

Clinic goes 7 Days

New staff works to expand hours, convert to accessible records system

By Keith McLendon

The new faces at the Platte Valley Medical Clinic have been making changes. Among those changes are new week-end hours that make an appointment possible from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day of the week.

Another change being made is transferring records from the Amazing Charts program previously used to the more widely used and available Athena medical information program. The Athena medical records program allows for more flow through billing, instantly files fax records into their proper place and allows patients to create a "health portal" where they can view their records or even chat with the doctor or the nurses about treatments.

THE NEW FACES:



Bryan Kaiser, Physician

Bryan Kaiser, MD originally came to Saratoga as an intern back in 2015. When the previous doctor, Dean Bartholomew, decided he needed to leave town Bartholomew asked Kaiser if he would be interested in taking over the practice.

Dr. Kaiser said yes and has now been running the Platte Valley Medical Clinic since August 2017.

Dr. Kaiser is originally from Fargo, N.D. and grew up there before the family moved to Lodi, Calif., near his mother's family, when he was 16. Kaiser did most of his schooling there and eventually attended Sonoma State and where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology and chemistry. After that Kaiser went to Portland, Ore. where he got his doctor of chiropractic degree. Kaiser practiced chiropractic for several years there then went to nurse practitioner school where he obtained a nursing degree before being accepted into medical school.

Kaiser attended medical school in Poznan, Poland and said he loved it there. "Because it is kind of a social/private health system there they don't rely on a lot of imaging like MRIs that we send people for so we had to learn how to get in there 'hands on' and do diagnosis. We had labs available all we

wanted, but that higher end stuff we didn't use a lot." Kaiser continued, "We used a lot of ultrasound which is awesome. That is a very effective way of diagnosing things that is very inexpensive and has no side effects. You're not getting radiation or any of that stuff. I guess if it's safe for babies it should be safe for everything else."

Kaiser said he wanted to get an ultrasound machine for the office and that it would be helpful for many things. He then said if something was found he would back that up with MRIs or the like.

When Kaiser returned to the United States, he interned at the University of Wyoming and was in Cheyenne for five years doing that. He also worked for the Veterans Administration (VA) for two years.

When Kaiser did a residency at the Platte Valley Medical Clinic in May 2015 Dr. Bartholomew began to discuss Kaiser taking over the practice.

"I got to like the area back then and once I got done with my VA contract I asked (Dr. Bartholomew) if you still want me to come over there and he said 'Oh, yeah.' So here I am."

Kaiser talked about the new Athena medical records system and some of the other changes that have been made saying, "Since that time we have had a lot of changes and have tried to streamline a lot of things and make it more up-to-date." Kaiser added. "We have also changed one of the rooms in the back from a casting room to a minor procedure room where we can do more surgical type things."



Susan Foley, Nurse Practitioner

Susan Foley was born in southern Calif. but never felt completely comfortable there. Foley's parents were born and raised in Douglas, Wyo. and moved back there after they got married. Foley herself calls Douglas home.

Foley got her Registered Nurse (RN) certification in 1991 in Calif. then worked as a nurse in Calif., Colo., Ariz., Mont. and finally came back to Douglas where she worked for 10 years.

As a nurse, here primary

work background was in the emergency room and intensive care. She has also worked in management, hospital administration and as an educator; both as a nurse educator and a hospital educator which included paramedic education and infection prevention.

Eventually Foley went back to school to finish her bachelor's degree in nursing at Western Governor's University and was then accepted into medical school at UC Irvine. Because Foley's passion lay in nursing she decided to decline medical school and get her Nurse Practitioner certification instead. During an intensive 19-month program given by Georgetown University in Washington D.C., Foley earned her nurse practitioner degree.

As Foley was finishing her nurse practitioner degree she began to look around at mountainous small-town areas to follow her desire to fulfill the need of medical services for areas in need of those services.

As Foley says, "Being a Nurse Practitioner, for me, is more of a service. I want to be able to help provide for people who don't have adequate resources."

Foley went on to add that because of this drive she had been to Africa four times to do medical missions work.

Eventually she saw an opening in Saratoga and came to visit former clinic runners Dr. Dean Bartholomew and his wife, Tanya, who hired Foley. She started at the clinic in September 2017.

Foley noticed the atmosphere very quickly, enthusiastically saying, "What a great model to have a clinic and community where you have a foundation that helps support it so that you can actually provide what the community needs. It's not the big corporate environment—it's not the push people through as fast as you can. It was kind of like the perfect fit for what I wanted to do."

She says she has enjoyed the community, too saying, "Wonderful people. Everybody that I have met has been so welcoming and so appreciative and just kind-hearted." Foley then laughed, "How can you not like it here?"

Foley's husband, Michael, and two kids have fit in well also. Foley says her husband is looking to open an IT consulting and computer repair business and her children (Daughter, Joelle, an SM/HS senior, and son, Christopher, an SM/HS junior) seem to have taken to the area, too.

So while Susan works to get to know the community and works toward transferring information to the new records system and the rest

of the family settles in, the married Foley's goal is to remain a part of the community and look to eventually retire in the area.



Shaylee Burgess, Medical Assistant

Shaylee Burgess is an already familiar face. Burgess was born and raised in the area and went to the University of Wyoming.

After earning her degree in microbiology last May, Burgess was offered the position in April.

Burgess felt like the position was a really good fit for her offering the peace she is seeking and having family close by. Burgess also likes that she, "gets to help the people I Have known all my life. That's rewarding in and of itself."

Burgess draws labs, helps people on the phone, getting patients checked in, helping with trauma walk-ins, answers questions on medications, does medication refills and occasionally does research on referrals.



Shelby Hiser, Billing & Front Office

Shelby Hiser grew up in Saratoga, living with her grandparents, Dick and Peggy Hiser. Hiser got her bachelor's degree in accounting starting at Laramie County Community College in Cheyenne and finishing at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Hiser said she lived in Las Vegas for a few years working in construction accounting. Then Hiser decided it was time to, "Bring my kids back to grow up here and be closer to my grandma and grandpa who are still ranching."

When she first came back, Hiser worked at the Encampment Post Office and feels fortunate to have gotten the job saying it gave her an opportunity to know a lot of

people in Encampment. Eventually, Dr. Kaiser offered Hiser a job at the clinic. Of the offer, Hiser said, "When Dr. Kaiser offered me the job I had seen him in action when my grandpa was very ill, it just really—I have a lot of faith in Dr. Kaiser. I believe in Dr. Kaiser and what he wants to do. He genuinely cares." After that Hiser started at the clinic in November.

Hiser was involved in recommending the new records system and has been the central figure in implementing it.

Hiser enjoys the situation at the clinic and said, "It's nice to finally be able to use my accounting degree to help people," and feels she can contribute by making sure insurance companies are doing what they need to do.

When asked if there was anything else she wanted to say, Hiser said, "One of the things I get asked repeatedly is; 'Do you take walk-ins still?'" Hiser answered the question, "Absolutely."

Hiser went on to say that though faces and billing had changed, the clinic is open 7 days a week now and there are still providers on call past that.



Amber Helm, Receptionist

Amber Helm is from Cedar Rapids, Iowa originally and has lived in Saratoga on and off for 12 years. She says she has met friends in the area and has worked at the Snowy Mountain Lodge previously and moved here to be with her boyfriend, Gary Condict.

Helm is a currently a part-time receptionist who started at the clinic June 4. Helm is also a registered respiratory therapist. Helm got her respiratory therapist certification in Cedar Rapids at Kirkwood Community College and says there is a possibility she will be cross-trained to assist with respiratory therapies in the future.

When asked about the area, Helm said, "I love Saratoga. It's my favorite place to be in the world—I just really do love it here."

The Saratoga Sun plans on introducing the full staff of the Platte Valley Medical clinic in upcoming editions.

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