by using the chronic care model to actively take care of people with chronic diseases,” says West. “We get the patient more involved in their care so the patient knows as much as possible and can play a more active role in the management of their disease.”

“Working at health center has been very enriching,” says Jeanne Alley, LPN who has been with LHC for over 21 years. “We see a wide variety of patients, often generations within the same family, and it is satisfying to me that we are able to help provide them with the care that they need.” Many in the area, she says, might not have access to care otherwise. “And we are so fortunate that the people in community are very supportive of Lovejoy Health Center.”

Alley says that she enjoys the one-on-one nursing model that was implemented at the health center five years ago. “It offers the patient greater continuity of care. Many have shared that they also appreciate that they can easily get in contact directly with their nurse, who can then easily speak with their doctor to assess their medical needs.” It is also
rewarding for nursing to staff to have a close professional relationship with the doctors whom they support, she says.

Debbie Bloomstein, who has been at the health center for 25 years, shares similar sentiments. “Watching our young patients grow over the years has been very rewarding.” Bloomstein serves as a patient service representative, facilitating managed care referrals and insurance billing. “I see that our patients feel special here, and they feel comfortable with our doctors and staff,” she adds. “And it has been wonderful to work here over the years. We feel appreciated. Many of us here work close to home and this has been very meaningful, and has allowed for more time to spend with our own families. We have been more able to attend local after-school activities with our children, for example. And our doctors have been supportive of our families, themselves watching our children grow up.” In addition to her regular duties, Bloomstein serves with others at the health center as a member of a volunteer group, the “Lovejoy Empty Nesters,” who fundraise for local families in need. Activities include a quilt raffle, bake sales and more.

LHC also benefits from the active involvement of a volunteer community Board, which owns and maintains the health center building and helps keep HealthReach and the center in touch with local needs. Community Board member Dolly Batteese has been a part of the center’s success from the beginning. As a member of the local group of citizens concerned about access to needed health care services nearly three decades ago, Batteese was involved in the grassroots effort that founded the health center.

Batteese smiles warmly and with pride as she shares her insights about what the health center means to the community. “The entire team is wonderful: the providers, the staff, all of them,” she says. “They truly care about the community and are exceptionally dedicated.” Batteese and Leonard Dow, a founding father of the center also actively involved since the early days, deserve much credit for their diligent efforts over the years to bring and support the delivery of quality, affordable health care, close to home to area residents.

“The Lovejoy Health Center is exemplary of all programs designed to provide medical services to otherwise ‘medically underserved’ rural areas of the nation and of this state,” says Dow. “The professional staff serve some 20 communities in central Maine. The association with area hospitals and specialty physicians provides comprehensive care for our citizens, and the center’s community and patient outreach adds a vital component of preventative care.”

Keep up the good work LHC team! You make a difference every day!
Andrew Rice, MD, Lovejoy Health Center

Lovejoy Health Center in Albion is pleased to welcome Andrew Rice, MD, who will join Drs. Forrest West, Paul Forman and David Austin and Lynn Cote, FNP in providing quality health care, close-to-home, to area residents.

Dr. Rice completed his residency at the Maine Dartmouth Family Practice Residency Program. He completed his doctoral degree at the University of Maryland School of Medicine and is a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians. His special areas of clinical interest include performing office procedures such as minor surgery, as well as orthopedics, pediatrics, and women’s health issues.

“I will enjoy family health care and the diversity that caring for men, women and children offers,” says Rice. “The community has been welcoming and supportive and I am excited about the opportunity to live and work in a rural community. It is a good fit for me.”

Melody Pratt, DO, Bingham Area Health Center

Dr. Melody Pratt, who joined BAHC in July, offers patients a new service at the health center: Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment (OMT). Osteopathic doctors like Dr. Pratt treat the whole person, with a strong focus on prevention. They use their advanced knowledge of the human musculoskeletal system (nerves, muscles and bones) to manipulate the body in a way that encourages the body’s natural tendency toward good health.

“I’m excited to have joined the practice. This is my dream job, to be providing care in a rural community, so close to where I live, with extraordinary people like Dr. Robertson and the BAHC nurses and staff. It is an ideal situation,” says Dr. Pratt. Dr. Pratt is a graduate of the University of Maine, and completed her doctoral degree at the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine. She performed her residency at the Maine Dartmouth Family Practice Residency Program, and has a special interest in preventive medicine and women’s health. We are pleased to have Dr. Pratt join Cynthia Robertson, MD, in caring for BAHC patients.

Madelyn Besse, PA, Strong Area Health Center

Strong Area Health Center is pleased to welcome Madelyn Besse, PA, who will join Ann Schwink, DO in caring for patients.

“I am thrilled to be joining the health center team,” says Besse. “It has long been my desire to live, work, play and settle in a close-knit community like this one in Franklin County. I am looking forward to practicing here and getting to know the people and families who also call this area home,” she says. Besse has a strong clinical interest in family practice and women’s health.

Besse is a graduate of St. Lawrence University, and completed her Master degree at the University of New England. She is a member of the DownEast Association of Physician Assistants and the American Academy of Physician Assistants.

Welcome aboard Madelyn!
Patient Self-Management Support is a Key Component of the Chronic Care Model

Lovejoy Health Center in Albion is a participant in the 2005 Health Disparities Collaborative (HDC) for Diabetes Care. The Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC) has developed an initiative, Health Disparities Collaborative, to decrease the gaps between what we know to be “good health care” and what we do. The Collaborative is a multi-year health initiative that HealthReach Community Health Centers (HRCHC) must participate in because it is a system of eleven (11) Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC).

National statistics show that over 100 million Americans suffer from one or more chronic (long-term) illness. The United States spends greater than $500 Billion every year for health care for patients with chronic illness. The BPHC Health Disparities Collaborative uses the “Care Model” - a system approach to effect the improvement in nationally shared process and health outcome measures in diverse community health center settings and populations. The “Chronic Care Model” has six key elements: 1) Patient Self-Management Support, 2) Delivery System Design, 3) Decision Support, 4) Clinical Information System, 5) Health Care Organization, 6) Community Resources.

When Lovejoy’s Kaleidoscope performed the initial data entry of Dr West’s 100 Diabetic Patients, the data showed two key elements (Patient Self-Management and Community Resources) that could be significantly improved. Last month’s newsletter article focused on a partnership between the Move More Program and Lovejoy Kaleidoscope that was developed to assist Dr. West’s Diabetic patients with community information and resources for indoor/outdoor physical activities.

Let’s focus again on Patient Self-Management Support that emphasizes the patient’s role in managing his chronic illness; assesses the patient’s self-management knowledge, behavior, confidence and barriers; provides effective behavioral change interventions and ongoing support; and assures collaborative care-planning and problem-solving. This is a total shift from the previous way of practicing medicine! In the recent past the patient went to his provider, was diagnosed with a chronic illness like Diabetes and the provider told the patient what he needed to do.

Ways to Give

HealthReach Community Health Centers is a non-profit healthcare organization. We depend on the generosity of individuals, families, corporations and foundations to ensure our continued excellence in delivering family health care to Maine citizens and visitors. Since opening our first community health center thirty years ago, we have received a number of generous grants from federal, state and private sources as well as contributions from individual donors. These have enabled us to offer a Sliding Fee Program to those who qualify, as well as to initiate a variety of outreach and education services.

The generosity of donors is needed now more than ever to fund patient service improvements, technology, patient education and community health programs, as the requirements of our patients continue to grow, while insurance and government supports decline.

Visit the “Ways to Give” section of our website to learn more about giving opportunities at your health center or call the Development Office at 207-861-3400.

www.HealthReachCHC.org
We all know the importance of using sunscreen to protect our skin from the sun’s harmful rays, but what about protection for our eyes? The same UV-A and UV-B rays that can damage your skin can harm your eyes as well. When you protect yourself from the sun, don’t just think sunscreen – think sunglasses and a wide brimmed hat.

Recent studies have shown that prolonged exposure to the sun’s invisible, high energy ultraviolet rays without protection may cause eye conditions that can lead to vision loss, such as cataracts and age-related macular degeneration. During the summer months the level of ultraviolet radiation is three times greater than the winter. The more exposure to bright light, the greater the chances of developing these serious eye problems.

Extensive or intense exposure to UV rays can cause “sunburn” on the surface of your eye. Similar to a skin sunburn, eye surface burns usually disappear within a couple of days, but may lead to further complications later in life. Here are a few tips from the American Academy of Ophthalmology on how to protect your eyes.

- To protect your eyes, wear a brimmed hat and the right kind of sunglasses when you are going to be exposed to UV light.
- If you spend time on the water or in the snow, consider purchasing goggles or sunglasses that wrap around your temples because they block the sun’s rays from entering on the sides, offering better protection.
- Remember sunglasses don’t have to be expensive to offer the right kind of UV protection. Even inexpensive glasses can protect your eyes if they offer 99 to 100 percent UV-A and UV-B protection.
- It’s important to protect your eyes when UV light is most intense. Generally, UV light is at its greatest level at midday (10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.), but you need to protect your eyes whenever you’re outside for a prolonged period, even when it’s gray and overcast.
- In addition to the damage caused by repeated sun exposure over time, you need to protect your eyes from acute damage caused by a single day in the sun. Excessive exposure to ultraviolet light reflected off water, sand, snow or pavement can burn the eye’s surface.
- Don’t forget the kids! Remember to protect their eyes with hats and sunglasses too.
- Your eyes can be harmed by UV light sources other than the sun, such as welding lamps or tanning lights. So remember to wear eye protection when using these sources of invisible, high energy UV rays.

Have fun in the sun this summer, but do remember to protect your eyes.

Source: American Academy of Ophthalmology

### HEALTH CENTER HAPPENINGS – Photo Roundup...

Mt. Abram Regional Health Center community Board members help spread the word about MARHC during Kingfield Days.

Practice Managers gathered in June to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of retirees Judy Quimby (Rangley Region Health Center) and Carolcuse Hill (Bingham Area Health Center) pictured front center.

Members of Belgrade Regional Health Center’s community Board review plans and blueprints for a proposed new health center building. Groundbreaking is planned to occur later this summer.

Community Board members associated with HealthReach gathered at a forum in June to share ideas and solutions to common challenges.
Richmond Area Health Center
Richmond Days Open House a Success!

On July 23, following the Richmond Days parade, RAHC providers and staff hosted a successful open house event that featured free food and family fun for community members of all ages, door prizes, as well as health education.

Over 75 community members toured the newly remodeled health center facility, enjoyed free healthy snacks, and more. Local children enjoyed activities and games promoting nutrition and physical fitness. Preventive health care and dental care materials were available, and there were presentations and information provided by other health and wellness resources in the community including: free certificates for seniors to attend “Matter of Balance” presentation, information from local attorney Richard Goldman regarding Advance Directives, and information from Nicole Biron of Senior Spectrum on the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit. The event was co-sponsored by Richmond Area Health Center and Getting Healthy: the local Healthy Maine Partnership.

Also noteworthy: In addition to hosting the event, staff created a float, and participated in the Richmond Days parade that preceded the open house. The RAHC float won “Best Theme” for the parade, “Laugh Your Way to Good Health,” for which they received a large ribbon, now displayed in the health center waiting room.

Special thanks and congratulations to Leslie Coombs, Practice Manager and the whole RAHC team of providers and staff for hosting this event, and to co-sponsor Getting Healthy: the local Healthy Maine Partnership and other local partners and businesses who contributed to the event.

Richmond Area Health Center Nurse Practitioner Delivers Keynote at National Conference

Tom Bartol, Nurse Practitioner at Richmond Area Health Center, recently delivered the keynote address at the prestigious National Conference for Nurse Practitioners in Orlando, Florida.

The address, entitled “Health Care Reform: Change Through Practice, Not Politics,” discussed what the nurse practitioner can do in everyday practice to aid in health care reform. Bartol offered a critique of the current system, with over 45 million U.S. citizens without health insurance, and highlighted current disease trends such as obesity that represent challenges to our national health. He then offered steps in which nurse practitioners, in their own unique role as clinicians, can broaden their impact by promoting good health and health care policy by educating patients and community members and by serving as a technical resource to legislators.

Bartol, who is well known for his expertise on the subject of diabetes, was also published in the July 2005 issue of the national journal The Nurse Practitioner. In the article, Bartol presented easy-to-use guidelines aimed to help nurse practitioners build their coding skills for the often complex care of patients with diabetes.

WELCOME
Karen Darling, Production Assistant, Highwood; Samantha Richards, Medical Records Clerk, Richmond; Barbara Russo, Patient Service Representative, Rangeley; Brenda Tirado, Patient Service Representative, Western Maine; Alicia Ward, Patient Service Representative, Lovejoy.

MILESTONES
5 years: Constance Coggins, Director of Operations, Highwood; Kate Quimby, Practice Manager, Rangeley Region Health Center; Dianna Milot, Practice Manager, Bethel Family Health Center.

10 years: Paula Dube, Lovejoy Health Center; Ann Young, Administrative Assistant, Highwood

15 years: Patricia Dumas, Sheepscot Valley Health Center

FAREWELL
Julia Quimby, Practice Manager, Rangeley; Nancy Later, Receptionist, Bingham; Robert Myshrall, Hygienist, Strong; Rachelle Horn, Sheepscot; Karen Campbell, LPN, Strong; Carol Sue Hill, Practice Manager, Bingham; Denise Littlefield, Medical Assistant, Bingham; Elaine Henry, Receptionist, Western Maine.

(Please note that the occurrences in our Welcome, Milestones and Farewell sections took place during May/June, 2005).

As the next issue of Health Center Highlights will include a special supplement reporting on the October 29th Annual Employee and Volunteer Recognition Dinner, it will not publish until November.
HealthReach Community Health Centers

1. Belgrade Regional Health Center: 495-3323
2. Bethel Family Health Center: 824-2193
3. Bingham Area Health Center: Health: 672-4187
   Dental: 672-4562
4. Lovejoy Health Center (Allibon): 437-9388
5. Madison Area Health Center: 696-3992
6. Mt. Abram Regional Health Center (Kingfield): 265-4555
7. Rangeley Region Health Center: 864-3303
8. Richmond Area Health Center: 824-4135
9. Sheepscot Valley Health Center (Coopers Mills): 549-7581
10. Strong Area Health Center: Health: 684-4010
    Dental: 684-3045
11. Western Maine Family Health Center (Livermore Falls): 897-4345
12. HRCHC Administrative Office (Waterville): 861-3400

Toll Free in Maine 1-800-427-1127

HealthReach Community Health Centers is a family of 11 federally qualified, community-based health centers located in central and western Maine. Dedicated providers deliver high quality, affordable health care to 38,000 rural and underserved residents in over 80 communities. A private, non-profit organization with a 30-year history, HRCHC is funded by patient fees, grants and individual donations.

Health Center Highlights is a bi-monthly publication of HealthReach Community Health Centers. Please send article ideas/submissions, comments, or suggestions to Director of Communications, 8 Highwood St., PO Box 1568, Waterville, Maine 04903, via fax to (207) 861-5519, or e-mail: media@HealthReach.org

www.HealthReachCHC.org
HRCHC is an Equal Opportunity Organization

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