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## Annie Jeffrey's Spring Health Fair Slated for March 2nd

Annie Jeffrey Memorial County Health Center is staying vigilant about COVID-19, also called coronavirus. We are taking precautionary steps to protect our patients, community members and staff from COVID-19. Annie Jeffrey Health Center wants to keep the chance of infection to a minimum while continuing to make individual's health a priority with the opportunity for preventative health screenings. Available discounted health screening services will be blood draws and the Bryan Health Mobile Screening Unit will be offering cardiovascular screening tests. That being said Annie Jeffrey Memorial County Health Center has decided to proceed with our 14th Annual Spring Health Fair on Tuesday, March 2nd.

*"Routine maintenance on yourself is just as important as routine maintenance on your machinery," states Joe Lohrman, Annie Jeffrey Health Center Administrator.*

The health fair will be held at the Annie Jeffrey Memorial County Health Center in Osceola. Fair goers will be asked to enter through the "ER walk in Entrance" on the south side of the hospital where they will be screened upon entry to the facility. If you are experiencing cold or flu symptoms including but not limited to fever, coughing and/or shortness of breath, if you or a member of your family have traveled from an area where COVID-19 is spreading or if you or a member of your family have been in close contact to or exposed to someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19 we ask that you do not attend the health fair.



We ask that all fair goers wear a mask and observe social distancing recommendations while in the facility. This year's event will be held from 6:45 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.

Annie Jeffrey Health Center will be providing comprehensive blood screening profiles including general blood chemistry analysis, cholesterol profile, and complete blood cell count at a discounted rate of \$35 (a \$315 value). Thyroid screening (TSH), diabetes screening (Hemoglobin A1C), Vitamin D, and prostate specific antigen (PSA) testing will also be available for \$25 per each additional test requested. All participants who want a blood test are asked to not eat or drink 8-12 hours before the test. You are encouraged to drink as much water as possible to keep hydrated and to take your medications as you usually do. Please bring a self-addressed, stamped legal sized envelope so that your test results can be mailed directly to you.

The Comprehensive Blood Screening Profile provides information on your body's ability to fight infection along with helping identify health issues such as but not limited to anemia, diabetes, heart disease, some clotting disorders, cancers, and liver disease.

*Continued on page 2.*

## Health Fair offers Spring “Tune Up” *(Cont. from pg 1)*

The thyroid screening, TSH, measures a thyroid stimulating hormone that tells if your thyroid is working too hard or not hard enough.

The diabetes screening, Hemoglobin A1C, measures your average blood sugar for the past 2 to 3 months. This test provides a much better indication of long-term glucose control than a blood glucose.

Vitamin D screening provides a baseline Vitamin D level which is important since insurance companies will not cover this screening unless you are pre-diagnosed with a deficiency. Vitamin D deficiency presents a silent danger, it has been linked to several different illnesses and conditions including osteoporosis, respiratory diseases, high blood pressure, depression, fatigue, mood changes, psoriasis, muscle weakness, bone pain, and kidney problems. As presented by William F. Marshall, III M.D. from the Mayo Clinic, “Several recent studies have looked at the impact of vitamin D deficiency in people with COVID-19 noting that those who had a vitamin D deficiency were more likely to test positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 than people who had normal levels of vitamin D.” According to the National Institutes of Health and the World Health Organization,

“There isn’t enough data to recommend the use of vitamin D to prevent infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 or to treat COVID-19.” Further research is needed to determine what role, if any, vitamin D and vitamin D deficiency might play in the prevention of and treatment of COVID-19. In the meantime, if you have a vitamin D deficiency, talk to your doctor about whether a supplement might be right for you.

The prostate cancer screening, PSA, measures a prostate specific antigen in men. This protein produced by the prostate gland tells men information about their prostate health.

Bryan Health Mobile Screening Unit will be here from 8:00 am until Noon. At that time they will be providing Atrial Fibrillation Screening for \$10 to any interested individuals. To be eligible for the following three screenings you must be at least 65 years old or age 55 to 64 with personal history of prior heart disease or heart surgery, history of tobacco use, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and/or diabetes or a family history of stroke, heart attack, high blood pressure, kidney failure, sudden cardiac death or abdominal aortic aneurysm. Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Ultrasound Screening will be available for \$40, Carotid

Artery Ultrasound for \$40, and Peripheral Arterial Disease Screening for \$20. Tests will be performed by a Bryan Health Registered Vascular Technologists and will be read by a Bryan Health Cardiologist or Vascular Surgeon. Interested individuals need to call Annie Jeffrey Health Center at 402-747-2031 to set up an appointment and receive your pre-diagnostic screening instructions for the vascular screenings available from 8:00 am until Noon.

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm is caused by a weakened area in the main vessel of the body that supplies blood from the heart to the rest of the body and is called the “silent killer” because there are usually no obvious symptoms. The Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm screening is a painless ultrasound screen that takes pictures of the aorta to detect the presence of an AAA. See the above criteria to be eligible for this \$40 exam.

A Carotid Artery Ultrasound screening will help you determine if you are at risk for Carotid Artery Disease which typically has no warning signs, but can cause strokes due to narrowing or blocked arteries. This non-invasive screening detects plaque deposits in the carotid arteries. See the above criteria to be eligible for this \$40 exam.

## Staff Receives “Thank You” from Volunteers

The Annie Jeffrey Volunteers thanked the Annie Jeffrey staff with beverages provided by the Thrift Shop Volunteers and made at the Gathering Grounds in downtown Osceola. The Volunteers wanted to say “thank you” to the hospital staff for their dedication in making Annie Jeffrey Health Center the outstanding facility it is. Several Volunteers made several trips to the hospital and back with the beverages.





# Chris Gabel awarded March of Dimes Rural Healthcare Critical Access Nurse of the Year

by Marla Teegerstrom  
Polk County News Guest Writer

*"If anyone has been around this wonderful person you all know how deserving she is for this award! Chris Gabel was nominated back in April/May for the March of Dimes Rural Healthcare Critical Access Nurse of the Year! She has not only been a mentor and advocate for rural health but she has been a dedicated nurse and continues to dedicate herself to the profession! She has taught so many and touched so many people's lives! What better year to win this award in 2020, the Year of the Nurse! I know I owe a lot of my skills and knowledge to her and her passion for what she does is something to strive for! Thanks for being my advocate and mentor! Congrats, my dear friend! You deserve this over and over again!"—nominating fellow nurse Carle Conard.*

They gathered to surprise her with the award. Recent Covid concerns withstanding, the usual recognition ceremony would not be held this year. And where else would she be—at work at Annie Jeffrey Hospital—filling a night shift for someone. They trickled into the building: her husband, friends, colleagues. All to celebrate and honor a deserving healthcare giver: Chris Gabel.

The reasons for giving her this honor are numerous. "A lot of us rural health nurses say we are 'Jack of all trades and master of none,' but Chris has mastered what a rural healthcare nurse is—a go-to-girl, who will come and rescue us anytime of the day or night," said Carle Conard. Carle has called Chris her colleague since Carle did her community health practicum in 2010-2011 at Annie Jeffrey Hospital—which eventually led to Chris's insistence that Carle stay in Osceola upon her graduation. "She immediately took me under her wing and empowered me. She fed my passion of nursing, which has led me to my current employment as OB/delivery director at York General Hospital. But I am very thankful for my time with Chris," said Carle, "Her voice is always in my ear telling me various OB tips and tricks."

Chris has served various roles in Annie Jeffrey. "It was my first job after graduating



from UNL College of Nursing," she chuckled of her 42-year career stint. Twenty-two of those years have been as the Director of Nursing and 25 as OB and ER nurse. "And now, I am on my second generation of babies having babies," she added, "And actually, I was born here as well—"

In 2017, Chris made the decision to 'slow down' and step aside from that position, "I wanted to make sure that during the succession plan that my replacement had someone to turn to as they took over the position." But according to Carle and those close to Chris, she has not really slowed down. Chris oversees a good share of the technology involved with nursing as well as electronic health records and fills in wherever she is needed.

In reflection, Chris is quick to mention the nurses who influenced and helped her as a young nurse: the late Sandy Wright and her own mom Delphine Kresha. "My mom went to nursing school. It was during WWII and in Chicago on a military program as an Army nurse. She worked at Mercy Hospital in Chicago, but of course, when she got home, married, and had kids, she stayed at home. That's what they did then." But Chris has worked pretty much continuously during her career. She and her husband Patrick have 3 sons Brian, Tom, and Mike—and eleven grandchildren.

*Continued on page 7.*



## It's Scholarship Time for High School Seniors

In 1956, Polk County received a generous gift from Dr. Charles W. Jeffrey. As a memorial to his mother Annie, Dr. Jeffrey donated funds to help build a new hospital in Osceola. Thanks to Dr. Jeffrey's foresight, Annie Jeffrey Health Center is proud to say that we have helped thousands of people through the years. Our dedication to improving both the delivery of health care and the living conditions in our area are our top goals.

The Foundation for Annie Jeffrey continues Dr. Jeffrey's vision by offering scholarships for the future of health care. We offer scholarships to the four area high schools, Shelby/Rising City, Cross County, Osceola and High-Plains, for high-school seniors wanting to pursue a health-related degree plus scholarships to our employees who want to further their education. Students should contact their school counselors for more information.



**FOUNDATION FOR  
ANNIE JEFFREY**


*Golf Tournament*

**June 18, 2021**

**Ryan Hill  
Country Club**


*The thirteenth annual  
Foundation for Annie  
Jeffrey golf tournament  
will be held on Friday,  
June 18 at Ryan Hill  
Country Club in  
Osceola. Ryan Hill  
County Club secured a  
position in American  
golf history in July 1997  
when three  
players scored  
holes-in-one on the  
par-3 8th hole within  
an hour of each  
other. The Foundation  
for Annie Jeffrey golf  
tournament promises  
to be a fun-filled day  
with great prizes,  
food and fun!*

*Stay tuned for more  
information!*



# Annie Jeffrey

## Your Baby's Birth is Our Specialty



Whether you are having your first child or your fifth, Annie Jeffrey Health Center wants to make sure your baby's birth is an event that will be cherished forever.

To arrange a tour of our labor and delivery room, call Annie Jeffrey at 402-747-2031.

## Farm Safety is Important

**W**hat's more peaceful sounding than a family farm? In reality, it can be one of the most dangerous places to work. Farming involves a wide range of chores, many of which are physically demanding and must be performed in all kinds of weather. With the arrival of Spring and the busy season, farmers might work 12 to 18 hours every day of the week. Machinery is involved in about 50% of all farm injuries. Respiratory irritation is another sort of danger for farmers because of the toxic fumes associated with farming. Working with animals can also be risky.

Since most farm accidents take place at this busy time of the year, farmers need to remind themselves of their practical safety instincts, such as:

- Never take machinery for granted

- Never reach into equipment with moving parts or when making repairs
- Be sure equipment is turned off and don't remove safety shields or guards
- Avoid baggy clothing because they can catch in machinery too easily
- Supervise children and assign chores appropriate for their age
- Be careful when working in stored grain bins and manure pits

Farmers should take care of themselves physically and mentally. Farmers are known for their spirit of independence and self-sufficiency. This is an admirable trait, but it can work against you if you try to bear all the responsibilities alone. Always seek help when you need to and have a safe Spring.

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**THANK YOU** to everyone who participated and contributed to our Virtual Hearts on Fire Wine Fest in February!! What a fun event!!! A BIG thank you to The Rose Colored Glass, Eakes Office Solutions, and Pinnacle Bank for your participation and donations! Special thanks to everyone who supported us! What a great community we live in!!

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## March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Colorectal cancer – cancer of the colon or rectum – is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States for both men and women combined. Despite the fact that it is highly preventable, each year there are so many new cases of colorectal cancer diagnosed.

There are ways to prevent colorectal cancer. Screening tests are the most effective way to prevent colorectal cancer or detect it in its earliest, most curable stages. Most cases of the disease begin as non-cancerous polyps – grape-like growths in the lining of the colon and rectum. These polyps can become cancerous. Because there are often no symptoms related to polyps, it is very important to be screened.

Doctors recommend that everyone should be screened for colon cancer when they turn 50 - or younger if a parent, sibling,

or child has been diagnosed with colon cancer - and at least once every ten years after that. Unfortunately, residents living in southeast Nebraska have higher rates of colon cancer than the U. S. average. If you follow your doctor's guidelines and have your colonoscopies on time you will reduce your risk of colon cancer by up to 90%.

The risk of developing colorectal cancer increases with age. All men and women should talk with their health care professional about screening for colorectal cancer.

Please call Annie Jeffrey Health Center at 402-747-2031 to schedule your colonoscopy. Dr. Cameron Sidak and Dr. Brent Jameson perform colonoscopies at Annie Jeffrey.



## New Year's Baby

Annie Jeffrey is proud to introduce our New Year's Baby - Kade Raymond Watts born January 26th, 2021 at 12:23 pm. Parents are Logan and Brandi Watts. He will be welcomed home by big sister Kendall. Congratulations!

## Covid-19 Vaccine Sign-up List

We have been receiving a number of phone calls from individuals anxious to get their COVID-19 vaccine. The Polk County Health Department is starting to give vaccines to Polk County residents.

To get signed up, go online to the Four Corners website at: <https://fourcorners.ne.gov> and click on the "Programs and Services" tab. From the drop down, hover over "Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information", to the extended dropdown and click on "Covid-19 Vaccine Information".

## Volunteer's Make a Difference

Volunteers are valued members of the community. Every year, they contribute hundreds of hours of time and energy. Every day they make a difference to the lives of our patients and the residents of Polk County.

Annie Jeffrey Volunteers operate the Thrift Shop on the south side of the square in Osceola. The Thrift Shop has clothing for the entire family, toys, household items and a variety of gift items. Profits obtained from sales are donated to the hospital and are used to purchase specialty items and fund new equipment. The shop does a great business and over the past 25 years has been able to donate over \$119,560.00 to the Annie Jeffrey Memorial County Health Center for the purchase of needed equipment!

*Thank you to our volunteers for making a big difference in our community!*



# National Doctor's Day

## March 30, 2021

**N**ational Doctor's Day takes place on March 30, 2021. National Doctor's Day is commonly celebrated in healthcare organizations as a day to recognize the contributions of doctors to individual lives and communities.

Thank you to our dedicated staff of Medical Specialists for your talent and commitment you bring to your patients, to the community and to the lives you touch at Annie Jeffrey Health Center!



**David Jameson, MD**  
Family Practice

**Dr. David Jameson**, Chief of Staff, graduated from the University of Nebraska Medical Center in 1983 with his M.D. degree. He began practicing at Annie Jeffrey Health Center in 1988. Dr. Jameson also serves as

Annie Jeffrey's Trauma Medical Director. He and his wife reside in the Stromsburg, NE area.

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**Cameron Sidak, MD**  
Family Practice

**Dr. Cameron Sidak**, graduated in 2007 from The University of Nebraska Medical Center with his M.D. Dr. Sidak covered call at Annie Jeffrey beginning in October of 2008

and became part of the Medical Staff July 2010. Dr. Sidak and his family live in Osceola.

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**Brent Jameson, MD**  
Family Practice

**Dr. Brent Jameson**, was born at Annie Jeffery hospital and raised in Stromsburg, Nebraska. He completed his Bachelors of Science degree in Chemistry, Health and Life Sciences at Wayne State College in 2011. In

2015 he graduated from medical school at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. He was then accepted into the Accelerated Rural Residency Training Program which he completed in 2018. After finishing residency he moved back to his home town and joined the Medical staff.



**Katie Rystrom, APRN-FNP**  
Family Practice

**Katie Rystrom, APRN-FNP** is a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) who received her undergraduate degree in nursing at Bryan College of Health Sciences in Lincoln, NE. She then began working as a

Registered Nurse (RN) at Annie Jeffrey Memorial County Health Center while completing her master's degree. She graduated from Creighton University College of Nursing in 2015 with a Master of Science in Nursing as an Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner with a specialty in Family Practice. Katie and her family live outside of Stromsburg.



**Amy Steiner, PA-C**  
Family Practice

**Amy Steiner, PA-C**, is from Columbus, Nebraska. She attended University of Nebraska in Lincoln for her Bachelors of Science degree and then went to Union College to become a Physician's Assistant. Amy enjoys

being outdoors, reading, running, watching movies and spending time with friends and family.

### ANNIE JEFFREY SPECIALISTS:



**Robert Dugas, MD**  
Orthopaedics/Sports  
Medicine

**Robert Dugas, M.D.** is the Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine specialist for Annie Jeffrey Health Center. Dr. Robert Dugas has been active in the practice of

Orthopaedic surgery since 1989, originally joining Nebraska Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine in 1990. His practice interests and expertise include knee and shoulder reconstruction, sports injury evaluation and prevention, and arthroscopic surgery. Dr. Dugas is Board Certified in Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine. If you are in need of orthopaedic care or are experiencing pain from a past injury contact the hospital.

## Doctor's Day - March 30, 2021 ANNIE JEFFREY SPECIALISTS (CONT.)



Robert  
Hibbard, MD  
Cardiology

**Robert N. Hibbard, M.D.** is a Cardiologist for Annie Jeffrey Health Center. He graduated

from the Creighton University School of Medicine in Omaha in 1980. Following graduation he completed his internship, a residency in internal medicine and fellowship in cardiology at the Creighton University School of Medicine. He is certified with the American Board of Internal Medicine and the American Board of Internal Medicine Sub-specialty Boards of Cardiology. He is also a member of several professional societies and is listed in the reference, "America's Best Doctors," a listing of the top referral specialists throughout the United States.



Christopher  
Balwanz, MD  
Cardiology

**Christopher Balwanz, M.D.** is a Cardiologist at Annie Jeffrey Health Center.

Dr. Balwanz received his medical degree at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and completed his internal medicine residency and internship at the University of California-Davis School of Medicine. He did a cardiology fellowship at the University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City, Kan.

Dr. Balwanz is an Omaha native, and is board certified in cardiology and internal medicine. He has special interest in cardiac imaging.



Stephen  
Nagengast, MD  
General Surgery

**Stephen M. Nagengast, M.D.** is the General Surgeon for Annie Jeffrey Health

Center. He went to college and medical school at Creighton University in Omaha. Dr. Nagengast did his residency in Phoenix, Arizona and has been performing general surgery since 1991. As a board certified General Surgeon, Nagengast manages a broad spectrum of surgical conditions affecting almost any area of the body. He can establish the diagnosis and provide the preoperative, operative, and postoperative care to surgical patients and is usually responsible for the comprehensive management of the trauma victim or the critically ill surgical patient.

## Chris Gabel awarded March of Dimes Rural Healthcare Critical Access Nurse of the Year

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And obviously, times have changed in the nursing profession over the last forty-some years. "Every piece of medical equipment is a computer: IV pumps, heart monitors, fetal monitors, blood pressure machines . . . Nursing is definitely a job you have to continue to learn in. And it has been a wonderful job for me," said Chris, "I like to say that I take care of the patients like they were my family. That sets the tone for their care—like family."

This sentiment was reflected by Dr. David Jameson, her coworker in healthcare over the past 32 years, "Chris is a great addition to healthcare and is a credit to her nursing profession. She is very deserving of an award of this nature. Many patients share how glad they are to be in her care."

Chris expressed some regret in receiving the recognition she was getting, "There are so many good nurses who I work with that deserve the same recognition. It's just—I've been here a long time—" Dr. Jameson

said, "That comment does not surprise me coming from Chris. She has a thankful, humble heart and admits that there are others who deserve the same recognition, but it's just the kind of nurse she is—she cares for others and doing what's right for them."

As Conard shared, "This quotation reminds me of Chris—'A good teacher is like a candle – it consumes itself to light the way for others.'" And along with being a very deserving nurse, it is obvious—Chris Gabel has lit the way while providing so many with the care that they need—either personally or through those she has taught.

"A snowflake is winter's version of a butterfly."



# Health Screenings you must know for 2021

Concerns about COVID-19 have prompted some adults to delay or cancel their routine health visits. While there may be an end in sight for the pandemic, heart attacks, IBS, strokes, cancers and diabetes are here to stay.

## Screening recommendations for healthy adults are:

- **Blood pressure** – all adults over 50 should be checked at least every two years and more often if you have a history of cardiovascular disease or your blood pressure reads above 120/80 mm HG
- **Cholesterol** – A simple blood test can measure your good and bad levels and should be checked at least every 4 years if yours is normal
- **Colorectal screenings** – Screenings are recommended every 5 to 10 years depending on if you are prone to problems, starting at age 45.
- **Diabetes** – Anyone over 50 with high blood pressure or who is overweight should be screened as recommended by your provider.
- **Skin Cancer** – an annual head-to-toe exam can check for suspicious moles or spots
- **Breast Cancer** – an annual mammogram is recommended for women over 50 or sooner if you have a history of breast cancer
- **Cervical cancer** – A Pap test at your exam can detect cervical cancers
- **Prostate Cancer** – A prostate exam and PSA test can help find cancers early starting at age 50
- **Bone Density** – a noninvasive DEXA scan of the spin and hip should start at age 60



See Annie's Babies on our website at:  
[www.AJHC.org](http://www.AJHC.org)

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