



From Dan DeGroot

I want to let you all know that this year, 2024, will be my last year as President and CEO of Stoughton Health. I plan to work to year end and then step away and retire. It is and has been a tremendous privilege to serve in this capacity with this great organization and the wonderful community of Stoughton. Tina and I plan to retire right where we are, surrounded by friends and family.

Thank you for your support and the trust you have given me. Rest assured we will continue to move forward with the many projects and opportunities in front of us.

In terms of recruitment, we have a good process in place. Donna Olson, BOD Chair and Tim Rush, Vice Chair will be reviewing with Chris Schmitz in February. More to come on this. Recruitment should ramp up in late June or early July.



Thanks again for all that you do for Stoughton Health!

From Judeen Reese, President



The term “snowbird” is, in fact, a nickname for the Dark-eyed Junco, but in terms of people, it's used to describe a group of seasonal travelers, usually retirees, who migrate to areas with warmer climates during the winter months.

I am a snowbird. For the past eleven years, right after Christmas, my husband and I overload the car and head South. We don't stop until we reach the Gulf of Mexico. Our rented condo overlooks the beach, so the first thing I do is run to the balcony and reconnect with my old friend. It's a beautiful sight. The water meets the sky, and the hues of blue and green are unending. Dawn and dusk add shades of pink and orange. No picture does it justice. Many things are overrated. The beach is not one of them.



The Gulf and I have a comfortable relationship. Early each morning, I can be found on our balcony with my first cup of coffee, gazing into the Gulf. We share, we converse, we kick back. I throw out my worries and responsibilities which no longer seem as heavy. The Gulf sings to me in a soothing, rhythmic cadence, and the lyrics offer comfort, solutions and new possibilities. The Gulf is a place where salt lowers your blood pressure, and nothing calms the soul like a walk on the beach. Of all the paths you take in life, make sure one of them leads to the beach. I hope each of you has a “Gulf” in your life. Whether it be a good book, your pet, a special friend or another travel destination, I wish you each a renewed experience as we make plans for the coming year as Partners of Stoughton Hospital.

Medical Outpatient Building Update

The new Medical Outpatient Building being constructed on the Stoughton Hospital campus is continuing to run on schedule and is slated to open in Spring 2025. The Stoughton Hospital Foundation would like to thank all of you who have been able to support this new building project and help raise over \$2,005,000! We will continue to update and share information over the next year. If you are interested in donating to this effort, please call the Foundation office at (608) 873-2334 or go to the website at stoughtonhealth.com/stoughton-hospital-foundation to view the building progress.



Calendar Raffle Update

325 calendars have been sold for the Calendar Raffle fundraiser. Thank you and good luck if you've chosen to participate! The first few drawings have happened and the winners contacted, but there are still plenty of chances to win. To view the winning ticket numbers after each drawing, please go to the website at stoughtonhealth.com/stoughton-hospital-foundation.

If you would like to get your name in the raffle, purchase your calendar online or call the Foundation office at (608) 873-2334 and we'll be glad to help.

Advocacy Day, March 20, 2024

The Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) Advocacy Day will be held on

*March 20, at the Monona Terrace
and the State Capital Building.*

The morning session begins with registration and continental breakfast at 8:00 am. The morning sessions include education and process for afternoon visits with state legislators at the Capitol. Attendees determine how much of the program they will be attending when registering.

Typically, 1,000 hospital advocates attend this event to be educated and motivated about current health care-related issues. Hospital volunteers are encouraged to attend this free event and become involved in grassroots advocacy for Stoughton Health. For additional information and registration go to www.wha.org. You may also contact Sharon Beall at 1-217-663-8594 for more information.



FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH



Every February Marks Annual American Heart Month In The US

February raises awareness about heart disease and helps people learn ways that they can protect their heart health. The federally designated event stands as a reminder to all when it comes to this important issue.

- Be more physically active. Organize a group walking session, take a new gym class, or even get a team together for a sporting event.
- Eating well is a smart way to protect your heart's health. Learn more about heart-healthy foods and cooking balanced meals at home. Invite friends to share a heart health meal.
- Track your health stats. Check your blood pressure.
- Better sleep, less stress, and quitting smoking are all ways to improve heart health.

Since heart disease and heart failure are so common in America, it's vital to know how to check for these illnesses by looking out for the warning signs.

- **Shortness of Breath:** Do you experience shortness of breath when active or even while resting? These symptoms could indicate that your body isn't getting the oxygen it needs due to heart-related issues.
- **General Tiredness:** Do you find it hard to complete simple daily activities? Always feeling tired or fatigued – even when just waking up – could be symptomatic of a larger underlying health concern such as your heart failing to pump enough blood around your body.
- **Sickness or Lack of Appetite:** You might feel full or even sick when your heart is failing to pump blood around the body, because your digestive organs can't function properly when they're not getting enough blood.
- **Confusion:** Even confused and impaired thinking could be indicative of heart problems. This is because levels of substances in your blood (such as sodium) are affecting your brain.
- **Coughing or Wheezing:** If you're always wheezing or coughing up white or pink blood-tinged mucus, you should contact your doctor as soon as possible. This could be a sign of fluid build-up in the lungs related to heart failure.
- **Fast Heart Rate:** Unless there is a clear cause, an elevated heart rate and heart palpitations are a worrying sign. If you experience these symptoms, speak to your doctor!

Small changes can create big results.



For additional nutrition, exercise, sleep
and mental health education, visit

www.cdc.gov



Have You Visited the Gift Shop?

Once again, our Gift Shop has a supply of seasonal gnomes, perfect for your special Valentine. These whimsical dwarfish creatures are each looking for a home and make the perfect gift. Each one is believed to be a "good luck charm." Come to the gift shop to see them. Other Spring and Easter items are arriving daily.

Appreciation goes to each of our gift shop volunteers who have chosen to brave the harsh Wisconsin winter and cover in the gift shop while other volunteers have traveled South.



We announce that Peg Close has joined Partners of Stoughton Hospital. Watch for Peg in the gift shop, blood drives, plant sales or cookie bakes. Welcome, Peg!!



The Partners of Stoughton Hospital Membership Directory has been updated and is available to any Partner who would like a copy. 2024 directories are available in the Gift

Shop or at the Community Health & Wellness Center. Please pick up your copy at your convenience.

Appreciation goes to our Membership Chair, Brenda Klitzke for the hours it took to complete the updates. Thanks to Linda Schaefer for formatting and printing and thanks to Sharon Beall for completing the job.

Please help keep these directories up to date. If your email, phone number or other contact information changes, please notify Brenda Klitzke.



Calendar of Events

- Jan. 31 - Save a Life with COCPR
- Feb. 6 - Stoughton Memory Café
- Feb. 7 - Partners Monthly Board Meeting, 9:00 AM, CHWC
- Feb. 8 - "Life Changing" Surgery for GERD
- Feb. 12 - Parkinson's Support Group
- Feb. 15 - Guided Grocery Tour: Fuel for a Happy Heart
- Feb. 16 - Blood Drive
- Feb 16 & 27 - Safe@Home
- Feb. 24 - Safe Sitter
- Feb. 27 - Learning to Breathe for Healthy Living
- March 6 - Partners Monthly Board Meeting, 9:00 AM, CHWC
- March 20 - Advocacy Day
- April 4 - Pansy orders due
- April 11 - Pick up Pansies, CHWC, Time TBD
- April 18 - Partners Community Card Party
- May 1 - Partners Monthly Board Meeting, 9:00 AM, CHWC
- May 2 - Geranium orders due
- May 9 - Pick up Geraniums, CHWC, Time TBD

For more information about classes and events go to <https://stoughtonhealth.com/events/>



The Month of February

is dedicated to everyone's favorite decadent treat. The celebration begins on February 1 with “**National Dark Chocolate Day**” and continues on February 9 with “**World Chocolate Day**.” While these holidays aren't official, they are simply a way for all lovers of chocolate to indulge.

Let's celebrate!

DID YOU KNOW?

Ruth Wakefield
June 17, 1903-
January 10, 1977



Ruth Wakefield was an American chef, best known as the inventor of the Toll House Cookie.

Ruth and her husband bought a tourist lodge that they called the Tollhouse Inn. They called it this because it was located on what used to be the toll road between Boston and New Bedford. Ruth cooked for the guests and her recipes were a hit.

She experimented with semi-sweet chocolate to create a new cookie flavor. The cookie got so popular that it was featured in newspapers. The Toll House Cookie became the most popular dessert of the time. Her use of Nestle chocolate was beneficial for both parties. Nestle's semi-sweet chocolate bar sales soared. Ruth and Nestle's came to an agreement where Nestle's began to print the Toll House Cookie recipe on their packaging. Part of Ruth's payment was Nestle's agreed to supply her with as much chocolate as she needed for the rest of her life!!



Long before Ruth's contribution to the chocolate industry, the first heart-shaped box of chocolates was introduced in 1861. Richard Cadbury, son of Cadbury founder John Cadbury, started packaging chocolates in fancy boxes to increase sales. The first heart-shaped box of chocolates was introduced for V-Day in 1861, and today, more than 36 million heart-shaped boxes of chocolates are sold each year, many in February for Valentine's Day.

That's 58 million pounds of chocolate!



Easy, Elegant Chocolate Fudge

2 C. semisweet chocolate pieces
 $\frac{2}{3}$ C. sweetened condensed milk
1 T. water
 $\frac{3}{4}$ C. chopped walnuts
1 t. vanilla

Combine chocolate pieces, sweetened condensed milk, and water. Microwave, uncovered, on 100% power for 1 minute; stir. Microwave about 1 minute more, or until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. Stir in nuts and vanilla. Spread into a 9x6-inch rectangle or drop mixture by rounded teaspoons onto prepared cookie sheet. Chill fudge for about 30 minutes or until firm. Cut into 1-1/2-inch squares. Makes 24 pieces.