

A family of caring

"To us, family means putting your arms around each other and being there."

Barbara Bush, American first lady, 1989-93

Families represent caring and wanting the best for each other. At MeritCare our family of caregivers is dedicated to making MeritCare a great place for patients by improving the health and quality of life of the people we serve. MeritCare Foundation is also a family — individuals, organizations, and businesses who come together to ensure the development, advancement and preservation of the best healthcare possible.

The families that you will meet on the next pages are wonderful testimonials to the strength of great health care supported by donors who want to make a difference.

Bob and Lorry Lyngstad of Fargo have received medical care in other parts of the U.S. but, according to Bob, "The best care we've ever received is here at MeritCare Roger Maris Cancer Center. Everyone from the greeters to our trusted doctors and their staff go out of their way to make you feel special when you become a patient at the RMCC. Staff continually ask, 'How are you doing today?' While asking you this or greeting you, they reach out and touch you." Lorry calls this "the touch of love." "And love abounds in all the rooms and halls," Bob adds. As a result of the wonderful care they received the Lyngstads were motivated to make a generous gift to MeritCare.

The Lyngstads approached Bob's physician, Gerald Gross, M.D., during an office visit, about wanting to help in a way that would benefit an area of need in the Cancer Center. "I feel they have an affinity to growing a local center of excellence and the value of that type of cancer care in this region," says Dr. Gross. "It was so complimentary of the staff — a donor making a sizable gift and asking the cancer center to decide the most important need; to put their trust in us that the money will be used in good faith and to benefit everybody."

The staff discussed this opportunity and decided the focus should be on education. "We envisioned that this gift will support having regional experts come here to MeritCare or will allow us to send staff for training. We choose conferences sponsored by renowned educational facilities that offer objective, research-based presentations. Our staff can stay up-to-date in all areas of cancer care." "When they come back with new information," adds Dr. Gross, "like a new approach to breast cancer care, it is readily shared with other staff."



Education has always been available for staff, however being able to provide much more staff education than the budget would have allowed benefits both patients and staff. By setting up an endowed fund for education with their donation, the Lyngstads made a purposeful decision to support MeritCare now and in the future.

Lorry Lyngstad, Gerald Gross, MD, and Bob Lyngstad share a warm greeting at one of Bob's appointments at the MeritCare Roger Maris Cancer Center.

Annual Report 2005-2006

Making a Difference... TOGETHER



MeritCare's fiscal year is from July – June. Our donors have made each year more productive than the last.

In fiscal year 2005-2006, we're delighted to announce that 7,961 donors made gifts. The total amount of \$2,308,755 is from generous gifts of cash and stock and from in-kind donations.

Many generous donors make gifts to MeritCare because of the great care given or services provided.

The Foundation is proud to say that many associates also make financial gifts. Our staff supports both their own area of interest and those areas of great need, which are funded by MeritCare Fund.

Roland "Rocky" Swanson of Moorhead and his family have a long history of health care at MeritCare. "We've been cared for here for 45 years — my brother, as an infant, is alive because of pediatrician Dr. LeBien; both of our children were born at MeritCare; my father was cared for by Dr. Preston Steen and the Roger Maris Cancer staff; and our daughter had a scare with cancer." However it is his most recent and most memorable experience at MeritCare that prompted a gift to the Foundation. "I'm still alive!" says Rocky, "I wanted to show my appreciation with a gift."

"It was September 11th and I hadn't been feeling well for a few days. I convinced myself to go to the hospital at 5:30 that morning. By 1:00 that afternoon I was on the operating table." Rocky had developed a life-threatening blood clot in his small intestine. "I had excellent care in the emergency room and surgeon Dr. Michael Howell was superb! I was in the hospital for two weeks with no complications and had terrific follow-up care. After I was home and had fully recovered I decided I wanted a tangible way to show my thanks."



Rocky Swanson makes another trip to the doctor — this time to thank Michael Howell, MD, for the exceptional medical care he and MeritCare staff gave him last fall.

Rocky and his wife Mary made a gift to MeritCare Fund. This fund is set up to provide the opportunity for MeritCare staff to develop innovative programs and ideas while meeting the mission of MeritCare Health System. These funds support research, technology, education, patient care, and program development in all services. Adds Rocky, "If I had this happen to me 20 years ago, without today's technology and methods of care, the doctors tell me I wouldn't have made it. The donation comes from my debt of gratitude."

Evelyn Quigley, MN, RN, has dedicated over 37 years of her career to MeritCare. As a Senior Executive, she provides system-wide leadership and coordination for community benefit initiatives, including Community Connections, Social Services, Spiritual Services, Guest Services and Volunteer Services. Ev coordinates and facilitates MeritCare's relationships with academic institutions, faith communities and social service agencies.

Ev and her husband, Brian, are also devoted donors to MeritCare and have been making gifts since the Foundation began in 1985. In the past year they have generously supported the Nursing Development Fund, Friends of the Family, the Parish Nurse Program, and have continued their support of the renovation of MeritCare Children's Hospital.

Ev Quigley, here with husband Brian, is one of over 820 MeritCare associates that gave to MeritCare this year.



"I am so impressed with the support and commitment MeritCare associates have shown to the Friends of the Family initiative. The contributions they give to the silent auction are beautiful gifts and a reflection of their generosity. Additionally, the quality of the items makes it fun for those of us who dream of being the recipient as we participate in the silent auction. The teamwork of those who plan the event is very much appreciated. I know that the funds assist many patients and families who come to MeritCare for care. Brian and I are happy to be able to contribute to our community since we have been richly blessed."

Ivan and Yvonne Nelson, Grand Forks, have been giving to MeritCare Children's Hospital for 17 years. They give from the heart in memory of their grandson Michael James.

"We first heard of MeritCare Children's Hospital during the Children's Miracle Network television broadcast in 1990. A six-year-old girl was featured who, like Michael, had neuroblastoma. He had just been diagnosed in January at 17 months of age. We wanted his family from California to visit us and we knew after watching the telethon we would have a place to take him for care. In Michael's four short years he had many chemotherapy and radiation treatments and a bone marrow transplant. In July of 1992 he had a kidney transplant from his mother. They both did well until the day after his fourth birthday. His body began rejecting the kidney and he went into a coma that lasted for weeks. We lost him on September 19, 1992."



Long-time donors Ivan and Yvonne Nelson and grandson Michael James (MJ) support MeritCare because of its specialized medical care for children in this region.

MeritCare Children's Hospital is near and dear to the Nelsons. "Michael wasn't treated at MeritCare but we want to make sure that the Children's Hospital is here for our grandchildren and all the other children of the region. We also are so pleased that 100% of our donation stays in this region. For both these reasons we plan on continuing our donations to MeritCare."

Long-term donors are a valuable resource for MeritCare. They provide the continuity and stability that allows the Foundation to provide programs and services that would otherwise not be available.



Harry Hayer, Brian Hayer, and Denise Magness of Warner and Company — a regional, family business that supports organizations like MeritCare Foundation.

Warner and Company is a family business that has been in this region since the agency was founded by Raymond D. Warner and Alonzo Rupert in October 1911. In 1920 Mr. Rupert sold his interest to Mr. Warner and his two brothers, who had joined the firm. In 1930 the name was changed to Warner and Company.

The present owners are also a family. Harry Hayer, President of Warner and Company, joined the organization in 1964. Harry was named President in 1970 and bought majority ownership in 1974. He continues to be active in the business while his two children, Denise Magness and Brian Hayer, handle the day-to-day operation of the agency. Denise and Brian are also very active in the community and serve on many organizations' board of directors.

MeritCare Foundation is privileged to have 42 donors in our giving family that have made gifts for all 21 years that the Foundation has been part of MeritCare.

Warner and Company is a member of MeritCare Foundation's Corporate Partner Program. Warner and Company has made a gift to MeritCare every year for 21 years and became a member of the *Corporate Partner Program* that began last year. This annual business campaign for MeritCare Health System consists of making a gift to a fund of choice or partnering on a sponsorship opportunity.

According to Brian, "MeritCare plays a key role in providing a great quality of life for area residents. Our family believes that supporting MeritCare is an important part of our community philanthropic support."

All our donors — individuals, organizations and businesses — have provided funds to ensure the best healthcare possible for our family and friends.

Mike and Char Solberg's connection to MeritCare became even more special this last year. Mike is on the Foundation Board of Directors and the Solbergs made a commitment to the renovation of MeritCare Children's Hospital during the 2003 campaign. Last October, when their son Charlie was born, turned out to be a time of great risk to mother and son – a time they relied on the high level of care available at MeritCare. Char developed a potentially dangerous condition called placenta previa. Under the close care of MeritCare obstetrician Dr. Margaret Mickelson, the Solbergs took the needed steps: frequent checkups and close monitoring of Char and the baby, bed-rest for Char. In the last few weeks, medication was given to help the baby's lungs develop in case of a premature birth. "To be honest, I felt like a ticking bomb," says Char. The Solbergs knew the delivery of their baby might happen sooner than expected and they knew it would likely be a cesarean section (C-section) to reduce the risk of severe bleeding of the placenta. They knew, too, the high-level care needed would be readily available; MeritCare Children's Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) is located next to MeritCare Family Birth Center.



Grace Solberg, Fargo, hugs her baby brother Charlie, whose life was saved thanks to advanced care at MeritCare.

On October 10, at 36 weeks, Charlie entered the world weighing 8 pounds, 8 ounces. Because he was somewhat premature and had a fast heart rate and rapid breathing, he was immediately transported to the nearby NICU, where he received close monitoring, oxygen and nourishment through a temporary feeding tube. But the most critical situation was yet to unfold. While under close supervision in the recovery room, Char began to

hemorrhage. Many steps had to be taken to stop the hemorrhaging but the Family Birth Center medical team worked quickly to save her life. Over the next few days Char began to recover. "I was still pretty out of it, but I knew people were checking on me often, and I felt very much like I was under a watchful eye," she says. "I was so incredibly weak I couldn't even go to the NICU to see Charlie, but the nurses brought him to me. I could see he was in good hands," she says. Over the next five days, Char's strength gradually returned and she was able to go home, followed by Charlie two days later.

"We're blessed beyond belief that what could have been such an unhappy ending turned out the way it did.," says Mike. "When we made the gift to the Children's Hospital Renovation, we didn't expect that we would need the technology in the expanded NICU and the expertise of the staff so soon. We're so thankful the care Char needed and the care Charlie needed was all there in one place!"

Marvin and Donna Ward have thought seriously about the future of health care. They took a step in that direction by setting up an annuity that benefits MeritCare. This fund ensures that MeritCare will be able to provide quality health care in this region for many years to come. By including MeritCare in their estate plans they are members of **LegacyCare**.

Donna's mother, Eleanor Arvig, was passionate about making gifts to the community. The Arvig family has made many programs and services possible in their hometown of Perham and throughout the region. Gifts to MeritCare were part of that philanthropy and Donna and Marvin are continuing the legacy started by her mother.



Marvin Ward, Roger Gilbertson, MD, and Donna Ward pause for a photo at the Honors Dinner. The Honors Dinner recognizes donors that have made cumulative gifts of \$10,000 or more.

Sixteen donors notified the Foundation this year that MeritCare is included in their estate plans. This brings the membership of LegacyCare to 154 members.

Through planned giving, you can make provisions for MeritCare to receive a gift at some time in the future. Inclusion of MeritCare in your estate plan qualifies you for LegacyCare membership.



Paul and Mary Swenson support MeritCare in many capacities.

Paul and Mary Swenson have many relationships with MeritCare. Every week of the year, Mary and Paul interact with other members of the MeritCare family as patients, volunteers, or donors.

Paul was in the agriculture department at American Crystal Sugar for over 40 years, starting in Drayton, ND, and continuing when Paul and Mary moved to Fargo in 1973. Paul was instrumental in establishing American Crystal Sugar's corporate support of MeritCare in 1985. That same year Paul and Mary also made their first gift and they continue that support many times a year.

Mary began her connection to MeritCare by working in the office of William Norberg, MD, pediatric cardiologist, at Fargo Clinic (now MeritCare). Dr. Norberg was active in getting the Children's Hospital started at MeritCare and was its first medical director.

Mary began volunteering at MeritCare in March 1994 and she has accumulated over 9,000 hours. Much of her time has been spent in the Foundation office. "I remember when we used index cards for tracking donations," says Mary. "That was before computers and they were a lot of work." Mary has provided invaluable help with mailings and events. Every year Mary is on the scene of the Children's Miracle Network (CMN) broadcast. "In the first 15 years the televised event was held for two straight days. I remember staying there for 24 hours without sleep! It's also exciting being on-air and waiting for donors to call and make a pledge. There is so much support of CMN in this region."

Mary was MeritCare Auxiliary President in 2001-2002. "As an auxiliary member you get involved in many different projects, from book sales to inventory of the gift shop. I also enjoy working with the Auxiliary during Festival of Wreaths."

"We've also been patients at MeritCare since we moved our family here," says Mary. "Our sons, Ralf and Rod, and grandchildren recognize and appreciate our strong connection to MeritCare."



Mary Swenson, a dedicated volunteer for the Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Celebration, waits for the next donor to call.



It's not unusual for volunteers to give a total of 5,000 hours in one month – the equivalent of 29 full time employees.

MeritCare Auxiliary is like a very large extended family and one that also provides tremendous financial support. Since the Auxiliary's first donation in 1963 the organization has given more than a million dollars to MeritCare. Among their accomplishments are the purchase of a mammography machine and major contributions toward the Walk-In Clinic at Southpointe, the Easy Street rehabilitation area, and the recent renovation of the Children's Hospital. The major income producer is MeritCare Gifts, located at MeritCare Hospital and MeritCare South University, and they've coordinated many other successful fund-raisers over the years. For Tammy Breuer, who joined the Auxiliary in 1975, great satisfaction comes from seeing how the funds have been used over the years. "As Auxilians, we know where the

money goes and what it supports, and there's great pride associated with that. We're involved and we're committed."

Of over 260 Auxiliary members, half are also MeritCare volunteers. Volunteers can choose from a wide variety of opportunities — delivering flowers and mail to patients, knitting caps for newborns, delivering snacks to patients receiving chemotherapy, staffing the Gift Shop, guiding patients to various areas of MeritCare, playing with children in MeritCare Children's Hospital playroom, and much more. They, too, are a part of the *family* that provides care and comfort for everyone who visits MeritCare.

Your gift directly benefits MeritCare patients through programs, services, research, technology and education.

In the last year \$1,297,810 was distributed for
Community benefit: 5.8% of total
Education: 16.4%
Equipment: 11.1%
Family & Patient Support: 31.5%
General: 4.1%
Renovation: 26.0%
Research: 3.8%
Scholarships: 1.3%



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You can join our family of caring.

Donations can be made on our secure web page at Foundation.meritcare.com; by using the envelope inside this newsletter; by mail using the address of PO BOX MC, Fargo, ND 58122-0302; or in person at the Foundation office, located in the Scandia Hotel (across from MeritCare Emergency Center at 717 4th Street in Fargo.)

A Foundation staff member would be delighted to talk with you and help you decide which program or service area meets your wishes of what you'd like to support. Please call the Foundation at (701) 234-6246 or (800) 437-4010 and ask for extention 6246.

*Some friends I cherish as family,
Some family I treasure as friends,
I embrace all those who touch me
and find joy as I also touch them.*

-Karen Schossow