DAILY SUN A6 **Sunday, April 20, 2014**

AMERICA'S HEALTHIEST HOMETOWN

A weekly report on The Villages' efforts to become "America's Healthiest Hometown" compiled by Daily Sun Ombudsman Larry D. Croom Email larry.croom@thevillagesmedia.com. Or call him at 753-1119, ext. 9366.

Contact The Villages Health at 352-674-1700 or visit the website at the villageshealth.com.

Did you know?

Dr. Tomas Perez, who practices at the Pinellas Care Center, enjoys playing tennis and golf.

Fixing health care: All about **ARNP Linda Wheeling**

Primary care doctors, specialists and other medical providers have been recruited as part of an initiative to revamp health care right here in Florida's Friendliest Hometown. The Villages Health is partnering with USF Health to bring in family doctors, care providers and specialists who will work as a team, all in the best interests of serving patients. This weekly feature will introduce these innovative medical providers who have joined this effort.

What is your favorite thing about being a nurse practitioner?

The fantastic feeling that you get when the patients thank you for explaining something to them. They've had a condition for however long and they say, 'nobody's ever explained it to me that way.' It's just really gratifying to know that you're able to help people in such a profound but yet very simple way.

How does your background as a registered nurse come into play in your job as a registered nurse practitioner?

RNs are primarily taught to treat the psycho, social, mental, emotional and the physical aspects of patient care. But we have a huge emphasis on education. I personally like to explain things in a way that I feel that it's much easier for people to understand so that they can be more proactive and know why they're having trouble managing their condition. Just helping them look at it in different ways so that it's simpler for them and they don't have to feel so discouraged or daunted by whatever it is they're experiencing.

What is your personal philosophy on health care?

Health promotion through disease prevention, of course, is my primary focus. I want to help people be well before disease even begins and to prevent illness. But more importantly, I'm into educating people so that they know



Care Center: Colony **Age:** 53 Certified: ARNP **Undergraduate:** Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis Master's degree: Old Dominion University

pretty much how to stay out of the doctor's office and only come in for their screenings, rather than to come in because they're already ill.

How does it feel to be part of a health care initiative that's being looked at by other communities?

I think it's fantastic. I've come from the other medical model where the emphasis is on numbers and production rather than quality, patientcentered visits. And I think that if this helps to facilitate a change nationwide, then I am honored to be a part of it.

Do you think it can America?

Sure. If this is going to be the small seed and if it takes off and if we turn out to be successful with it, then why wouldn't it change (health care)?

Next week Find out all about Dr. Glen Morgan, a primary care physician who practices at the Mulberry Grove Care Center.

Creating America's Healthiest Hometown

What is your personal philosophy on health care?

The modern age has brought many technical advances to the practice of medicine. The use of new imaging and procedural equipment has significantly improved diagnosis and treatment. Too often, however, this has removed us from direct patient contact. My approach to patient care certainly includes the latest technol-

ogy, but equally important is patient communication. Before ordering a battery of tests, I want to talk with and listen to what is troubling the patient."

> Dr. Michael Wald, Mulberry Grove Care Center



Care Centers in The Villages

Primary care

The Villages Health Colony Care Center 280 Farner Place, 352-674-1710 The Villages Health Santa Barbara Care Center 1575 Santa Barbara Blvd., 352-674-1740 The Villages Health Pinellas Care Center 2485 Pinellas Place, 352-674-1720 The Villages Health Mulberry Grove Care Center 8877 S.E. 165th Mulberry Lane, 352-674-1750 **The Villages Health Lake Sumter Creekside Care Center** 1050 Old Camp Road, Building 100, 352-674-1760



Gary Lester, right, vice president of The Villages for community relations, congratulates, left to center, Dr. Joe Hildner, Dr. Rob Reilly and Operations Manager Chad Collins during Wednesday's ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new Lake Sumter Creekside Care Center.

Patient-centered care

Medical providers at newest Villages Health facility praised for listening

By LARRY D. CROOM DAILY SUN OMBUDSMAN

THE VILLAGES Tillager Paul Klein was all smiles recently as he chatted with his physician, Dr. Robert Reilly, at the grand opening of the new Lake Sumter Creekside Care

"I think it's fantastic," said Klein, who lives in the Village of Duval. "It's right here in my own backyard and I can get here by golf cart. I don't even have to take the

Villager K.J. Macko, who also sees Reilly, said she enjoys receiving medical care in Villages Health facilities because they are much different from other doctor's offices she's visited.

"The more we learn, the more impressed we are," said the Village of Hadley resident. "The experiences I've had so far have been exceptionally positive."

Macko said one of the many things she truly appreciates is that appointments take place on time.

"They don't rush you," she said. "You seem to get as much time as you need and I don't get the feeling that anybody's looking at their watch, trying to get to the next patient."

Macko's husband, John, sees Dr. Brooks Betts at the Colony Care Center. And like his wife, John is thrilled to be a Villages Health

"I'm not one that likes going to the doctor, but they make it very pleasant here," he said. "The biggest thing I'm coming away with is that they listen to you. They're here for you and they're really patient-centered."



Bonnie and Richard Grabowski, left, of the Village of Mallory Square, talk with Dr. Christine Stopyra during the recent open house event at the new Lake Sumter Creekside Care Center.

John Macko said he also enjoys being a Villages Health patient because the facilities offer so many different services under one roof, like X-ray, lab work and audiology, to name a few.

"One of the reasons I didn't want to go to doctors was because it's a pain in the neck. You've got to go here. You've got to go there," he said. "Here, your doctor is right there, looking at the results. I had an EKG last Friday and he looked at it, came out and told me boom, done, easy."

Nancy McColligan, whose daughter Susie Courtney is the clerical supervisor at

the Pinellas Care Center, said she feels quite relaxed when she arrives for medical appointments and takes a seat in Creekside's living room area.

"You're sitting there watching a TV or something and you're in a room with pretty curtains and furniture," she said. "And you're not there a whole long time."

McColligan's husband, Earl, said he also appreciates the great care that he receives from Reilly and his physician assistant, Karen Doyle, as well as the other medical providers on their team. He added that he especially appreciates the way

Coming April 27

Dr. J. Sanford "Sandy" of medicine and health management economics at the Perelman School of Medicine and the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, offers his thoughts on The Villages Health.

Reilly listens when he's talking about issues he has with diabetes and other medical concerns.

"He'll start throwing things out there that he's thinking about and you'll go, 'yeah, that's happened to me,' or 'yeah, that's happening," Earl McColligan said. "Next thing you know, you've got it all out on the table and you feel like, whew, somebody listened to me and somebody understands me. It's great."

Another prospective Villages Health patient who was chatting with medical providers at last week's open house was state Rep. Marlene O'Toole, R-The Villages. The Village of Mira Mesa resident said she liked what she saw and looks forward to the day when she and her husband, Ed, are being cared for at Creekside.

"The thing I like the most about this particular facility is the ratio of doctors to patients," she said. "When we first got here - we've been here over 20 years now - it was one hot doctor or two hot doctors and you had to sit in the office and you were a captured audience. Now you have a lot more choice and I think that's

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- K.J. Macko, of the Village of Hadley, on the medical providers at The Villages Health Lake Sumter Creekside Care Center