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CONNECTION
A publication from your friends at Huron Regional Medical Center | **VOLUME 14 ISSUE 1**



LEADING BY Example

State Treasurer Josh Haeder Has a Message for South Dakotans Over 45: **Get Screened for Colon Cancer.**

PAGE 6

A Letter From Our CEO



Erick Larson,
President and CEO

THERE IS SOMETHING deeply humbling about leading a hospital in a community like Huron.

At Huron Regional Medical Center, we are often the closest source of care for families across our region, and we take that responsibility seriously. What happens here matters – not just in the critical moments, but in the everyday care that supports our community's health. Our team understands the role we play and shows up each day with a strong sense of purpose and commitment.

Rain or shine, middle of the night, holidays included, our nurses, physicians, technicians and support staff are here. For the farmer who can't afford to wait. For the grandmother who shouldn't have to travel hours for follow-up care. For the young family that simply needs to know that skilled, compassionate help is close to home.

Rural health care is not a lesser version of care. In Huron, we are committed to making sure it never feels that way. That commitment is only possible because of the incredible team that walks through our doors every day – and a community that believes, as we do, that every person deserves exceptional care close to home.

Erick Larson
President and CEO
Huron Regional Medical Center



Welcome, Amanda Soesbe

AMANDA SOESBE'S PATH to health care finance began in high school while working in a chiropractic office. Drawn to both numbers and patient care, she earned degrees in health care administration and accounting at the University of South Dakota. Following internships with a Big Four accounting firm and Sanford Health, she discovered a passion for leadership within community-based settings.

After serving as a chief financial officer (CFO) at Winner Regional Healthcare Center in rural South Dakota, Soesbe recently joined Huron Regional Medical Center as vice president of finance/CFO. She works in a hybrid capacity, splitting time between Huron and her family's cattle ranch near Gregory.

What drew Soesbe to HRMC was the vital role a local hospital plays in a community's health.

"I believe it's important to protect that resource by being diligent and thinking strategically," Soesbe says. "I'm excited to bring fresh ideas while building on what already works – whether that's improving financial processes or leveraging technology more effectively."

While financial strategy is central to her role, Soesbe values being in a position that allows her to better support patients and families across the region.

IN THIS ISSUE

Think Salads Are Just 'Diet Food'? 3
Finding Hope in Huron 4
Holistic Help for Complex Wounds and Ostomy Care 5
Leading by Example 6
Expanding for the Future 8
Say Goodbye to Pain With iovera® Therapy 8
HRMC Foundation 9
Your Connection to Care, Redesigned 12

Think Salads Are Just 'Diet Food'? Think Again.

HURON REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER IS TURNING THE HUMBLE SALAD INTO A COMMUNITY EVENT – AND EVERYONE'S INVITED.

THIS MAY, THE HRMC FOUNDATION is bringing a fresh twist to your lunch routine with the Huron Salad Challenge! Throughout the contest, community members are invited to head to their favorite local Huron restaurant, order a salad and snap a photo of their colorful creation.

Entering is simple – just post your photo on Facebook and tag both the restaurant and the HRMC Foundation. Every post with both tags counts as one entry into the contest, so the more you dine and share, the better your chances!

"By highlighting the delicious and healthy salad options already available at our favorite local spots, we hope to show that nutritious choices are right at your fingertips here in Huron," says Mati Felderman, executive director of community engagement and the HRMC Foundation.

One lucky winner will be selected from all qualifying entries to receive a $100 wellness package. It's a great excuse to explore Huron's local dining scene, support our community restaurants and eat fresh – all while competing for a great prize. So grab your fork, find your favorite salad and start snapping!

WHY SALADS ARE WORTH THE HYPE

"Many people think of salads as something you 'suffer through' to lose weight," says Kundana Neelam, MD, an internal medicine physician at HRMC. "But from a medical perspective, they are powerful medicine on a plate."

A bowl of leafy greens and colorful veggies delivers essential fiber, potassium, and vitamins A, C, E and K. Fiber alone slows sugar absorption, lowers "bad" cholesterol and keeps digestion running smoothly. Nutrients from fresh ingredients are essential for maintaining energy levels throughout the day, and regular salad consumption is linked to a lower risk of heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and certain cancers.

BUILD A BETTER BOWL

To ensure your salad is a nutritional powerhouse, Dr. Neelam recommends a "meal bowl" approach:

- **50% vegetables:** Load up on greens and seasonal veggies.
- **25% protein:** Add grilled chicken, chickpeas or eggs to stay full.
- **25% healthy carbs:** Include quinoa or sweet potatoes.
- **Healthy fats:** Use avocado, nuts or seeds to help absorb key vitamins.

For bold flavor without the extra calories, reach for hot sauce, lemon juice, vinegar, garlic or fresh herbs.

"When done right, salads are sustainable, filling and incredibly beneficial for your long-term health," Dr. Neelam says.

■ Ready to start the Salad Challenge? Follow HRMC Foundation on social media to explore local fresh and healthy options and enter to win!

TRY IT AT HOME: HURON SPRING SALAD

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Mixed spring greens
- Sliced strawberries
- Cucumber
- Snap peas
- Avocado
- Grilled chicken or hard-boiled eggs
- Sunflower seeds
- Olive oil
- Fresh lemon juice
- Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS:

Toss greens, strawberries and vegetables in a large bowl. Add avocado and your choice of protein, and top with sunflower seeds. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice, season with a pinch of salt and pepper, and serve fresh.









Finding Hope in Huron

AFTER YEARS OF STRUGGLING WITH DEBILITATING GASTROPARESIS, COLLEGE STUDENT ABBY VAN MAREL FINALLY FOUND HOPE THANKS TO A LOCAL SURGEON WHO WAS WILLING TO GO THE EXTRA MILE.

BEFORE SHE ARRIVED at the University of Michigan, Abby Van Marel was already fighting a quiet battle against a stomach that refused to function. Gastroparesis didn't just slow her digestion; it stalled her life, leaving the once-active student bedbound for days at a time. Despite ongoing care from her medical team in Michigan and efforts to manage her symptoms via diet and nonsurgical methods, Abby's condition did not improve.

FACING BARRIERS TO TREATMENT

When her health worsened, Abby's care team recommended an endoscopic procedure to alter the muscle between her stomach and small intestine. However, insurance challenges and difficulty finding a surgeon willing to perform a pyloroplasty, a less common surgery that could relieve her symptoms, left Abby and her family discouraged. Trips to specialists did not provide answers.

Hope came unexpectedly through a hometown connection. Esther Van Marel, Abby's mother and a cardiac rehabilitation nurse at Huron Regional Medical Center, shared Abby's story with Anthony Loewen, MD, a general surgeon at HRMC. Dr. Loewen carefully reviewed Abby's medical history, consulted with colleagues and performed the pyloroplasty in Huron.

A COMPASSIONATE APPROACH

"The surgery itself is not overly complex, but it's relatively uncommon," Dr. Loewen says. "It helps with motility and relieves symptoms but does not completely cure the problem."

Esther and Abby's father, Doug Van Marel, MD, a hospitalist at HRMC, are grateful to finally have found a surgeon who took a genuine interest.

"After searching for someone to really take action, we're so thankful for Dr. Loewen," Esther says.

A NEW CHAPTER

Abby describes her experience as transformative.

"I was surprised how easy it was to get the procedure done in South Dakota. I thought it would be in Michigan, but there were many barriers there," she says. "Dr. Loewen spent so much one-on-one time with me after surgery – it felt personal and reassuring."

The results have been life-changing.

"I feel like a whole different person," Abby says. "I can make it to class, go on walks in the park and I'm back in the gym."

Now, newly married, Abby embraces life again thanks to the compassionate, patient-centered care she found at HRMC.

■ **For more information or to schedule a consult with a general surgeon, visit www.huronregional.org.**



WHAT IS GASTROPARESIS?

Gastroparesis is a condition where the stomach's muscles don't work properly, causing delayed emptying of food into the small intestine. This slowdown can lead to symptoms like nausea, vomiting, bloating and feelings of fullness after eating only a small amount. It sometimes results from nerve damage or other health issues and can affect digestion, nutrient absorption and blood sugar control.



HOLISTIC HELP
for Complex Wounds and Ostomy Care

FOR KRISTIN PRATT, CNP, THE ROAD TO LEADING THE WOUND CARE PROGRAM AT HURON REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER HAS BEEN A JOURNEY OF BOTH FAITH AND PROFESSIONAL EVOLUTION.

AFTER YEARS OF serving families in primary care, Pratt returned to Huron to specialize in a field that offers something rare in medicine: the opportunity to facilitate tangible, physical healing.



Kristin Pratt, CNP

"Wound care wasn't always on my radar," Pratt says. "But after practicing family care and having time to reflect, I realized it's time to take this opportunity to specialize, providing focused care and helping patients throughout their healing journey."

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

Pratt's extensive primary care background equips her to approach wound healing holistically, reinforcing the health advice patients receive from their primary care providers – like managing diabetes and nutrition, which often contribute to wound development.

"I'm excited to bring that comprehensive perspective," Pratt says. "Wound and ostomy care patients often feel discouraged, and I want to give them hope, help them understand their condition and empower them to make and practice lifestyle changes to support prevention of future wounds."

Huron's wound care and ostomy program includes inpatient consultations and outpatient treatments. The wound care team is collaborative, including Pratt, wound care nurses, physicians and specialists in surgery and podiatry. The team customizes a care plan for each patient using the latest advances in wound care including new dressings, skin substitutes, technologies and therapies.

"We want people in Huron and surrounding communities to know wound and ostomy care is available here," Pratt says. "Patients shouldn't have to drive hours to Sioux Falls or beyond for these services, especially when mobility may be limited. Our goal is to treat patients close to home and build strong relationships with providers across the region."

Pratt is also enthusiastic about future program growth in expanding access to care in remote and rural areas and bringing cutting edge treatment modalities to Huron.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

Aside from clinical expertise, Pratt is passionate about education.

"Many people still treat wounds with outdated methods," she says. "I want to empower patients and providers with current knowledge, so we can prevent minor wounds from becoming serious chronic issues."

■ **To schedule wound care services, call Huron Regional Medical Center at (605) 353-6334.**

DO YOU NEED PROFESSIONAL WOUND OR OSTOMY CARE?

According to Pratt, you should seek wound care if:

- The wound hasn't healed over a few weeks or months.
- You have health conditions, such as diabetes or poor circulation, that can interfere with wound healing.
- You have an ileostomy, colostomy or urostomy, and you need routine ostomy assessments or experience any problems.
- Your pain worsens rather than improves.
- Your wound shows signs of infection, such as redness, swelling, discharge or foul odor.
- The tissue around your wound is dark or black.



Scan to watch Josh's testimonial about his screening experience.

Leading by Example

STATE TREASURER JOSH HAEDER OFFERS A SIMPLE SUGGESTION FOR A LONG LIFE: GET YOUR COLONOSCOPY.

JOSH HAEDER IS a man who wears many hats. As the state treasurer for South Dakota, voice of Tiger athletics at Huron Arena and a business owner in Huron, he is used to the spotlight and the fast-paced world of politics and commerce. But recently, Haeder stepped in front of the camera for a different reason: to share his experience with a routine colonoscopy at Huron Regional Medical Center.

Haeder's motivation was simple. He recently turned 45, the new "gold standard" age for beginning colorectal cancer screenings. Like many people, he felt a bit of trepidation about the procedure.

FAST FACTS ABOUT COLORECTAL CANCER

158,850
New cases in the U.S. in 2026

1 in 24 men and 1 in 26 women
Will be diagnosed during their lifetime

2%
Annual increase in new cases among people ages 20–54

1 in 5
People diagnosed with colorectal cancer are younger than 55

DID YOU KNOW ...

Most health insurance programs cover a screening colonoscopy every 10 years at no additional cost to you. It's part of your preventive care coverage.

EXPERT CARE, RIGHT HERE AT HOME

One common myth is that patients need to travel to large centers for high-quality colonoscopies. Terry Larsen, DO, chief medical officer and general surgeon at HRMC, says that excellence is available right in Beadle County.

Surgeons with HRMC are continually tracking their adenoma detection rates and complication rates, and these are at or better than the national averages.

For those living outside of Huron, Dr. Larsen also provides outreach care in Miller, reducing the travel burden for rural residents. Whether in Huron or Miller, the goal remains the same: early detection.

"Warning signs can be subtle," Dr. Larsen says. "Unexplained weight loss or fatigue can be gradual. Blood in the stool or a change in bowel habits are alarm signs that should not be ignored."



Anthony Loewen, MD



Terry Larsen, DO

"I was nervous about the process, but really it was very simple," Haeder says. "It's important that people do this screening because it's better to find things early. I say it's like a day of suffering through the prep process versus detecting colorectal cancer when you're in Stage 2, 3 or 4."

THE POWER OF PREVENTION

For Haeder, the decision to schedule his colonoscopy came down to family. He credits his wife for being the driving force behind his screening.

"If she wouldn't have told me, 'Hey, you're old now, you're getting close to middle age, it's time to get this done,' we probably wouldn't be having this conversation," he says.

By sharing his story, Haeder hopes to strip away the taboo often associated with colon health.

"We all want to live a long time. We want to have good married lives, kids and grandkids," Haeder says. "If you're not doing those screenings, you're leaving things to chance."

Haeder found comfort in the care he received locally. After meeting with Anthony Loewen, MD, the process became much less intimidating.

"Dr. Loewen was incredibly calm and friendly. He explained the process, and that really did ease my nerves."



WHY 45 IS THE NEW 50

Haeder's timing was perfect. In recent years, medical organizations like the American Cancer Society have lowered the recommended screening age from 50 to 45. The reason? A rise in colorectal cancer cases among younger adults.

"There has been a big push to improve screening rates because the incidence of colorectal cancer being diagnosed in patients before age 60 has been increasing by about 1% per year," Dr. Loewen says.

During a colonoscopy, surgeons look for precancerous lesions called adenomas. According to Dr. Loewen, approximately 1 in 3 men and 1 in 4 women have these lesions.

"The strategy is that we find these when they are small and remove them early so that years down the line they will never turn into cancer," Dr. Loewen says.



HEALTHY ADVICE

Haeder's takeaway for his neighbors in Huron is clear: Don't let fear or "taboo" stand in the way of your health.

"It's 24 hours of prep work to make sure that you're healthy," Haeder says. "If you just let the medical team do their job, they'll help you stay healthy for your family."

■ **Talk with your primary care provider or visit www.huronregional.org/goblue to request a colonoscopy consultation or learn more about scheduling your screening.**

Expanding for the Future

HURON REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER is pleased to announce continued progress on the hospital's $19.4 million expansion and renovation of the surgical services department, marking an important milestone in the effort to enhance access to advanced, patient-centered care close to home.

Construction crews have now fully framed four new operating rooms, establishing the structural foundation for the expanded surgical suites. In addition, the exterior façade of the new addition is complete, offering the community a clear glimpse of the future of surgical care at HRMC.

Additional phases will include continued interior build-out, integration with existing surgical spaces and renovation of current areas to ensure a seamless transition between new and existing facilities.

When complete, the surgical expansion will modernize HRMC's operating environment, supporting advanced technology, improving workflows for care teams and enhancing the experience for patients and families. The project reflects HRMC's commitment to delivering high-quality care close to home.

■ **Find additional construction updates at www.huronregional.org.**



Say Goodbye to Pain With **iovera®** Therapy



PROVIDERS WITH HURON Regional Medical Center now offer iovera®, a leading edge, non-opioid treatment designed to help manage pain and improve recovery. This innovative therapy uses targeted cold therapy to temporarily block pain signals, offering effective relief without the risks associated with opioids.

A minimally invasive approach, iovera® helps patients stay mobile, recover faster and live more comfortably.

A NEW PAIN MANAGEMENT OPTION

Jason Barnhard, CRNA, a fellowship-trained pain management provider, uses iovera® to expand access to non-opioid care for patients dealing with chronic or procedure-related pain.

"We are committed to bringing innovative, evidence-based treatments to the community," Barnhard says. "The addition of iovera® reflects our focus on enhancing patient care through safe and effective pain management options."

IMPROVING ORTHOPEDIC REHABILITATION OUTCOMES

Leonard Wonnenberg, PA-C, now offers iovera® to support patients preparing for and recovering from orthopedic surgery. By reducing pain both before and after procedures, this therapy leads to better rehabilitation outcomes.

"iovera® is going to make a meaningful difference in pain management and help promote success in early post-surgical rehabilitation," says Kevin Hofer, MD, orthopedic surgeon. "This, along with Mako robotic-assisted surgery and recent renovations to our operating areas, demonstrates our ongoing commitment to delivering top-of-the-line care right here in Huron."

■ **Want to learn more? Contact your primary care provider or schedule an appointment with HRMC specialists. Call (605) 353-7660 for orthopedic care, (605) 353-6334 for pain management or visit www.huronregional.org to request an appointment online.**

Lights, Music and a Mission



PAPA LUIGI, HURON'S MOST BELOVED GALA, DELIVERED A NIGHT TO REMEMBER – AND RAISED THE STAKES FOR LOCAL HEALTH CARE.

THE SEQUINS WERE out, the dance shoes were shined and Huron showed up in style for the 27th Annual Papa Luigi: Dancing with the Stars (Season Two) gala benefiting the HRMC Foundation – raising nearly $90,000. By all accounts, the sold-out event, held on March 28, lived up to every bit of the buzz.

This year's theme was "Prom Through the Ages," and the festivities started early. Guests enjoyed a gallery walk featuring real prom dresses from community members, some dating all the way back to 1959. Think big hair, bigger shoulders and a whole lot of nostalgia. On stage, six star couples took the floor under the direction of choreographer Tarin Oyler, HRMC Foundation board member and wife of family medicine physician Vincent Oyler, MD.

"Tarin Oyler has truly brought Dancing with the Stars to life," says Mati Felderman, executive director of community engagement and HRMC Foundation. "She has crafted an experience that has inspired a love of dance in our community, energized our event and made an impact on our mission."

The couples who competed for the crown were:

- Erick and Nicola Larson
- Eric and Windy Zell
- Mark and Jessica Harvey
- Jesse and Julianne Thorne, DDS
- Rich and Jen Bragg
- Rob and Kim Rieger

Returning champions from Season One, general surgeon Anthony Loewen, MD, and his wife, Emma, were joined by the Oylers for encore dances after the Season 2 cast dazzled the crowd.

In true prom form, competition winners Mark and Jessica Harvey were crowned prom king and queen and presented with the mirrorball trophy.

"I'm so incredibly proud of our dancers, who gave so much of their time and worked diligently on their performances," Oyler says. "And I'm absolutely over the moon about exceeding our fundraising goal. I feel honored to be part of something the community supported so enthusiastically to help our hospital thrive."

EVERY DOLLAR MADE A DIFFERENCE

Each donation made through the event served as a vote for a favorite couple, and every dollar enhanced the mission of the HRMC Foundation and its three pillars: people, technology and wellness. Together, those investments ensure that high-quality health care stays right here in Huron – for your family, your neighbors and generations to come.



Missed the event? You can still make an impact. Donations to the HRMC Foundation are accepted year-round. Scan the QR code to give today and help keep high-quality health care right here in Huron.



Mati Felderman, Executive Director of Community Engagement and HRMC Foundation

Thank You

HRMC Foundation

WE ARE DEEPLY GRATEFUL to the individuals acknowledged here from the last few months and all who have given of their time or resources. Your generosity supports programs and services, ensuring high-quality health care is available close to home.

Thank you for being an essential part of our mission.

Scan this code to **Donate Now**

HRMC Foundation Donors, July through December 2025

Annual Campaign—2025

In Memory Of:

Paul Christen, Daniel and Karen Wehde | **Dr. James Cole**, Debbie and David Cook | **Verla DesLauriers**, Randy and Adele Jacobson | **Lone Ferguson**, Signe and Rodney Harmon | **Patricia Hirtzel**, Margo Anderson | **Darlene Kinkel**, Ronald and Karon Ziegeldorf | **Dr. and Mrs. Clifford C. Landing**, Cynthia and James Ayers | **James A. Mattke**, Ronald and Karon Ziegeldorf | **Joyce North**, Willie and Joan Kutter | **Doug Ramsell**, Jay and Joyce Borah, Sara Solem | **Dr. Dale Sattgast**, Larry and Regela Walz | **Marlene Schaffer**, Jan LaMont, Ronald and Karon Ziegeldorf, Marcia ★ and Jon Zwanziger

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Robert Hohm, Tschetter & Hohm Clinic, PC | Huron Community Foundation | Mary Pearson | Warren Sandmeier

Dr. Paul & Carol Holm Healthcare Scholarship Campaign

South Dakota Community Foundation

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HRMC Auxiliary

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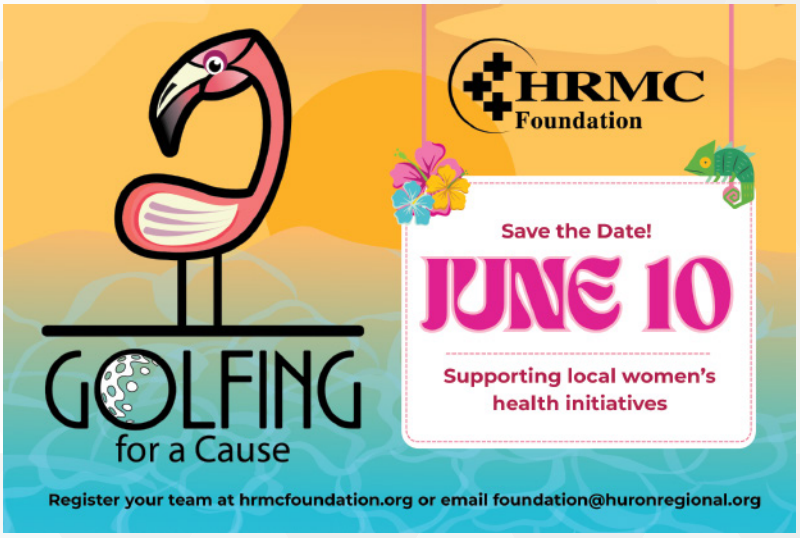
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Papa Luigi 2026

Burns Rentals LLC | Cornerstone Financial Solutions | Dakota Energy Cooperative, Inc. | Farmers & Merchants Bank-First National Bank | 1st Stop Insurance | Greater Huron Development Corporation | Mac Daddy Phone Repair | New Life General Surgery | Potter's Shoes | Rob and Kim ★ Rieger | Alyssa Siemonsma | StoneyBrook Suites | Welter Funeral Home

*Papa Luigi contributions received in 2026 will be recognized in next Well One Connection.

We've Got You Covered 2025

Escape Salon & Spa | Stephanie Gerrits | Huron Tiger Volleyball Team | Olympic Buick GMC | Runnings