



# Heart to Heart

NEWS FROM ST. LUKE COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

Quarter 2

POSTAL  
CUSTOMER

NONPROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
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## COMPLETE CARE:

### Mental health check-ins a key component of comprehensive care for growing children

ANNUAL WELL CHILD CHECKS WITH A SPORTS PHYSICAL, IF NEEDED, ARE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY for physicians to check in on a child’s physical and mental health. In the past, sports physicals were conducted primarily to ensure a child’s health prior to sports participation. Things have changed. Well-child exams are now more comprehensive. This appointment represents a unique opportunity for physicians to evaluate a child’s whole health in the privacy of a one-on-one appointment.

A nine-question mental health screen, used nationally and at St. Luke, provides doctors a tool for gauging depression and anxiety problems in their clients. According to Dr. Kelli Larson, red flags include sleeping much of the time, self-seclusion, withdrawal from activities once considered important and attempts at self-harm. She believes the incidence of depression and anxiety increased in recent years while recovery from the fallout from COVID continues to be a concern.

The screening begins a conversation about mental health and provides clues as to whether a deeper dive into issues should



ST. LUKE PHOTO

Dr. Kelli Larson, a family practitioner with St. Luke Community Healthcare, checks up on one of her newest patients.

take place. Parents may see these appointments as a resource for addressing not only health concerns but the emotional

continued on next page

## ALL IN THE FAMILY:

### Multi-generational loyalty a hallmark of St. Luke workforce

WHEN ST. LUKE OPENED IN 1953, a local newspaper called it “a dream come true.” For five years community members worked and donated to make St. Luke a reality. Loyal workers even donated their first hour of pay to keep the hospital going.

Loyalty and longevity are hallmarks of many employees extending in some cases from one generation to another.

St. Luke Plant Operations Manager and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Nick Emerson knows about multi-generational loyalty as his mother and his grandmother both worked as nurses at St. Luke and ended their long careers as the Director of Nursing. His grandmother, Rosemary Miller, worked at St. Luke for 21 years and his mother, Leah Emerson, worked at St. Luke for 49 years. Even today she continues to support the hospital in her role as a board member.

Born and raised in Ronan, Emerson worked lawn maintenance for the hospital during high school and in 2000 joined the construction crew that built the OR addition and the Southshore Clinic. With a break in employment from 2001 until 2013, for the past 10 years he has worked in his current department.

According to Emerson, the list of employees who’ve had a relative work at St. Luke continues to grow because “the Mission Valley is a very desirable place to live and raise a family.”

Shonna Elverud enjoys a similar experience as a multi-generational St. Luke employee. Her father was Chief Financial Officer for 25 years and her mother was an administrative secretary for 23 years. Her daughter worked for St. Luke for six years.

Elverud began work in 1994 in purchasing, moved to the business office and currently holds the position of accounting technician, making a total of 23 years of employment, (including a 5-year hiatus).

Both Emerson and Elverud credit family members with encouraging them to work at St. Luke and would

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## FAMILY PHYSICIANS TAKE CARE OF YOU THROUGHOUT LIFE

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD HOW ST. LUKE COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE IS UNIQUE in the way it delivers care. Part of the reason is that St. Luke is a family practice-centered organization. What does that mean? Well in contrast to many other hospitals, all of our primary care physicians are board certified and specialize in family medicine. The specialty of family medicine is a unique blend of training that brings together multiple areas, including pediatrics, adult and internal medicine, and often obstetrics. A family medicine physician can provide newborn, pediatric and well-child care; adult men & women’s health; preventative care; hospital inpatient care; geriatric care; emergency care, and obstetrics.

Having a family physician is a great choice for you and your family’s health care. Our family physicians take care of you throughout your lifespan and follow your care both in the clinic and in the hospital. Family physicians are a great choice because they see the connection between your family health history and your health. If your parents have a history of heart disease, a family physician will recognize the potential risks for you and create treatment plans to help counteract that risk. Family physicians have the ability to address and focus on your unique care needs. They take a “bigger picture” look at your wellness and comprehensive health needs and map out the best plan for you moving forward.

Family physicians are also a great choice for your budget because the care they provide is both affordable and comprehensive. With high deductible health plans and an increasing amount of out-of-pocket costs, St. Luke family physicians are the right choice with their ability to provide well-child checks, preventative exams, and annual wellness visits, which are fully covered by insurance. With a family



medicine physician’s breadth of knowledge, they can often be your one-stop shop for healthcare, including same-day urgent care visits in the clinic setting.

Our family physicians work to provide comprehensive care and are not “referologists” (a physician that just refers you to a variety of other specialists). There are definitely times when it is important for you or your family member to be sent to a specialist, however, in most cases family physicians are able to diagnose and treat conditions. Family physicians are well-equipped to manage chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, and many more complex illnesses.

A family physician can follow you through your pregnancy and then provide pediatric care for your newborn. Almost all other specialties focus on one specific disease or body part – and while specialists are very important – it is the family physician that is uniquely trained to care for you in a comprehensive and holistic manner. And, if for some reason you *do* need a referral to a specialist, your family physician can appropriately match you up with the right one, based on your health and personal needs - and can coordinate and provide follow-up care afterward. For these reasons and many more, do not delay, schedule your annual wellness visit with your family medicine physician. You’ll be glad you did.

On a separate subject, a big THANK YOU and congratulations to our retiring Clinic Administrator, Chris Ellingson. Chris has done a great job and has consistently been professional, caring, and enthusiastic in his role. He has been amazingly gracious and loyal, delaying his retirement while we have worked to find a qualified replacement. We wish him all the best!

Steve



complete care (from page 1)

well-being of their child as well. Dr. Larson explained that “there is still a large stigma out there regarding depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions ... it puts up barriers to people getting the help they need.” She stressed that the challenge for most people is openly discussing mental health matters and having real dialogue about feelings. Children need to understand their feelings don’t make them wrong, weak, abnormal or a burden. Dr. Larson encourages parents who have themselves experienced mental health struggles to share these so children don’t feel alone. The CDC states between 2017-18, 15.1% of American children reported they had experienced a major depressive episode, 36.7% had persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness and 8.9% attempted suicide. Montana’s suicide rate overall ranks third highest in the country. Between 2011-20 Montana youth ages 11-17 committed suicide twice as often as that age group in the rest of the nation making the evaluation and treatment of mental health issues imperative.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, interpersonal conflicts, especially a disconnect with parents, provide the largest factors associated with suicide. Students not doing well in school are almost

Well-child checks with sports physicals provide an important resource for parents by examining a child’s whole health: physical, mental and emotional.

400 times more likely than a student doing well, to attempt suicide.

Recent studies show that social media can be an additional stressor for those with mental health struggles. Dr. Larson explained that in her practice she sometimes finds that kids are being bullied online, and parents are not always aware this is happening. She went on to say “Electronic use in general can worsen sleep, which can in turn worsen depression. More time online also typically means less time outdoors playing and being active, which can bring other health concerns into the picture too.” She added that being online a lot

can interfere with kids’ abilities to interact in person. Dr. Vivek Murthy, United States Surgeon General, issued an advisory this year regarding the effects of social media on youth mental health. The same “safety first” approach used for adoptions, toy manufacturing, vehicle use, as well as food and drugs, he said, should be applied to children’s use of social media. While policy makers and technology companies play important roles in safeguarding children from the ill effects of social media, the advisory recommended some steps parents can take to protect their children from online harm: create a media plan that includes time/place boundaries and tech-free zones – such as during meals and at bedtime. The advisory further encourages parents to model appropriate use, encourage their children to report cyberbullying/abuse/exploitation and teach about privacy, benefits and risks of social media. Parents have an important, underrated, and complex job of raising children. Well-child checks with sports physicals provide an important resource for parents by examining a child’s whole health: physical, mental and emotional. St. Luke physicians look forward to partnering with you to provide the resources needed to keep you, your child and your family informed and healthy.



ST. LUKE PHOTO

Nick Emerson and Shonna Elverud and their families bring a combined total of 160 years of employee loyalty to St. Luke Community Healthcare.

loyal workforce (from page 1)

support their children continuing the family tradition. Admittedly, growing up in the area means they and their children already know a lot of the staff. Each stated great relationships with

co-workers provide their favorite part of their work and a bonus to their employment. Just these two employees and their families have brought a combined total of over 160 years of employee loyalty. Considering the current trend in high employee mobility, that is a “dream come true.”



Vehicle crashes are the number one cause of preventable death for teens.

Safety tips for teen drivers

AS A PHYSICIAN WORKING AT ST. LUKE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, Dr. Alex Nutt has seen the trauma victims receive in automobile accidents. Driving in the Ronan and Mission Valley area, he says, presents unique challenges, especially for new drivers. High speed driving on U.S. Highway 93 requires fast thinking and the ability to anticipate other drivers’ actions. Pete Ridgeway, a safe driving instructor, said 20% of accidents have a drowsy driver component. Additionally, the part of the highway that travels through our valley towns includes several speed changes requiring drivers to pay close attention to road signs. Ridgeway noted that road signs are changing and driver’s need to stay vigilant of posted signs. Our soft, dirt and gravel agricultural roads

can cause roll-over accidents when drivers don’t anticipate the way vehicle wheels can slide on those roads. Ridgeway instructs drivers to know their car, as well as to do an inspection prior to driving - making adjustments to mirrors, seats, etc. prior to engaging the vehicle. According to Dr. Nutt, many of the vehicle accident victims he sees in the ER are inexperienced drivers. The use of seat belts has become more common place and that’s a good thing, as drivers and passengers are hurt worse when they’re not worn. Dr. Nutt explained that some people have walked away from a roll-over accident by wearing their seat belt. Without a seat belt drivers can be thrown into the back seat

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FOUNDATION NEWS: 23rd annual Foundation Dinner is Sept. 15

THIS YEAR MARKS 70 AMAZING YEARS that St. Luke Community Healthcare has been meeting the healthcare needs of our families, friends and neighbors here in the valley. We are quite proud of our history, and even more privileged to serve you as we look to the future. In the last few years, we’ve prioritized things like equipment and services, based on the needs of our community. We upgraded to 3D Mammography in 2019. We implemented Telehealth and upgraded imaging in 2020. In 2021 we upgraded Obstetrics with a new state of the art Baby Warmer, along with additional education and simulation training. Last year, we put our efforts into improving the living and working environment in our Extended Care Facility. The best part is that this was all made

possible in partnership with our community! You! So much more has been accomplished than what is visible in these few sentences, and we couldn’t have done it without your support. We are already making plans for what’s in store over the next several years - a long-time goal of bringing full time Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) in-house. We’ve heard you loud and clear when you say that waiting lists and hours of travel time are more than just difficult, it impacts family, work, and life in general. We know too, that having access to essential and timely



Teresa Nygaard

diagnostic care can greatly reduce the need for people to be transferred further from home. It’s important to you, so it’s important to us. Join us Sept. 15 for our 23rd Annual Foundation Dinner, Auction & Virtual Auction where we’ll be raising funds to make this a reality. You can help support the work of St. Luke Community Healthcare and the Foundation by contributing to any part of St. Luke that is close to your heart. You can also participate in our events or activities, or you may choose to leave a legacy. No matter how you wish to support the ongoing work of St. Luke Healthcare, the Foundation is here to walk you through it. Feel free to call Teresa Nygaard, Foundation Director, tnygaard@stlukehealthcare.org, 406-528-5324.



# Ellingson to retire in July

CHRIS ELLINGSON BEGAN MANAGING ST. LUKE’S PRIMARY CARE CLINICS in March of 2015. Tentatively set to retire in July, Ellingson explained “he won’t be sailing off into the sunset (until his replacement) gets up to speed and to cruising altitude.”

Ellingson does however have plans for his approaching retirement. With three daughters and two granddaughters, he plans on traveling and visiting. He also has a variety of projects put on hold that he plans to get back to work on.

“Helping the people who help the patients,” he said, has been a favorite part of his job. It’s been gratifying, he explained, to support the people, the staff, who provide health services for community members. He noted that he’ll miss the relationships he’s had with co-workers. He added that, being a small community, he does often enjoy communicating and interacting with co-workers outside the work environment.

COVID presented Ellingson’s greatest challenge at work. A novel experience, the pandemic, he explained, “... took the world by surprise. The speed it infected people, especially before vaccines, had deadly consequences for some, especially those with health challenges.” He’s proud of how St. Luke responded as one of the first in the state to do COVID testing without a physician’s order. He said “people from all over the state came to get tested, even those who were asymptomatic.”

Ellingson would recommend any career in healthcare because the acquired skills are marketable and transferrable. Young people especially can learn how to provide customer service, engage in teamwork, gain the ability to pay attention to detail, and acquire critical thinking skills.

Ellingson said he’s going to miss the opportunities to learn and grow as every day provides new experiences. His career at St. Luke, he said, has been very fulfilling as it’s been both enjoyable and professionally rewarding.



ST. LUKE PHOTO  
St. Luke Community Healthcare Clinics Manager Chris Ellingson is preparing to retire next month.

## safety tips (from page 2)

or worse, out of the car. He’s seen chest injuries when people are pushed into their steering wheel, head injuries when they hit the windshield, along with broken hips and injured knees.

As June is National Safety Awareness month as well as the month most young people eagerly jump into summertime activities, parents and teens can benefit from some teen-driver pointers and information.

Vehicle crashes are the number one cause of preventable death for teens. Parents can help keep young drivers safe by practicing driving with their teen and helping them develop safe habits. The National Safety Council stresses that parents should remember to drive the way they want their teen to drive.

Parents should also make sure their new drivers understand how many passengers they are allowed by law and how not only passengers, but music and phones can be dangerous

distractions. Additional weekly pointers for parents can be found at [nsc.org](http://nsc.org).

Dr. Nutt’s and Ridgeway’s advice is to always wear a seat belt and to make good decisions about who you get in a car with. If someone is impaired, get a ride from someone else. Ridegeway emphasized that the law is not whether a substance you take is legal, the question is “Am I impaired?”

Young drivers are particularly vulnerable to distracted driving according to Dr. Nutt. Phone calls can go to voicemail or drivers should pull over. Music, (especially very loud music – can’t hear the motorcycle pulling up beside you), phone calls, texting and very engaging passenger conversations can wait. “It can all wait,” he said.

Ridgeway explained that speed related accidents cause 10,000 deaths a year and “speed is one element of driving fully under your control.”

Dr. Nutt also recommends slowing down. “It’s better to be late than to not make it at all,” he said.

**Music, phone calls, text messages and even engaging conversations are all distractions that can wait until a teen isn’t driving.**

## HEALTH WATCH

*For those experiencing suicidal thoughts, or know someone who is: please reach out.*

**The National Suicide Hotline is 988.**

*Calls are answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.*

[SuicidePreventionLifeline.org](http://SuicidePreventionLifeline.org)

## PROVIDER DIRECTORY

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Darren Brockie, MD	Bruce D. Mikesell, MD
Ben Grass, MD	Alex Nutt, MD
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Phillip Anuta, DO	Aurbree Ruzkowski, DO

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Douglas Waldo, MD  
406-327-4646  
Robert Minor, MD  
406-327-4646

### Podiatry

Stephen Latter, DPM  
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### Psychiatry

Eleanore Hobbs, MD  
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### Radiology

Northwest Imaging  
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### Ear, Nose and Throat

Kyle Tubbs, MD  
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Kent Keele, DO  
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### Sleep Medicine

Kim Damrow, MD  
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### Neurology

Kurt Lindsey, MD  
406-752-5095

### Maternal Fetal Medicine

M. Bardett Fausett, MD



# ECF PROFILE: Anong ‘Annie’ Naree Hemphill

Information provided By Annie's daughter,  
Nancy Hemphill

ANONG OR “ANNIE” NAREE (SIBANYEN) HEMPHILL, was born on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1933, in Ayutthaya, Thailand, and was the only adopted daughter of an older couple. Annie’s adoptive parents owned a rice farm and Annie worked very hard on the farm, helping in the rice paddies and caring for the family’s water buffaloes. As a child, she would swim in the “khlong,” or canal, catching fish and the occasional unexpected duck. Annie attended school until 6<sup>th</sup> grade and, when she was 18, she became engaged to a local young man through an arranged marriage. Annie might have spent her life as a small-town wife in Thailand, but fate intervened. One day she was paddling her small canoe to her home when a young American man saw her and thought that she was simply the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. This American was Roderick Hemphill, who was newly out of the army and working as an interpreter for the Thai Silk Company. Rod found out from a friend who the beautiful stranger was and a courtship soon commenced. Even though Annie spoke no English and Rod was not yet fluent in Thai, they quickly fell in love. The young couple married shortly afterward, and moved to northern Thailand on the Laos border, where their daughter, Malee, was born in 1952. Their daughter, Sita, followed in 1954.

That same year, the family moved back to the United States for just a year, first to Washington DC for training and then to Carmel, California, where they both taught the Thai language at the Army Language School in Monterey. Annie was a favorite teacher of the soldiers that were assigned to the language school, and Rod used to get a kick out of seeing his little wife surrounded by big army soldiers all clamoring for her attention.

Rod’s work for the US government took him to many different countries over the next 20 years. The family moved to Manila, Philippines in 1955, where their next two daughters, Nancy and Ericka, were born. Annie was quite busy raising her four girls, but had a nanny to help, so was able to spend time on hobbies that would become lifelong interests. These hobbies included tennis, bridge, and art. Annie became a talented artist, painting Chinese-style watercolors on rice paper. She would later have several art gallery showings and sell a number of these works. Because of her diminutive size, Annie was an ideal coxswain, or steerswoman, for Rod’s rowing crew and led the team to many a victory. She also became fluent in Tagalog during their stay. From Manila, the family moved to Nairobi, Kenya in 1965. One of Annie’s favorite things to do in Kenya was to go to the game parks to see all of the wild and beautiful animals. A highlight of living in Kenya was climbing Mount Kilimanjaro. A favorite vacation spot for the family in Kenya was going to the beach in Mombasa. While in Kenya, Annie learned to speak Swahili, so was then quite fluent in four languages!

The last world stop for the family was the Middle East – first Riyadh, Saudi Arabia then Beirut, Lebanon. Saudi Arabia was not her favorite place to live, because as a woman, she was unable to drive and had to have a driver take her everywhere she wished to go. However, she got creative and made the best of her time there. Because alcohol sales were prohibited, she learned how to make wine and beer, and became quite good at it. She was a skilled hostess, holding great parties and regular bridge and poker games. Annie was a fantastic cook and produced not just Thai meals, but killer Thanksgiving feasts as well.

Rod retired in 1974 and the family returned to Westerly, his hometown in Rhode Island. Although taken aback at first at the fact that their son had married a Thai woman that he barely knew, Rod’s parents grew to love Annie very much over the years and, of course, adored their grandchildren. Rod and Annie lived happily in Rhode Island and saw their girls get married and have children of their own. Annie continued to play tennis regularly and was very active in a bridge and bowling league. Tragedy struck, however, in 1984, when their youngest daughter, Ericka, was killed in an automobile accident while living in Houston. Annie never really got over this loss.

In 1999, Rod had a massive heart attack and passed away, after 49 years of marriage. Annie never remarried, although she was only 66 when her husband passed away. She continued to live in their home in Rhode Island until moving to Maryland with her daughter, Malee. In 2018, Annie moved to Montana to live with her daughter, Nancy. She then moved into the St. Luke Extended Care Facility in 2020 and has happily lived there since. She recently turned 90 years young and is still quick to smile and laugh. While Annie participates in nearly all of the provided activities, she doesn’t talk much. She prefers to listen to everyone chit-chat around her and take the world in.

A lesson learned from Annie perhaps? The world is yours for the taking!



Anong “Annie” Naree Hemphill

## NUTRITION CORNER



### Intermittent Fasting: Current Trends in Diets

By Alex Banuet, RDN  
(Registered Dietitian Nutritionist)

INTERMITTENT FASTING (IF) HAS BEEN A GROWING TREND for achieving health goals including weight loss. IF describes various meal timing schedules that cycle between fasting and non-fasting. Participants choose between alternate-day fasting, periodic fasting, and daily time-restricted feeding. The argument behind potential weight loss and other positive health outcomes states that as long as we don’t snack, insulin levels will go down and fat cells release stored sugar. As insulin levels go down, weight loss can occur. This allows insulin levels to go down far enough and for long enough that fat is burned off. Unfortunately, many do not understand how IF can affect health. With evidence-based research lacking, EatRight.org, (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics), states IF is not currently a recommended treatment for weight loss or treating other health conditions.

The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition discusses how many IF studies there are on rats. Though rats on various versions of IF have better health outcomes including cardiovascular health, this would not reflect the success rate in human trials. As many diets have shown, success depends on individual metabolism and lifestyle, working with some participants and not with others. Existing health conditions must also be considered. For Type 2 diabetes patients, insulin dosing becomes difficult to manage and maintain in IF.

Dieting and fasting have been found to result in many negative emotional states including increased anxiety, nervousness, depression, slower decision-making and poorer memory.



People tend to keep or put weight on during times of prolonged stress, which is another reason why diets generally do not work. Further research is needed to see how IF can influence these health factors.

If you are still interested in IF, you should consider whether this is the lifestyle choice you should make. Can you eat enough for your work or school schedule? Will you be able to eat with family? Can you eat while commuting? Even with these obstacles, IF doesn’t guarantee your diet will be healthy. With only a limited amount of time to eat, participants must include a mostly nutrient dense meal to ensure adequate calories are eaten in the 8-10-hour window. This would consist mostly of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins. If not, participants may be at risk for nutrient deficiencies and prolonged hunger. Participants that do succeed with IF say that it helped them structure their mealtimes and meal prepping. Sustainability is key in any lifestyle change, so pay attention to your environment and be practical (and kind!) to your body.

## EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

Quarter 2:  
Misty Coe, ED

MISTY COMES TO WORK EVERY DAY WITH A SMILE and is pleasant to everyone she interacts with. She goes above and beyond her job duties on a daily basis, which is appreciated not only in her department but by others as well, particularly Environmental Services (EVS). She is always willing to pitch in wherever needed and is truly an asset to the St. Luke team!



Misty Coe

## SL Heart to Heart

[www.stlukehealthcare.org](http://www.stlukehealthcare.org)

### IN RONAN:

St. Luke Community Hospital  
St. Luke Community Convenient Care  
St. Luke Community Extended Care  
St. Luke Community Oxygen & Medical Equipment  
St. Luke Community Hearing Center  
St. Luke Community Healthcare Foundation  
107 6th Ave. SW 406-676-4441  
St. Luke Community Clinic – Ronan 406-676-3600  
St. Luke Orthopedic Clinic 406-528-5580  
St. Luke General Surgery 406-676-3600  
126 6th Ave. SW

### IN POLSON:

St. Luke Community Clinic – Ridgewater 406-883-3737  
St. Luke Community Clinic – Ridgewater PT 406-883-2666  
107 Ridgewater Drive  
St. Luke Community Clinic – Southshore 406-883-2555  
104 Rufus Lane

### IN ST. IGNATIUS:

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**The Heart of Healthcare  
in the Mission Valley**

