One Wish... Two Horses and a Hospital

“Sometimes we can’t change the outcomes but what we can do is change how the outcome happens.” Peggy Bartram, Director of Respiratory Services

Boy Toy and Caesar, two Morgan horses, sniffed the autumn air as they stepped cautiously from the horse trailer parked in front of Gaylord’s Brooker building. Karen Hunter Bobbi, the horses’ trainer, gently stroked their heads as she instructed them to be on their best behavior. Taking their bridles, she led them slowly up the sidewalk toward the large wooden doors of Brooker.

Meanwhile, a carefully synchronized team was working inside the hospital readying one of its sickest patients, Eileen, for a much-anticipated reunion. Housekeeping busily cleared the hallways while respiratory therapists and nurses coordinated care so Eileen could travel from her room in Milne 2 to Brooker’s lobby. But in the last 24 hours Eileen’s health had worsened; she was very weak and listless.

Eileen Hunter was only 63 years old when she was diagnosed last May with chronic myelomonocytic leukemia (CMML), a rare blood cancer. She was told that a stem cell transplant was the only treatment that might save her life. But then a drug reaction...
Dear Friends,

It has taken more than a year, but now I can I joke that what brought me to Gaylord was an ambulance.

What really happened is that in August 2012 I was riding my motor scooter in Westbrook, Conn., when a car suddenly pulled in front of me. I didn’t have time to brake or swerve; I hit it broadside and flew about 70 feet. I ended up with so many broken bones that I required 22 separate surgeries at Yale-New Haven Hospital.

Then I came to Gaylord Hospital. My body was so shattered that when I arrived, the staff had to use a crane to lift me from my bed to a wheelchair; I could barely move.

This was the lowest I had ever been. I was so depressed that some days, I felt as if I were going down a deep hole with no way out. But the Gaylord staff helped me turn that around, and sometimes in quite simple ways. Sue, one of my nurses, would come into my room and without my saying how low I was she would just put her hand on my arm and quietly assure me I was going to get better. That was the best medicine possible.

Before my accident I had a big job: I was Vice President of Marketing and Sales for an international firm. So I know a lot about establishing the culture of a workplace. I can tell that Gaylord has done an outstanding job of creating a culture of caring. Yes, the rehabilitation services are state-of-the-art, but at Gaylord, it is the people which really stand out. In my case, it made all the difference in giving me a successful outcome.

After six months of treatment at Gaylord, I walked out of the hospital under my own power. Today, I get around fine using just a cane.

My accident was a major turning point in my life. The wonderful experience I had at Gaylord was a second turning point because it gave me hope for my future – and a sense of humor.

I am proud to tell my story because maybe it will inspire generous support from donors such as you – so that places such as Gaylord will continue to be able to provide the kind of care I got.

Every gift can make a difference to improve someone’s outcome, and help write a great story.

Won’t you consider supporting Gaylord’s unparalleled work? Please, make a gift today.

Sincerely,

Jeff Alexander
One Family’s Story:
They Got Their Son Back, and More

It was the kind of phone call no mother wants to receive. Kim Hall listened in disbelief to the heart-wrenching words that would change her life: “Your son … accident … skateboarding … head injury.”

Earlier that September day, Kim’s 19-year-old son Jeffrey went to visit friends at Central Connecticut State University. The childhood pals enjoyed catching up, hanging out, and talking about their favorite sport, skateboarding.

The group of teenagers brought their skateboards to an empty parking garage to practice their skills, but the merriment was soon cut short.

Jeff’s friends watched in horror as he stumbled and struck his head against the concrete floor. The severe blow briefly rendered the college student unconscious. The panicked teens loaded their dazed and vomiting friend into a car and drove 25 minutes to their hometown hospital where an MRI revealed bleeding in the brain. With precious time ticking away, the doctors alerted Kim and her husband Tom of the necessity to transfer their son to Hartford Hospital for advanced trauma care.

Kim recalls how Jeff’s behavior changed dramatically during the 20-minute ambulance ride.

“He was calm when we left but by the time we reached Hartford, he began to thrash and yell at the paramedics. I knew something was wrong … very wrong,” she said.

Diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury, Jeff was rushed into an emergency hemicraniotomy, a four-hour operation to remove a section of Jeff’s skull to accommodate his rapidly swelling brain.

For two weeks Jeff Hall lay in the ICU, unconscious and dependent on a ventilator. “As a mom,” Kim said, “I was scared but I had faith that he would pull through. Miraculously, he did.”

Bedridden, unable to speak, and on a feeding tube, Jeff left the hospital nearly two months later to recover on Hooker II at Gaylord Hospital. Despite the transfer, Jeff was far from stable and suffered from frequent “storming,” a condition in which the body reacts to the brain injury with sudden high fevers and elevated heart rate.

Gaylord’s medical staff worked hard to control the fevers with ice blankets and medication. On several occasions the severity of his episodes warranted readmission to the ICU. Jeff also faced a setback when the surgery to replace the bone flap in his skull left him dependent once again on a ventilator.

“It felt like his progress was two steps forward, five steps back,” his mother commented, “but Gaylord never let us lose hope. They always found a way to work around whatever obstacles were thrown at us.”

Once a promising business major, the young man’s severely impaired short-term memory made it difficult to remember the skills and concepts he had just learned the prior day.

“Jeff didn’t have just one therapist; he had a whole department. They all put their heads together to discuss the next steps and strategies that would work for him.”

She explained, “The therapists noticed that he felt overwhelmed in the big gym, so they brought him to the smaller gym to keep him focused. They knew he did best early in the morning, so they’d work with him at 7:00 a.m. Jeff said he loved Blink 182, so they would play their music to keep him motivated.”

Continued on page 11
damaged her lungs, thwarting the transplant and forcing her in and out of hospitals for the next four months. Now Eileen’s lungs were failing and the goal was to keep her as comfortable as possible.

Throughout her life Eileen had worn many hats as a working wife and mother, and as an avid supporter of children and youth. She served as the office manager at Hunter Pool Center for 38 years and she was the owner and manager of a horse farm and training facility in Cheshire. Her upbeat attitude and gift for seeing the best in people made her popular in her community and with the staff caring for her at Gaylord. Always alert for ways to help others, Eileen had arranged for some of her horses and riding students to visit patients at Masonicare over the past few years. Eileen now needed some of that same nurturing therapy for herself. She longed to see her horses again and happened to mention her desire to one of her nurses. Then a family member contacted the hospital wondering if they could bring the horses to Gaylord.

Behind the scenes Eileen’s quiet wish and her family’s inquiry resulted in a beehive of activity. Peggy Bartram, director of respiratory services, received a chain of emails regarding the request. There were concerns about Eileen’s health and questions about bringing a horse onto the hospital’s property. For Peggy, these were minor obstacles. After assessing Eileen’s health Peggy said, “Of course we can do this – just tell us when and where!” Swinging into action, Peggy knew that she might need to jump a few hurdles to get approval for the visit.

As Peggy and other staff members worked at rallying support from multiple departments including facilities, nursing, respiratory, the administration and C-suite, Eileen’s health continued to decline. She was receiving the highest respiratory assistance possible for her breathing without being on a ventilator. But the respiratory team was still confident they could move Eileen with breathing support.

On the morning of Wednesday, October 23rd, Eileen’s daughter, Karen Hunter Bobbi, was wondering if she would be able to fulfill her mother’s wish. Then she received a call from Sandy Delong, the unit manager on Milne 2. Gaylord’s management team had given the go ahead! Could Karen bring the horses TODAY? Shaken, Karen asked if her mother had gotten worse and Sandy said yes. Sandy explained that the new plan was to transport Eileen to the lobby in her hospital bed rather than using a wheelchair. Karen quickly went to work loading the two horses she thought her mother would like to see, Boy Toy and Caesar. They arrived at Gaylord early that afternoon.

Boy Toy is seven years old, an adolescent in horse years. Eileen first saw him as a baby at a friend’s stable and named him from afar, not knowing that she would eventually own him. Like many adolescents, Boy Toy can be a bit feisty and he likes to make it clear he’s the boss.

As the medical team readied Eileen for the reunion, her respiratory therapists and nurses made sure that everything was coordinated to support her breathing. Eileen’s condition required high-flow oxygen equipment that provided a constant supply of oxygen. But no one was sure how many canisters of oxygen she would need for the trips through the hospital and during the reunion. Two respiratory technicians stood ready to quickly exchange and refill the canisters.

Caesar is the mature adult presence that balances Boy Toy’s youth. He is 29 years old, mellow and calm and has boarded at Eileen’s farm for years. For Eileen, Caesar and Boy Toy are members of the family.

As Eileen’s journey began, there was an air of expectation, hope and excitement.
air of expectation, hope and excitement. Would seeing her horses be all that Eileen hoped for? How would the horses respond?

When Eileen’s bed rolled into the lobby it was obvious that Brooker was uniquely equipped for this event. The sloping sidewalk made it easy to get the horses to the doors. The double doorway allowed the foot of Eileen’s bed to go to the edge of the entrance and there was ample room for the horses to put their heads inside and over the bed. The high ceiling made the lobby feel spacious – an important factor because horses don’t like small spaces.

Boy Toy and Caesar quickly spotted Eileen as they neared the door. Becoming very quiet, they took turns poking their heads inside. Unaffected by the breathing mask covering her face, they seemed to instantly sense her vulnerability and fragility. The horses nuzzled Eileen gently, delicately touching her pale hands with their noses and staring directly into her eyes. Boy Toy carefully poked his nose in Eileen’s covers hoping to find the carrots she always brought him and then he gently laid his head on her lap. As the two huge animals tenderly greeted their friend it seemed to energize Eileen. For the medical team, family members and other staff watching these loving interactions – there wasn’t a dry eye in the room.

As Eileen’s breathing equipment hummed in the background the unsung heroes of the day, the two respiratory technicians, kept a constant pace exchanging the oxygen canisters and running them to the basement for refilling. Under normal circumstances Eileen would have probably used only one or two canisters, but during this time she used nine.

After the reunion her nurses were stunned by the changes in Eileen. She was energized, smiling and talking with people. Later in the day she was snapping photos of her family and sharing pictures on her iPad. Her energy and desire to live seemed to be revived. “All the oxygen in the world couldn’t do what that reunion did,” said Sandy Delong. “Medicine couldn’t do what being reunited with those horses did!”

It took a team of 30 to 40 people to pull off the reunion. Many of the staff said there was a palpable shift in their energy and motivation as a result of this experience. In medicine there are some outcomes that can’t be changed, but there are times we can impact how an outcome happens. When these opportunities occur it is often as powerful for those providing the care as it is for those who are receiving it.

*Eileen received hospice care at home where she could see her horses from her window. She passed away on November 27.
Erin’s Story:

Never Giving Up

Erin Spaulding has always been a dedicated runner. Even on her honeymoon in 1997, she and her new husband, Michael, ran a 10-kilometer race.

Today, at age 40, she still runs. In January 2013, she competed in the Disney Half Marathon, her first run of that length, in Orlando, Fla.

The Disney event was, in a way, a miracle run, because in April 2010 her athleticism almost was cut short. One day at work, a 300-pound wall-mounted cabinet came loose and fell on her, badly injuring her shoulders and neck and causing a brain injury. It took four co-workers to lift the cabinet off; she spent five days in the hospital.

She worried that her running days were over, and what one doctor told her seemed to confirm that. “He said, ‘Find the athlete in you, and let it go – just get beyond it,’” she says.

But she refused to give up and, after extensive physical, cognitive, speech, and occupational therapy at Gaylord Hospital, she is now not only running but plans to participate in triathlons, which involve running, biking, and swimming.

“After the accident, I was having trouble walking, balancing, and forming complete sentences,” she says. “One of my doctors said, ‘you need to go to Gaylord’.”

Learning to Walk Again

At Gaylord, during five weeks in inpatient rehabilitation, she learned to walk again. “With my injuries, I could not put one foot in front of the other,” Erin explains. But with therapy she went, in her words, “from a wheelchair to a walker, to crutches, to a cane, to a brace” – which she now wears on her right ankle.

“From the head injury, my feet don’t coordinate well,” she told friends and family in an e-mail, “and my right foot turns out in a different direction than my left. The brace forces my foot to do a more natural heel-toe … which has helped my balance and gait issues tremendously.”

But running competitively is something else.

Running Once Again

“The question I kept asking myself was ‘how am I going to get back to running?’” she says. The answer, in part, was to join Gaylord’s Adaptive Sports Program, which helps people with disabilities participate in sports. She also joined Achilles International, which enables people with disabilities to take part in mainstream sports events. (She is now president of Achilles’ Connecticut chapter.)

“These organizations,” Erin says, “have helped me return to athletics and have given me an important piece of my life back – one that I thought was gone.”

During athletic events, Achilles-sponsored guides participate right along with Erin, on the alert to support her if she turns an ankle or in another way is in danger of being injured. When she swims competitively, a guide swims in front of her; she bicycles on a tandem bike with a guide in front.

At the Disney Half Marathon, representing Connecticut on the 20-person Team Achilles, she joined 20,000 other runners in the race, sponsored by Achilles and Cigna Corp. “I am an official 13.1 [kilometer] finisher with a medal and blisters to prove it!” she wrote her family and friends.

Not Giving Up

Erin, who with her husband and two children lives in Branford, Conn., gives the staff at Gaylord much of the credit for her return to the world of athletics. “They always find the positive thing,” she says. “They don’t give up, and they make sure you don’t give up on yourself.”


“Then the big one, in November 2014 – the New York Marathon,” she says. “I don’t back down lightly from a challenge.”
Carlton’s Story: 

Never Let a Setback Make You Sit Back

It was a miracle that Carlton Crooks made it through the night.

For seventeen hours, the 29-year-old lay unconscious in the woods along route 691 after his motorcycle clipped the guard rail, launching him and his bike down an embankment—and out of the sight of passersby.

The force of hard, unforgiving metal against flesh completely sheared off Carlton’s left leg. As he lay there unnoticed, Carlton bled profusely, his body barely clinging to life.

The next morning, an observant passenger gazing out of the window spotted something unusual in the woods and urged his friend to double back to the scene.

Only steps away from the shoulder the two men found a telling trail of evidence pointing to something terribly awry.

First, they saw a helmet. Next, the back end of a motorcycle. Finally, they came upon the motorcyclist himself, bloodied, in shock, and slowly but deliberately crawling towards the road.

Within minutes LifeStar arrived to transport the barely responsive young man to the hospital.

Though Carlton’s body was out of the woods, his life certainly was not.

He had lost a critical amount of blood and doctors were amazed that he had survived. His dislocated arm was severely injured and would remain frozen in place for months to come. Ligaments in his remaining leg were torn from his ankle. To make matters worse, doctors discovered a life-threatening blood clot in Carlton’s heart that was working its way to his lungs. He was immediately rushed into open-heart surgery.

Six days later, Carlton woke up in a hospital room to face the stark reality of his situation.

“I knew I had two choices: cry or accept it for what it was. Crying wasn’t going to change what had already happened, so I was determined to make the best of it.”

Going to Gaylord Made All the Difference

After a 39-day stay in the hospital, Carlton returned home and commenced outpatient therapy at Gaylord Hospital, a decision that he believes has made all the difference in his recovery.

Carlton was immediately struck by the facility’s state-of-the-art equipment, its “amazing” therapy pool, and most of all, the “kind-hearted” and “motivational” staff.

“Everyone was fabulous,” he recalled. “Each therapist had the same uplifting spirit and pushed me to give a little more.”

That encouragement, coupled with Carlton’s innate drive and determination, helped the young man quickly regain his strength, gain mobility in his injured arm, and learn how to walk with his new prosthetic.

But just as he was making significant strides in his recovery, a small patch of ice one cold January night instantly brought his progress back to square one.

Another Serious Accident—and Back to Gaylord

Carlton was traveling with a friend on I-91 when the vehicle hit black ice, spun around, and flipped onto its side. The impact ejected him through the driver’s side window and onto the highway, instantly breaking his lower back.

After three weeks in the hospital, Carlton was admitted to Gaylord Hospital for inpatient care. Though wracked with severe pain and unable to move, Carlton faced his recovery with the same optimism and stoic determination that helped him only months before.

The father of two eagerly looked forward to each therapy session as an opportunity to recover and often sought out extra time in the gym. He fondly recalled how all of the staff encouraged him when he was feeling disappointed with his progress.

“They pushed me when I didn’t feel like pushing myself. I appreciated that,” he said.

Within only five weeks, Carlton had progressed from being completely bed-bound to walking even stronger and steadier than he did before the second accident.
Many institutions describe their employees as being part of a “team.” While teamwork is indeed central to caring for patients at Gaylord Hospital, our employees often use another word to describe being a part of the staff: “family.”

Here are the stories of two women who spent many years at Gaylord and look back fondly on their experiences. Although they are now retired, they remain part of the Gaylord family.


“Volunteering is good for me,” says Martha Loudon. “If I’m feeling down in the dumps, being in the atmosphere of happy people cheers me up.”

Martha, who will turn 90 early in 2014, spends an average of two days a week volunteering in Gaylord Hospital’s gift shop. But being a volunteer isn’t her first connection with Gaylord; for a decade, she worked in the hospital’s dietary department.

“My father died when I was 12,” she said. “He had been sick for three years, and that took most of the family’s money, so I was unable to go to nursing school, the way I wanted.” Born in Marblehead, Mass., and brought up not far away in the town of Groton, she was working at the USO at the end of World War II when she met Edward Loudon, who was in the Army at nearby Fort Devens.

Edward was originally from Wallingford, and after they married they moved there, and Martha stayed home raising their four children.

“In 1973, when my youngest daughter started high school, I thought it was time I took some sort of job outside the home,” she says. “Gaylord was advertising for help in the dietary department, and I thought, why not? It was nearby, easy to get to.”

The chef asked her if she’d like to make pastry in the kitchens. “Everything was made right on the spot – rolls, pastries, cookies – we didn’t buy anything readymade,” she says.

From that, she moved to salads, then to cooking breakfasts. “I want to tell you, on a 90-degree day, standing over a hot stove is not a happy thing to do,” she laughs. “But we made out all right. We all got along well; it was a nice place to work.”

In 1984, when Edward was an engineer at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, Martha retired from Gaylord in September. Unfortunately, Edward died suddenly only six weeks later.

Martha eventually went back to Gaylord, this time as a volunteer. “I enjoy meeting patients and their families in the gift shop,” she says. “Sometimes, they don’t really want to buy something, just to talk. More than one person has come back later and told me, ‘you know, you helped me. I needed to talk, and you were there.’ “It gives you a good feeling to hear that.”
Helen Rochefort first became involved with Gaylord Hospital because she and her late husband, Roland, were friends with Charles Lirot, Gaylord’s administrator at the time.

The Rocheforts and the Lirots had children about the same age; Helen and Ann Lirot belonged to the same women’s club; and Roland and Charles sang in a barbershop quartet.

In 1971, at a meeting of the quartet, Charles mentioned to Roland that Gaylord could use another pharmacist, and asked him whether his wife, a former pharmacist, would be interested in the job.

Helen had spent more than 15 years at home, raising their four children, but in fact she was looking for work again. That was the beginning of a long and happy professional relationship.

“I started at one day a week, then two,” Helen remembers, “then it was three days, and the next thing you know I was there all the time.” She worked in Gaylord’s pharmacy from 1971 to 1988. “It was very interesting work, and personally rewarding,” she says.

Helen, whose uncle was a pharmacist, helped out in a drug store as a teenager, then attended the University of Connecticut’s New Haven branch, where she earned a B.S. in pharmacy. “World War II was on, and there was a shortage of pharmacists,” she says. “We went straight through – no vacations, hardly any holidays – and finished a four-year course in three.”

She then worked in the pharmacies of the Hartford department store G. Fox & Co., both in the store on Main Street and in the branch attached to Hartford Hospital. She left in the early 1950s when the couple’s children were born.

Her connection with Gaylord continues. One day a week, she volunteers in the Gift Shop, as she has for almost 20 years.

“I like the work because it’s nice to be with people, and I’m a ‘people person’,“ she says. “It’s such a friendly atmosphere, with very cordial people, both patients and staff and families.”

Helen turned 88 in November. “I never thought that at my age I’d still be out working with people,” she laughs, “but I am, and I love it.”

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Gaylord’s Gift Shop is a terrific place to find all kinds of gifts for patients, friends or even yourself! Inside are all manner of goodies, like candy, flowers, cards, scarves, wine glasses, and much, much more. Here you will find a wonderful stocking stuffer or a last-minute treat for someone who needs cheering up. You can bring a smile to a patient’s face, or give yourself a pick-me-up.

Every gift you buy in the Gaylord Gift Shop does more than lift spirits; the net proceeds from your purchase are added to two endowed funds at Gaylord. One is the Barbara Chase Lane Scholarship for those in the allied health fields. This past year five scholarships totaling $6,250 were given out to deserving recipients. The other is the Auxiliary Endowment for Equipment, which made it possible to buy an exercise bike and iPad for our therapy patients and adjunct equipment for pulmonary patients. A grand total of $13,786.88 was raised for our patients.

But wait, there’s more! When you make a purchase at Gaylord’s Gift Shop, you pay no sales tax.

Our friendly, helpful volunteers will be happy to help you select just the right gift. Come see them soon! Your coffee mug, singing teddy bear or candy bar will brighten someone’s day and become an investment in education and equipment.

Gaylord’s Gift Shop is located on the first floor of the Jackson Pavilion (Gaylord’s Main Entrance). Hours are 10 am to 4 pm, M-F.

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Gaylord Development News
Make a Gift, Make a Difference in A Patient’s Life, and Get Tax Advantages:

**You Still Have Time to Make a Gift From Your IRA**

Mike Hoben is a member of Gaylord’s Board of Directors and a retired, successful businessman. Mike understands finance and investment. He also strongly believes in serving his community where he can. He saw a demonstration of the Ekso Robotic Exoskeleton and watched as a paralyzed young man stood up and walked. He was moved, and impressed with the technology Gaylord purchased through the donations of its friends.

This year Mike took advantage of a law which allows those of you who own an IRA and are over 70 ½ years old to make a direct gift of up to $100,000 to a qualified charity, such as Gaylord.

For you, the benefit is that your gift is tax free. The law says that a direct gift from your IRA to Gaylord will count toward your minimum distribution, but will not be included as income.

For Mike, it was simple: he made a gift from his IRA to support the Ekso program here at Gaylord.

You can too: just ask your IRA administrator to direct a gift here before December 31, 2013. Make a gift, make a difference, get tax advantages. Everyone benefits.

For more information, please contact Karen Hatcher, Planned Giving Officer, at 203-284-2844 or khatcher@gaylord.org

*Never Sit Back*, continued from page 7

“I had faith that I’d recover,” he said. “I just didn’t realize that they would have me up and walking so quickly.”

**An Extraordinary Recovery**

Today, Carlton continues to receive Gaylord outpatient care with a group of therapists he considers to be friends.

“They all love me,” he joked.

Never one to let a challenge slow him down, Carlton said that he looks forward to helping others facing traumatic injuries like his.

Weeks ago, Carlton was invited to speak at Gaylord’s Spinal Cord Injury Support Group where he shared his story through an aptly entitled presentation, “Don’t Let a Setback Make You Sit Back.”

“I just hope that I can encourage them the same way that Gaylord encouraged me throughout my own journey.”

It’s a journey that Carlton likens to a miracle.

“I’ve got God on my side,” he explained, “and Gaylord.”

“Both were with me every step of the way.”
But encouragement, Kim said, didn’t solely come from Jeff’s favorite band.

“No matter where we were in the hospital, he’d get so much positive reinforcement. The volunteers, the administrative staff, the cooks ... everyone would say, ‘Hey buddy, great job!’ It’s not just the hands-on caregivers, but the entire Gaylord community that makes it positive for the patients.”

Within six months of the accident, Jeff’s memory had vastly improved. He was breathing and eating independently, speaking clearly, and was beginning to walk with a walker. Jeff was nearly ready, his team said, to go home. The news, Kim recalled, was both thrilling and terrifying.

“I panicked. Gaylord was our security blanket; how on earth would we get by without them?”

In the weeks leading up to discharge, Gaylord staff worked side-by-side with Jeff’s parents to train them on the ins and outs of their son’s care.

“They let us be as hands-on as possible but were always ready to jump in with suggestions. When the day finally came, we thought, ‘You know what? We can do this.”

To celebrate Jeff’s birthday and homecoming, the nursing staff threw their beloved patient a surprise party complete with desserts, presents, and even a gift certificate to Taco Bell, Jeff’s favorite restaurant.

“The therapists would joke with Jeff about Taco Bell,” Kim smiled. “They knew what mattered to him. He was thrilled.”

Jeff continued to receive Gaylord outpatient speech, physical, and occupational therapies and participated in the hospital’s cognitive day program, an intensive series of classes and therapies for those with cognitive deficits resulting from brain injury.

“It’s a rule of thumb that brain injury patients generally don’t continue to improve after a year. But it’s been two years now, and he’s still getting better,” Kim explained.

She described his progress in the last four months alone as making “leaps and bounds,” a feat she attributes to a “relentless” therapist named Annette who worked extensively with Jeff in the therapy pool.

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“Gaylord gave him back to us and so much more. They gave us back a kid with a chance.”

Jeff with Dr. Dinu – who believed he would walk again

Being playful with his physical therapist, Jen Rice

About This Issue:
Contributions is produced by the Gaylord Development & Public Relations Office, which can be reached at 203-284-2881 or publicrelations@gaylord.org.

Articles in this issue were written by:
Katherine L. Kraines
Joy Sarulak
Henry McNulty

Special thanks to Laura Phipps for many of the photographs.
Our Tip-A-Player Sports Carnival Extravaganza with the Wolf Pack returns for its tenth year on February 18, 2014 at the XL Center in Hartford. This popular event raises money for the Gaylord Fund to underwrite patient needs and help maintain programs dependent on donations such as Therapeutic Recreation, the Chaplaincy and Music for Relaxation.

Held during the height of the hockey season the event includes a menu of options to please everyone in your group:
- Mini “Taste of Hartford” featuring food donated by area restaurants
- Dinner and beverages served by the hockey players
- Sports Carnival for the kids complete with inflatables, face painting and games
- Locker Room tours
- Silent Auction
- Bidding on jerseys worn by the players that night
- Autographs and activities with the players who are competing against each other to garner the most “Puck Bucks” - the currency of the evening.

Continue the long tradition of combining fun and helping out our patients! Sponsor and come to one or both of these upcoming events, each celebrating a big anniversary:

Our Tip-A-Player Sports Carnival Extravaganza with the Wolf Pack returns for its tenth year on February 18, 2014 at the XL Center in Hartford. This popular event raises money for the Gaylord Fund to underwrite patient needs and help maintain programs dependent on donations such as Therapeutic Recreation, the Chaplaincy and Music for Relaxation.

Upcoming Events

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- **The 25th Annual Gaylord Golf Classic** returns to support our Sports Association on **Monday, June 2, 2014** at the Farms Country Club in Wallingford.

The Sports Association and New England Paralympic Sports Club provides adaptive sport and leisure activities to put the “ability” in disability for both participants and the greater community. It does this through clinics, competitive teams and recreational clubs.

Sponsor or play in this 18-hole, competitive golf tournament in the scramble format; you’ll have a great golf experience and help disabled athletes get back into the game of life.