

# HEALTH MATTERS

## FAST TRACK

GIVING YOUNG ATHLETES  
A COMPETITIVE EDGE *p. 16*

### ALSO INSIDE:

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE  
IN TRAUMA CARE *p. 5*

ADDING TO OUR ALL-STAR  
PHYSICIAN LINEUP *p. 10*

HOW TEAMWORK SAVED  
A LOCAL MAN'S LIFE *p. 20*



# HEALTH MATTERS

WINTER/SPRING 2020

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*HEALTH MATTERS* is a bi-annual magazine published by Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) to inform residents of the Roaring Fork Valley about the continuous improvements and investments AVH and its Network of Care clinics are making to ensure the long health and vitality of our residents and community.



# ASPEN VALLEY HOSPITAL



## on the COVER

Cameron Blatz, a passionate alpine skier and AVSC athlete, is returning to snow this season after an ACL injury sidelined his previous season. On page 16, read more about how AVH athletic trainers help kids like Cameron get back on track to reach their dreams.

## OUR MISSION

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

## OUR VISION

To foster our community as the healthiest in the nation.

## OUR VALUES

Patient-Centered Care, Accountability, Respect for Others, Integrity and Teamwork.



## SHARE YOUR STORY!

*HEALTH MATTERS* would like to hear how AVH made a positive impact for you or a loved one. Please email [communityrelations@aspenhospital.org](mailto:communityrelations@aspenhospital.org) so that we may consider your story for an upcoming issue and inspire others on their journeys.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

With regards to employment, access to, or provision of care, Aspen Valley Hospital District (AVHD) shall provide all individuals with the full and equal enjoyment of the services, privileges, facilities, advantages and accommodations without discrimination, as required by Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act of 2010. AVHD shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (which includes gender-based discrimination), disability, religion, age or veteran status. Gender-based discrimination includes discrimination based on gender identity, gender expression and nonconformity with sex stereotypes.

## *in* THIS ISSUE



<b>A LETTER FROM DAVE RESSLER</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>@AVH SPOTLIGHT</b> AVH's Trauma Program receives Level III redesignation	<b>5</b>
<b>A CLOSER LOOK</b> Sneak peek at the new Snowmass Clinic	<b>6</b>
<b>@AVH CALENDAR</b> Upcoming classes and events	<b>8</b>
<b>@AVH BY THE NUMBERS</b> How healthy are we?	<b>9</b>
<b>INFORMATION HUB</b> Who to call, where to go when you need help	<b>26</b>
<b>ASK THE EXPERT</b> Kristy Bates, RDN, wants you to eat well	<b>27</b>

## **FEATURES**

<b>ROLL CALL</b> New physicians offer a wealth of expertise	<b>10</b>
<b>PEAK PERFORMANCE</b> Athletic trainers keep young athletes in the game	<b>16</b>
<b>TEAMING UP FOR OUR VALLEY'S YOUTH</b> Sports Safety workshops take injury prevention to new level	<b>19</b>
<b>"FORTUNATE TO BE ALIVE"</b> A grateful patient shares his extraordinary experience	<b>20</b>
<b>AVH FOUNDATION</b> How your donations help elevate healthcare in our community	<b>22</b>





It is our intent to pursue our ultimate vision for Aspen and the surrounding area, which is to foster our community as the healthiest in the nation.

In an environment of state-wide healthcare cost escalations and various legislative efforts to provide more affordable insurance options, **Aspen Valley Hospital continues to build the capacity to be a part of the solution for our valley.**

This can only be achieved through the pursuit of our **mission to provide extraordinary care in an environment of excellence, compassion and trust**, utilizing four key strategies to assure access to the highest quality of healthcare for our population.

Our **2020 Strategic Plan** reflects our ongoing work in the areas of: 1) Supporting the retention and recruitment of our **talented healthcare team** of physicians and our staff, and focusing on their wellness; 2) **Maintaining our cash reserves** during this time of intense price pressure through increased efficiency and lower operating costs; 3) Continuing to **provide the safest and highest quality patient care** that our patients define as extraordinary (consistently among the best in the country); and 4) **Expanding our network of care** and increasing access for the population we serve.

Our **tactical approach** to these strategies will continue to build on the progress we have achieved in 2019:

- Building on our relationship that we have established with **Hospital for Special Surgery** to improve and expand our Musculoskeletal Service Line that leverages the expertise and experience of the #1 orthopedic hospital in the country. We have a series of priorities that span the continuum of care, from awareness and education in our community, to wellness and prevention, fitness performance, conservative care, surgical care, and rehabilitation and recovery.
- Continuing to build **access to care at our midvalley campus**, with facilities to support our expanding services, including our new primary care practice, our surgery center and imaging center, our ancillary services (laboratory, rehabilitative services and educational programs), and our surgical specialties coverage.
- Building our hospital **electronic medical record**, in a cloud-based environment, to support real-time documentation and information exchange throughout our system.
- Working in collaboration with our local employers, chambers of commerce, Mountain Family Health Center and Valley View Hospital, our **Valley Health Alliance** is building on the same capabilities that helped us and other rural medical communities across western Colorado and Washington state save Medicare over \$12 million over the past three years, while enhancing the quality of life.

Our 2020 capital and operating budgets have been approved by our Board of Directors to support these strategies and tactics. And in the pages that follow, you will find more highlights on our path to maintain a healthy population and connect patients to our high-quality medical care. ■

Dave Ressler  
Chief Executive Officer



*Trauma Program Manager Karen Maciejko, RN, BSN, says AVH's program includes everything from mandatory quality reviews of all trauma cases, to ongoing training for clinical providers to education programs for the community.*

## KEEPING CRITICAL CARE CLOSE TO HOME

### *AVH receives Level III redesignation*

**F**ollowing its recent successful redesignation as a Level III Trauma Center, Aspen Valley Hospital continues its commitment to providing Roaring Fork Valley residents and visitors with round-the-clock access to emergency care.

"Our patients and their families often tell us how grateful they are for our trauma physicians, surgeons, care teams and facilities; and the redesignation means they will have access to these lifesaving resources," said AVH Trauma Program Manager Karen Maciejko, RN, BSN. "We are also a designated critical access hospital and exceed Level III state trauma requirements with expanded services such as 24/7 orthopedic coverage and

our Traumatic Brain Injury Program with six certified traumatic brain injury specialists."

First certified in 1999, the trauma center's redesignation signals that AVH achieves and maintains strict adherence to rigorous standards for emergency care. Staff works to continuously improve, performing practice reviews, engaging staff across the organization and coordinating efforts with AVH Trauma Medical Director Christopher Roseberry, MD.

In important ways, this highly collaborative process reflects AVH's overall approach to having a trauma care center encompassing the many departments and staff members that touch the lives of critically injured patients.

"Our review team commented positively on the level of engagement and dedication throughout the hospital," Maciejko said, noting that AVH's wide-ranging trauma program includes everything from mandatory quality reviews of all trauma cases to ongoing learning sessions for clinical providers, as well as community education programs focusing on helmet use and fall prevention.

"Everyone on the AVH team is so proud to have earned our redesignation as a Level III Trauma Center," Maciejko said. "We are fortunate that we can continue to provide this crucial care right here close to home." ■



# BIGGER,

# *better*

# AND OPEN

# YEAR-ROUND!

## The Snowmass Clinic will move to new, larger facility in Base Village

Injuries and illnesses can happen anywhere and anytime. So to better serve the community's evolving medical needs locally, Aspen Valley Hospital is relocating its Snowmass Clinic to a brand-new, larger facility in Base Village — where it will continue to be open year-round.

"Our staff is very excited for this beautiful, new facility," said Jon Gibans, MD, the clinic's medical director. "The Snowmass Clinic's mission interlaces nicely with our After-Hours Medical Care clinic in Basalt to provide comprehensive non-emergency services. Our presence in Base Village will allow us to better serve the people who live, work and vacation in the Roaring Fork Valley."

The Snowmass Clinic will move to its new location in Building 8 within the new Base Village development after the end of the 2020 ski season. The expanded, state-of-the-art clinic will feature improved access, dedicated patient parking and comfortable private consultation rooms for patients and their providers.

Expert treatment and care will continue to be provided for a variety of non-life-threatening ailments, such as:

- Sports injuries
- Bone fractures
- Colds and flu
- Muscle sprains and strains
- Altitude sickness
- Lacerations



*The new 6,300-square-foot clinic features a welcoming waiting room with beautiful views. The clinic can be accessed right off the ski hill or via dedicated patient parking.*

Snowmass Clinic physicians are trained in emergency and family medicine, and they receive valuable support from registered nurses, EMTs, X-ray technologists and physical therapists. "We have added staff during our peak seasons to treat the higher number of injuries related to winter and summer sports activities," Dr. Gibans said.

Onsite diagnostic capabilities are available, including X-ray and basic laboratory services. And as an AVH outpatient facility, the Snowmass Clinic has full back-up support from AVH's ER, a Level III Trauma Center. ■

## **SNOWMASS CLINIC**

**During the 2020 ski season:**  
105 Daly Lane  
Snowmass Village, CO 81615

**NEW LOCATION after 2020 ski season:**  
77 Wood Road, Suite #N200  
Snowmass Village, CO 81615

**Please call 970.544.1518 to confirm location and directions.**

### **HOURS:**

Daily, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

No appointment necessary – walk-ins welcome!

## MONTHLY EVENTS

### AVH BOARD MEETINGS

Second Monday of the month

Open to the public, the meeting is held at 5:30 p.m. in the Oden Conference Center at AVH.

### DIETITIAN DEMOS

NEW for 2020!

Second Thursday of the month  
Oden Conference Center at AVH

Registered Dietitians Lauren Mitchell, MS, RDN, and Kristy Bates, RDN, will talk diet trends, debunk nutrition myths and give cooking demos to accompany a different topic each month. Expect to learn how to use different cooking gadgets while expanding your knowledge of nutrition with AVH's nutrition experts.

## ONGOING CLASSES

### ASPEN BIRTH CENTER CLASSES

In Aspen and Basalt

Held throughout the week, classes include The Childbirth Preparation Series, the Art of Breastfeeding, Friends and Family CPR, V.I.P. Sibling course and more. For more information or to find the class nearest you, call **970.544.1130**. Online registration is available at [aspenhospital.org](http://aspenhospital.org).

### BRAIN FIT

Are you or a loved one struggling with dementia, Alzheimer's or a traumatic brain injury? Brain Fit can help. Regular aerobic exercise slows the progression of brain atrophy and improves cognitive brain function. Participants must commit to twice per week for at least one month. A referral from a physician is required. Contact Melody Durham at **970.544.1383** or at [mdurham@aspenhospital.org](mailto:mdurham@aspenhospital.org) for more information about class schedule and availability.

### ONCOLOGY REHAB

Did you know that regular exercise can improve, or even alleviate, some of the troublesome symptoms of cancer treatment? Oncology Rehabilitation at AVH holistically addresses cancer related symptoms during and after cancer treatment through cardiovascular exercise, resistance, balance and neuromuscular training in a supportive group environment. For class schedule information and to set up your preliminary interview, please contact **Jeanne Stough** at **970.544.1566** or at [jstough@aspenhospital.org](mailto:jstough@aspenhospital.org).

### CARDIAC REHABILITATION/ PULMONARY EXERCISE & REHABILITATION

Monday - Friday at AVH

Surviving a heart attack or any other cardiovascular or pulmonary event doesn't end with a trip home from the hospital. These programs, certified by the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation, help people reclaim the richness of an active life. For more information, call **970.544.1383**.

### DIABETES EDUCATION

In Aspen and Basalt

These ongoing classes offer education for those who are managing Type 1 or Type 2, gestational or pre-diabetes conditions. For more information, call **970.544.7394**.

## BLOOD DRIVES

In affiliation with St. Mary's Hospital, all blood drives take place on the following Tuesdays at Aspen Valley Hospital:

March 3, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
April 28, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
June 23, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
August 18, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
October 13, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
December 8, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### NATIONAL HOSPITAL WEEK PICNIC ON THE LAWN

Thursday, May 14, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

In celebration of National Hospital Week, Aspen Valley Hospital invites the community to a picnic lunch featuring healthy dishes prepared by AVH's award-winning nutritional team. More details to come! Visit [aspenhospital.org](http://aspenhospital.org).

### JUNE HEALTH FAIR

Thursday, June 4, 8 - 11 a.m.

Aspen Valley Hospital  
Blood draw only.

Saturday, June 6, 8 - 11 a.m.

El Jebel Community Center  
Blood draw only.

Sunday, June 7, 8 - 11 a.m.

Aspen Valley Hospital  
Blood draw, plus free health screenings and information stations.



### SUMMER POLO BENEFIT

Sunday, August 9, 10:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Aspen Valley Polo Club

An all-star event to benefit Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation. For more information, contact AVHF at **970.544.1302** or [avhf@aspenhospital.org](mailto:avhf@aspenhospital.org).

For more details on these upcoming events, visit [aspenhospital.org](http://aspenhospital.org).

# HOW *healthy* ARE RESIDENTS OF PITKIN COUNTY?

Our area's pristine environment and abundance of recreational opportunities have helped contribute to an overall healthy lifestyle. But other factors, such as the high cost of living and health insurance, can act as barriers to good health. Here's a snapshot of our community's health status.

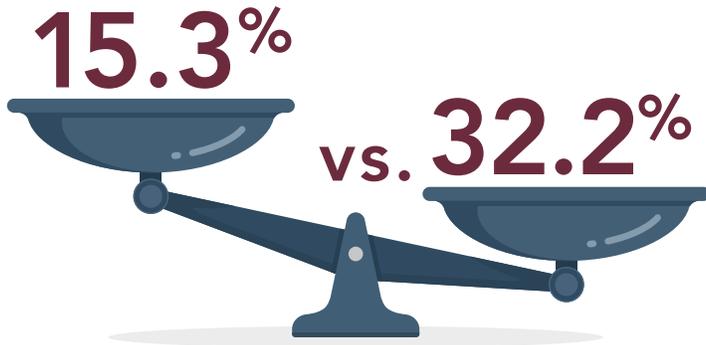
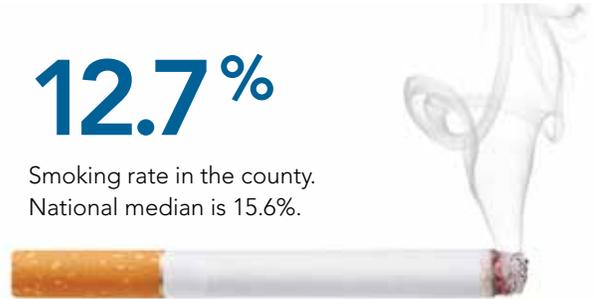


## 86.52

Life expectancy for county residents, which is the second highest in the nation. National median is 79.

## 12.7%

Smoking rate in the county. National median is 15.6%.



Percentage of obese adults in the county versus the national average.

## NO 12.1% INSURANCE

Percentage of county residents with no health insurance. Nation median is 9.9%.

## Over 1 MILLION

Coloradoans (26.9%) who say they, a loved one or close friend has been addicted to alcohol or drugs in their lifetime. In Pitkin County, binge drinking is a problem, with a higher rate (20.2%) than the state rate (18.4%).

## 86%

Percentage you reduce your risk of serious head and brain injury by wearing a helmet, while skiing, biking, etc., according to American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.



To learn more about our area's health, visit [pitkincounty.com/1192/Community-Health-Assessment-Improvement-Plan](http://pitkincounty.com/1192/Community-Health-Assessment-Improvement-Plan).

## Expanding patient care in the Roaring Fork Valley

# AVH ADDS PHYSICIANS AND SPECIALISTS TO OUR TEAM

**A**rea residents and visitors are gaining even greater access to patient-centered, expert care with the appointment of 11 physicians and specialists to Aspen Valley Hospital and its network of care.

Highly trained and respected, the newest AVH healthcare team members bring in-depth knowledge and expertise in internal and family medicine, oncology, neurosurgery, ophthalmology, cardiology, otolaryngology, trauma surgery and hospital care. Through these appointments, AVH moves closer to becoming a more comprehensive network of care with many access points, areas of expertise and benefits for residents and visitors throughout the community.

AVH continually ranks among the top-performing hospitals in the country for patient satisfaction by combining the technical expertise of a major metropolitan medical center within a warm, friendly healthcare network of excellence, compassion and trust. Our newest physicians and specialists exemplify AVH's stringent standards of commitment, knowledge and expertise required for meeting the community's healthcare needs.

In the next several pages, we will introduce you to these newest team members. Please join us in extending a warm welcome to them.



### SARAH E.B. ASHFORD, MD

#### OTOLARYNGOLOGY

#### (EAR, NOSE AND THROAT)

Aspen Valley Hospital Otolaryngologist Sarah E.B. Ashford, MD, almost never has a dull workday.

"Because of the variety of patients and vast number of treatments we offer, it's exciting to work in the ENT (ear, nose and throat) clinic," Dr. Ashford said. "It is particularly interesting to treat patients in the Aspen area due to the impact of altitude on ENT health and the overall high level of fitness among the population here."

Since joining AVH in October 2019, Dr. Ashford has significantly expanded the scope of ear, nose and throat care available here. In fact, her medical training and experience have focused on both general ENT care and specific areas such as thyroid and parathyroid pathology, salivary gland pathology, and tumors of the head and neck.

"I chose this field because it deals with so many senses, such as taste, smell, hearing and sight, as well as the abilities to speak, breathe and eat," Dr. Ashford said. "I also love the intricate anatomy and physiology of the head and neck, and I enjoy working with patients of all ages."

#### HEALTH TIP:

Never use cotton swabs to clean your ears. Instead, use mineral oil or hydrogen peroxide periodically to remove wax. Contact your doctor if you have a damaged eardrum or another ear issue.

For an appointment with Dr. Ashford, call **970.544.1460**.



**WADE M. CEOLA, MD, FACS, FAANS**  
NEUROSURGERY

When it comes to medical specialties, few can best neurosurgery in terms of effecting profound and lasting change in the life of every patient.

"It is extremely rewarding to be part of a healthcare team that transforms lives," said Aspen Valley Hospital Neurosurgeon Wade M. Ceola, MD, FACS, FAANS. "It's especially rewarding to work with patients like the ones at AVH. People in Aspen are highly motivated to achieve the best results from their care so they can get back outdoors."

His patients' steely determination meshes perfectly with Dr. Ceola's own professional philosophy. "I strive to treat every patient like a member of my own family," he said. "My goal is to achieve the best results possible and get people back to participating in the activities they enjoy."

After completing his medical training in 2001, Dr. Ceola entered private practice in Springfield, Mo. He moved to the Roaring Fork Valley in 2015 and joined The Spine Center at Valley View Hospital in Glenwood Springs. In 2019, he began seeing patients at AVH, treating a wide range of spinal conditions, such as tumors, traumatic injuries and scoliosis.

**HEALTH TIP:**

Don't let fear leave you suffering "silently" with back pain. For some back and spine conditions, up to 90 percent of all patients improve without surgery. When surgery is needed, many procedures are now performed on an outpatient basis.

For more information, call **970.384.8060**.



**KAREN LOCKE, MD**  
FAMILY MEDICINE

Aspen Valley Hospital's dedication to offering high-quality preventative care and treatment led it to open Aspen Valley Primary Care and appoint Karen Locke, MD, to its team of primary care physicians serving families throughout the Roaring Fork Valley.

Dr. Karen Locke earned her medical degree from the University of Kansas, where she met and married Kelly Locke, MD. For the past 12 years, they had their own family medicine practice in Basalt.

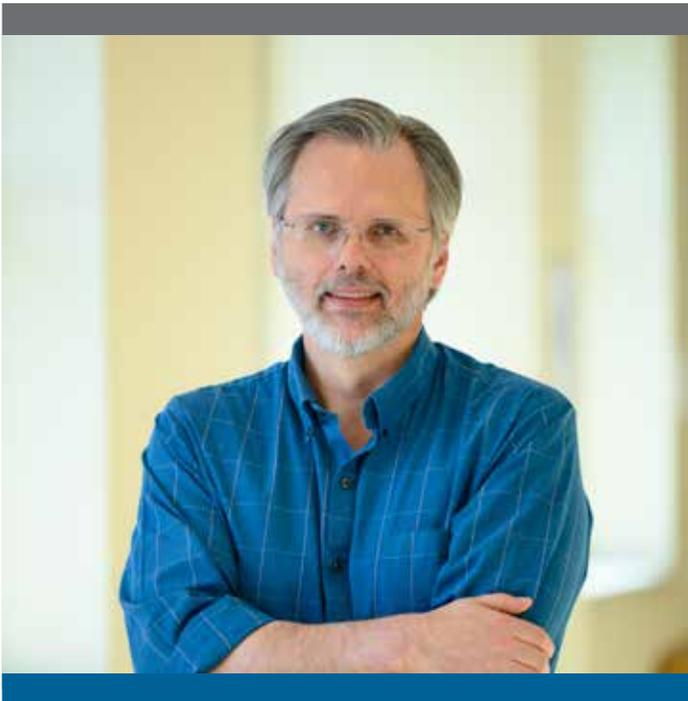
Both Drs. Locke count many three- and even four-generation families as valued patients. "Building trust with patients is what family medicine is all about," Dr. Karen Locke said. "We emulate AVH's in-depth, personalized approach to thorough, expert patient care and wellness."

Dr. Karen Locke will spend plenty of time with each of her patients, inquiring not only about his or her own wellbeing but also the overall health of the patient's family. "Say we are treating a child for an earache," she said. "We can also take care of the parents' needs, such as checking their blood pressure or giving them a needed immunization."

**HEALTH TIP:**

You can still benefit from getting a flu shot now, because flu season can last into May. With rare exceptions, all persons aged 6 months or older should receive an annual flu vaccination.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Karen Locke, please call **970.279.4111**.



**KELLY LOCKE, MD**  
FAMILY MEDICINE

After 12 years of operating their own family medicine practice in Basalt, husband-and-wife team Kelly Locke, MD, and Karen Locke, MD, joined Aspen Valley Primary Care in July. And the opportunity allows them to concentrate more on their patients — and less on the business of running a practice.

“We are now able to devote more time to our patients’ overall health and wellbeing,” said Dr. Kelly Locke, who is certified by the American Board of Family Medicine. “In addition, we can offer more advanced resources from Aspen Valley Hospital, such as psychologists, social workers, diabetes educators, imaging and lab services.”

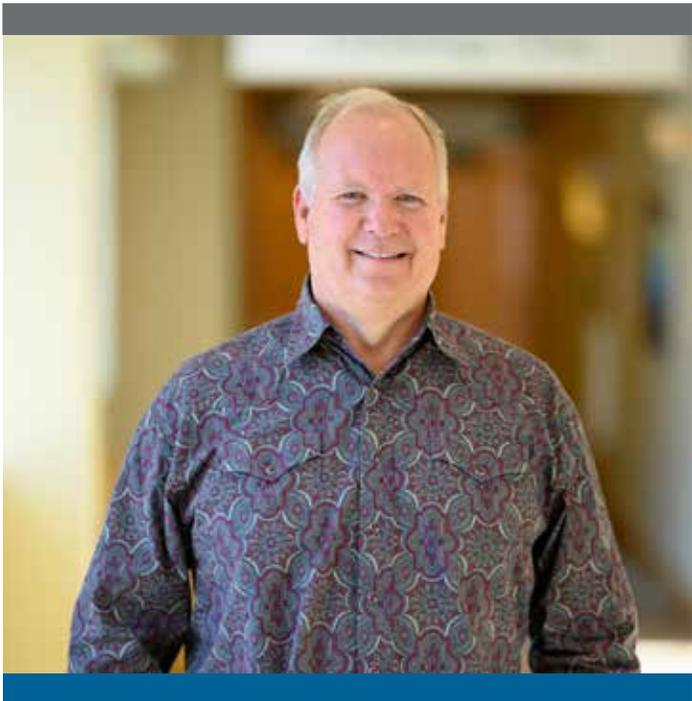
A graduate of the University of Kansas Medical School, Dr. Kelly Locke has been practicing medicine for 25 years, including five years with the U.S. Air Force.

“Patient expectations of their family’s medical care are greater today,” Dr. Kelly Locke said. “With the combination of comprehensive AVH resources and knowledgeable staff members at Aspen Valley Primary Care, we are ideally positioned to meet the community’s growing healthcare needs.”

**HEALTH TIP:**

Don’t forget about your vaccinations, especially if you plan to travel outside of the country. At Aspen Valley Primary Care, we offer routine vaccines for your entire family, as well as travel vaccines depending on where you plan to visit.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Kelly Locke, please call **970.279.4111**.



**STEPHEN MAYER, MD, PHD, FACP**  
ONCOLOGY

For Aspen Valley Hospital Oncologist and Hematologist Stephen Mayer, MD, healthcare comprises equal parts “health” and “care.” That’s because he believes effective cancer treatment includes addressing patients’ medical needs and ensuring they maintain their mental wellbeing.

“One of my goals is to help my patients understand what they’re experiencing during treatment and guide them on how to effectively manage their physical and emotional symptoms,” Dr. Mayer said. “It’s very gratifying to put patients’ minds at ease as they progress through a care plan.”

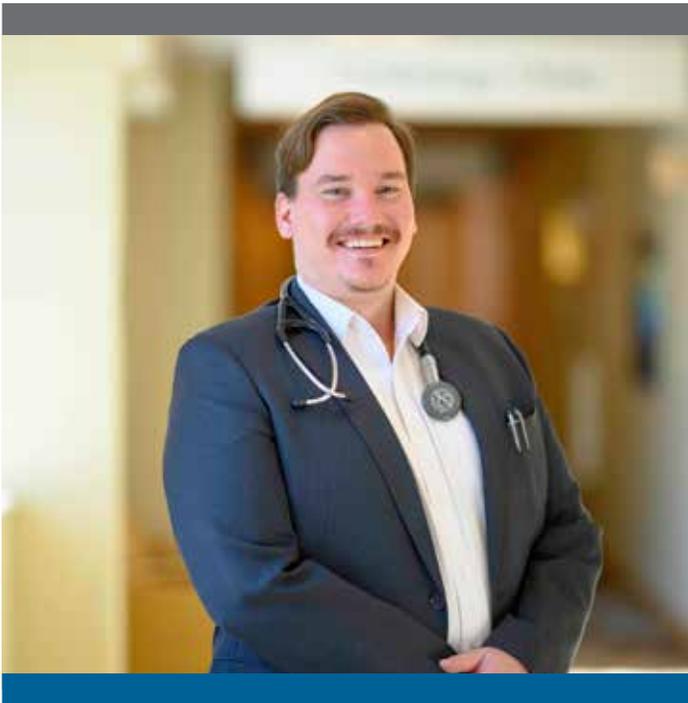
A graduate of Boston University Medical School who completed post-graduate training at Harvard Medical School, Dr. Mayer joined AVH in July 2019, and he splits his time between AVH and Valley View Hospital in Glenwood Springs. One thing that has impressed and inspired him since he arrived in the Roaring Fork Valley is the wide range of residents who value being active.

“Many of our patients get concerned if they can ride only 100 miles on their bike when they usually ride 200 miles,” he said. “We have many active people in their 70s and 80s, and they inspire me to stay active, too.”

**HEALTH TIP:**

Staying active is important at every age. Physical fitness provides “reserves” that can help individuals get through illnesses and return to a normal, active life.

For more information, call **970.544.1592**.



**MICHAEL PLACHTA, MD**  
FAMILY MEDICINE

Why is primary care so crucial? Because a primary care physician (PCP) focuses on managing and treating the overall health of patients and their families with the goal of improving the wellness of the community as a whole.

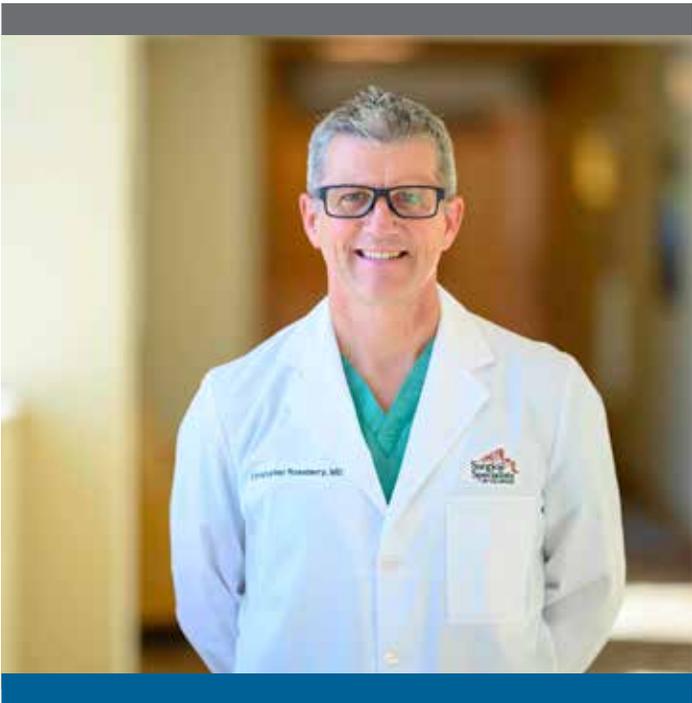
“Besides treating a patient’s immediate medical need, PCPs screen for cancer, high blood pressure, depression and more,” said Michael Plachta, MD. “When caught early, these health issues can be treated or managed before they become more serious problems.”

A graduate of the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Chicago and certified by the American Board of Family Medicine, Dr. Plachta practiced family medicine in Colorado Springs before joining Aspen Valley Primary Care in July.

“My goal is to provide medicine in a compassionate, thorough and evidence-based manner,” Dr. Plachta said. “I’m also an advocate for shared decision-making; it’s not just about what I recommend, but the patient’s goals and how we can achieve them.”

**HEALTH TIP:**  
Regular checkups can help prevent many health concerns — or catch them early when chances for successful treatment are best. Staying up to date on recommended screenings and care can help you live a longer, healthier life.

For an appointment with Dr. Plachta, call **970.279.4111**.



**CHRISTOPHER A. ROSEBERRY, MD**  
TRAUMA SURGERY

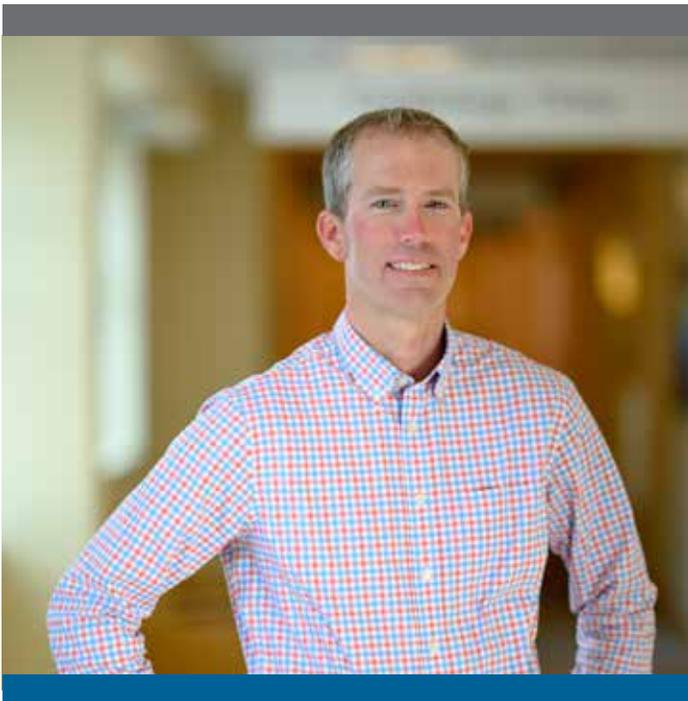
When it comes to aiding injured individuals, you would have a hard time finding anyone with experiences to match Christopher A. Roseberry, MD, Aspen Valley Hospital’s Medical Director for Trauma Care.

While earning his degree from Georgetown Medical School, Dr. Roseberry served in the U.S. Air Force and shared medical responsibility for some very high-profile individuals in the nation’s Capitol. “I was active on the critical care air transport team and in the support of the President of the United States and members of Congress,” he said. “I was also a first responder to the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001.”

After working in Texas and New Hampshire, Dr. Roseberry said he was happy to relocate to Aspen and begin his role at AVH in May 2019.

“All of us in my family are active cyclists, skiers and hikers. We have traveled to this area many times and have always loved being here,” he said. “Plus, I’m extremely proud to be part of the Level III trauma team at AVH. It’s a win all around.”

**HEALTH TIP:**  
When in the back country, use your head. Don’t travel alone, make sure someone knows where you’re going and how to contact you, and wear an activity-appropriate helmet.



**JOSEPH SCHULLER, MD, FHRSC**  
CARDIOLOGY

Maintaining a healthy cardiovascular system is essential to enjoying an active lifestyle. To expand the breadth of cardiovascular care and wellness in our community, Aspen Valley Hospital recently hired Joseph Schuller, MD, to join Aspen Cardiology.

Dr. Schuller is a cardiovascular disease specialist and cardiac electrophysiologist, a specialist in heart rhythm disorders. A graduate of the University of Minnesota Medical School, Dr. Schuller has over 15 years of diverse experience in cardiology. He sees patients at AVH in Aspen and Basalt, as well as Valley View Hospital in Glenwood Springs.

"My wife and I are excited to raise our two children here with its great outdoor access," he said. "And I enjoy treating patients who pursue healthy lifestyles. Helping patients return to their desired activities after a cardiac event is very rewarding."

Dr. Schuller will work with referred AVH patients, providing a range of cardiovascular therapies, as well as treating heart valve diseases and heart rhythm disorders that may increase the risk of stroke and heart failure. "Heart rhythm abnormalities are more common in combination with higher altitudes and an active older population, which describes a significant percentage of Aspen residents," he said.

**HEALTH TIP:**

Regular exercise is among the best things you can do for a healthy heart. But don't forget to check with your doctor first. He or she will make sure you're ready for your preferred activities and help you understand any physical limitations.

To make an appointment with Aspen Cardiology, call **970.544.7388**.



**ALANA SHAH, MD**  
HOSPITALIST

Alana Shah, MD, a Telluride native, recently joined Aspen Valley Hospital as a hospitalist. A graduate of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., Dr. Shah is double board-certified in internal medicine and pediatrics. She helps to determine if a patient requires hospitalization and provides treatment after admission.

"Patients are at their most vulnerable when they are in a hospital setting," said Dr. Shah. "I feel it is most rewarding to help them during challenging times."

A former high school ski racer, Dr. Shah is excited to be in the Aspen area — and specifically at AVH. "I try to think of each patient as a member of my family," she said. "I want to be the type of doctor I would want for my mother, father or husband if they were in hospital care."

AVH's culture of collaboration is another aspect Dr. Shah finds invaluable for providing high-quality patient care. "Our team members know each other well, an important element that helps us treat our patients with great, focused care," she said.

**HEALTH TIP:**

Good health starts with good handwashing, one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick and prevent the spread of germs to others. Follow these steps: wet hands with clean water, lather with soap, scrub for at least 20 seconds, rinse well and dry thoroughly.



**M. THERESA TURLA, MD**  
OPHTHALMOLOGY

Maintaining good eye health through regular screenings and tests is critical for preventing vision loss. To expand its scope of high-quality eye care, Aspen Valley Hospital recently hired general ophthalmologist M. Theresa Turla, MD.

In practice since 1996, Dr. Turla welcomed the opportunity to relocate to Aspen. "I love Colorado's mountains and have vacationed here for 15 years," she said. "I was very lucky to find this position with AVH, as it combines my love of the state with my love of medicine and ophthalmology."

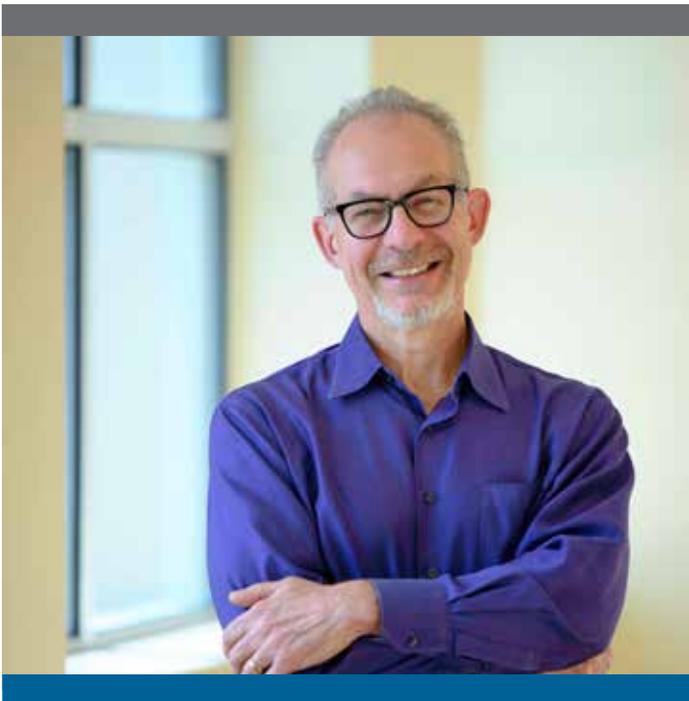
Dr. Turla values the quality and priority of patient care and wellness at AVH. "It's important to make sure patients fully understand their eye health," she said. "I will thoroughly explain the various ophthalmic tests available, and recommend procedures and medications to optimize vision and prevent vision loss."

Dr. Turla takes her knowledge and expertise to patients as a traveling ophthalmologist, regularly visiting Honduras to provide eye care to the indigent population there through Health in Sight Mission.

**HEALTH TIP:**

Like diabetes and high blood pressure, some eye diseases are silent until they have caused irreversible damage and vision loss. One eye can lose vision capability without notice because the other remains healthy and fully functional. Therefore, it is important to schedule an annual eye care checkup.

For an appointment with Dr. Turla, call **970.544.1460**.



**EDWARD WIESE, MD**  
INTERNAL MEDICINE

For Edward Wiese, MD, moving to the Roaring Fork Valley and joining Aspen Valley Primary Care this past fall was like coming home. Dr. Wiese, who practiced medicine in Ohio for the past 27 years, grew up in western Canada and loves to hike, fish, camp and ski in the mountains.

In addition to the appeal of living in a picturesque, outdoors-focused community again, Dr. Wiese was attracted to Aspen Valley Hospital's focus on population health. "AVH is spearheading the movement toward promoting wellness for the entire community," he said. "Besides treating patients for the one illness that brings them in, we explore their overall health and wellbeing."

A graduate of the Schulich School of Medicine at the University of Western Ontario, Dr. Wiese is board-certified in internal medicine — a specialty that fits well with his interest in providing care for a person rather than a person's specific medical condition. "I love the intellectual challenges of addressing the entire spectrum of factors affecting each patient's health," he said. "I especially enjoy primary care, because you can build rapport and trust with families by providing long-term wellness guidance and care."

**HEALTH TIP:**

Maintain your good health with preventative wellness checkups and age- and gender-appropriate screenings, such as mammograms and colonoscopies. These preventative steps can provide early — and potentially life-saving — diagnosis should they reveal a medical concern.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Wiese, call **970.279.4111**.



# KEEPING YOUNG *Athletes at the Top* OF THEIR GAME

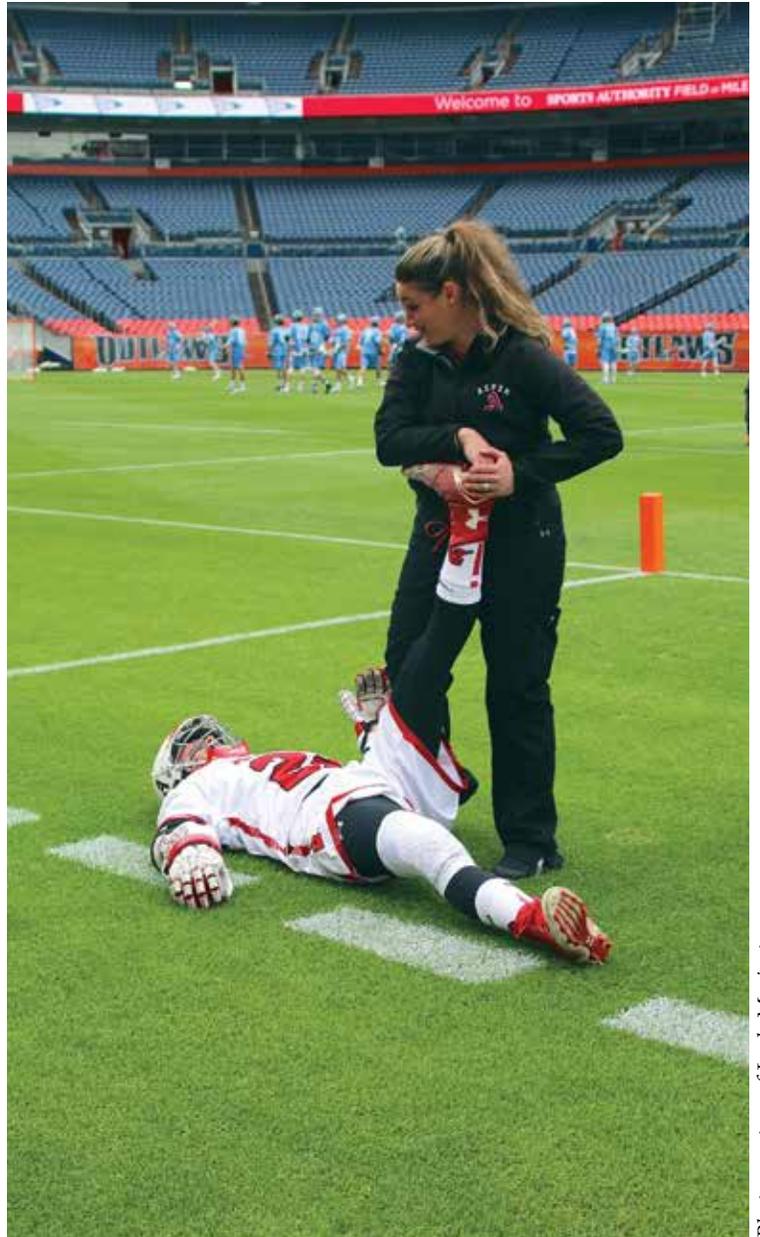


Photo courtesy of Leah Moriarty

## AVH athletic trainers focus on student wellness

Local young athletes and sports enthusiasts have plenty of options to choose from all year long. During the winter months, it's hockey, basketball, snowboarding and skiing. In spring, they look forward to baseball and lacrosse. Once fall rolls around, it's time for soccer and football. There's truly something for everyone. Unfortunately, active kids are also at risk for potential injuries, which can have serious implications for bodies that are still growing.

That's why Aspen Valley Hospital made the commitment to staff a full-time athletic trainer at the Aspen Valley Ski & Snowboard Club (AVSC) and Aspen High School (AHS). Both Erin Young, ATC, at AVSC and Cely Fitterer, MA, ATC, at AHS are onsite to provide full-time athletic training support, including injury prevention, emergency care, therapeutic intervention and rehabilitation of injuries.

### SPECIALIZED CARE, SAFER PROGRAMS

AVH and its orthopedic specialist group, OrthoAspen, collaborate with the #1 orthopedic hospital in the country, Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS), to further enhance and ensure the highest quality of orthopedic care for our entire community. In particular, this partnership elevates the experiences of our young athletes. It allows them to achieve their full athletic potential with sports-medicine support specifically prepared for competitive and recreational athletics programs at AVSC and AHS.

"Athletic trainers are a critical component of an effective healthcare team," Erin said. Cely added that athletic trainers can help to ensure the best practices are in place to make sure athletic activities are safer for all participants. "We're very fortunate to have these expert partnerships in our community as the majority of Colorado high schools and competitive clubs do not have full-time athletic trainers," she said.

Both Erin and Cely oversee the general care that includes injury rehabilitation, injury evaluations, protective taping, conducting concussion follow-up and overseeing return-to-play protocols. They assist with strength training and conditioning with a close eye on body movements to identify any weakness that may lead to injury. When injuries such as torn ACLs, dislocated shoulders or broken bones occur, they are onsite to begin immediate medical treatment, collaborating with the AVH staff to get athletes on the proper path to complete recovery.

### BOOSTING AVSC'S COMPETITIVE EDGE

With AVSC shifting to a year-round program schedule, having a full-time athletic trainer devoted solely to club athletes enhances the athlete experience. Their programs offer specific, quality healthcare and wellness regimens for young athletes participating in competitive and recreational alpine ski racing, freestyle skiing, Nordic skiing and snowboarding. The club serves 2,400 local youth age 3½ years and up.



Erin Young checks in with Cameron Blatz, an alpine racer returning to training after ACL reconstruction surgery last season.

**"This is an incredible opportunity to grow the presence of athletic training and enhance AVSC's already world-class programs."**

- AVSC ATHLETIC TRAINER ERIN YOUNG

*Opposite page, left photo: Erin Young evaluates the shoulder movement of Anders Weiss, a National Comp Nordic skier at AVSC. Right photo: Cely Fitterer helps an athlete with a pre-game stretch before the 2015 Boys 4A Lacrosse Championship at Invesco Field.*

"We are incredibly excited to welcome Erin," said AVSC Executive Director Mark Godomsky. "Her ability to handle medical decisions, act as a liaison between parents and medical staff, and educate families on the resources available through AVH allows our staff to focus on our athletic programs. This type of health and wellness resource is imperative to keeping athletes healthy, strong and at the top of their game."

Erin has an extensive sports medicine background. She received her bachelor's degree in kinesiology athletic training from San Diego State University, where she gained experience working with Division I college athletes. She developed her expertise working in the physical therapy, fitness and wellness departments at the Aspen Club and Aspen Club Sports Medicine Institute. Erin also worked as athletic trainer for the Aspen Leafs U20 Juniors hockey team and the Aspen Men's Lacrosse Club's local tournaments.

A former student athlete, Erin tore her ACL while playing high school soccer. The athletic trainer who saw her through the injury and rehabilitation made a lasting impression on her. "This is an incredible opportunity to grow the presence of athletic training and enhance AVSC's already world-class programs," she said.

#### PEAK PERFORMANCE FOR AHS ATHLETES

Celty first became interested in athletic training after taking a basic introductory class as a junior in high school. She received her bachelor's degree from Metropolitan State University of Denver and her master's degree in athletic training from San Jose State University. Celty is now in her seventh full rotation as AHS' full-time athletic trainer, overseeing 350 to 400 student athletes who participate in 25 varsity sports.

"I love all the aspects of my job," she said. "I'm honored to be part of AVH's high-level, efficient healthcare team serving our community's athletes."

As AHS athletic trainer, Celty monitors athlete training, diagnoses injuries,

initiates treatments and works extensively with student athletes to return them to peak sports performance. "I work with our athletes, guiding them toward achieving their best physical condition, before, during and after injuries and ailments," she said. "I also get athletes through treatment processes quickly, resulting in complete and timely recoveries, and as needed, I collaborate closely with the highly knowledgeable, skilled AVH and OrthoAspen staff."

"AHS is blessed to have Celty on staff as a full-time athletic trainer," said AHS Athletic Director Martha Richards. "She keeps our student athletes healthy and playing. And when injuries occur, she gets our athletes immediately onto treatment plans and refers as appropriate to the AVH/OrthoAspen healthcare team and guides them through the entire post-injury recovery process."

**"Injuries are never an easy situation. Through the collaboration with AVH, I get our athletes on the best treatment path immediately and work toward complete recovery with no lingering effects."**

- AHS ATHLETIC TRAINER CELTY FITTERER



*Celty Fitterer evaluates an athlete during a varsity football game.*

*Photo courtesy of Leah Moriarty*

"Injuries are never an easy situation," Celty said. "Through the collaboration with AVH, I get our athletes on the best treatment path immediately and work toward complete recovery with no lingering effects. Then I monitor athletes' performances post-injury with individualized therapies specially designed to their unique situations to avoid setbacks."

### EDUCATING ATHLETES AND THE COMMUNITY

In keeping with AVH's mission of promoting wellness, Celty looks forward to continuing to collaborate on presentations designed to bring awareness of functional movement and musculoskeletal health and wellness to more area student athletes. This initiative will integrate research and programming from HSS' Sports Safety workshops, another benefit of the affiliation between AVH/

OrthoAspen and HSS (read more below). Plans are to roll out across AHS teams and to other active community groups as well.

"We have a very active, outdoor-focused community with many young athletes who are rising stars," Celty said. "We want to especially educate young athletes and active residents of all ages on injury prevention, proper training techniques and general performance guidelines." ■

## Teaming up for our valley's youth

OrthoAspen has a proud history of working with Aspen High School (AHS) student athletes, coaches and parents to provide injury prevention education and care coordination during sports training and competition. OrthoAspen physicians along with full-time AHS athletic trainer, Celty Fitterer, work as a team to organize lectures on injury prevention and provide peace of mind on the sidelines of all AHS home games, including football, girls volleyball, boys and girls basketball, hockey and lacrosse.

Recently, OrthoAspen teamed up with its collaborator, Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS), the world's leading academic medical center, to take injury prevention in AHS sports to the next level. Together, they conducted Sports Safety educational workshops for the boys and girls basketball teams and their coaches. In addition, Thea Wojtkowski, MD, orthopedic surgeon at OrthoAspen, and HSS Sports Safety Program Manager James Russomano delivered an interactive workshop for parents.

The topics were risk factors and the relationship between movement quality and ACL injury among high school athletes.

This is just the beginning of more innovative programs to come from OrthoAspen and HSS, focused on maintaining the health and wellbeing of our valley's young athletes.



Thea Wojtkowski, MD, OrthoAspen, educates parents on ACL injury risk.



James Russomano, HSS, talks with boys basketball players and coaches before a movement demonstration.

## Local veterinarian becomes a patient in extraordinary circumstance

Local veterinarian Scott Schwarting of Aspen Animal Hospital followed his usual Thursday evening routine of going to the gym to take his favorite fitness class — except for one evening recently that turned out to be extraordinarily unusual.

“When I got home from the gym, I felt tightness and pain in my chest that I couldn’t relieve by sitting or lying down,” Scott recalled. “Minutes later, while I was on the phone with a colleague, the thought suddenly struck me: ‘I think I am having a heart attack.’”

### FAST THINKING, POSITIVE OUTCOME

Living only four minutes from Aspen Valley Hospital’s After-Hours Medical Care in Basalt, Scott immediately went there, where the After-Hours staff administered oxygen, checked his vitals and ran an ECG as they prepped him for an ambulance ride to the hospital. “What started as a seemingly normal visit became extraordinary,” recalled Bruce Bowen, MD, the attending physician that evening.

Attending nurse Cre Donovan, RN, was getting aspirin and an IV for Scott when Scott told Dr. Bowen that he was experiencing jaw pain. Cre quickly got the center’s cardiac cart and attached the heart monitor when Scott suddenly became unconscious. Dr. Bowen began immediate CPR and Tabitha McKinney, radiology technologist, was standing by to apply the breathing, if necessary. “Scott experienced lethal heart rhythm with no pulse depicting clear-cut cardiac arrest,” Dr. Bowen said.

Cre then administered a shock to restart his heart via a defibrillator. “During the second round of CPR, Scott suddenly woke up and said, ‘I’m sorry’ and ‘thank you,’” Cre recalled.

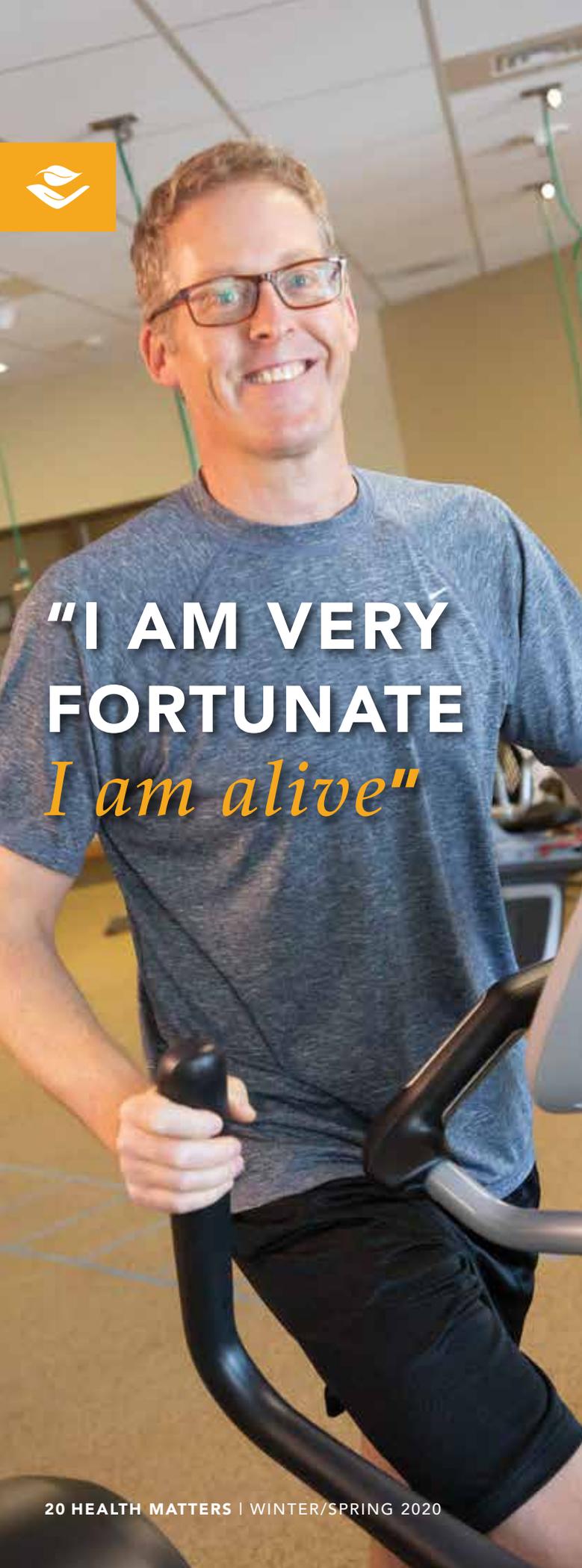
Rushed to Valley View Hospital’s catheterization laboratory, Scott underwent surgery Thursday night. “I had one completely blocked artery and required two stents,” he said. Two days later, he was released to return home.

### EMOTIONAL REUNIONS

The following week, Scott returned to After-Hours Medical Care to thank Cre, Dr. Bowen and the rest of the staff. “It was very emotional,” he said. “Just thinking how they were able to save my life was overwhelming. As a veterinarian, I realize they were doing their job; but as a patient, I have a great sense of gratitude and humility.”

The experience was also awe-inspiring for the After-Hours staff. “In my many years of nursing, Scott’s experience presented the worst and best scenarios all in a matter of minutes,” Cre said. “It was an incredible experience to see him alive and well, and it was

*Scott Schwarting credits his fast recovery from cardiac arrest to the teams at After-Hours Medical Care and AVH Cardiac Rehab. Opposite page, bottom left photo with Scott (left to right): the quick-thinking After-Hours clinical team of Cre Donovan, Dr. Bruce Bowen and Tabitha McKinney. Bottom right photo (left to right): the AVH Cardiac Rehab team of Jeanne Stough, Julie Puchkoff and Melody Durham.*



**“I AM VERY  
FORTUNATE  
*I am alive*”**

quite amazing to see the positive results from what we're doing and practicing."

"Our staff did a great job jumping in and doing exactly what they needed to do," Dr. Bowen added. "It was definitely one of the most dramatic and highly gratifying situations we have faced."

Scott also made a point of reaching out to the ambulance crew chief and the assisting police officer. "They were flabbergasted I was talking with them just five days after the incident," he said. "The more I relate my experience to others, the more fully I realize that I had a most unusual outcome. I am very fortunate I am alive."

#### ENCOURAGING ROAD TO RECOVERY

The week after his release from the hospital, Scott began a 36-session treatment program with AVH's Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation team. "Melody Durham, RN, BSN; Julie Puchkoff, MS, CSCS; Jeanne Stough, MS, EP; and Julia Powell, RN, all played big roles in monitoring my health so I could get my energy back and return to a more normal function," he said.

AVH's Cardiac Rehab team worked with Scott to develop a customized treatment plan, incorporating light cardio movements initially, including a treadmill, as well as recumbent and upright bikes, rowing machines and elliptical equipment. During the latter stage of Scott's recovery program, the team added movements from his favorite fitness class.

"The whole team is open, knowledgeable and accommodating," Scott said. "I was very comfortable during my sessions. My AVH team provided expert, professional guidance and warm, friendly encouragement."

#### RETURN TO ROUTINE

Scott credits the quick thinking of AVH's After-Hours Medical Care staff as key to his fast recovery. "Miraculously, I have no adverse effects, particularly relating to neurological functions," he said. "AVH's After-Hours Medical Care and Cardiac Rehab provide extraordinary care and excel at what they do." ■

"Our staff did a great job jumping in and doing exactly what they needed to do. It was definitely one of the most dramatic and highly gratifying situations we have faced."

- BRUCE BOWEN, MD





# GREAT TIMES & RESULTS



**A**spen Valley Hospital Foundation (AVHF) was once again the philanthropic partner with Aspen Valley Polo Club for both a Summer Polo benefit in August and the Snow Polo events in December. For the past three years, these polo events have provided incredible visibility and critical funding for priority programs, services, new technology and new facilities at Aspen Valley Hospital. Melissa and Marc Ganzi, owners of the Aspen Valley Polo Club, continue to be outstanding partners and supporters, with funding through these events approaching the \$2 million mark!

Summer Polo has quickly become the “must-attend” event of the summer. Incredible partners, including Caribou Club Catering, Piper Heidsieck Champagne, Beverly Hills Caviar and numerous other luxury-brand retailers, provided an outstanding ambiance for all of the guests last August. A Chukker Lounge ticket offered guests multiple food stations, a roving caviar cart, passed hors d’oeuvres and a more casual social scene. The VIP guests enjoyed the ultimate high-end experience with field-side reserved tables, a private lounge, and a full, sit-down, four-course luncheon.

In addition to a fantastic luxury experience under the tent, guests also enjoyed incredible polo action on the field, with world-class players competing for the United States Polo Association’s coveted Silver Cup® trophy. The winning team, Tonkawa, led by polo rock-star 10-goaler Sapo Caset, captured the Silver Cup. Teammates Jeff Hildebrand, Juan



# FOR A GREAT CAUSE

Martin Obregon and Mason Wroe finished with an impressive 15-10 victory over team Casablanca (Grant Ganzi, Juancito Bollini, Lucas Lalor and Nacho Novillo Astrada).

Polo action continued in December, and AVHF was once again named as the beneficiary of the St. Regis World Snow Polo games. Melissa and Marc Ganzi and Aspen Valley Polo Club hosted the games for the seventh year in a row, further showing their impressive commitment, not only as ambassadors for the sport of polo, but also for their local community.

The star-studded, sold-out crowd watched while team Richard Mille (Edouard Pan, Pablo MacDonough and Louis Jarrige) defeated the U.S. Polo Association in an action-packed final. In the United States, snow polo is competed exclusively in Aspen.

Following three days of exciting Snow Polo games, AVHF hosted a fundraising event at the W Aspen Hotel — a “White Hot Party with the Players.” Guests enjoyed an exclusive culinary experience created just for this event by the W Aspen’s Executive Chef, Jacqueline Siao, as well as hand-picked wines by sommelier LeeAnn Kaufman and crafted cocktails, courtesy of Royal Salute.

The evening was made possible by the wonderful support from the W Aspen Hotel, the St. Regis, Royal Salute, Louis Vuitton, Gorsuch and others who provided incredible underwriting support and auction items to ensure the event’s success. ■



## DONATE NOW

Your support is needed to help elevate healthcare in our community. To make a gift or to learn more about all the giving opportunities available, please contact Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation. You can also send a gift using the remittance envelope enclosed in the center of this magazine.

970.544.1302 ■ [avhf@aspenhospital.org](mailto:avhf@aspenhospital.org) ■ [supportaspenvalleyhospital.org](http://supportaspenvalleyhospital.org)





# SANDY'S STORY

*A letter from a grateful patient*

I remember when Aspen Valley Hospital was located at the base of Red Mountain and when it moved to Castle Creek Road in 1977. One of my first experiences at the “new” hospital was when my then five-year-old son broke his leg and needed emergency medical treatment.

Since then, I have seen the Hospital from every perspective. I have been a community volunteer, working to shape the mammography program — which now, 25 years later, is located in a comprehensive Breast Center! I have been a patient on several occasions — from being treated for breast cancer, to being stabilized after a stroke, to recently having a knee replacement. I have shared some of my most joyous occasions — like the births of all of my grandchildren. And I have experienced great tragedy and loss when my beloved step-daughter, Gunilla Asher, lost her battle with cancer.

But even in times of great pain and sorrow, I saw the very best in AVH. Gunilla’s care team became like family, and we all mourned this heartbreaking



*Sandy Israel (in hat) is shown with her husband, Charles, and their family.*

loss together. Over and over again, I have put my faith in Aspen Valley Hospital. From the first encounter with a plaster cast over 40 years ago to a space-age, robotic knee replacement last year, it has all exceeded my expectations.

No matter how much technology has advanced, or how much the Hospital has grown, the caregivers at Aspen Valley Hospital never lose sight of how important it is to care for their patients as the friends and neighbors that we are. ■



“The caregivers at Aspen Valley Hospital never lose sight of how important it is to care for their patients as the friends and neighbors that we are.”

- SANDY ISRAEL

# SNOWMASS CLINIC OPEN HOUSE

**O**n December 5, over 120 community members got a sneak peek of the new Snowmass Clinic, located at Base Village in Building 8. Hosted by Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation, **Snacks, S'mores and Tours** kicked off at the Limelight Snowmass Hotel, where guests enjoyed warm winter fare before donning hard hats and neon vests for their guided tours of the new 6,300-square-foot clinic space.

"This is a long time in the making," said Jennifer Slaughter, Chief Marketing Officer for Aspen Valley Hospital, as she walked into the new space.

In existence since the early 1970s and owned and operated by AVH since 2008, the Snowmass Clinic caters to locals and visitors alike for injuries and illnesses of all kinds. With a staff of 20, including four clinicians trained in emergency and family medicine, as well as registered nurses, EMTs, X-ray technologists and physical therapists, the clinic treats 2,300 patients in a typical winter season — sometimes with nearly 40 patients a day.

In June, the Clinic moved to operating year-round to accommodate the increase in summer Village activities. More than 600 patients were treated at the Clinic during its first summer open.

The new \$3.2 million space will offer a more streamlined and efficient flow for patient care. A dedicated pedestrian entrance for walk-ins, including reserved parking in the parking garage, a ski-up entrance for ski patrollers who bring patients directly off the mountain, and a more accessible ambulance entrance are all ways this new space offers more convenient points of entry. In addition, a new and improved waiting area, triage station, and physician and staff work stations all were built with great attention to efficiency, safety and privacy. In addition to new state-of-the-art procedure and treatment rooms, the new Clinic also offers X-ray capabilities and a physical therapy gym.

Jon Gibans, MD, Medical Director of the Snowmass Clinic, and Kelly Hansen, the Clinic's Office Manager, are especially thrilled about the improvements. Both have been working at the Snowmass Clinic for over 25 years and even helped design the new space. "After all of these years to have this come to fruition is really exciting," Dr. Gibans said, as he addressed the crowd on hand.

These are the kinds of projects that are fueled by need, and made possible by the generous support of our community. ■



# DIRECTORY *of services*

Want to schedule an appointment? Wish to check on a patient? Have a billing question? For all of your questions and requests, here is a list of Aspen Valley Hospital phone numbers to call.

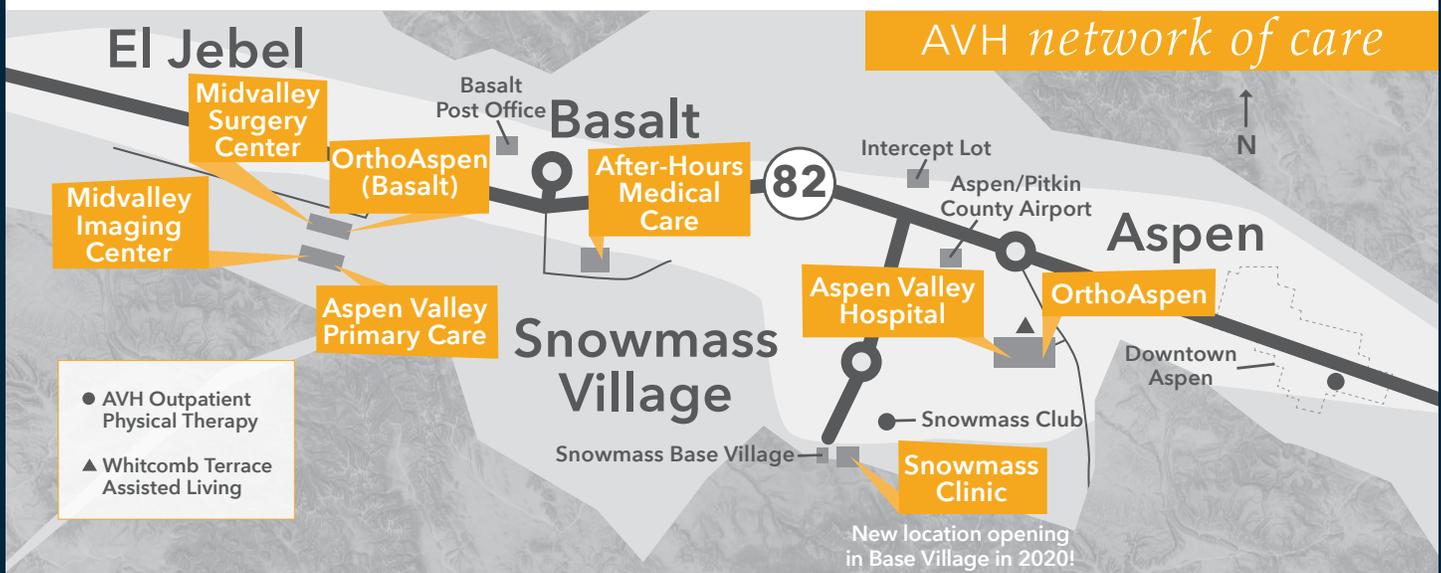
## HOSPITAL DEPARTMENTS

General Information	970.925.1120
Administration	970.544.1261
Admissions	970.544.7350
Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation	970.544.1302
Aspen Ambulance District	970.544.1583
Aspen Birth Center	970.544.1130
After-Hours Medical Care in Basalt	970.544.1250
Billing Help Line	970.544.7694
Breast Center	970.544.1420
Business Office/Billing	970.544.7377
	800.262.3067
Cardiac Rehabilitation	970.544.1383
Cardiopulmonary/Respiratory Clinic	970.544.1264
Community Relations	970.544.1296
Diabetes Education	970.544.7394
Diagnostic Imaging	970.544.1192
Diagnostic Scheduling	970.544.1392
Emergency Department	970.544.1228
Gift Shop	970.544.1304
Human Resources	970.544.1367
Laboratory	970.544.1570
Medical Records	970.544.1290
Midvalley Imaging Center	970.927.5087
Midvalley Surgery Center	970.544.1360

Nuclear Medicine	970.544.1127
Nutrition Services	970.544.1157
Oncology & Infusion	970.544.1507
Outpatient Scheduling	970.544.1392
Pain Center of the Roaring Fork Valley	970.544.1146
Patient Care Unit	970.544.1135
Pharmacy	970.544.1778
Physical Therapy/Rehab Services	970.544.1177
Same Day Surgery/Outpatient	970.544.1327
Snowmass Clinic	970.544.1518
Spanish Resources	970.544.1543
Surgery Scheduling	970.544.7391
Whitcomb Terrace Assisted Living	970.544.1530

## MEDICAL PRACTICES

Center for Medical Care	
Aspen Valley Primary Care	970.279.4111
Cardiology	970.544.7385
Ophthalmology	970.544.1460
OrthoAspen (Aspen & Basalt)	970.544.1289
Otolaryngology (Ear, Nose & Throat)	970.544.1460
Endocrinology	970.544.1395
Pulmonology	877.225.5654
Rheumatology	970.544.1395



# ASK THE EXPERT

Kristy Bates, registered dietitian and nutritionist at Aspen Valley Hospital, on how wise and simple dietary decisions can help improve health and physical fitness.

**W**hat are some health benefits one might notice right away by eating more nutritious foods?

One of the first things you notice after making changes — such as reducing dietary sugar and fat or increasing antioxidants and fluid intake — is in your overall appearance. Nutrition can have a significant impact on the quality of your skin, hair and nails. Improved dietary choices can also quickly help treat symptoms of digestive discomfort or chronic digestive conditions. In addition, controlling portions, avoiding alcohol, enjoying a balanced breakfast each morning and choosing healthy snacks can boost energy and confidence, prevent mid-day “crashes” and improve concentration.

**For many people, diets are hard to maintain for the long term. What are some strategies to keeping healthy resolutions?**

Forget dieting. A lot of evidence shows that dieting does not produce long-term health improvement. Diets, especially fad diets, are rarely sustainable and may be detrimental to individuals and their families. I encourage people to make lifestyle changes, eat mindfully and work with a qualified dietitian to set SMART — specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely — goals to empower them to become their own behavioral change expert. Also, don't be too hard on yourself. Eat intuitively and rely on hunger and satiety cues to nourish your body.

**How can we eat healthier without spending extra money and time?**

Healthy foods aren't necessarily more expensive. Fresh fruits and vegetables can be very affordable, if you become familiar

To learn more about nutritional services and consultations with AVH registered dietitians, call **970.544.1145.**

with seasonal offerings. Lower-priced canned and frozen fruits and veggies can be just as nutritious as fresh. Just be sure to read the package's ingredients list and nutrition fact label to avoid added sugar and excess salt and calories. As far as time goes, you can actually save time once you get in the habit of cooking your own meals rather than eating out. Plus, home-cooked meals are almost always healthier and more affordable than restaurant offerings, and preparing food can be so rewarding!

**How can a registered dietitian help individuals improve their health?**

A dietitian's expert advice can focus on prevention or treatment of medical or behavioral conditions. For example, preventive nutritional counseling may focus on athletic performance or healthy aging, while a treatment approach may seek to address concerns with cognitive, digestive or heart health; weight management; food allergies; eating disorders; or medical conditions such as diabetes or cancer.

**Tell us about the food workshops you plan to host.**

This year, we are ramping up our cooking demonstrations, which will be held on the second Thursday of each month. They will be free to the public and focus on wellness, incorporating whole food recipes, kitchen gadgets and preparation methods. Look for our Dietitian Demos newspaper ads, check the AVH website, or contact me or Registered Dietitian and Nutritionist Lauren Mitchell at **970.544.1145** to join our mailing list. ■





**ASPEN VALLEY HOSPITAL**

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