

# your HEALTH

Rogue Valley Medical Center Health Newsletter

Spring 2011

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**POLICED BACK TO HEALTH** *see page 2*

# Policed Back to Health



*Bryan Morrison (front center) with his police colleagues (clockwise from left), Roxy West, Steve Fahrney, Chief Brian Bowles, and Scott Daugherty*

**B**ryan Morrison is in the business of saving lives. As a public safety dispatcher with the Yreka Police Department, he spends 12 hours a day delivering help where help is needed. When a heart attack struck in 2009, Bryan discovered how it feels to be on the receiving end of help—thanks to Rogue Valley Medical Center (RVMC) and his police colleagues, who rallied to rescue him from an unhealthy lifestyle.

“I was eating junk food all the time, couldn’t really find time to exercise, and I put on a lot of extra weight,” Bryan recalls. He planned to see a doctor about starting a nutrition and weight-loss plan on January 6. His heart attack occurred on January 4.

An emergency cardiac catheterization at RVMC found that one artery was completely blocked and another was halfway there. Bryan had heart surgery to repair the blocked arteries, and soon after he started a 12-week Cardiac Rehabilitation program.

“They educated me on everything you should know about how to take care of your heart,” Bryan says. “It’s a great environment because there’s no

“Other workout facilities are competitive. In Cardiac Rehab everybody is there for the same reason, and everybody encourages one another. It’s like one big family.”

pressure. Other workout facilities are competitive. In Cardiac Rehab everybody is there for the same reason, and everybody encourages one another. It’s like one big family.”

Sally Seibert, RN, clinical coordinator of RVMC Cardiac Rehabilitation, says the program helps people develop long-lasting habits. “It’s not just about improving their health,” she says. “It’s about a whole quality-of-life issue. “People feel better, they’re eating better, and consequently their health is better—their blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugars.”

It worked for Bryan. Since his heart attack, he has lost 100 pounds and is no longer dependent on medication to control his diabetes. How does he stay on track? With a little help from his police department friends.

“They policed everything I did,” he says. If co-workers spied Bryan in a drive-thru (for coffee), they’d call his cell phone to ask what he was doing. When Bryan walked into the office with a paper bag from a fast-food restaurant, his fellow officers would inspect it to make sure no greasy burgers or fries were inside. “They were always asking, ‘Did you check your blood sugar? What kind of cheese is that?’ And they encouraged me to get out of my chair to walk around,” he says.

Before his heart attack, Bryan was caught in a cycle of unhealthy eating and inactivity. Now he packs a salad for lunch and walks as often as he can. “You have to make little promises to yourself and keep them,” he says. “My wife promised I could buy a new motorcycle if I lost 100 pounds.” He bought the motorcycle last May.

Can you recognize a heart attack? The signs aren’t always obvious. “Pay attention to anything new or different, a change from your normal pattern,” says Sally Seibert, RN, clinical coordinator of RVMC Cardiac Rehabilitation. “Some people would just tell me they felt like they were getting old.”

For example, your daily 1-mile walk is getting harder. With a partial blockage, you may experience pain with exercise that goes away with rest. This could signal that a heart attack is on the way. Call your doctor immediately.

On the other hand, if symptoms come on suddenly, are unrelenting, and last for more than five minutes, Sally says take an aspirin and call 9-1-1. Emergency responders alert the RVMC Catheterization Lab, where a team stands ready to save your heart.

## HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR TARGET HEART RATE

When you maintain your target heart rate while exercising, your heart gets the maximum benefit.

Follow this simple formula: 220 minus your age, multiplied by 0.55 to 0.85.

For example, for a healthy 40-year-old:  
 $220 - 40 = 180$  (maximum heart rate)  
 $180 \times 0.55 = 99$  (lower end)  
 $180 \times 0.85 = 153$  (upper end)

While exercising, keep your rate between 99 and 153, or 65 to 85 percent of your maximum heart rate. If you sense you're redlining your heart rate, slow down or stop until your breathing returns to normal.

Keep in mind that targets may be lower for heart patients and higher for serious athletes. Talk to your doctor to determine what's best for you.

## Move Your Feet! How to Start a Running or Walking

I'm out of shape. I can't even run to the mailbox—how can I start jogging? It's been a long day, and I deserve to sit on the couch and watch *Dancing with the Stars*...again.

You know that exercise is good for you. Don't let the excuses win! "The first step is to believe in yourself," says Beth Coker, Cardiac Rehab supervisor at Rogue Valley Medical Center (RVMC). "Too many people defeat themselves before they even start because the first week they expect themselves to do way more than they can, and then they quit."

To start—and stick with—a running or walking routine, Coker recommends the following strategies.

### START GRADUALLY

"You should be able to walk or run comfortably," Coker says. The first week begin with a baseline goal—for example, two laps around the block every other day—then increase gradually either by time or distance until you can achieve 30 minutes a day, five to six days a week.

### WATCH YOUR HEART RATE

To determine if you're on track, Coker says, watch your heart rate. Keep it in your target zone, which is 55 to 85 percent of your maximum heart rate (see sidebar at left). Below your target rate,

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"Sign up for a local 5K and tell people you're going to do this thing....It's not just for elite athletes. Anybody can do a fun run or walk. Just do it!"

—Beth Coker, RVMC Cardiac Rehab

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you're not gaining the full benefits of exercise. If you shoot too high, however, fatigue can set in.

"After your heart gets stronger, you need to boost your program a little bit," Coker advises. Interval training can help. Pick up the pace for five minutes and then slow down for five minutes.

## TAKE A BREAK

Overtraining is the most common cause of injuries. Prevent them by taking a day off. “Take some time for a little R and R,” Coker says. “Don’t hit the pavement seven days a week. You need to give your muscles and your feet a break.”

## WEAR GOOD SHOES

Speaking of feet, Coker says it’s important to wear good shoes. Investing in proper supportive footwear can prevent expensive aches and pains down the road.

## STRETCH

“Talk to anybody who’s lived the lifestyle of a walker or runner, and they’ll tell you stretching matters,” Coker says. She recommends active stretching before a workout (moving slightly with your stretches) and

passive stretching afterward (stretch and hold for at least 30 seconds). Active stretching helps get your body warmed up; passive stretching is best after a workout because your muscles are more pliable.

## TELL YOUR FRIENDS

What’s the real secret to exercise success? Accountability! “Sign up for a local 5K and tell people you’re going to do this thing. Then you have made a commitment,” Coker says. “It’s not just for elite athletes. Anybody can do a fun run or walk. Just do it!”



*Coker recommends stretching before and after a run.*



*James Romano of Medford trains in February. James is a Cardiac Rehab graduate.*

# A Team Effort to Save a Crew Chief



PHOTO BY KEVIN LAUNUS, THE DAILY COURIER

*“75 days in hospital.  
37 days in ICU.  
Surgeries to fix his leg.  
Surgeries to put his face back on.  
First his nose. Then chin, then orbits.  
Surgery time for Dad is counted in days,  
not hours. He has fallen, and all the  
king’s horses and all the king’s men have  
been putting him back together again.”*

*—Marlin Foster, son of Eldon Foster*

When patients suffer traumatic injury, it takes the coordinated and inspired efforts of specialists and therapists in inpatient rehabilitation to help them return to a normal life. It also takes the love and the devotion of family and community. Eldon Foster is such a story.

On June 18, Eldon fell 20 feet from a hot-air balloon. The 70-year-old Grants Pass adventurer and seasoned

balloon crew chief suffered multiple traumatic injuries, leading to numerous surgeries and healing milestones. On August 31, Eldon beat the odds and returned home, leaving a lasting imprint on all who cared for him.

“Mr. Foster’s care was fully a team effort,” says Jeff Solomon, DO, a board certified physiatrist and the physician in charge of coordinating Eldon’s care at the Rogue Valley Medical Center (RVMC) Inpatient Rehabilitation Center in Medford. A squadron of health professionals, including therapists, optometrists, ophthalmologists, orthopedists, psychologists, social workers, and nurses, came alongside the Foster family with one common goal: to restore Eldon’s quality of life.

As a result of his injuries, Eldon had to relearn many basic behaviors, including sitting up, walking, and

eating. Speech/language pathologist Erica Saunders worked with him daily to restore reasoning skills, spatial orientation, and short-term memory. “It was truly amazing, as many individuals do not recover their cognitive abilities to the degree Eldon did after experiencing such a critical injury,” she says.

“As healthcare workers in a rehabilitation setting, we often learn more from our patients and their families than they learn from us,” says Matt McEwan, RVMC physical therapist, recalling Eldon’s gift of storytelling and unwavering strength. “I will carry many of the lessons I learned from—and with—Eldon for the rest of my career in healthcare.”

With each small victory, the rehab staff was committed to teaching Eldon’s family how to continue his progress when he made the final victory lap home. Today the Fosters attribute Eldon’s recovery to two factors: excellent care close to home—and faith.

### A SON’S LOVING STORY

Marlin Foster has followed his father’s recovery on “Eldon’s Blog.” Following are some excerpts. The full blog is at <http://eldonfoster.blogspot.com>.

*“Miracles abound in this. God’s glory and handiwork are interwoven throughout this journey.”*

—Marlin Foster, June 21 blog excerpt

*“Just at the moment, Grandpa is not the infallible pusher of swings and mender of broken things.”*

—Marlin Foster, July 17 blog excerpt

*“While working on bringing a spoon to his mouth to eat soup, Dad stopped and thought for a few moments. Then smiled and picked up the bowl with both hands and slurped away. My kids would have been proud.”*

—Marlin Foster, July 24 blog excerpt

**P**atients recovering from traumatic injury or stroke often need hospital-based rehabilitation. It is complex and on average takes 12 to 14 days.

In the Inpatient Rehabilitation Center (IRC) patients relearn simple tasks of daily living, such as speaking, walking, eating, and dressing, in a spacious, healing environment. It is a team effort led by a rehabilitation medicine physician and includes physical and occupational therapists, rehabilitation nurses, neuropsychologists, social workers, and speech/language pathologists.

At the center is the patient, who is often an example of heroic effort supported by the love of family and the compassion of the therapy team. They form trusting relationships that lead to a successful return to normal life.

If you or your loved one needs inpatient rehabilitation, RVMC can provide it seamlessly.

## BREATH FOR LIFE CLASS SCHEDULE

**B**reath for Life classes run for seven weeks and meet on Thursdays at the Asante Diabetes Education classroom downstairs from the Asante Diabetes Education Center at 2900 East Barnett Road in Medford.

The next two series of classes will run on the following dates:

**Thursdays | 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**

• **June 23 through August 4**

• **September 22 through November 3**



# Breath for Life Classes Help You Quit Smoking

**T**hinking about quitting tobacco? It's tough, but you can do it with Breath for Life, a tobacco-cessation program designed to help you quit for good. This seven-week course combines essential tools for success and group support led by an American Lung Association Freedom from Smoking–certified instructor.

Only 5 percent of people who try quitting cold turkey actually succeed in kicking the habit. That success rate jumps to 30 percent for those who get help. “Use the tools that are available to you,” says Gail Anderson, health promotion coordinator with Asante Work Health. She recommends having a plan and a support system comprising friends, family, your physician, and a Breath for Life coach. “Being in a group of people who are going through the same thing you’re going through is very powerful,” Anderson says. “We’re here to walk with you through the process.”

Breath for Life focuses on transforming your behavior—trading tobacco addiction for positive, healthy choices. You won’t just address

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“Do not let this tiny cigarette control your life. If I can quit after 33 years—and I did love smoking—anyone can!”

–Wendy Gibson, CPR instructor

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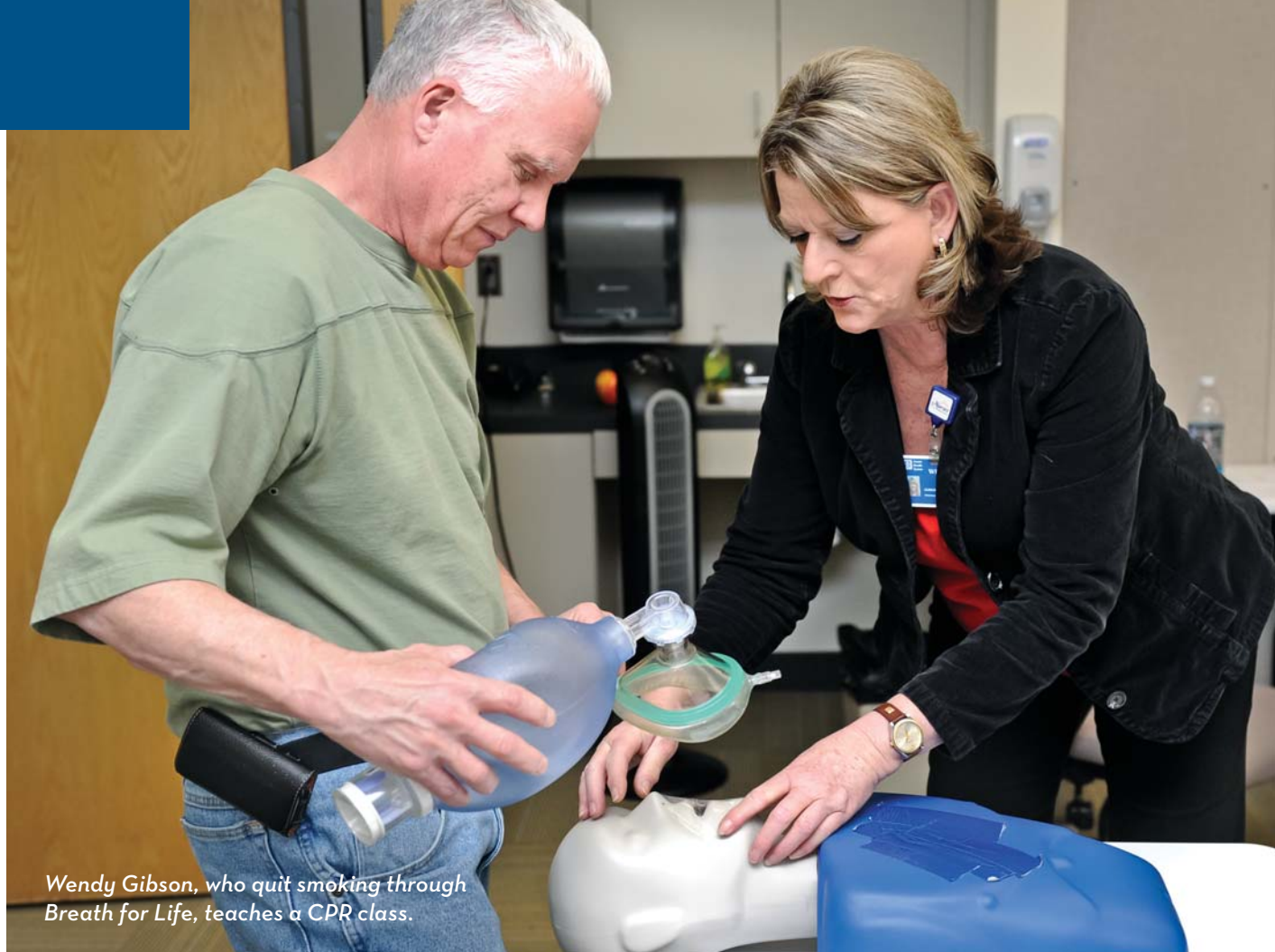
the symptoms of tobacco use; you’ll dig into the underlying issues and understand your relationship with tobacco. You’ll even develop a plan for preventing relapses.

It worked for Wendy Gibson, a CPR instructor at Rogue Valley Medical Center (RVMC), who smoked for 33 years before Breath for Life set her free. “Breath for Life helped me with having someone to talk with and by giving me the tools to use in helping me quit smoking,” she says. Such tools include nicotine replacement aids, which Oregon state law now requires all health plans to cover up to a minimum of \$500.



Wendy has been tobacco-free for three and a half years. Beyond the great health benefits, she has discovered many perks to her new lifestyle. “My hair and my clothes smell so much better. Food tastes much better. I am no longer afraid to kiss!” she says. To anyone who wants to quit but thinks they can’t, Wendy urges, “Do not let this tiny cigarette control your life. If I can quit after 33 years—and I did love smoking—anyone can!”

Breath for Life is a partnership among RVMC, Three Rivers Community Hospital, and Asante Work Health. The program cost is just \$20. For more information or to enroll in the program, call (541) 789-3932.



*Wendy Gibson, who quit smoking through Breath for Life, teaches a CPR class.*

## BECOME A PART OF YOUR COMMUNITY

Rogue Valley Medical Center is a part of Asante Health System—a locally owned, tax-exempt health system created by and for the people of Southern Oregon and Northern California. To support the work of Rogue Valley Medical Center, to honor someone, or to learn about planned giving, contact the Asante Foundation in Medford at (541) 789-5025 or via e-mail at [foundationinfo@asante.org](mailto:foundationinfo@asante.org).



# NICU Expansion Is Under Way and You Can Help

On December 1, 2010, a sledgehammer broke through the wall in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Rogue Valley Medical Center (RVMC), marking the first step toward keeping more families closer to home. As the only NICU in a nine-county region, the unit is in high demand. When RVMC runs out of space, babies are often transported to other hospitals outside the area. Our tiniest patients deserve better. “Babies don’t know there is a recession,” says Kent Brown, RVMC chief executive officer. “There is a need, and we must meet it.”

The expansion will increase capacity from 20 to 32 babies, and families will benefit from the tranquility of 13 private rooms. There are many ways you can help support the endeavor, including purchasing a Children’s Miracle Network balloon for a dollar at local retail stores.

“It’s amazing how many families are touched by the NICU,” says Sue Mendenhall, program director of Children’s Miracle Network at RVMC. “We are very grateful that the community is supporting this special project.” Employees and the auxiliaries at

RVMC and Three Rivers Community Hospital have already donated more than \$200,000.

The Asante Foundation is offering tours for anyone interested in championing the cause. For more information call the Foundation office at (541) 789-5025 in Medford or (541) 472-7300 in Grants Pass.



*A NICU “graduate” and her mother take a first swing.*

# Barbecue Roasted Salmon

Recipe from Amy Eaton, BS, ES, exercise therapist at Rogue Valley Medical Center Cardiac Rehabilitation

Amy recommends eating the Mediterranean diet for heart health. The Mediterranean diet is long on vegetables, whole grains, legumes, olive oil, and fish and is short on red meat and dairy products. The diet is also high in omega-3 fatty acids, which help reduce cholesterol and improve heart and vascular health. Salmon is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, so Amy recommends this delicious recipe. Enjoy and take care of your heart!

## BARBECUE ROASTED SALMON

### INGREDIENTS

4 (6-ounce) salmon filets

#### Marinade:

¼ cup pineapple juice

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

#### Dry rub ingredients:

2 tablespoons brown sugar

4 teaspoons chili powder

2 teaspoons grated lemon rind

¾ teaspoon ground cumin

½ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Cooking spray

Lemon slices (optional)

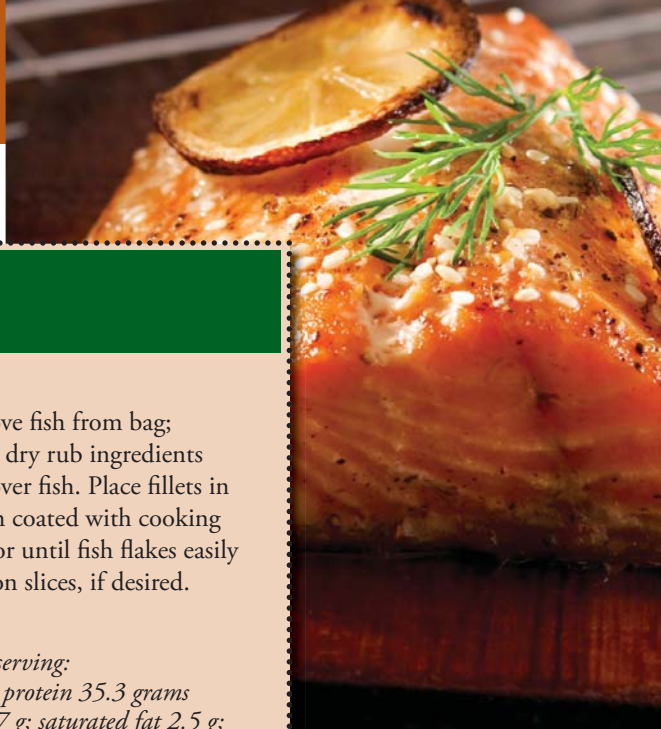
Combine first 3 ingredients in a zip-top plastic bag; seal and marinate in refrigerator for 1 hour, turning occasionally.

### INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 400°. Remove fish from bag; discard marinade. Combine dry rub ingredients in a bowl, then rub evenly over fish. Place fillets in an 11-by-7-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. Bake for 12 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork. Serve with lemon slices, if desired.

*Nutritional information per serving:*  
calories 314 (42% from fat); protein 35.3 grams (g); carbohydrate 9 g; fat 14.7 g; saturated fat 2.5 g; monounsaturated fat 6.9 g; polyunsaturated fat 3.3 g; dietary fiber 1 g; cholesterol 111 milligrams (mg); sodium 405 mg; iron 1.5 mg; calcium 30 mg

Source: *Cooking Light*, May 2001



# Asante Community Health Education Series



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Community Health Education series.  
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*[www.rvmc.org/classes-events](http://www.rvmc.org/classes-events)*

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