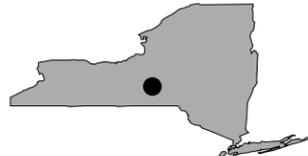


LANSING COMMUNITY NEWS



Serving the Town and Village of Lansing, Cayuga Heights, King Ferry & Genoa
 "Not quite paradise, but a nice place to live."
 NOVEMBER 7, 1996 ♦♦♦ Vo. I No. 4

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SURGICARE Ground-Breaking Last Friday = Easier Health-Care Access For Lansing, Cay Hts.

By Matthew Shulman

Approximately 50 people braved the first blustery day of winter last Friday to celebrate the official ground-breaking for the \$3.4 million Cayuga Medical Center (CMC) 12,000 square foot Warren Road outpatient *Surgicare* facility.

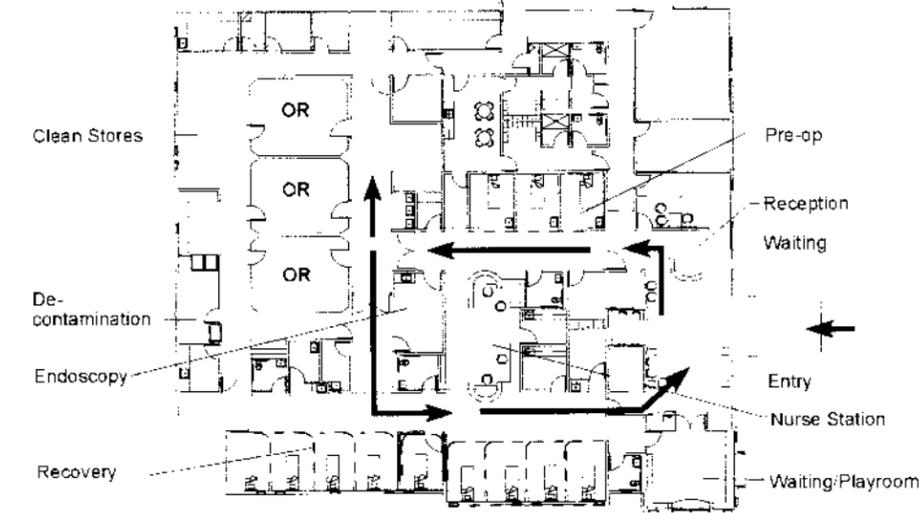
"Advances in medical technology have occurred so rapidly," said CMC President Bonnie Howell, "that we can now offer procedures on an outpatient basis that would have been impossible just five years ago."

Outpatient procedures allow the patient to have same-day surgery without being admitted to the medical center for more costly inpatient care. In 1995, 4,640 outpatient procedures accounted for 75 percent of the surgeries performed at the CMC.

When completed next July, *Surgicare's* three operating rooms and endoscopy suite will accommodate up to 25 percent of the CMC's surgical volume. "All operations will be outpatient and, by definition, non-emergency in nature," said Howell.

Advances in medical technology were not the only forces behind the decision to create a new surgical unit in Lansing. Other national and local factors also weighed in.

The national trend toward outpatient surgery is both technically and financially driven. The intersection of advances in sur-



ARCHITECT'S PLAN shows the layout and projected patient flow at the Cayuga Medical Center's East Campus *Surgicare* facility due to open in 1997.

gical procedures and pain management allow less invasive surgical techniques and faster healing.

At the same time, shorter hospital stays translate into better cost containment. Though nobody expects medical costs to diminish, cost controls can slow the growth

of provider costs and consumer insurance premiums.

Locally, continuing population expansion in Lansing and the northeast part of the county has concerned health care providers since the county hospital became a not-for-profit organization in 1981. "We're commit-

ted to improve access to health care services," said CMC Vice-President Joe Fitzgerald.

The first response to increase health care access for residents living on the east side of Cayuga Lake was the 1990 opening of the 6,000 square foot Convenient Care Center. Patients can walk into the Center at any time with their urgent health problems without an appointment.

In 1993, a 13,000 square foot medical office building was attached to Convenient Care. In addition to housing doctors' offices, it contains the CMC's Women's Imaging Center for early detection of breast cancer.

The new *Surgicare* facility will include three operating rooms, the endoscopy suite, pre-op and post-op recovery rooms, a nurses' station, support services, reception and waiting areas, and a playroom.

When its doors open next year, *Surgicare's* operating suites will feature same day services such as ENT (ear, nose and throat) surgery, orthopedic procedures, plastic and cosmetic surgeries, eye surgeries and some general surgeries. A special suite will let physicians perform diagnostic endoscopies.

Endoscopies often permit physicians to

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Food Pantry Aids 300; Many Volunteer In Return

Striving to be self-sufficient while accepting produce and canned goods from the Food Pantry can produce a lot of mixed feelings, said Ludlow Road resident Mary Seymour.

"Only my husband has an income and we need the food," explained the Food Pantry volunteer and participant, "but we have a sense of responsibility and want to work to pay back what we take."

Fortunately for the Seymours and 70 other Lansing families, the Food Pantry is there when the cupboard is bare whether it's for a few weeks or for the long haul.

"Most of the people we serve have jobs," noted Pantry co-coordinator Mary Searles. Grace Baptist Church pastor Alan St. George, who serves as Searles co-coordinator, observed that the participants tend to fall into one of three categories. "Most of the folks we serve are working poor or have recently lost jobs," he explained. "Others are aged and disabled. Some are chronically unemployed."

The Lansing Food Pantry was founded in 1988 by Joy Cruikshank, a registered nurse and life partner to her husband's pastoral activities. From the beginning, it has been a community-wide effort. "For the moment, most of the volunteers come from Grace Baptist, All Saints and the Lansing United Methodist Church," St. George explained, "but we'd welcome more volunteers whether or not they're affiliated with any church."

The Food Pantry gets its food from a variety of direct and indirect donors. The Ithaca-based Friendship Network regularly secures high-quality surplus produce and baked goods from Tops, Wegman's and P&C and arranges for periodic donations from other area food-handlers, such as Cornell.

"We must pick up the food on time," said volunteer Joan Haas of Ridge Road. "If we're late, we foul up our donors' routine. I think that having reliable volunteers to do the trucking is the hardest part."

Most canned goods are acquired from the Elmira-based Southern Tier Food Bank. Though these goods are purchased, the fee only covers actual handling costs and represents just a few cents on the retail dollar. The food is trucked in monthly shipments to Eddydale Farm for all Tompkins County food pantries. From there, Lansing volunteers transport the goods to the Lansing United Methodist Church



SHARING A SMILE - Coordinator Mary Searles and volunteer Jo Baker prepare Food Pantry parcels for delivery to homebound neighbors.

where they are stored prior to distribution.

Verna Jaquith's Food Pantry experience began 15 years ago. "We bought a truck and hauled food for Groton," she said. "We finally wore out the truck."

The Food Pantry also receives non-perishable goods and/or cash donations from the North Lansing Ladies Auxiliary, Milliken Station, the Lansing faculty, Lansing Quilters, Boy Scout Troop # 48, the Brownies, students at all three Lansing schools and area postal carriers. "With the money, we can buy canned goods that are not available through the Southern Tier Food Bank," explained co-coordinator Mary Searles.

"We try to give a specific amount of fruits and vegetables for each person in the participating family," said

Searles. She also makes an effort to see that the food parcels have a nutritional balance among the major food groups.

Most distributions are made from the Lansing United Methodist Church, which has donated storage space to the Food Pantry. However, deliveries are available to homebound people whose infirmities or failing eyesight really preclude their coming.

The Lansing Food Pantry makes no pretense of providing a month's meals. The average parcel contains just enough food for 2 to 4 meals. This may not sound like much, said St. George, but we're talking about families with virtually no discretionary income. These several bags full of groceries "can free up money for shoes for the kids or a visit to the dentist," St. George explained. "And after working on so many charitable efforts to help people far away, it's a joy to help people right here in Lansing."

"We've had a number of people who had a short term need and who later came back with money or food or volunteered their time to help," said Haas.

Sometimes it's very hard for people to accept help, said Searles. "They feel that they shouldn't take it even if their families need it."

Mary Seymour knows better. In the time since she's been coming to the Food Pantry, she's not only taken , but given her service to others. "I've been looking for work as a receptionist, food service worker or child care provider for two months," she said determinedly. When she gets her job she'll continue to help. "We'll pay back for what we receive."

"I know we'll have extra volunteers for Thanksgiving and Christmas," said Searles, "but we'll be looking for more help after the first of the year when seasonal jobs end and the number of participants is likely to rise." If you could spare several hours once every two months, give Mary Searles a call at 533-4070.

The Lansing Food Pantry is one of ten food distribution points serving every town in Tompkins County. Lansing's Food Pantry also works closely with the Genoa Food Pantry in neighboring Cayuga County. See the Community Calendar for distribution dates.

Annual Autumn Red Cross Blood Drive

Wednesday, November 13 At The Lansing High School Cafeteria

Students (17 and older): 12:30-2:00pm Community: 2:00-4:30pm

Walk-Ins Welcome or Call 533-4868 To Set Up An Appointment

Sponsored by the Lansing Chapter of the National Honor Society (Tina Ellis, President Carolyn Childers, Chairperson)