

The Year in Review  
Aspen Valley Hospital's  
2008 Annual Report



## Opening remarks from Dave Ressler, CEO/Administrator

It's hard to believe, but my family moved to Aspen almost five years ago. Not unlike most families, my wife and I sought rewarding work, a healthy place to raise our children, and an environment that encourages physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. I am happy to say that coming to Aspen was a good move for us on all fronts.

Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) is a reflection of this beautiful community. It is filled with intelligent, hard-working, and caring employees, physicians, and volunteers. There is a special, reciprocal relationship between staff and patients. All of us who work here reap the rewards of having helped someone in a time of need, but it is the appreciation we receive in return that can turn a good day into a great one.

It is gratifying to acknowledge in this annual report the many people who contribute to AVH's success. As you review the empirical data from our patient satisfaction surveys, the remarkable story of our own Henry Romero, our financial report and community benefits contributions, the latest in technology, and the generosity of our donors, remember it is our staff — both at the bedside and behind the scenes — who make Aspen Valley Hospital such a special place.

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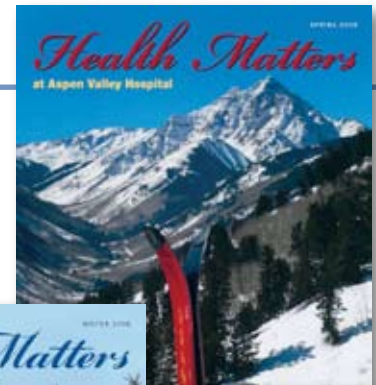
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## Newsletter wins prestigious award

"Health Matters," Aspen Valley Hospital's quarterly newsletter to the community, has won a 2008 Aster Award.

The newsletter, which was redesigned in 2008 with a more contemporary look, helps educate the community about healthy living and the hospital's medical services. The bronze award came in the category of Newsletter Series for hospitals with fewer than 75 beds.

Hosted by Creative Images, Inc., the Aster Awards are presented annually to recognize excellence in healthcare marketing and advertising.



# O u r M i s s i o n

To deliver extraordinary healthcare in an environment of excellence, compassion, and trust.

## Exemplary patient experiences

### AVH in the top 5 percent of hospitals nationwide

The Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) mission is to deliver extraordinary healthcare in an environment of excellence, compassion, and trust — the operative word being “extraordinary.” We strive to be more than “good,” to do more than provide “quality” care. We strive to provide a healthcare experience in which patients and their families are given extraordinary care and compassion by each and every member of our team, where no problem is too large or too small, and where the commitment to each patient is embodied in all of our decisions and actions.

With a mission that differentiates AVH from many other hospitals, one which drives us to continuously improve, we are honored to have received the coveted “Exemplary Patient Experience” award from Avatar International, a leading international healthcare research and consulting firm. Based on scores obtained from patient satisfaction surveys administered by Avatar, AVH is placed in the top 5 percent of hospitals nationwide, including inpatients, outpatients, emergency, and ambulatory surgery patients.

“We have a long-standing clarity about who we are and the only reason we exist — to provide extraordinary healthcare,” says CEO Dave Ressler, regarding the award. “Through an outside research firm, we measure and monitor our patient satisfaction scores and translate them into defined objectives. Our staff has worked hard to achieve this designation as a top 5 percent performer, and we are all proud to be a member of the AVH team.”



Mary Fran Powell, RN, ICU nurse.  
ICU nurses consistently earn “5-star” ratings on patient surveys.

“From the time of our arrival in the emergency room to my release from the hospital two days later, **without exception, I was treated in a courteous, pleasant, and professional manner** by everyone with whom I had contact. In our impersonal world, Aspen Valley Hospital stands out as absolutely the best.”

— AVH patient survey

# 'I am very proud to work at AVH'

After major car crash, employee has a different view of hospital

Henry Romero Vasquez remembers nothing about the accident except seeing the lights of the bus. He was driving to work that morning to the Snowmass Clinic, part of Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH), where he has worked for three years in the nutrition services department. Highway 82 was dark and icy, and it was snowing heavily in the predawn hours of February 16, 2009.

Then, Henry saw the lights. They were in front of him, but on the wrong side of the road. After that, his memory is blank. He has heard the stories and read the news reports of the accident. He has seen photographs of his car at the scene — images he would gladly erase from his mind.

But he does not clearly recall seeing the Roaring Fork Transportation Authority bus after it strayed into the wrong lane and stopped. Or how his Honda Civic hit the bus and spun away, leaving most of Henry's upper and lower body pinned in the crumpled remains. He does not remember how emergency crews removed the two passenger-side doors and the roof of the car in order to extract him from the wreckage. Or how the Basalt Ambulance rushed through the falling snow to take him to the emergency room at AVH.

There, the hospital's trauma team, lead by general surgeon William Rodman, MD, performed two emergency procedures within the first day to address the most serious of Henry's injuries — and many subsequent procedures in the days that followed.

The first thing Henry remembers is waking up in the intensive care unit of AVH. It was February 19, 2009, three days after the accident.

During the next seven days that he spent in ICU and the following nine days in a patient care unit, Henry came to see a different side of the hospital where he worked. And he developed a whole new appreciation for the level of care and compassion that his colleagues at AVH provide every day.

"I received wonderful attention — wonderful!" the 36-year-old Carbondale resident says. "Everybody was very nice; the nurses seemed to adopt me as a son, and I received wonderful attention from everybody here at AVH."

Henry's injuries were critical, and he recites the list of them like someone well practiced in retelling his story. "I had a broken hand, a broken arm,

five broken ribs, and a fractured hip," he says and then pauses to take a breath. "I injured my spleen and my left kidney, my intestines were damaged, and I was in a lot of pain."

Henry's injuries were potentially life-threatening and required immediate attention. "Working together, the ambulance crew and our trauma team were able to identify the problems and injuries, and address them quickly. That contributed to Henry's remarkable recovery," Dr. Rodman says. "Another factor is that Henry is a young and healthy man with a wife and two children. Because of his good health and family support, he was motivated to recover quickly."

More than once, Henry has heard that it's a miracle he survived the crash. Now that he is able to walk and work pain-free, he tends to agree with that assessment, giving credit not only to his family, but also to God and the staff at AVH.

"Right now, I feel like a new person. I'm living again, thanks to the care I received from the doctors and nurses," Henry says. "I am very proud and happy to work here at Aspen Valley Hospital."



## Whom we serve

“Where do your patients come from?” That was just one question asked by the Aspen City Council during the Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) Master Facilities Plan Review. We were happy to provide them with an answer and thought you might consider the findings of interest too.

A 2008 review of “patient origin” showed that the vast majority of AVH patients were “local,” i.e., from the Roaring Fork Valley. Only 23 percent of patients were from outside the area. As one might expect, the highest percentage of non-local patients sought **emergency** services, and the lowest percentage of non-local patients sought **obstetrical** services.

Of local **inpatients**, most (73 percent) lived in communities from Aspen through Basalt. A smaller percentage (23 percent) resided in El Jebel or Carbondale. A few (4 percent) listed addresses in Glenwood Springs or beyond.

A large portion of AVH’s business is **outpatient**, with 87 percent of patients being local. Of those, 83 percent were from Aspen through Basalt, 14 percent from El Jebel or Carbondale, and 3 percent from Glenwood Springs or beyond.

In conclusion, the type of services needed often drives where a patient seeks care. For instance, in an emergency situation, one will go to the closest facility. Fortunately for our visitors who are far from home, their fears are quickly put to rest by an outstanding emergency staff that consistently surpasses our patients’ expectations.

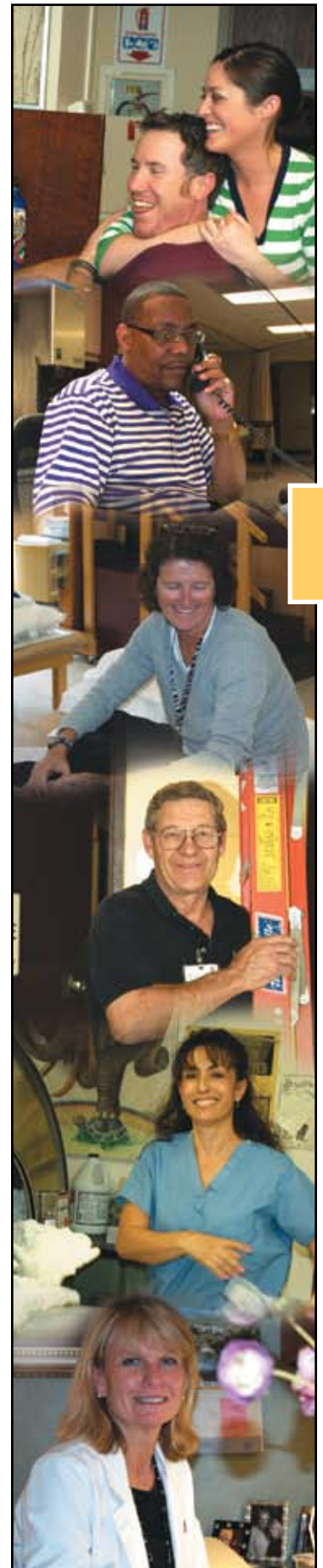
For inpatients, including obstetrical patients, the hospital in which one’s physician has privileges to practice determines where the patient receives medical care. With a medical staff representing over 20 different medical specialties, we are fortunate in this community to have access to a broad scope of services and numerous physicians who meet most medical needs.

Finally, for outpatients, hospital choice is typically a matter of convenience. Those who work in the upper valley will often choose to have their diagnostic tests done at AVH even if they live in the lower part of the valley.

Quality, care, compassion, and rapport with physicians and other staff are also factors in patients’ decisions. At AVH, our patient satisfaction surveys show that we excel in all of these areas, and some patients, despite distance or inconvenience, make a conscious decision to obtain medical care from AVH and its medical staff.

*Our patient satisfaction surveys show that we excel in all of these areas,*

*and some patients, despite distance or inconvenience, make a conscious decision to obtain medical care from AVH and its medical staff.*





# A message from John Sarpa, AVH Board President

As I approach my eighth year as president of the Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) Board, I have been contemplating the progress of AVH on many fronts. Over the years, the hospital has grown stronger financially, improved its scope and quality of services, and made steady progress on the master facilities plan. This past year was no exception with some notable accomplishments having been achieved.

First, we are pleased to report that the conceptual master facilities plan was approved by the Aspen City Council. With unanimous support for proposed improvements, we are now one step closer to upgrading our 32-year-old hospital with private inpatient rooms, contemporary outpatient service areas, an expanded surgery department, onsite medical office space, and sufficient parking to name just a few of the improvements.

Next steps include the creation of more specific designs for Phase II (inpatient areas, physical therapy, cardiopulmonary rehabilitation, medical offices, and more), final approval from governmental entities, and the final development of the financing plan. Community support, as well as the hospital district's cash reserves, will all be critical for implementing the project.

On that note, we found ourselves well-positioned in 2008 for the economic downturn experienced throughout the country, including Aspen. Strong receivables and diligent cost containment in recent years enabled us to build our cash reserves and maintain an investment grade (Baa3) credit rating. The 2009 budget focuses on preserving our qualified staff, protecting cash, and advancing strategic initiatives.

One such strategy is the development of After-Hours Medical Care. Located in Basalt — and done with the cooperation of the Aspen Valley Medical Foundation — the facility is one more way in which we are able to reach out to the mid-valley portion of our district and improve access to care, along with the Snowmass Clinic, Midvalley Ambulatory Surgery Center, and Midvalley Imaging Center. After-Hours Medical Care is open evenings and weekends and offers services when physician offices are typically closed.

On behalf of the entire Board, it is a pleasure to serve as Directors for the hospital. We are all volunteers, elected by the community, and rewarded by the knowledge that AVH staff and physicians provide extraordinary healthcare to residents and visitors of our community. Thank you to the community for your ongoing support of the hospital.

## Board of Directors

John Sarpa, President

Barry Mink, MD, Vice President

Chuck Frias, Treasurer

Lee Schumacher

Mindy Nagle, MD

We are now one step closer to upgrading our 32-year-old hospital with private inpatient rooms, contemporary outpatient service areas, an expanded surgery department, onsite medical office space, and sufficient parking.

# Nurse of the Year

Beth Barnes, RN, was recently named Aspen Valley Hospital's (AVH) Nurse of the Year. Beth was chosen by fellow nurses from a slate of 11 nominees. She has worked at AVH for almost 19 years as a medical/surgical, intensive care, and emergency nurse. Currently, she is a house supervisor.

Nominations for Beth acknowledged her expertise, patient advocacy, sense of humor, professionalism, and helpfulness. "She is hands-on, even as a supervisor," said one of her colleagues.

**Congratulations, Beth!**



## Honoring our long-term employees

Tenure says something about an organization's relationship with its employees. In fact, at Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH), we think tenure is a reflection of an employee's job satisfaction and commitment to the organization and their profession. This past year, 41 employees were honored for five or more years of service to AVH. Our most sincere gratitude is extended to you all. Following are our 10-year plus employees who received service awards in 2008.

### 10 years:

- Bruce Benson, EMT . . . . . Ambulance
- Lisa Ruggieri, EMT. . . . . Ambulance
- Janice Robinson . . . . . Medical Records
- Stephen Ramsey, EMT-P. . . . . Ambulance
- Cara Borchers, RN . . . . . Emergency

### 15 years:

- Deb Tullman, PT . . . . . Information Technology
- Deborah Hutchinson, EMT-P. . . . . Ambulance
- Paula Moore . . . . . Whitcomb Terrace
- Jennifer Sparkman . . . . . Medical Records

### 20 years:

- Paula Starodaj . . . . . Emergency
- Laura Stewart . . . . . Information Technology
- Mary Ellen Secrist . . . . . Emergency
- Lou Cunningham, RN . . . . . Cardiology Clinic
- Peggy Madden, RN . . . . . Intensive Care Unit
- Melissa Helser . . . . . Emergency
- Lauri Cross, RN. . . . . Patient Care Unit

### 25 years:

- Kathy Gibbard, RN . . . . . Infection Control
- Kathy Nilsen, RN . . . . . Ambulatory Surgery Center

### 30 years:

- Cheryl Hannah, MT. . . . . Laboratory
- Maggie Harris, RN . . . . . Patient Care Unit
- Deb Demeulenaere, RT . . . . . Mammography

### 35 years:

- E.O. Anderson, RN . . . . . House Supervisor



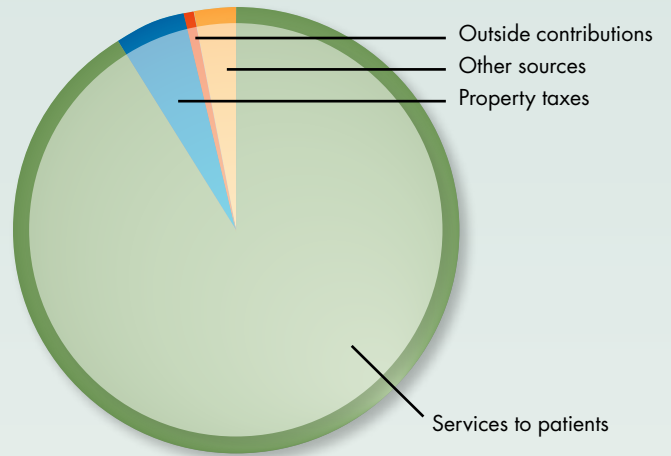
From left: Deb Demeulenaere, E.O. Anderson, Kathy Gibbard, Cheryl Hannah, and Maggie Harris.

# 2008 Statement of Revenues and Expenses

The year continued the past successes of Aspen Valley Hospital in maintaining and enhancing a strong financial position. With a net margin in 2008 of over \$6 million, we continue to position ourselves well for the future.

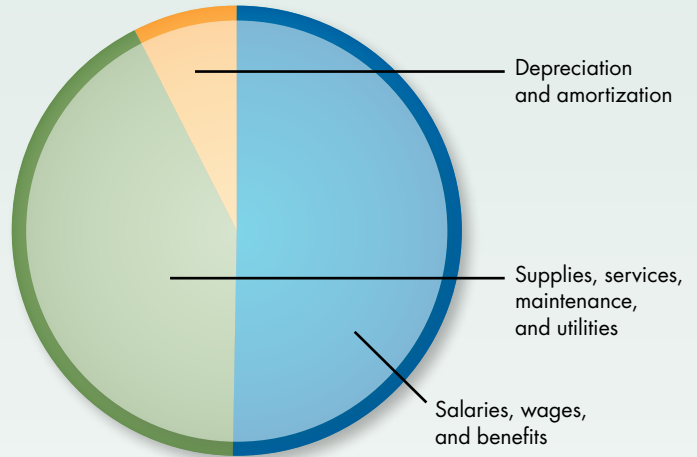
## Revenues:

Services to patients . . . . .	\$56,417,976
Property taxes . . . . .	3,667,045
Outside contributions . . . . .	172,885
Other sources . . . . .	1,617,418
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$61,875,324</b>



## Expenses:

Salaries, wages, and benefits . . . . .	\$28,124,092
Supplies, services, maintenance, and utilities . . . . .	23,483,481
Depreciation and amortization . . . . .	4,110,049
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$55,717,622</b>



**Increase in fund balance . . . . . \$6,157,702**

## 2008 was successful . . .

Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) had another good year in 2008. We were able to increase our cash reserves by over \$3 million. These reserves are important to AVH for several reasons:

- 1) They protect us in times of economic difficulties;
- 2) As we approach a major renovation project, they provide additional funding capability; and
- 3) They help us maintain our bond rating.

## 2009 is challenging . . .

AVH, like most other businesses, has been affected by the economic downturn. In response to lower patient volumes, we implemented cost reductions aimed at preserving our cash reserves. We are spending less on day-to-day operations, and we are purchasing major pieces of equipment only as needed. However, we are also vigorously protecting our most important assets: our people, our cash, and our strategic initiatives. There may still be difficult times to come, but we are well-positioned to weather the storm.

The auditing firm of Grant Thornton conducted Aspen Valley Hospital's 2008 audit in accordance with district law and auditing standards generally accepted in the United States.



# Aspen Valley Medical Foundation

## A message from Kris Marsh, President/CEO

This year, the Aspen Valley Medical Foundation (AVMF) continues its strong commitment to excellence in healthcare through grants, scholarships, and initiatives. Even though the economic climate is less than ideal, AVMF has continued to support Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) with several important grants ... \$680,000 for a new electronic medical record system and new diagnostic imaging capacity for the new After-Hours Medical Care Clinic at the Aspen Basalt Health Care Center in Basalt.

AVMF invests \$100,000 annually in providing scholarships for healthcare professionals for nursing education, training for emergency medical technicians (EMTs and paramedics), and assistance for mental health professionals.

AVMF grants funds to 30 local non-profits who are engaged in prevention and early intervention for health-related issues.

AVMF is engaged in creating a new professionally run hospice organization serving patients from Aspen to Parachute called Hospice of the Valley. Over 40 patients have been served since February!

AVMF is engaged in providing emergency assistance for over 400 locals with medical, prescription, dental, vision, and mental health challenges.

AVMF provides case management and problem-solving services for the chronically difficult to serve through VIA and the Aspen Homeless Shelter.

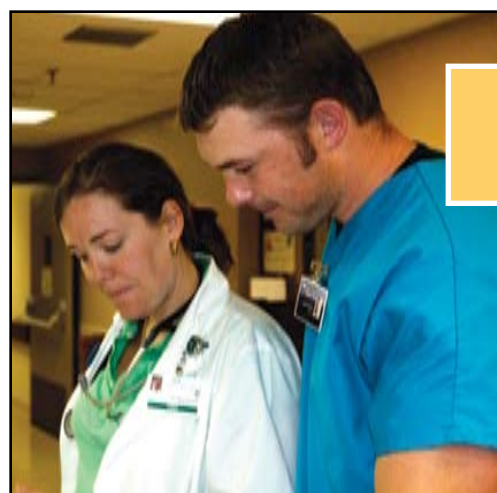
AVMF has begun a comprehensive Mental Health Needs Assessment with the University of Colorado Depression Center to determine the effectiveness of existing services, identify the gaps, and create a plan for meeting the current and future mental health needs in Aspen and Pitkin County.

The Aspen Valley Medical Foundation seeks to make a real difference in the lives of people in our community. You can help by joining the AVMF Presidents Club, contributing for specific needs at Aspen Valley Hospital, supporting Neighbor to Neighbor for local health and human services, or participating in upcoming foundation events. Please visit our new Web site, [www.avmfaspens.org](http://www.avmfaspens.org), or call **544-1298** for more information.

## Serving our community in unexpected ways

At a time when communities throughout the country face economic challenges, Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) continues to work toward providing healthcare services that are stable and sustainable. Yet we do much more than offer medical care. Following are just a few examples of how AVH provides meaningful benefits to the communities we serve:

- AVH provides free or subsidized care to underserved populations, both at AVH and Mountain Family Health Center. In 2008, we provided \$2.6 million in charity care to qualified individuals.
- AVH works to keep the community healthy by not only treating people when they are sick or injured, but also offering early detection and prevention programs through health fairs, trauma prevention programs, community lectures, support groups, and other outreach programs.
- AVH collaborates with other health and human service agencies such as The Right Door, Colorado West (psychiatric and detoxification services), Pathfinders, and the homeless shelter, making both in-kind and monetary contributions.
- AVH supports the education of nursing students with instruction and clinical experience.



Abby Nims-Lavy, RN, CMC nursing instructor, with student Bob Antonelli.

## After-Hours Medical Care

Ferrell McClain, MD  
Kiernan Smith, MD

## Allergy/Immunology

Richard Weber, MD

## Anesthesiology

Chris Beck, MD  
Giora Hahn, MD  
Eric Willsky, MD  
Amy Goodman, CRNA  
Carolyn Holland, CRNA  
Kathleen Mitchell, CRNA  
Greg Read, CRNA  
Phyllis Whitman, CRNA

## Anesthesia/ Pain Management

Giora Hahn, MD

## Cardiology

Morris Cohen, MD  
Gordon Gerson, MD

## Ear, Nose, and Throat

Matthew L. Goodstein, MD

## Emergency Medicine

J. Stevens Ayers, DO  
Gregory Balko, MD  
Catherine Bernard, MD  
Scott A. Gallagher, MD  
John Glismann, MD  
Kimberly Levin, MD, MPH  
Chris Martinez, MD

Amy Covington, PA-C

Dawn Kopf, PA-C  
Sean Nevin, PA-C  
Lisa Olsen, FNP

## Family Medicine

Bruce Bowen, MD  
Michael Check, MD  
Anne Goyette, MD  
Glenn Kotz, MD  
Karen C. Locke, MD  
Kelly T. Locke, MD  
Dewayne Niebur, MD  
Kim Scheuer, MD

## Gastroenterology

Gerard Tomasso, MD

## General Surgery

William Rodman, MD  
John Schultz, MD

## Hospitalist

Mike Goralka, MD

## Internal Medicine

David J. Borchers, MD  
Ann Mass, MD  
Susan Zimet, MD

## Neurology

Gary M. Weiss, MD

## Neurosurgery

David Miller, MD

## Obstetrics/Gynecology

Gail King, MD  
Natasha Knight, MD  
Melinda Nagle, MD  
Nancy Bacheldor, CNM

## Oncology

Ira Jaffrey, MD  
Douglas Rovira, MD  
Nancee Dodge, FNP

## Ophthalmology

Dan Weitzenkorn, MD

## Oral Maxillofacial

Daniel George, DMD

## Orthopedic Surgery

N. Lindsay Harris, MD  
A. Lee Osterman, MD  
Tomas Pevny, MD  
Mark Purnell, MD  
Thomas St. John, MD  
Nick Armano, PA-C  
Lindsey Haynie, PA-C

## Pathology

Frank Holmes, MD  
Robert Macaulay, MD  
Jerry Steinbrecher, MD

## Pediatrics

Harvey Fahy, MD  
Charlene Guggenheim, MD  
William Mitchell, MD  
Claudia Nelson, MD

## Plastic Surgery

Dennis Cirillo, MD  
W. Jason Martin, MD  
Daniel A. Thimsen, MD

## Podiatry

Noel Armstrong, DPM

## Psychiatry

Alan Nelson, MD

## Psychology

Martin Manosevitz, PhD

## Pulmonology

Gary R. Cott, MD

## Radiology

Radiology Imaging Associates

## Urology

Jeffrey E. Fegan, MD  
Jamie Lowe, MD  
Brian Murphy, MD

## Honorary/Emeritus

John Freeman, MD  
Barry Mink, MD  
Carl Schiller, MD

## Web-based electronic medical records on the horizon

In conjunction with the Aspen Valley Medical Foundation and Quality Health Network, Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) is well on its way to establishing an electronic health information exchange system which will allow doctors, hospitals, and other healthcare agencies to share and access vital medical information. With better communication among providers, patient care will be more efficient, accurate, and of higher quality. Fewer medication errors, less duplication of tests, and more timely access to test results are just a few of the benefits of the new system.

Quality Health Network (QHN) is a nationally recognized health information network. Based in Grand Junction, it is a non-profit organization founded in 2004 by hospitals and physicians in Mesa County. According to QHN CEO Dick Thompson, there were three initial objectives:

- To assist patients in receiving optimal health status;
- To improve provider access to patient information; and
- To eliminate errors and reduce redundancies.

“Hospitals, labs, imaging centers, and others provide services to a doctor’s patients,” says Thompson. “As a result, there are silos of information. QHN provides electronic tools, in a secure environment, to break down these silos.”

QHN’s system has been very successful in Mesa County with 350 connected providers. Data is collected into the system and is subsequently distributed, pursuant to patient privacy and security standards, to providers of record involved in the patient’s care. The web-based system provides a single portal for physicians to access data about their patients and includes medical histories, laboratory results, emergency room notes, medications, discharge summaries, progress notes, radiology reports, and surgical notes.

The system is paid for by participating physicians and hospitals. With start-up costs at slightly more than \$500,000 and ongoing annual costs of approximately \$300,000 with full physician participation, funding from the Aspen Valley Medical Foundation (AVMF), and the support of their donors, was critical to moving forward.

AVH has had an internal electronic medical record for several years, but connectivity to physicians and other providers has been minimal. “This is a strategic priority for Aspen Valley Hospital,” says AVH CEO Dave Ressler. “By providing real-time access to information for our various independent providers, we will enhance patient care and improve patient outcomes.”

The hospital’s goal is to bring 20 physicians “live” by the end of 2009. A steering committee of physicians and information technology specialists will oversee the implementation and establish workflows and definitions that will be necessary to initiate the information exchange.

“We have a lot of work ahead of us this year, but the rewards will be significant from a strategic and care facilitation perspective,” says Ressler.

## 2008 Annual Report

### Aspen Valley Hospital Volunteers

Hands that serve, hearts that care

With approximately 100 volunteers on the roster at Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH), our staff and patients reap the rewards of the commitment this invaluable group of men and women bring to AVH. Our highest praise and deepest gratitude are extended to all. Thank you for serving and for caring.

#### Our four-legged friends

Bringing care and compassion of a different kind to our hospital are pet therapy volunteers Maggie, Daisy, Keuka, Oakley, Blitzen, Dennis, Witz, and (another) Daisy. Pet Therapy founder Rita Cohen (and the late Butter) initiated this program eight years ago, and it is so popular with both patients and staff that Rita is preparing to expand the service.

"When one of the dogs comes in, we all gravitate toward him or her," says one employee. "They bring a special kind of cheer and make you feel good no matter how busy or difficult the day."



From left: 2008 President Barbara Fretz, 20-year volunteer Becky Ayres, and 2009 President Helen Burnett.

