

VIM VOICE



April/May 2021

NOTES FROM PAM



Dear Volunteers;

April/May of 2020 was a time of worry, contemplation, and reorganization. Fast forward to April/May 2021 and a time of excitement, reflection, and innovation! I am excited to say that our patient numbers are climbing, volunteers are coming back, and new volunteers are signing up. Thanks to Lee's hard work, we are becoming more efficient. Thanks to Dr. Casey, Ruth and the entire medical staff, our patients continue to receive excellent care. Spring is bringing many new innovative programs to BJVIM. The dedicated work of our staff and volunteers continues to bring recognition and high praises from our patients and the community!

— Pam



In April we incorporated our quarterly nurses meeting with a luncheon to recognize our wonderful nurses!

We also resumed the in-person quarterly doctors meeting with a dinner and celebration acknowledging their commitment to the clinic and our patients. We are planning on an administrative luncheon soon to

recognize the hard work of our non-medical team. It takes over 67 talented people to operate the clinics each week! Your time and many talents are appreciated every month—not just in April. Thank you all so very much for your love of our patients, your hard work and dedication!



As we celebrate nurses' week, this is a good time to not only thank our nurses but to give a special thank you to Ruth Spinello, our nurse manager. Ruth's time and talents are unmatched! She takes such good care of our patients in so many ways. She fills in when a nurse is unavailable for a clinic, not only in Bluffton but also Ridgeland. Ruth stays late all the time to return patients' phone calls. Her care not only goes to patients, but also to the nurses, doctors, admin volunteers and staff. She keeps us in line with her love and understanding. Thank you, Ruth and your wonderful group of nurses, **Happy Nurses Week!**

Special thanks to Martha for the wonderful



Adirondack Chairs. They are a colorful addition to the front and help make patients more comfortable while waiting for their appointments.

COVID VACCINE CLINICS

On April 1st we held our first on site COVID-19 vaccination clinic sponsored by Access Health of the Low Country and Beaufort Memorial Hospital. Sixty-four patients and friends received the vaccines from our parking lot that day. The second dose was administered on April 29th. We were thankful for good weather and wonderful staff and volunteers who participated in both events. We are in the process of meeting requirements to receive our own supply of vaccines. Research now shows that the public is more receptive to receiving the vaccine from their medical providers rather than going to a mass vaccine site. While we are waiting for site approval, Access Health will work with us to host another event at the end of May.



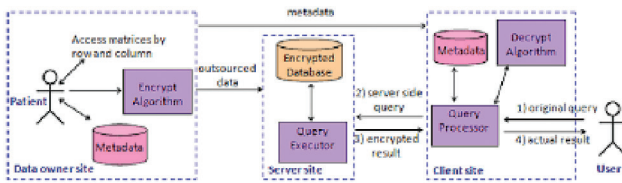
SC Strong Initiative

May will once again bring a collaboration with DHEC and the University of South Carolina for the testing of COVID-19 antibodies. We will have these testing sites on May 21 and May 28.



Care When It Counts

The SC Free Clinic recertification visit was postponed until May 27th.

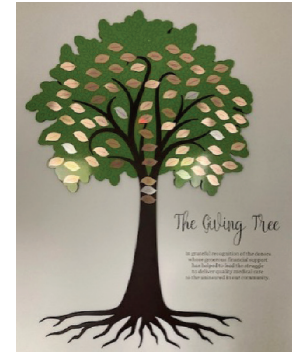


EMR News

During our shut down time last year from March–June we began to evaluate our EMR program Practise Fusion. Getting specific reports from Practise Fusion has always been a challenge and during our down time it was almost impossible for our doctors to receive lab reports and other medical reports without coming into the clinic. During this time, we instigated a telemedicine program and an appointment texting reminder system. We had a difficult time coordinating all these programs and began to look for another EMR system that might help us bring everything together. Many free clinics use **ATHENA** as their go-to system, so we approached the company. And they offered a free program that looked like it would meet and exceed our needs. We formed a focus group including: Dr. Casey, Dr. Cross, Dr. Evans, Ruth, Lee, Terry and Pam to review **Athena**. While the program seemed to fit our needs, the thought of changing EMRs was daunting! We have now found a system. **Updox** integrates with Practise Fusion allowing us to improve reporting, integrate the telemedicine program in an easier manner – bringing lab and other medical reports directly into the patient’s file and sending text reminders to our patients. This program will not be free; however, we all think this is a great solution and well worth the money. Implementation will begin sometime in July with multiple training opportunities available during the next few months. Special thanks to the focus group for their genuine interest in making our EMR system better for everyone!

GIVING TREE

As you know, 2020 was a record year for our fundraising and grant awards! In recognition of our many generous donors, the Giving Tree has NEW leaves! Names of donors have been printed on the leaves with leaf colors acknowledging levels of lifetime giving. A Bronze leaf recognizes gifts between \$5,000-\$49,999. A Silver leaf represents those whose gifts are between \$50,000 - \$99,999, and a Gold leaf is for donations in excess of \$100,000. Please look at our beautiful tree reflecting the hard work of our Resource Development Department and our wonderful donors!



In April an anonymous donor sent us a check for \$85,000 specifically to be used to expand our Ridgeland clinic! For many years, it has been the goal to have a paid staff member at the clinic. We are now actively recruiting a registered nurse to work in Ridgeland on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. We are also working to recruit volunteers, both medical and non-medical to work at the clinic. The Pregnancy Center of the Lowcountry will be in Ridgeland every Tuesday and Dr. Irving has resumed his clinic hours on the first Wednesday of each month. Dr. Kondor sees patients from 10am to 3pm on the third Thursday of the month and we are working with Dr. Epps to add cardiology appointments. If you know of anyone who might like to work in Ridgeland, please let us know. Having a clinic in Ridgeland is a great help to our patients so they no longer have to find rides to Bluffton. A local clinic makes a patient more compliant!

Dental News

While it may look like things are slow moving, Pattie and Linda have made some great strides in getting us closer to opening the clinic. We had to change one of the x-ray machines which fortunately had not yet been delivered and we are now waiting on final certification for both this new piece of equipment and the large panoramic x-ray machine. We have been actively recruiting additional volunteers and Patti has been able to recruit a dental assistant who is working on her certificate. Trainings have been scheduled on OSHA regulations and bloodborne pathogens. We hope to report the grand opening date in our next newsletter.



Donated Drugs

DHEC and the SC Board of Pharmacy have issued some new guidelines for non-dispensing pharmacies. Effective immediately, we are no longer able to receive donated drugs or supplies from the public. We will post this new regulation on our web page and on the entrance doors. We have been so grateful for the many donations received over the years which have helped our patients and saved us a lot of money. When donations are brought to the clinic, please explain that we can no longer take them.



PICTURE DAY!

Thanks to everyone who came to the clinic to have their picture taken on April 28th. Jackie was so accommodating in working with us and

I look forward to seeing all the proofs. These pictures of our beautiful volunteers will add much to this year's annual report celebrating BJVM's 10 Year history! If you were not able to have your picture taken on the 28th we will have a makeup date soon.

