As Chairperson of the 2012 West Bank Relay For Life and a West Jefferson Medical Center employee, I am proud to say that WJMC has been a sponsor of the West Bank Relay For Life since starting on the West Bank more than 12 years ago. WJMC is dedicated to our community. Continuing with a great sense of pride, I make mention of WJMC making the dream of another project a reality. With the cancer patient at the core of the vision, our Infusion Center and Hematology & Oncology Clinic will be completed later this year. This new facility will provide an environment of tranquility, comfort and safety while allowing our staff to continue to provide quality, yet personalized care to our patients. The ease of accessibility is exciting and will benefit our patients tremendously, sort of a “one stop shop” focus.

Relay For Life is an event that gives communities a chance to celebrate the lives of people who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost and fight back against the disease. At the event, our team will camp out for 12 hours and take turns walking around the track to raise money and awareness to help the American Cancer Society create a world with less cancer and more birthdays. Our team is doing its part to make sure that cancer never steals another year of anyone’s life.

Relay For Life is an American Cancer Society signature fundraising event. Money raised through this event helps to support the many programs offered by the American Cancer Society. A few of the programs that patients have benefited from, and will continue to benefit from while undergoing treatment at WJMC is: Look Good...Feel Better, Road to Recovery and the Patrick F. Taylor Hope Lodge. All of our patients benefit from the research funded by the American Cancer Society. More than a fundraising event, Relay For Life is an event where community members get together to remember those who have lost the battle against cancer and celebrate with those who have survived to see another birthday.

This year the West Bank Relay For Life is on April 21 from Noon until Midnight at Mel Ott Park in Gretna with an opening ceremony at 1 p.m. and a luminaria ceremony at 9 p.m. There will be children’s activities all day to keep the kids engaged. There will be raffles. The winners need not be present. Local band, Limited Edition, will take the stage from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. and local celebrity Benny Grunch will be on hand to help us celebrate our “Ain’t Dere No More” theme. Come out to support the cause while enjoying time with family and old friends, making new friends, eating good food and having fun.

For more information, please call me, Judith Lazzara, at 504.349.2198.

Judith Lazzara, RN
Nurse Educator Coordinator, WJMC Education Dept.

Relay For Life: Supporting Cancer Care & Research

Join the West Jefferson Medical Center Comprehensive Community Cancer Program in the fight against cancer.

Relay for Life
Food • Fun Activities • Music
Saturday, April 21
Noon to Midnight
“Because Cancer Never Sleeps”
Mel Ott Park • 2310 Belle Chasse Hwy. • Gretna

Come Out and Show Your Support for Our WJMC Team: Fishing for a Cure!
Allergies are more common during certain times of the year due to the pollen of several different kinds of plants; these pollen allergies are called seasonal allergies or hay fever. In the springtime, seasonal allergies are most often caused by the pollen that comes from blooming trees and flowers. Later in the year, the pollen comes from various grasses and ragweed. Not everybody suffers from seasonal allergies, but about 20 percent of people get allergic rhinitis (a.k.a. Allergies) from one or more allergen triggers.

The symptoms of seasonal allergies are caused by the immune system’s reaction to the inhaled pollen grains. The immune system produces antibodies called immunoglobulin E (IgE) antibodies in response to the allergen, as well as chemicals that cause inflammation in the tissue lining the nasal cavity, like histamine. Generally, the more pollen that is inhaled, the stronger the reaction, so the symptoms on high-pollen days are worse than on low-pollen days.

When seasonal allergies start, the initial symptoms include a runny nose, frequent sneezing, eye watering and itchiness in the eyes, nose, mouth or skin of the face. After the onset of the initial symptoms, other symptoms may occur, including: nasal congestion, a stuffy feeling, swelling under the eyes, coughing, headache and fatigue. After a person has had allergies for a while, a sore throat can develop because of the post-nasal drip that can occur with excess mucus secretion. The excess nasal secretions drip down the back of the throat, causing a cough and a sore throat.

For short-term symptom relief, antihistamines are often used, and there are allergy medications available over-the-counter. Symptoms that last for a while without improvement often benefit from the use of corticosteroid nasal sprays, which are prescribed by a doctor. Over-the-counter nasal decongestants can help with symptoms of nasal congestion and stuffiness. Cough medicines and throat lozenges can also help with cough and sore throat symptoms. If you have chronic or severe allergy symptoms, see a doctor for more effective treatment options.

Call The Family Doctors at 504.349.6824 to make an appointment.

Meagan Jones, DO
Family Doctors - Lapalco Clinic

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**Spring Allergies**

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**West Jefferson Hospital Foundation**

**Family Lounge Improvements Made Possible by Boomtown**

**Second Floor Project Underway Will Provide Added Comfort to Family Experience**

Work is currently underway to improve the family experience in the Surgery and Critical Care Family Lounge at West Jefferson Medical Center.

Through a generous donation of $50,000 by Pinnacle Entertainment, this initiative on the second floor of the hospital has begun. Both the Foundation and Medical Center have expressed appreciation to Boomtown for the assistance to improve our facilities, support innovation and respond to community needs.

“Improving the family lounge area is important to our hospital and we thank Boomtown, once again,” said Garey Alimia, Hospital Foundation president. “There are many opportunities for corporate sponsors to get involved to support the mission of the hospital through the Hospital Foundation.”

“We are looking forward to the completion of the project which includes space devoted to a Physician and Family consultation room,” said Frank C. Di Vincenti, MD, a general surgeon and Chairman of the Hospital Board of Directors. “The additional comfort they’ll be offered in the Surgery and Critical Care Family Lounge is very much appreciated.”

The improvements to the space are scheduled to be completed this spring. “Families in the refurbished area will be able to witness the special impact made by our community partner who supports the Medical Center’s mission,” Dr. Di Vincenti added. “Corporate donors such as Boomtown are making a difference.”

To make a donation to the Foundation, call 504.349.2051.

Jennifer Steel, RN
Executive Director, West Jefferson Hospital Foundation
Outstanding progress has been made in immunization rates for children younger than two years old. Immunization coverage rates in the United States for vaccines routinely recommended for infants and young children remain at or near record highs. For example, rates for measles, rubella and three doses of Hib and Hep B are greater than 90 percent. However, there is still much work to be done, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

More than one million children in the U.S. are not adequately immunized and each day nearly 12,000 children are born and each in need of protection from diseases. Thousands of lives are in jeopardy from vaccine-preventable diseases, and hundreds of thousands of dollars are being spent on the care of disease stricken children whose illnesses could have been avoided. As a community hospital, West Jefferson Medical Center recognizes those facts and communicates with new parents the need to appropriately immunize their little ones by the age of two.

Parents and caregivers need to know that their children can and will be protected against many childhood diseases. During National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW), efforts are made in hundreds of communities around the United States to increase awareness. Please do your part by contacting your Family Doctor and double checking that your child is up-to-date on all their immunizations.

For appointments, call The Family Doctors at 504.349.6824.

Kelli Arnold, RN
Clinical Director, WJMC Family Birth Place/Child Services

FIGURE 1: Recommended immunization schedule for persons aged 0 through 6 years—United States, 2012 (for those who fall behind or start late, see the catch-up schedule [Figure 3])

This schedule includes recommendations in effect as of December 23, 2011. Any dose not administered at the recommended age should be administered at a subsequent visit, when indicated and feasible. The use of a combination vaccine generally is preferred over separate injections of its equivalent component vaccines. Vaccination providers should consult the relevant Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) statement for detailed recommendations, available online at http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/acip-list.htm. Clinically significant adverse events that follow vaccination should be reported to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) online (http://vaers.hhs.gov/) or by telephone (800-822-7967).

Courtesy of: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
In April 2006, Tere and Pat Walsh were told that their 21 year old son Matt would not survive the head injury caused by a motor vehicle crash. Matt was registered in the Louisiana Organ and Tissue Registry and Tere was familiar with donation as a nurse. As hard as it was to say good-bye to their son, the decision to donate his organs was an easy one. “I knew this was something that Matt wanted to do,” according to his mother Tere. Through donation, Matt was able to save three lives. Currently, more than 112,000 people are waiting for a life saving organ transplant and almost 1,800 of those individuals are in our home state of Louisiana.

Because April is National Donate Life Month, there is no better time to learn more about the gift of organ donation. Instituted in 2003 by Donate Life America (DLA), National Donate Life Month raises awareness concerning organ donation and encourages Americans to register as donors. DLA explains the need for continued education, because although “transplantation is one of the most remarkable success stories in the history of medicine... the need for organs and tissue is vastly greater than the number available for transplantation.”

The United Network of Organ Sharing explains that donations may be limited due to myths about the process. Some of the most common myths include:

**Myth:** Having a heart on your driver’s license or joining the registry is all you have to do to become a donor.

**Fact:** In Louisiana, joining the donor registry is legally binding; however, it’s important to talk to your family about your decision to donate so they are aware of your wishes.

**Myth:** Only hearts, livers and kidneys can be transplanted.

**Fact:** Needed organs include the heart, kidneys, pancreas, lungs, liver and small intestines. Tissues that can be donated include the corneas, skin, bone, heart valves and tendons.

If these and other myths are dispelled, more people may choose to donate life. While 2011 marked the achievement of 100 million registered donors nationwide, with Louisiana contributing 2 million of those registries, the need fororgan, eye and tissue transplants is steadily increasing.

To learn more about the WJMC flag raising ceremony and organ donor registration drive, call Lisa Newsom at 504.837.3355, ext. 311.

Lisa Newsom, RN
Hospital Resource Coordinator, LOPA