

Foundation

Happy New Year!

in focus

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Designing a Healing Environment

Those who enter through the locked doors of the McLaren Bay Region's Behavioral Health Unit are often in the darkest depths of despair. They've come to a place—perhaps unwillingly—where they'll receive compassionate care from a team of expert psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, social workers, and therapists who specialize in psychiatric care.

But as it currently stands, it's a place with outdated surroundings and a drab, almost institutional-like feel.

"We don't want patients feeling like they've done something so wrong that it's a punishment to be here," says Bridget Cashin, MSN, RN, director of Behavioral Health at McLaren Bay Region.

Unfortunately, other than some key structural and safety issues, the Behavioral Health Unit has remained largely unchanged since it opened in 1978. Never has it had an overhaul, a complete renovation with aesthetics and comfort at the center of attention.

That is about to change. Planned updates include new wood-grained flooring, painting of the entire unit, new lighting, and remodeled bathrooms. A kitchenette and an exercise/recreation room are also being considered, while an expansion will allow for more areas that patients can get away to for quiet reflection.

According to Bridget, a patient's care often centers on communication rather than high tech equipment. Therefore, their surroundings play an essential role in the therapeutic process.

"We've worked really hard on the programming of the unit toward providing expert care and services for the patients. Now is the perfect opportunity to create surroundings that will reflect that care," says Bridget. "We're grateful that the foundation has chosen to dedicate funds for the renovation of the unit."

THE BATTLE CONTINUES

Jackie Jammer never imagined she'd spend her 46th birthday in the Behavioral Health Unit at McLaren Bay Region. But looking back, she admits it was the best place for her to be after a series of harrowing physical health problems left her severely depressed. "When I walked out of there, I felt good about myself," recalls Jackie. Sadly, it's a feeling she doesn't get often, having first noticed the signs of depression more than a decade ago. "I don't think I wanted to believe it," she says. "You don't want to say it can happen to you."

Life remains a struggle for Jackie. Physical health issues continue to plague her, which fuel her depression. She sees mental health professionals on a weekly and bi-monthly basis. Providing Jackie moral support and encouragement is Johanne Luth, an aunt of Jackie's partner, Richard. Johanne, who serves on the board of McLaren Bay Medical Foundation, knows firsthand the experiences of dealing with mental health struggles. Johanne, 59, sought help for depression and what she came to learn was PTSD following an intense period of life struggles that included breast cancer, divorce, business challenges, and the deaths of her mother, brother, and sister. Johanne is motivated to educate people about mental health and to reduce the stigma often associated with getting treatment. "Anything I can do to help turn someone in the right direction is a win," says Johanne.



PATIENT AND HEALER

Sandy Donaldson, MSW, is a mental health counselor at McLaren Bay Region's Behavioral Health Unit. She knows all too well the effects of mental health challenges, both in her work and from personal experience. "I was from a dysfunctional family," says Sandy, 53. "Mental health wasn't discussed. I was severely depressed, and I used alcohol and drugs to compensate. I was off from my job for three months, going through substance abuse and mental health treatment. I had what I call a 'spiritual experience' at age 33. I never used illegal substances again." Today, she helps others who are suffering. She notes that counseling, psychiatric care, medications, and support groups are all there for the asking. And that's the key. "You have to want help, and asking can be hard for people," says Sandy. She believes the planned Behavioral Health Unit renovations will help. "An extensive remodel [to the facilities] will give hope to the depressed," says Sandy. "It will help ease the moods of psychotic patients. They're in their own worlds of hell. We can present mental illness as a disease like any other and not something to hide from."

MCLAREN BAY MEDICAL FOUNDATION'S NURSING/ALLIED HEALTH EDUCATIONAL GRANT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Jana Stagray is devoted to mental health. She is currently a nurse at McLaren Bay Region's Behavioral Health Unit and never imagined that mental health is where her career would take her.

She is also committed to furthering her education. Last Spring she applied for the McLaren Bay Medical Foundation's Nursing/Allied Health Educational Grant Assistance Program, and was one of the two employees chosen for this scholarship.

Jana is currently 85% completed with her Master's Degree in Nursing, and once done with that, will transition into Davenport's Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) program. Her ultimate goal is to be established in this community as a Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner.



No Heavy Lifting Required

The owner of Two Men and a Truck makes a simple gift of stock to support mental health.

“Super easy. Super, super easy!”

That’s how Bay City entrepreneur Ashley Anderson, 53, describes her gift of stock to McLaren Bay Medical Foundation behavioral health appeal. What made it so easy? “I’m not physically writing a check,” laughs Ashley. “It was a no-brainer. You know you’re giving money, but you’re not really seeing it come out of your checkbook.” For Ashley, as owner of Bay City’s Two Men and a Truck and Sunrise Pedal Trolley, giving back to the community is a passion. She consistently donates to local nonprofits and has served on the board of McLaren Bay Medical Foundation for more than 15 years. The idea of making a gift of stock started this past summer when Ashley sat down with her financial advisor for a bit of early year-end tax planning. Her advisor suggested she might want to take some stock and gift it to charity so she wouldn’t get hit with such heavy capital gains taxes come next spring. Ashley was all for it. Once she gave the nod, her financial advisor did the rest, making calls to McLaren Bay Medical Foundation and other necessary parties. Ashley earmarked the \$500 contribution for the foundation’s behavioral health appeal, although the actual amount may have varied based on what the stock sold for on the day of sale. She’s thankful her donation is going to something as important as mental health. “It really brings to light something that’s not often discussed,” says Ashley. Whether your passion is neuroscience, heart health, or behavioral health, Ashley says a gift of stock to the foundation is “a real simple way to make a donation to the hospital, and the gift stays in our community.”

6 Easy Ways to Make a Gift

Fortunately, you can save lives *and* save on taxes with a gift to McLaren Bay Medical Foundation. Here are six easy ways to give.

Give a gift of cash. It’s simple and easy. Plus, you’ll receive a charitable tax deduction on this year’s tax return.

Make a bequest. Simply designate the foundation as the beneficiary of an asset by will, trust, or other estate planning document.

Designate us beneficiary. As beneficiary of your life insurance, we receive the payout upon your death. And your estate will benefit from a charitable deduction for the value of the gift.

Transfer stocks, bonds, or real estate. Avoid paying capital gains taxes on the sale of stocks, bonds, or real property when you gift them to us.

Establish a charitable gift annuity. When you transfer your cash or appreciated property to us, we’ll pay you a fixed income (with rates based on your age) for the rest of your life.

Donate from retirement assets. A gift from your IRA, 401k, 403b, pension, or other tax-deferred plan is an excellent way to give back.

Begin your legacy today. Please contact your financial advisor or Konnie Gill, 989-895-4728, for more information on the giving tool that’s right for you.

SAVE THESE DATES

**MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS SAGINAW
SPIRIT HOCKEY GAME**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6TH
THE DOW EVENT CENTER

**EMOTIONS IN MOTION
5K WALK/RUN**

SATURDAY, MAY 7TH
MCLAREN BAY REGION

**SPRING
MEMORIAL TREE**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25TH
MCLAREN BAY REGION CAFE

Meet our Dedicated Board of Directors

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Kenneth Parsons, MD, Vice Chair • EmMed, P.C.
Cynthia Phares, Secretary • PNC Bank
Michael Stodolak, Treasurer • Independent Bank

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Paul Begick, Begick Nursery & Garden Center
Sally Bowen, Community Volunteer
Eileen Curtis, Bay Area Community Foundation
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Daniel Engelhardt, Assured Financial Advisors, LLC
Robert Dimitroff, Community Volunteer
Wendy Dore, Doreable Entertainment
Timothy Dust, The F.P. Horak Company
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Johanne Luth, McDonald's Restaurants
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Richard Steele, Penzien-Steele Funeral Home
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Mary Beth Taglauer, R & R Ready Mix, Inc.



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Your Gifts at Work in Our Community

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