

wibi

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Great River Health Systems
Wellness Plaza
West Burlington, Iowa

NELSON

CARL A. NELSON & CO.



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president's LETTER



wibi \ 'wē bē\ abbr. acronym

When undertaking a project such as this publication, selecting a title is often the hardest part. We went through numerous suggestions and none of them seemed right. Marketing wanted something “catchy yet simple”, I wanted something “strong and powerful”.

As you can see we titled this publication, *wibi*. In this world of acronyms, it may seem that this 104-year-old company is trying to be hip or cool but, in reality, we have been using this acronym for over 10 years. In December 2003, we introduced “wibi” to our employees. We had signs printed and embroidered the letters on the sleeves of our company clothing serving as a reminder that quality craftsmanship be a top priority. Wibi was then introduced to our clients in our March 2004 newsletter. The newsletter did not survive but “wibi” did. It survived because it is not just a catchy phrase, it is part of our culture. It stands for “Would I Buy It”.

We have empowered our employees to ask this of their work and the work of our partners and subcontractors. If we would not buy it, then why would we expect our clients to buy it? It is an attribute that sets us apart from our competitors.

For years, these four letters have hung on the

walls of our offices and job trailers serving as a reminder to produce something of which we can be proud. Now, *wibi* is in your hands.

With this, our inaugural edition of *wibi*, we hope to offer you insight into how we think, how we work, what we value, and what we accomplish. This publication and future editions will tell our story from the viewpoint of our clients and employees.

We hope you enjoy this compilation of our efforts.

Tim Seibert, P.E.
 President
 Carl A. Nelson & Company

AND THEN, THERE WAS ONE.

The Evolution of Great River Health Systems

by: Michelle L. Stump, Marketing Director

Author's Note: While evaluating our health care clients for this article, it became evident that the subject of our inaugural publication would be Great River Health Systems in West Burlington, Iowa. It is not often that a construction firm can acknowledge a 41-year history with a client and express its appreciation for their continuing relationship.

However, my examination into the history of Great River Health Systems led to a story that is much bigger than the successes of client and construction firm. In order to accurately chronicle the accomplishments of this client, it is necessary for one to understand the history of this hospital and its community. I have determined the existence of this regional medical center seems to have been destined from the beginning. The success of Great River Health Systems can be attributed to a history of consistent, long-term leadership; a realistic, forward-thinking vision; and the inherent dedication and support of a community. Since its beginning, the names of this award-winning hospital (Burlington Hospital, Burlington Medical Center and now, Great River Medical Center) have changed over time, but the tradition of excellence has remained constant.

I had the pleasure of interviewing Mark Richardson, CEO; John Mercer, Director of Facilities; and Randy Plath, Facilities Manager. I sincerely thank them for their time. I would also like to thank Craig Borchard, Director of Marketing and Public Relations; Sarah Goff, Librarian; and Sheena Abbott, Supervisor - Great River Athletic and Performance Center. The information shared with and provided to me, was invaluable.

For this article, I also spent time at the Burlington Public Library and the Des Moines County Historical Society. I extend my sincere gratitude to the staff who assisted me with my research.

In order to explain the complex evolution of what is now Great River Health Systems, one must revisit the history of this hospital. In 1856, the first hospital in Burlington, Iowa was built by the federal government. It was named Marine Hospital and was intended to treat patients with yellow fever. However, only two patients were actually admitted to the hospital and it was eventually closed in 1867. The community would be sans hospital until 1882 when, according to legend, a man was injured in a quarry accident and brought to Burlington for treatment. Because a hospital did not exist, the man died on the street. The citizens of Burlington were so stunned by this, they persuaded the Franciscan Sisters to open St. Francis Hospital that same year. Another hospital followed in 1893 when Mercy Hospital was established by the Sisters of St. Francis.

As was common in the 1800s, and still today, churches played a significant role in the establishment, support, and development of hospitals. Concerned that treatment be available to anyone regardless of their religious beliefs, pastors from the seven German Protestant churches in Burlington began planning in 1894 for the city's third hospital, Burlington Hospital, which opened at the Garrett Homestead in 1895. The homestead later became the Phelps House, which sits at the top of Burlington's famed Snake Alley. The Burlington Hospital had 12 patient beds on the first two floors, while three full-time nurses lived on the third floor. Operations were performed in the dining room, and the kitchen was in the basement. Two years later, the Burlington School for Nurses was established and served its students for 77 years. A total of 910 nurses graduated from the school.



St. Francis Hospital



Mercy Hospital, only remaining building



First Burlington Hospital, now The Phelps House

Increasing patient population led to the construction of a new hospital building at Third and Court streets in 1898 which would remain the hospital's home for the next 102 years. Expansion projects followed in 1908 and 1926 with a south and north wing, respectively. The addition completed in 1926 allowed for four stories housing 25 patient beds, surgical and x-ray departments. The construction contract for this building was \$115,000 and did not include plumbing and heating costs which was reported to bring the total of the new addition to \$160,000.00. This project would cost over \$2.1 million dollars today.

With a total of three modern hospitals in 1931, the city of Burlington was often referred to as a hospital center. The choice of words was certainly cutting-edge at the time, but the foundation for what would become a hub of healthcare services was already emerging. The activities at these hospitals and the nursing school were highly regarded by the surrounding region. This was evident in the number of articles that appeared in area newspapers that focused on the hospitals and their advancements and activities.

Having the support of a community is extremely important regardless of the type of business, but for a hospital it is imperative. History reflects that this hospital has received more than support – they have experienced a community's devotion. The earliest publicly documented reports of personal contributions to Burlington Hospital were in 1951 and 1952 when Lydia Dankwardt gave \$220,000.00 (valued at \$2.1 million dollars today) that allowed for another wing to be constructed. Her generosity would be the first of many to be received by the hospital from residents of Burlington. Miss Dankwardt also bestowed \$90,000.00 to the hospital in her will following her passing in 1956. In addition, The Edward Percy Eastman Memorial Wing was built in 1962 by a bequest from Millie Eastman, his wife. The Eastman name is still honored today with the Eastman Plaza currently on the Great River Medical Center campus.

In 1957, the residents of Burlington would receive another gift when Burlington millionaire and bachelor,

F. Albert Klein, left the majority of his \$2.3 million estate to construct and maintain a non-profit hospital "as may best comply with the needs of the people of the city of Burlington and the surrounding territory." The bank authorized to execute Mr. Klein's will sought the advice of the Iowa State Department of Health for guidance on what type of healthcare the community lacked. The State determined that Burlington's greatest need was for a hospital to treat chronic illness. Therefore, the 100-bed Klein Memorial Hospital opened in 1963 in Burlington's beloved Crapo Park "so that the chronically ill patient of all ages may receive the care he needs and be able, through rehabilitation therapy, to return to his own home." Completion of the project included the assistance of a federal grant and a monetary gift from two of Klein's friends toward the purchase of the land. According to early marketing materials, opening room rates in 1963 were \$14.00/day for private and \$11.00/day for semi-private. The hospital also offered an innovative "Day Care Program" (known today as respite care) for 35 cents per hour or \$2.50/day. The dollar value for Klein's bequest would be close to \$20.1 million today.

Throughout the 1960's and 1970's, Burlington's medical services saw tremendous change with the consolidation of the city's three hospitals into what would become Burlington Medical Center. In 1969, Mercy Hospital merged with Burlington Hospital to form Memorial Hospital at Burlington, and a skywalk was built to connect the two buildings in 1970. In 1971, St. Francis Hospital converted to a nursing home. In 1975, Klein Memorial Hospital merged with Memorial Hospital to form Burlington Medical Center. Also, the Mercy Hospital building was converted to house physician offices and renamed the Mercy Professional Building.

(continued)



Burlington Hospital School for Nurses Nursing Graduates, circa 1930's



Glen Heagle, CEO 1971 to 1997



Mark Richardson, CEO since 1997

Only 2 CEOs in 46 Years

The merges, conversions, and reorganizations must have been confusing to some; but to the hospital's Administrator, Glen Heagle, it was very clear. Mr. Heagle arrived in 1969 with a big vision and a thorough understanding of the implications of the newly created Medicare program in 1965. In an article from The Hawkeye on August 20, 1972, Mr. Heagle was quoted as saying, "Medicare provides a great service to the elderly, but it doesn't pay the full cost to the hospital. This means that the hospital must make up the slack from other patients. Also, with it go (the hospital's) controls. As the old saying goes, 'he who pays the piper calls the tune.'" Mr. Heagle also had a few predictions on the future of healthcare. "In the future, we'll be taking care of the very sick in the hospital and treating the others on an out-patient basis." Mr. Heagle added, "Medicare will be increased materially. This of course will mean more paperwork for the hospitals and more government regulations." Mr. Heagle and his vision would remain in Burlington and in charge until 1997.

During the city's change from several hospitals to one major medical center, considerable growth in construction projects was also visible. Carl A. Nelson & Company's first project with Burlington Medical Center dates back to 1976 and consisted of remodeling office space for two physicians. Another two projects followed in 1979 including a \$14 million, five-story addition connecting the hospital and the professional building.

Carl A. Nelson & Company's relationship with this client grew stronger in the 1980's, completing eight projects. With the purchase of a physician clinic in Wapello, Iowa in 1981, to serve residents in smaller outlying communities, Great River Health Systems (GRHS) was established as a parent organization to manage clinics and other health services not based at the hospital's downtown location. Although a formal

plan was not yet on the horizon, the vision for a regional medical center was beginning to take shape.

In 1989, 83 acres of land in West Burlington was purchased by GRHS and throughout the 1990's emerged a campus housing many outpatient services including a family practice center, cancer center and dialysis center. During this decade, there was also a great deal of construction taking place at the downtown location. Carl A. Nelson & Company completed 29 construction projects at both the downtown location and the new campus in the 1990's.

In 1997, Mark Richardson became Burlington Medical Center's second CEO in 26 years. Shortly after, the need to relocate the hospital was indisputable. "We were land-locked and had nowhere to go - bordered by the Mississippi River on one side and a city park on the other. The hospital board attempted to work with the City to purchase the park, but it became clear that the community wanted the park to stay. Luckily the Board had the forethought to have purchased the land in West Burlington. When I came, we had started the planning process. We knew we were going to continue to grow and needed to expand", stated Richardson.

"We migrated slowly. (The move) started with the construction of the Family Practice Center and the Cancer Center. Cancer services were available at the downtown location but were limited. We wanted to provide a less stressful environment for those patients," said John Mercer, Director of Facilities. Although those projects were completed in 1990 and 1991 respectively, they were the cornerstone of the plan to become a southeast Iowa referral center. The remainder of the 1990's also saw the completion of the Southeastern Dialysis Center, the Center for Rehabilitation Services, and the Mercy Plaza and Eastman Plaza Medical Office



Burlington Medical Center

Buildings.

In 1997, Burlington Medical Center began construction on the new hospital in West Burlington and thus began the process of changing their name one final time. To continue the tradition of community involvement, a contest was held. The name of the new facility became Great River Medical Center after the evaluation of numerous submittals from hospital employees and the residents of Burlington and West Burlington, Iowa.

Great River Medical Center opened its doors in 2000, and a two-day, public open house drew nearly 15,000 visitors. With a combined population that year in Burlington and West Burlington at less than 30,000, the turn-out is further confirmation of the continued support from the community.

The hospital has 378 beds and offers acute and intermediate care to residents of southeast Iowa, west central Illinois, and northeast Missouri. Great River Medical Center admits more than 6,500 patients annually and logs more than 190,000 outpatient visits, according to the hospital's website. In addition, GRHS has over 120 physicians and 2,300 employees.

One of the unique features of the GRHS campus is the way the hospital is powered - with what is believed to be the world's largest lake-coupled geothermal heating and cooling system. Instead of burning fuel, the system transfers heat from one source to another. Water is pumped through a closed-loop piping system that extends from the bottom of the 12-acre man made lake to the hospital. The 105 miles of closed pipes are filled with city water and an antibacterial additive. The system, which became operational in 1999, was enhanced in 2001 by adding 180 wells (each approximately 300 feet deep) on the north side of the

lake to add more capacity.

This system has received numerous design and construction awards and two awards from the State of Iowa for energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. Visitors from across the United States and Japan have traveled to West Burlington to learn from the efforts of GRHS. This system also gained Great River Medical Center the ranking of the #1 Most Energy Efficient Hospital in 2004 by a study conducted by Grumman/Butkus Associates.

This article would not be complete without mention of the 160-bed, award-winning Klein Center. Completed in 2013, this long-term and skilled care building is 127,000 SF and is often referred to as a community within a community. Areas are identified as "households", and there are ten households surrounding an indoor mall of services at the main entrance called Town Center. Town Center is home to a beauty shop, coffee shop, gift shop, gathering hall, library and gym in addition to a chapel and business offices. This prized facility and its staff have been recognized and awarded for their quality and service.

According to Randy Plath, Facilities Manager and 26-year employee for GRHS, The Klein Center was the one project that means the most to him as well as being one of the most challenging construction projects. "The Klein Center project means the most to me because it is home for the elderly and (living there) makes their lives better. It is great for the staff to be able to work in a nicer environment. I think it is something the community can be proud of." stated Plath. "It was challenging because we actually had to raise the level of the building and bring in a lot of dirt. We used the excess dirt left from when we built the lake. It was a very large project and we came in under budget.", said Plath.



View of Town Center
Great River Klein Center



Great River Helicopter Hangar and Ambulance Garage

When asked about what advice he would give to other hospitals that are searching for a construction firm, he replied, "From my perspective, being able to have the equipment function right is very important and also the placement of that equipment. Carl A. Nelson & Company listens to us. I would highly recommend them. If there is an issue, they will work until they are able to resolve it. It is like (they) have a stake in us... almost like they own the hospital too. That attitude is why we have built this relationship for over 40 years."

Another feature unique to GRHS is the rock climbing wall located in the recently completed Wellness Plaza. According to Richardson, "We are the only hospital in Iowa to put in a rock climbing wall. We recently had 72 boy scouts attending a jamboree here and they were all rock climbing. We built it for events like that. We wanted to create the kind of center that would draw people in for wellness." The Wellness Plaza houses the Center for Orthopedic Excellence, the Athletic and Performance Center, and areas for Outpatient Rehabilitation, Functional Training, and Athletic Strength and Conditioning. In addition to the rock climbing wall, amenities include state of the art fitness equipment, an indoor therapy pool and an elevated walking/running track. Patients as well as members of the community utilize the plaza for cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation, physical therapy, occupational and speech therapy, athletic training, and for personal work outs. GRHS also partners with Southeastern Community College to offer athletes multiple surface training areas while recovering from sports-related injury and/or surgery. (The Wellness Plaza is featured on the cover of this publication.)

In Carl A. Nelson & Company's 41-year history

with GRHS, there have been other challenging projects as well. Chris Smith, Vice President of Construction, has been the Project Manager for GRHS for 16 years. According to Smith, the most complex project was the combined project package of the ER Renovation, Digestive Health Center, Heart & Vascular Center, Behavioral Health Unit, Inpatient Rehabilitation Program, Helicopter Hangar and Ambulance Garage. John Mercer agrees. "We had to relocate the Behavioral Health Unit to make room for Heart and Vascular. Once we did that, we added on top of the ER for the Digestive Health. (There were) a lot of pieces to that project."

Mr. Richardson stated that the project was most challenging because we had to "keep operations going." "Carl A. Nelson & Company was very respectful of our patients, our patients' privacy, the noise factors and they would work off hours if we needed them to." He went on to say, "This project stands out for me because adding the Heart & Vascular Center took us to a different level as a regional referral center. That changed our reputation in the healthcare community."

The helicopter hangar project is one that Mr. Mercer has "a lot of pride in." Many hospitals locate the helicopter hangar in a less visible area of campus and GRHS was prepared to follow this prototype. Due to Federal Aviation Administration regulations that stipulate engine overhauls must be performed after a certain number of flight hours or cycles (each time an engine is started and stopped), Mercer thought they should consider placing the hangar closer to or attaching the hangar to the hospital. "We sat down to discuss it with Carl A. Nelson & Company and came up with the solution to place the hangar near the ER and attach it to the hospital. We were confident we could make it



Eastman and Mercy Plaza Office Buildings

not appear out of place and make it more convenient for our customers and staff and that is why I am most proud”, he explained. By relocating the hangar next to the ER, the number of cycles was reduced resulting in cost savings of helicopter maintenance to the hospital.

Carl A. Nelson & Company has completed 58 projects and is proud to be a part of such a strong presence in the region’s healthcare community. When asked why this relationship works, Mark Richardson stated, “First, it is the 40+ years of trust. That certainly helps and yet, that is not enough to keep it going. If you work with someone for 40 years, they have got to be able to produce every time. I think (Carl A. Nelson & Company) has consistently provided great construction – a quality product. Every time we have worked with them, they have done a good job. Secondly, it is the relationship itself. They’re good people, they know our people, we trust them, they trust us and I would say it is a friendship as much as a business relationship. That makes a big difference when you are talking multi-million dollar projects. Lastly, they don’t have turnover. They have had consistent players that have developed those relationships. So, from project to project, we are dealing with the same people every time and that makes a huge difference.” Mr. Richardson also emphasized the importance of bringing in Carl A. Nelson & Company during the design process: “They are at the table from the very start, working with us, and we’ve found that results in better decisions and saving of costs.”

In 2015, Great River Health Systems became the fifth member of the University of Iowa Health Alliance organization, teaming with Genesis Health System (Davenport), Mercy Cedar Rapids, and Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare-Iowa (Waterloo). Through this alliance, hospitals and physicians share education,

research, and effective practices. The collaboration allows GRHS to remain independent but provides for larger, more broad-scale resources for them and their customers. The decision was made because it was a good fit for the hospital and will enable them to ultimately provide more services for the community.

The GRHS campus saw continued growth throughout the 2000’s and currently, Carl A. Nelson & Company is providing pre-construction services on several projects, including an addition to the Kid Zone Child Care Center, patient room renovations, an expansion to the Behavioral Health Inpatient Unit, and an Outpatient Behavioral Health Clinic.

Over the years, Carl A. Nelson & Company has watched its relationship with Great River Health Systems transform from an initial business meeting between client and construction firm to nearly a half century of collaboration, friendship and trust. Burlington-based Carl A. Nelson & Company is proud to have been a part of their growth and success and looks forward to continuing to serve GRHS and their customers by providing quality construction services that maintain their reputation of excellence and devotion to our community.

58
Projects
41
Years



Wellness Plaza



Great River Behavioral Health



Copper Ally

Could copper be your new friend in the fight for infection control?

by: Ellen McCulley, AIA, LEED AP, NCARB

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Ellen McCulley graduated *magna cum laude* with a Bachelor of Architecture from Iowa State University where she received the Pella Architectural Award from the Department of Architecture. She is a registered architect in Iowa and Illinois. Ms. McCulley joined Carl A. Nelson & Company in 2012.

In this series of articles, Ellen will address design trends and best practices in healthcare facilities. For more information, you may contact Ellen at 319-754-8415.

Healthcare-associated infections (HAI) pose a significant challenge to the United States healthcare industry as an estimated one out of every 25 patients admitted to hospitals acquire healthcare-associated infections. Recent studies have explored the inherent ability of copper alloys to inhibit microbial growth and their potential application in healthcare settings to supplement infection control measures.

Copper alloy surfaces have been shown to continuously reduce the number of bacteria, yeast, fungus, and viruses and perform significantly better than other traditionally used materials. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recognizes that copper alloys kill greater than 99.9% of bacteria within two hours and continually kill more than 99% of bacteria when cleaned regularly. Currently the EPA has registered over 350 alloys.

In the fall of 2016 the American Journal of Infection Control published a study conducted at Grinnell Regional Medical Center (GRMC), a 49-bed hospital located in Grinnell, Iowa. The rate of HAIs at GRMC is too low for statistical comparison, so the study investigated the bacteria concentrations found at high touch surfaces near the patients and their providers. In the study half of the patient rooms in the medical-surgical suite were outfitted with copper alloy materials, and the remaining control rooms maintained their existing non copper materials. Samples were taken while the rooms were both occupied or unoccupied. The study compared the bacteria burdens on a total of twenty surfaces over a twelve month period and found that the copper alloy materials harbored significantly lower concentrations of bacteria upon terminal cleaning. The authors of the study concluded that copper alloys can significantly

decrease the amount of bacteria found on high-touch surfaces and thus felt the incorporation of copper alloys into a larger infection control strategy in rural hospitals is validated.

A wide variety of architectural copper alloy products is now available on the market; including door handles, push plates, railings, casework pulls, faucet handles, and sink basins. Other options include IV poles, nurse call buttons, bed rails, and overbed tables.

According to the Copper Development Association, the cost of outfitting high-touch surfaces with copper alloy runs between \$7,700 and \$15,000 for each patient room. A more modest retrofit of door levels, casework pulls, and sink handles would cost between \$1,000 and \$1,500.

While some hospitals have been eager to begin implementation of copper alloy elements based on findings thus far, others choose to wait for additional research to support the added cost.

coming up...

In our next issue:

River Ridge Pavilion at
Regional Medical Center
Manchester, Iowa



employee spotlight

KIM BAILEY

40 YEARS OF SERVICE



Kim Bailey is the longest serving employee at Carl A. Nelson & Company with 40 years of dedicated service.

Mrs. Bailey began her career as a secretary and says she was hired because she knew shorthand and how to take dictation. Later, when computers first entered the business scene at Carl A. Nelson & Company, she became the Data Processing Manager. In this role she worked directly with IBM CMAS to set up the company's first computer system.

Kim currently is our Accounts Payable Manager and is a shareholder of the company. She has served as Corporate Secretary since 1992. Kim has worked with four Carl A. Nelson & Company Presidents throughout her tenure and has witnessed many successes and some failures - like our former "orange and brown logo which was proudly put on the ugliest jackets", she says with a roll of the eyes.

When asked about some of her memories throughout the years, Kim told me of how bids used to be prepared. "Back in the day, we did everything by hand and everyone in the office was involved, doing their part. And if we won one, everyone gathered in the basement to celebrate our win with a few beers that always seemed to be on hand.", said Bailey. "We all knew we were a part of the team but it also seemed like family." she added.

Kim serves on the Finance Council and the Administration Commission for St. Mary's Catholic Church in West Burlington, Iowa. She and her husband, David, will celebrate another milestone in 2017 - 40 years of marriage.

Congratulations Kim Bailey and thank you for all the years at Carl A. Nelson & Company.

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under

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“Our clients easily attest to the strength of our safety program by the number of repeat projects we do for them. We can be productive while meeting budget and schedules, but when everyone makes safety a top priority the difference is, quite simply, that everyone goes home the way they arrived”.

- Steve Jones
Project Superintendent



Steve Jones, Project Superintendent
27 Years with Carl A. Nelson & Company



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