

# THE pulse

 **syracuse**  
AREA HEALTH



**FALL/WINTER 2019**  
INSIDE THIS ISSUE:



**FEATURED STORY:**  
DOING HIS OWN STUNTS



**NOW OFFERING:**  
NEW 3D MAMMOGRAPHY



**WITH YOU 24/7:**  
THE HOSPITALIST  
PROGRAM

# LETTER FROM THE CEO



Dear Friend,

As we celebrate our one year anniversary in our new facility, we are continuing to grow and have a lot of exciting stories to share in this next issue of *The Pulse!*

In an effort to provide the most advanced technology for our patients, we'll tell you all about a new CT scanner and 3D Mammography machine that will allow us to offer a wider range of testing services and provide more accurate diagnoses and earlier detection, paving the way for a better treatment plan if and when necessary.

In addition, we're highlighting Tim Panko's story as he graciously shares his experience being treated by our ER and orthopedic team as they ensured he made a successful recovery after an injury. While what he went through is no laughing matter, find out why he jokingly says he does his own stunts.

This issue also includes our annual report, highlighting the growth we are seeing at Syracuse Area Health.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to read *The Pulse*. And, as always, feel free to reach out with ideas or feedback – we love to hear from you.

Sincerely yours,  
Michael Harvey  
President & CEO





**Dr. Douglas Ramos, MD, PC, joined Syracuse Area Health to provide world-class, personalized plastic surgical care including both cosmetic and reconstructive surgery, as well as treatment of skin conditions.**

His passion for his work is evident. "I enjoy the challenge of taking care of problems from head to toe for people both young and old, men and women."

After growing up in a small town in Iowa, just off of Hwy 2, Dr. Ramos began his medical journey at Cornell College before attending Creighton Medical School and completing his general surgery residency at Tufts University in Boston. He completed his post-doctoral work at MIT and his plastic surgery training at Harvard, followed by a professorship at Stanford University School of Medicine.

Once he and his wife, Tammy Ramos, MD, had their son, they decided a move back to the Midwest was in order. This move suited Dr. Ramos perfectly. "My original plan was to do family medicine in a small town, so by working with Syracuse Area Health I'm able to come full circle and connect with a smaller community. And, with a smaller community you get to know patients a little better.

While his education and experience are highly regarded, Dr. Ramos continuously finds ways to stay on top of changes and innovation in his field to provide the best care possible. "Electronic devices, especially my

iPad, make keeping up with things easy. Anywhere I am, if I have some free time, I can be reading journals and articles," he says. "Plus, I have many connections at some of the best places in the world that I can call on as resources with new ideas or technology."

Currently, Dr. Ramos operates a practice in Omaha with his wife and travels to Syracuse Area Health twice a month to meet with patients. He says nearly all the procedures that he performs can be done right in Syracuse, making it easier for people to access the services they need or want.

For Dr. Ramos, that's what it's all about. He shares the word that guides his working philosophy: dignity.

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**"If you preserve the dignity of your patients and provide excellent surgical care, it's hard to improve upon that experience."**

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## Services Offered

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Dr. Ramos is available to see men and women of all ages at Syracuse Area Health. His work primarily is categorized into three areas:

**Reconstructive plastic surgery** – Includes skin cancer, breast reduction (which are often covered by insurance), and all other types of reconstructive surgeries

**Cosmetic plastic surgery** – Includes, but not limited to, breast augmentation/lifts, eye lid surgery, nose surgery, tummy tucks, and liposuction

**Skin and dermatological conditions** – Includes treatment for acne, rashes, and skin cancers, among others

# Doing his own stunts



Dr. Scott Strasburger

When **Tim Panko** decided to go skateboarding with his sons a week before Easter this year, he anticipated making happy memories while getting some exercise—pretty much all you could ask for from a spring day.

However, the day took a painful turn when he found himself landing hard on his right leg, leaving him with a very complicated tibial fracture that required emergency

surgery. The way Tim described it, he “shattered” his tibia, which led to the need for a rather complex surgery to repair it.

Fortunately, he was in good hands with Syracuse Area Health’s Orthopaedic Surgeon, Dr. Scott Strasburger who said, “The unique thing about this case is that it involved the joint surface of the knee broken into several pieces—this causes the complication.”

To mend the shattered bones, Dr. Strasburger and his team placed an Ilizarov External Fixator around the joint. This device consists of rings wrapped around the outside of the fractured area that are connected to pieces of the fractured bone with heavy-gauge wires called “pins” or Kirschner wires, which provide structural support and create tension stress that encourages the bone to heal correctly. Once that is complete, usually within about 12 weeks, the device is removed.

“We were able to bring his bones together with the spoke wires of the device and this allowed him to bend his knee almost immediately after the surgery,” Dr. Strasburger said. “We were also able to reinforce the repair by assisting with an arthroscope to ensure everything was correct.”





When asked about his surgery, Tim was quick to praise, saying, “Dr. Strasburger is just an awesome surgeon—everything went really smooth.”

With a complex injury and surgery like Tim’s, successful post-surgery rehab was vital to his recovery. Tim Parmley, a physical therapist at Syracuse Area Health, who worked with Tim during his recovery, said that his therapy went very well.

“Tim Panko was really easy to work with all around. He came to therapy with a good attitude and we were able to progress his therapy smoothly as he made gains in his motion from week to week.”

Tim’s therapy took 11 weeks to complete and began with non-weight bearing exercises and work on general range of motion. He then graduated to mild strength training, balance exercises, and underwent electrical stimulation for quadriceps recruitment before progressing to weight lifting machines and advanced balance exercises.

“I have worked with a few other patients who have had this surgery in the past and I remarked to Tim how fortunate he was to have little to no pain in his knee throughout the entire process. It was really quite remarkable,” Tim Parmley shared.

Tim was thankful for his rather easy healing process given the nature of his injury and appreciated everyone who helped him along the way.

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“Everybody has their job to do there  
(at Syracuse Area Health) and did it  
exceptionally well—all the way to the end.”

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And as for his skateboarding days? Tim says he’s officially retired.

“Dr. Strasburger said when you get to be our age your bones aren’t as strong as they used to be—I wish I would’ve heard that a day earlier!” he shared with a chuckle.



To make an appointment with **Dr. Strasburger** or to find out more about Syracuse Area Health’s orthopaedic capabilities, please call **402-269-7636**.

# new & innovative radiology options

## STATE-OF-THE-ART CT SCANNING & 3D MAMMOGRAPHY TECHNOLOGY

Syracuse Area Health is dedicated to the continual expansion of capabilities, including a new and improved CT scanner. The new **CT Scanner** gives the radiology team at Syracuse Area Health the ability to provide lung cancer screenings, calcium scoring, and other standard CT exams to patients.

Patients, physicians, and members of the radiology team, have all commented on the benefits this system has brought to Syracuse Area Health.

“It really is a game changer,” said **Stacey Siefken**, Director of Radiology. “Our team loves being able to use a tablet to control the CT machine, and patients have responded enthusiastically too, because it gives them a chance to interact more closely with their technologist. Patients and staff can carry on a conversation throughout the exam setup, which really goes a long way toward easing any concerns they have about their tests.”

Stacey and her team have already taken note of patients coming in for routine exams they previously may have put off because they didn't want to drive to Omaha or Lincoln for treatment. Now, they can get those tests without a lengthy commute.



### TWO PARTICULAR EXAMS STAND OUT:

- **Calcium Scoring** – Patients can determine their potential risk for heart disease with this test that analyzes levels of plaque within their arteries.
- **Lung Cancer Screenings** – Patients, aged 55-77, with a history of smoking for 10 years or more are eligible for this important exam, which tests for signs of lung cancer so the patient can begin treatment early if cancer has started to form.

“While we can do a number of important CT procedures, I'm particularly excited about the low-dose lung cancer screenings,” said Stacey, referencing the standardized dose of low-level radiation that helps provide additional safety assurances to the patient. “A person can go a long time without symptoms, not realizing they have lung cancer until it's too late. A lung cancer screening helps give our patients peace of mind. Plus, if signs of cancer are detected, you can immediately start talking to your physician about a treatment plan.”

In addition, the CT Scanner is already being used for other diagnostic and interventional exams, available via referral from providers across the area.

Speak to your doctor about receiving your next CT or other radiology exam at Syracuse Area Health, or call **402-269-7590** for more information.



“There’s a certain level of trust at Syracuse Area Health. We see our patients out in the community on a daily basis, they are our friends and neighbors. If we can keep the majority of their medical care local and improve their experience with our beautiful facility and new technology, that’s ideal for everyone. We’re doing everything with our patients’ best interest in mind.”

-Stacey Siefken, Director of Radiology

Syracuse Area Health is also excited to introduce a new **3D Mammography** machine. This new technology improves the quality of care for patients, while demonstrating dedication to keeping up with the latest innovations in healthcare.

### Why offer 3D breast exams?

Because the breast is a three-dimensional object, simply viewing it in a two-dimensional image, as is done in a traditional breast exam, doesn’t allow healthcare providers to make the most accurate diagnoses, particularly when trying to diagnose overlapping or dense breast tissue.

According to Stacey Siefken, Director of Radiology, “Dense breast tissue makes cancers harder to detect by obscuring lesions, and as the density increases, so does the risk of breast cancer. For these reasons, 3D screening is very helpful.”

A 3D Genius exam requires no additional compression and takes just a few seconds longer than a conventional 2D exam.

Stacey adds, “Syracuse Area Health is committed to the fight against breast cancer. In offering the 3D exam, Syracuse Area Health provides a more accurate tool for breast cancer screening. One in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime, and while 3D mammography does not promise a cure, it is a woman’s best chance of early detection and survival.”

To schedule a 3D mammography exam, call **402-269-7590**.



Dr. Timothy Lieske



Dr. Sean Barry

# when one door closes, another door opens

Syracuse Area Health has been fortunate to have the services of pulmonologist **Dr. Timothy Lieske** for many years. Dr. Lieske has decided to retire at the end of this year, and we are very appreciative of the care he has provided to our community. We wish him the very best in this next chapter.

Dr. Lieske’s main practice was Lincoln Pulmonary & Critical Care, where he was partners with **Dr. Sean Barry**, a fellow pulmonologist. Lincoln Pulmonary & Critical Care will close upon Dr. Lieske’s retirement, and Dr. Barry will relocate to Nebraska Pulmonary Specialties.

In addition, Dr. Barry will begin providing a pulmonary clinic at Syracuse Area Health in 2020. We are thrilled to have him join the Syracuse Area Health community, and will continue to offer quality pulmonary care right here in Syracuse.

To pre-schedule an appointment with Dr. Barry, call **402-269-7636**.

# with you, 24/7



**Chad Kelley, PA-C**



**Tim Rosfeld, PA-C**



**Jaimee Homan, APRN**

## THE HOSPITALIST PROGRAM AT SYRACUSE AREA HEALTH

A stay at the hospital can be a stressful time—even under the best circumstances. That’s why Syracuse Area Health has a hospitalist program, with three hospitalists dedicated to you. Consider your hospitalist your guide to your stay. He or she is your point person, working closely with your physician and all departments to ensure your care is coordinated and that nothing gets overlooked. Even more important than that, however, is that your hospitalist is always on hand to answer questions and explain your plan of care to you and your loved ones.

“The hospitalist is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to care for hospitalized patients,” says **Tim Rosfeld**, PA-C, a Syracuse Area Health Hospitalist. “We coordinate the healthcare team for inpatients. Based on a thorough history and physical exam, lab tests and diagnostic studies, the hospitalist makes decisions with the patient on how to optimally manage their illness while in the hospital to provide the best outcome when they are discharged.”

Adds Syracuse Area Health Hospitalist **Chad Kelley**, PA-C, RN, EMT-P, “Before the hospitalist program, family practice clinicians would round on patients before and after clinic, then respond to emergencies throughout the day while managing a full clinic schedule. There was limited time to meet with families, review labs, imaging, and discuss treatment options with the patient, families, or specialists.”

Hospitalists allow family practice clinicians to stay involved with their patient’s care without needing to be in the hospital as much, but they still work closely together and it ends up being a better system for everyone involved.

One thing that distinguishes the Syracuse Area Health hospitalist program from others is that the hospitalists also cover the Emergency Department, which ensures prompt treatment there as well.

This means that the patient benefits across the board are numerous. Hospitalist **Jaimee Homan**, APRN, shares, “We’re here 24/7 to ensure that patients in both the ER and hospital are well cared for and that their needs are met efficiently. We’re able to be there when they need us in a way that family practice clinicians can’t due to their schedules, and we see patients through their care until they’re discharged.”

Tim adds that this kind of program is unheard of in other smaller hospitals. “This is a unique program not often found in other community hospitals,” he says. “It is only through the generous support of community members that we have the opportunity to serve them in this incredible facility. We are profoundly grateful.”



# Antibiotics:

## what you need to know

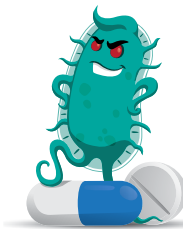


Antibiotics are a common and effective treatment for bacterial infections. However, they are still a powerful medical drug and should always be taken with care, particularly so they are not overused.

When visiting a healthcare provider, they will analyze your symptoms and run tests to determine what type of infection you have. This is essential because antibiotics only cure infections caused by bacteria. These infections include: strep throat, urinary tract infections, some ear infections, most cases of bronchitis and some sinus infections. Other infections caused by viruses (like the common cold) and even some bacterial infections are not affected by the use of antibiotics.

### **When prescribed an antibiotic there are a few things to remember to ensure it's as safe and effective as possible:**

- Always finish the entire prescription even if your symptoms are gone
- Take every dose as prescribed and don't skip a dose
- Never share antibiotics—there are multiple types and their level of effectiveness for treating certain infections can vary
- Don't take antibiotics unless necessary and prescribed by a medical provider



### **ANTIBIOTIC-RESISTANT BACTERIA**

Taking antibiotics too frequently increases the risk of your body forming antibiotic-resistant bacteria. This means that even when you take an antibiotic, the bacteria can survive and the infection remains. Once this happens the resistant bacteria can spread to other people, spreading an infection that is now harder to treat.

### **When antibiotics don't work it can result in:**

- Longer lasting illness
- Illness becoming more complicated and with worse symptoms
- More doctor visits
- Need to use stronger or multiple drugs
- Increased risk of severe health consequences or even death

If you have any questions about antibiotics, reach out to your healthcare provider.



## Syracuse Area Health **Foundation Board**

Our board represents a cross-section of our district and has a passion for our organization and those we serve. The members work to ensure long-term sustainability of the organization.

**Irene Wilhelm** -  
Chairperson

**Lanny Burr** -  
Vice Chairperson

**Dixie Dobbs** -  
Secretary/Treasurer

**Don Hobscheidt**

**Kelly McIntosh**

**Deb McWilliams**

**Jenny Panko**



Syracuse Area Health Foundation is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization and an avenue for you and your family to make a difference. Our goal is to identify the needs in our communities and enhance healthcare services in Southeast Nebraska to meet those needs. Please consider our Foundation as part of your charitable giving. Your gift will allow us to expand our healthcare services with state-of-the-art technology, as well as add new services at our Hospital, Specialty Clinic, Syracuse Medical Clinic, and Weeping Water Medical Clinic. Your donation allows us to continue to grow and provide quality healthcare for you, your family, and future generations.

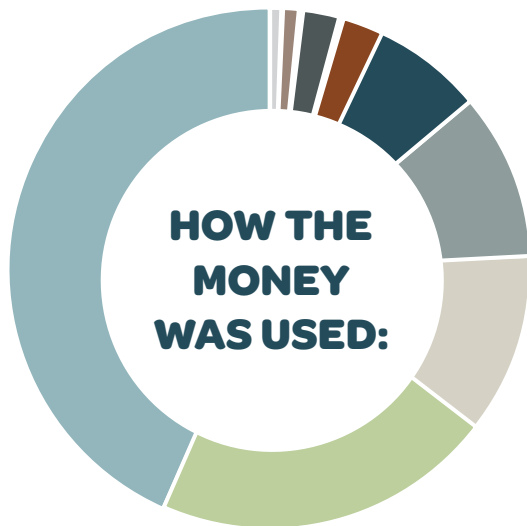
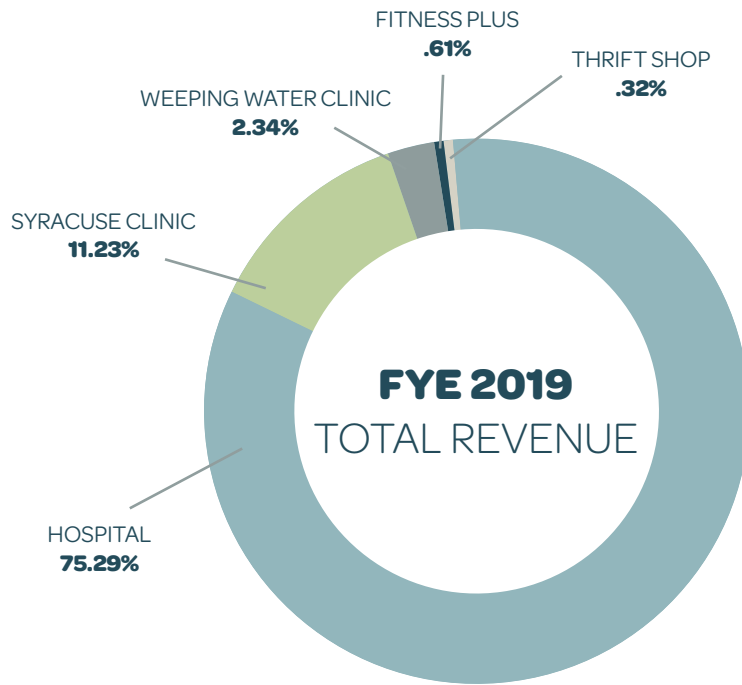
### 1. WHAT DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION DO?

Our organization raises funds for the enhancement of services, programs, and equipment, enabling the residents of our communities to stay local for healthcare needs while utilizing modern, state-of-the-art technology. Patients and families can feel confident in receiving high quality healthcare from caring, compassionate staff at Syracuse Area Health.

You can use the enclosed envelope to make your donation or visit [www.syracuseareahealth/foundation](http://www.syracuseareahealth/foundation) to make an online donation. You may also contact Foundation Director Jill Ford by calling **402-269-7658**, or contact any of our Foundation Board members.

### 2. HOW WOULD MY DONATION BE USED?

You can designate your gift for a specific purpose, or to be used for current needs. We have a responsibility to our community and our donors and work hard to ensure long-term sustainability of the organization. Please consider Syracuse Area Health Foundation as part of your charitable giving, in your will, as a beneficiary, or with a Thrivent Donation.



- INSURANCE  
**\$147,165**
- CHARITY CARE  
**\$218,382**
- INTEREST  
**\$617,982**
- BAD DEBT  
**\$619,846**
- EQUIPMENT DEPRECIATION  
**\$1,993,792**
- PURCHASED SERVICES AND FEES  
**\$2,647,594**
- INSURANCE SHORTFALLS (CONTRACTUALS)  
**\$2,906,977**
- OTHER PATIENT EXPENSES (SUPPLIES)  
**\$5,373,580**
- WAGES & BENEFITS  
**\$11,103,306**

**Wages paid to employees:**  
\$9,039,692

### Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2019 STATISTICS

	FY 2018	FY 2019
Admissions	12,909	13,883
Cardiac Rehab Visits	680	539
Cafeteria Meals	16,851	21,997
ER Visits	1,366	1,429
Laboratory Tests	29,447	29,306
CT Scans	835	854
MRI Scans	96	91
Sleep Studies	100	90
Specialty Clinic Visits	2,071	2,642
Physical Therapy Sessions	8,376	8,937
Syracuse Clinic Visits	11,358	11,362
Weeping Water Clinic Visits	2,843	2,875
Inpatient/Swing Bed Days	436	481
Surgical Procedures (includes GI)	323	425



2731 Healthcare Drive  
Syracuse, NE 68446

## Syracuse Area Health **Auxiliary & Thrift Shop Volunteers**

### Some of the items purchased in FY2019:

\$844.90	Finger Pulse Oximeters for Medical Clinics
\$6,889.40	Environmental Services – Floor Scrubber
\$966.60	Environmental Services – 26" Wide Vacuum
\$2,452.37	Surgery – Braces & Clamps
\$1,508.26	Specialty Clinic - Cast Saw Vacuum
\$7,534.48	Nursing - Trurize Patient Chair
\$6,909.35	Pathway CTS 1500 Pelvic Muscle Rehab System

### FISCAL YEAR 2019

Number of  
Volunteers **57**

**9,193** Hours  
Volunteered

The Thrift Shop opened in December of 2007. Grand total for the items donated to the hospital since the Thrift Shop opened is

**\$762,755.84**