

Winter 2014

Health Matters

at Aspen Valley Hospital

Photo by Taylor Liebmann



Message from Dan Bouk

Aspen Valley Hospital's New CEO

When I first learned about the CEO position at Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH), I was intrigued to say the least. Lovers of the outdoors, my family and I could picture ourselves here, enjoying all that Aspen has to offer.

My first step, though, was to learn more about the hospital. What was its governing structure? Would I be the right fit? Did I have the needed skill set for the hospital, the staff, and the community? How would it feel to move from a large healthcare system to a small community hospital?

The more I learned, the more comfortable I became. I discovered that AVH is so much more than a typical small-town hospital:

- It has a relatively large medical staff that represents numerous medical specialties.
- The technology is state-of-the-art and representative of a facility that truly "lives" its mission for extraordinary healthcare.
- It is fiscally sound — the facility itself is being updated with the financial support of the community.
- Patient satisfaction scores are excellent — also indicative of an organization that lives its mission.

Upon further exploration, I also learned that as a quasi-governmental institution in a small town, open communication with all stakeholders — one of the qualities in which I excel — is required. As I stated during the interview process, I am transparent to a fault.

After a lengthy process of interviews in which I learned more about the hospital, its governing board, the physicians, and its leadership team — and they learned more about me — I was offered the position. And now here I am.

My new job began on January 2, and I am 100 percent committed to helping this hospital successfully transition to a future full of unknowns. The good news: AVH is well positioned for whatever is yet to come.

I am dedicated to ongoing communication, establishing trust, and achieving results that benefit the community. I believe that where you went to school and how many hours you work really don't matter if people don't trust you. While "home runs" are nice, progress is most often made with a series of "singles."

Thank you for welcoming me to Aspen. I, and my family, look forward to getting to know you.

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"What a place — I'd put Aspen Valley Hospital up against any other facility in the country, hands down!"

— AVH patient

About our new CEO

Dan is married and has two children, ages 18 and 15. Both are accomplished athletes and will finish their senior and sophomore years at their Wisconsin high school.

Prior to becoming the CEO at Aspen Valley Hospital, Dan was president of Summit Hospital in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Summit Hospital is part of the integrated healthcare system of Aurora Health Care. Dan has also served as executive vice president of four community hospitals within the Aurora Health system.

All in all, his experience in healthcare spans 35 years, with 28 of those years in executive-level positions. He has managed hospitals ranging in size from 40 to 600 beds.

Dan's undergraduate degree is in community health administration, and he holds a master's degree in healthcare administration from the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse. He is a fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives.

John Sarpa completes active term as interim CEO



Asked to serve in an interim capacity, many people would simply stay quiet, maintain the status quo, and wait to hand over the reins. Not John Sarpa.

John, who completed a seven-month term as interim CEO of Aspen

Valley Hospital (AVH) in January, used his role to move forward aggressively with projects crucial to the hospital's future.

John was appointed after AVH's longtime CEO Dave Ressler left in spring 2013. Having served for 11 years on the hospital's board of directors, John was intimately familiar with the hospital's resources, challenges, and opportunities. Among his accomplishments were:

- Finalizing a collaboration with Mayo Clinic Care Network (see page 4 for information).
- Overseeing part of the multimillion-dollar expansion and modernization of AVH's facilities.

- Further development of the Valley Health Alliance, a cooperative effort among large employers to improve our community's health.
- Completing a top-to-bottom reaccreditation review by The Joint Commission.

"I wasn't there to rock the boat, but there was so much going on that I had to step into a lot of projects that needed to come to fruition," John said. "As it turns out, we were able to finish a lot of what we hoped to accomplish."

John also helped smooth the transition with weekly phone calls with new CEO, Dan Bonk. "With vision and stewardship, John led the hospital through an important time in its history," Dan said. "The community, the staff, and I personally owe John a great deal of gratitude for his work."

John looks forward to remaining active with AVH through volunteer work with the Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation and its fundraising efforts. "We have one of the strongest professional teams in healthcare," John said of the AVH staff. "It has been an honor to lead this remarkable group of people."

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– John Sarpa

Mayo Clinic Care Network offers world-class services to AVH

Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) has been selected as the first hospital in Colorado to join the Mayo Clinic Care Network, an outreach initiative of the renowned Mayo Clinic. The network offers the knowledge and expertise of Mayo Clinic's 4,100 physicians and scientists to AVH care providers in enhancing medical services in our community.

"This is a tremendous benefit for our patients and a great honor for Aspen Valley Hospital," said John Sarpa, AVH interim CEO at the time of the announcement in November. "The similarities between their values and our values, their culture and our culture was how this all got started. They believe, first and foremost, in doing what is best for the patient, and we are very much the same."

Recognizing that people prefer to get care close to home, the network provides access to Mayo Clinic expertise without patients having to travel to a Mayo Clinic facility. The network promotes close relationships between AVH's community of medical providers and Mayo Clinic through formal collaboration and information-sharing tools, such as:

- **AskMayoExpert**, a medical resource developed by Mayo Clinic physicians for use at the point of care. This online tool covers the latest Mayo-vetted information on diagnosis, therapy, and care management.
- **eConsult**, an electronic consultation tool that connects AVH physicians directly to Mayo Clinic medical specialists on questions of complex care.
- **Healthcare consulting**, which allows AVH to benefit from Mayo's experience in business and clinical systems and share best practices.

Chris Beck, MD, president of the AVH medical staff, said the benefits for patients will be profound and immediate. "The challenges of medicine in this modern age demand that we seek and share vast amounts of knowledge," Dr. Beck said. "Things constantly and rapidly change — new protocols, new technology, new medications, and more. This collaboration with Mayo Clinic will enhance the outstanding care AVH physicians already provide."

Added Barry Mink, MD, president of the AVH board of directors: "This is one more step in Aspen Valley Hospital's evolution. Our small-town hospital provides a level of care one would expect in a major medical center, and becoming a member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network reflects our commitment to the highest standards of medical care for local residents and visitors to the area."

As a member of the care network, AVH has a formal relationship with Mayo Clinic but will remain independent and locally owned. Launched in 2011, the Mayo Clinic Care Network has 24 members in 14 U.S. states, Puerto Rico, and Mexico. Network members are selected based on a rigorous set of clinical excellence, patient care, and quality criteria; AVH worked with Mayo Clinic for about a year to finalize the agreement.

"The Mayo Clinic Care Network helps Mayo and community hospitals like Aspen Valley work closer together, in new ways, to enhance the lives of patients," said Wyatt Decker, MD, vice president of Mayo Clinic and CEO of Mayo Clinic in Arizona. "We are delighted to welcome Aspen Valley Hospital as the first Colorado location."

"This collaboration with Mayo Clinic will enhance the outstanding care AVH physicians already provide."

Chris Beck, MD, president of the AVH medical staff



Dr. Wyatt Decker of Mayo Clinic congratulates AVH's interim CEO John Sarpa on becoming the first Colorado hospital to join the Mayo Clinic Care Network.

Proudly serving the mid-valley

Quality care, price advantage

Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) made a commitment to the mid-valley area decades ago, initially with just a small primary care practice, but over the years the services have expanded. And, in many cases, you'll find a price advantage by receiving care at one of our mid-valley facilities.

For instance, our urgent care center in Basalt — After-Hours Medical Care — is a great alternative to hospital emergency care when you or a member of your family needs unanticipated medical care after your doctor's office is closed. Conditions cared for at the clinic include upper respiratory infections such as flu, bronchitis, ear or throat infections; urinary tract infections; lacerations; sprains and strains; and a variety of other conditions that need attention but don't need a higher level of care from a hospital emergency department.

The clinic is located at 234 Cody Lane, and walk-ins are welcome. Hours are Monday – Friday from 5 to 10:30 p.m., and weekends from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Also in the mid-valley are an ambulatory surgery center; lab, X-ray, and MRI capabilities; and primary and specialty care. Medical specialties with offices in the mid-valley include family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, orthopaedics, pain management, obstetrics and gynecology, ENT, gastroenterology, and neurology. Most recently, cardiologist Gordon Gerson, MD, expanded his practice to the mid-valley. He now sees patients in Basalt one day a week in addition to his clinic at AVH.

For more information about Aspen Valley Hospital's mid-valley services, call **544.1296**. We are pleased to serve you in Aspen, Basalt, and El Jebel.



Dr. Gordon Gerson, cardiologist, has expanded his practice to include office hours one day per week in Basalt.



Foundation update

By Deborah Breen, Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation President

What a great year Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation has had! It has been so rewarding serving as the first president and CEO of this incredible organization and putting the core building blocks in place. I have felt very welcomed into this wonderful community, and the foundation continues to take great strides in terms of furthering its mission of encouraging philanthropic support from our community. While we meet the new year with some pretty lofty goals, we continue to be impressed and encouraged by the level of support already given by so many across our community — and beyond!

I am also very grateful for the support shown by both the hospital board and the newly formed foundation board. We have assembled an incredible team: Archer Bishop as our first chairman, along with board members Coley Cassidy, David Eisenstat, Chuck Frias, Ernie Fyrwald, Craig Sakin, and John Sarpa, plus new hospital CEO Dan Bonk. This is a great team, and one we will be expanding over the next year.

Thank you again to all of our supporters — both near and far — for allowing Aspen Valley Hospital Foundation the opportunity to develop at such an accelerated pace! We look forward to keeping you updated on our progress!

Latest news from the world of medicine

Supplements may help knee arthritis

Glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate may be beneficial for those who have a mild case of osteoarthritis in the knee. A two-year study found that the supplements have their greatest potential effect in the disease process. However, there is no consensus on how the findings should guide treatment options. Source: *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*

Good for energy, but perhaps bad for your heart

Energy drinks that contain high amounts of caffeine and taurine may put extra strain on your heart. Participants in a German study experienced a 6 percent increase in their heart contraction rate after consuming an energy drink, raising concerns that the drinks have at least short-term effects on the heart. Source: *Radiological Society of North America*

Eating well costs more — but not much

You may have to pay a little more to eat a healthful diet. In a review of studies from 10 countries, researchers found that a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, nuts, and fish costs about \$1.50 more per day than a diet consisting of mostly processed foods with refined grains, meat, sugar, and fat. Source: *BMJ Open*

Predicting mountain sickness

Just because you've experienced mountain sickness in the past doesn't necessarily mean you will in the future. In a review of earlier studies, Canadian researchers found that a personal history of mountain sickness may not be a reliable guide for predicting future episodes. Source: *British Journal of Sports Medicine*

Can eating nuts help you live longer?

New evidence suggests that eating a handful of nuts every day may help you live longer. New research suggests that consuming a one-ounce serving of peanuts, cashews, or other nuts (pick your favorite!) may reduce your risk of dying by 20 percent over 30 years. Source: *New England Journal of Medicine*

Calendar of Events

Community Blood Drive

Tuesday, February 11
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Mobile Donor Van
Aspen Valley Hospital
Call **970.244.2555** for information.

"Matters of the Heart" Heart Health Screening

Thursday, February 13
8:30 – 10:30 a.m.
After-Hours Medical Care
234 Cody Lane, Basalt
Call **544.1296** for information.

Health Fairs

Thursday, June 5
8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Blood tests only at After-Hours Medical Care
234 Cody Lane, Basalt
Saturday, June 7
8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Blood tests only at Aspen Valley Hospital
Sunday, June 8
8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Blood tests and other screening stations
at Aspen Valley Hospital
Call **544.1296** for information.

Hospital construction update

The past year brought to conclusion almost all major aspects of Phase II construction. Several outpatient departments were renovated, and new construction enabled us to open a spacious cardiopulmonary rehab facility and medical offices for specialty clinics.

All Valley Women's care moved into new leasable space within the building, making it much more efficient to deliver care to both office patients and laboring inpatients. Landscaping commenced on a peaceful outdoor courtyard near the Evelyn H. Lauder Patient Care Pavilion. This area will be dedicated in honor of Brenda and Lester Crain in recognition of their generous lead gift to the Campaign for Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH). In October, the Cardiac Rehab Demo Kitchen was dedicated in honor of Joe and Judy Zanin, two outstanding and early supporters of the capital campaign.

Eighteen affordable housing units were completed — six for long-term usage and 12 for short-term or seasonal staff — and are now 100 percent occupied by AVH employees. Throughout the summer and fall, landscaping efforts were in full swing, with hundreds of trees and bushes planted in strategic locations throughout the campus. We are pleased with the aesthetic progress made in just a few short months and have received a lot of positive feedback from neighbors and community members.

In March, a new four-bed intensive care unit will open. Following ski season, renovation of the admissions area will begin. When complete, privacy for patients checking in for procedures and tests will be significantly enhanced. A relatively small project, it will take approximately two months from start to finish. Once done, the volunteers' gift shop will be finalized and opened in its new and improved location.

In the meantime, we are reviewing quotes for Phase III and plan to begin site work on the west side of the building in 2014. Included in Phases III and IV of the project are the emergency department, diagnostic imaging, surgery, the laboratory, and a new outpatient entry/registration area.



Castle Creek Meadows is 100 percent occupied for the winter season.



Dozens of trees and shrubs were planted this summer and fall along the bike path and Castle Creek Road, as well as in the meadow on the north end of the campus.



Melody Durham, RN, poses in the new cardiopulmonary rehab facility between classes. Patients in various phases of recovery from cardiac events or pulmonary disease exercise here with supervision and monitoring of vital signs.



ASPEN VALLEY HOSPITAL

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This publication in no way seeks to diagnose or treat illness or serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Please see your physician if you have a health problem.

Welcome, new doctors



Ann S. Golden, MD

Dr. Golden specializes in hand, wrist, and elbow microsurgery and is associated with Aspen Orthopaedic Associates. She is board-certified by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgeons and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. She sees patients in Aspen,

Basalt, and Glenwood Springs. Appointments can be made by calling **925.4141**.

Medical School: University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas

Orthopaedic Residency: Parkland Memorial Hospital, Dallas

Fellowship: Christine Kleinert Institute for Hand and Microsurgery, Louisville, Kentucky



Jason Collins, MD

Dr. Collins joins the Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) medical staff as a gastroenterologist. While his primary practice is in Glenwood Springs, he sees patients in Aspen (at AVH) for both consultations and procedures on a weekly basis. He is board-certified in

internal medicine with a certificate in gastroenterology. Appointments can be made by calling **945.8503**.

Medical School: University of Illinois, Chicago

Residency: University of Illinois Hospital, Chicago

Fellowship: Howard University Hospital, Washington, DC

Recognition and validation

Surveys by outside agencies are a way of life for U.S. hospitals. In 2013, Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) had its fair share of reviews, with several accrediting organizations taking a close look at our processes, procedures, and outcomes. All were successful, with AVH being reaccredited by the following this past year:

- The Joint Commission, following a three-day, unannounced survey process
- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Level III Trauma Certification
- American Diabetes Association Diabetes Education Recognition
- Cardiac Rehabilitation Certification by American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation

Congratulations to the entire team at AVH for a job well done day in and day out!