

FALL ISSUE

# peakHEALTH

 **Natividad**  
Inspiring healthy lives.

## Moving FORWARD

Rehab fast-tracks recovery

De vuelta para una  
copia de la revista  
en Español

inside

New Clinic  
Helps Attack  
Breast Cancer

Nurses Are  
the Heart of  
the Hospital

The Spirit of  
Natividad





# *we are* Inspiring healthy lives

Warm, welcoming and respectful, we are Natividad. Where doctors, nurses and all of our care professionals take pride in delivering first-class health care to our community. Whether you're a patient or someone who has never walked through our doors, Natividad makes a difference for you and everyone who trusts us to keep Monterey County healthy.



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A healthy diet works wonders in helping a patient transition to a rewarding and active lifestyle. Check out our delicious recipe!







# Greetings

It was an exciting day in May when Natividad launched its new brand and motto, *inspiring healthy lives*.

But for those of us at the hospital, the rebranding event wasn't just a one-day show. We are doing it every day, in every way we can. One of those ways is through this magazine, *Peak Health*, where we can highlight our different service lines provided at our hospital and provide expert health advice and guidance while showing how we are inspiring people to lead the best lives they can.

One community service I'm especially proud of is our Diabetes Education Center, which, with the help of the county, is attacking one of the largest health problems in our area. Dr. Dana Kent and her staff are working hard to educate the public about diabetes prevention, and how eating well can be the best weapon in your arsenal. Again, we're *inspiring healthy lives*.

We also take a look at the state-of-the-art 3D mammography services offered in Women's Diagnostic Imaging in Natividad's new Care Center in Building 400. We're honored to invite the community in for this vital, life-saving screening. If you're a woman over 40 be sure to mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month this October by getting a referral from your physician and making an appointment for a mammogram at the center by calling (831) 772-7642 – and be sure to encourage your friends to as well! That way you'll be *inspiring healthy lives*, too.

We also highlight the Sam Karas Acute Rehabilitation Center, our award-winning and powerful rehab facility. We have Dr. Anthony Galicia, Dr. Raymond Villalobos and Program Director, Michelle Toderick, and their talented staff to thank for all the success stories that have exited the center's doors. Many of our patients at the center get to go back home after therapy rather than to nursing facilities or other hospitals. For us, that's a mark of success, but read the stories of Salinas resident and agricultural matriarch, Sue Antle, and Carmel Valley rancher, John Boekennoogen, who spent time there to really get a feel for what the center offers. Through occupational, physical and animal therapy, we are *inspiring healthy lives*.

We hope you enjoy *Peak Health* and that you are inspired to look to Natividad to live a healthier life!

**Dr. Gary Gray**

CEO, NATIVIDAD

# Photo Album



It was a beautiful, breezy day when Natividad launched its new brand on May 16, the same day as the Farmers' Market opening. Clockwise from below: Natividad Medical Center becomes Natividad; A Farmers' Market vendor dishes up lunch for hungry participants; Boomer the therapy puppy joins Natividad's volunteer staff; healthy food booths were a popular stop during the festivities; Frutas Frescas, anyone? A young shopper stops to smell the flowers sold at the Farmers' Market.





# New Care Center Gets Better Outcomes With 3D Mammography

State-of-the-art breast screening is reducing patient anxiety and time

By Peggy Spear

W

hen Natividad purchased its state-of-the-art digital 3D mammography system, it was a game-changer for patients.

As the first to adopt the system in Monterey County three years ago, Radiologic Technologist Cheryl Reeves said Natividad's radiologists began finding some breast cancers at an earlier stage in some patients.

"With the 3D system, we're able to detect cancers that aren't necessarily seen in traditional 2D imaging," Reeves said. "This earlier detection corresponds with earlier treatment. And the earlier a patient gets treatment, the better the outcomes and chance of survival."

In March, Natividad moved its Hologic Selenia Dimensions 3D System and Women's Diagnostic Imaging to the newly constructed Care Center. Located in Building 400 at Natividad, the outpatient center offers women's diagnostics, bone density exams and ultrasound scans to women, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay.

"We make screening easy by offering the best equipment available in an accessible, intimate location," Reeves said. "Most of our staff is bilingual and it's important to us to that everyone feels welcome and comfortable here."

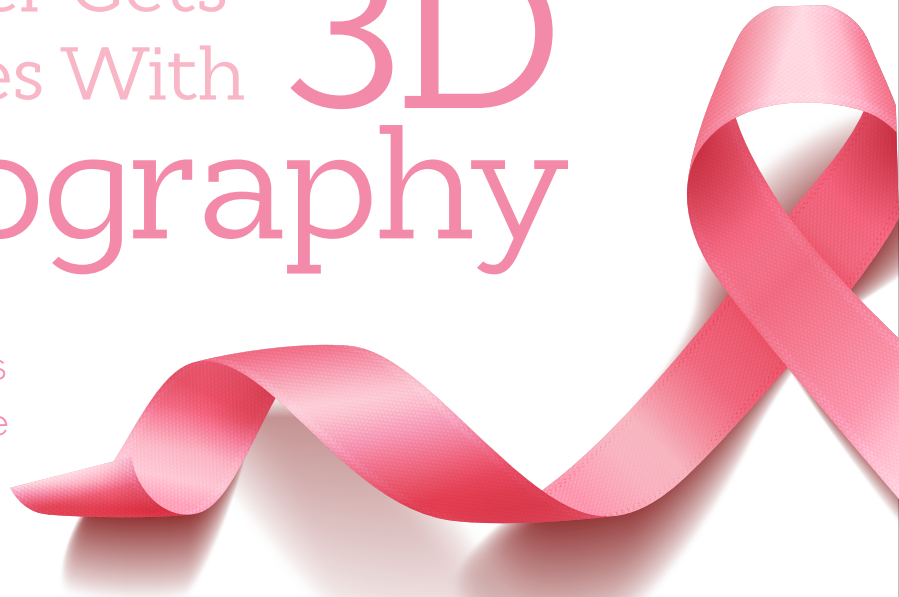
The 3D mammography system, also called digital tomosynthesis, or "tomo," makes screening quicker than a traditional 2D system. It typically takes four views and

usually requires two compressions of each breast. The 3D system combines the newest technology with traditional mammography for easy and accurate comparison and allows the images of the breast to be examined in layers. Reeves likens the images she obtains to looking at slices of bread as compared to a whole loaf. The resulting 3D images can improve cancer detection by up to 30% compared to 2D images.

"Our patients love how quick the 3D system is and I love the greater clarity and more accurate results we get," Reeves said. "When our first reading is more accurate, we see fewer false positives or need for call-backs. That means our patients can have less anxiety and avoid the time and expense of coming back for further imaging."

With 15 years of mammography experience, Reeves believes it's important to advocate for women's health and participates in everything from Relay for Life to bake sales to volunteering for the American Bone Health Association. She's also on the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) Standard Setting Committee for the mammography prerequisites and testing questions.

Natividad and most referring physicians recommend an annual screening for women starting at age 40. If results are found to be normal, women should return for their next routine screening based on their



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"It's amazing, the power of one little image. It can save your life."

— Radiologic Technologist Cheryl Reeves



Radiologic Technologist Cheryl Reeves analyzes images from the 3D digital mammography system at Natividad's Care Center.

physician's recommendations, usually every one to two years.

"Size doesn't matter in breast cancer," she said. "As women, it's important that we're all proactive in getting care."

Reeves urges women in Monterey County to mark October's Breast Cancer Awareness Month by getting a referral from their physician and making an appointment at Natividad's Care Center. "It's amazing, the power of one little image. It can save your life," she said.

To make an appointment for Women's Diagnostic Imaging, contact (831) 772-7642.

## QUICK FACTS

Every 2 minutes

a woman in the U.S. is diagnosed with breast cancer

1 in 8

women will develop breast cancer in her lifetime

Nearly 26,000

women are diagnosed with breast cancer in California each year

70%+

women are diagnosed who have no family history of breast cancer

#1

breast cancer is the leading cause of death in U.S. women ages 40 to 55

### *Recommendations by The American Cancer Society*

Women aged 40 to 44 years should have the choice to start annual breast cancer screening with mammograms if they wish to do so.

Women aged 45 to 54 years should get mammograms every year.

Women aged 55 years and older can switch to mammograms every two years or choose to continue yearly screening.

# NATIVIDAD'S Nurturing Nurses

They're at the heart of the mission to heal, comfort and lead

By Dave Cowan

**W**hen you come to the hospital, whether as a patient or a family member, some of the first people you'll encounter will be nurses — those professionals who welcome you, soothe your nerves, and let you know you're in the best of hands.

At Natividad, the nurses are not just highly valued, but woven into the fabric of the hospital. They're at the center of everything that happens in taking care of people — the pillars that Natividad stands on — and that's 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

In short, Natividad depends upon the skill, kindness and spirit of nurses, and patients can too. They are highly trained and deeply involved in making Natividad a top health care center.

"The nursing staff supports the actual culture of Natividad," said Chief Nursing Officer Nancy Buscher, DNP, RN, NEA-BC. "And in turn, nurses feel that the culture of the hospital is very supportive. Their work is supported and appreciated, and they know it."

Natividad trains 170 nurses a year in every aspect of nursing: from clinical nurse specialists, to registered nurses, to nurse technicians, and more. Registered nurses get one-on-one attention in their residencies, and a wealth of learning on the job.

Alexandra King, Emergency Department Nurse, is one of those trainees. The Santa Cruz native chose Natividad's residency program because she specifically wanted to work there someday.

"Prior to my residency I didn't know what to expect. The work at Natividad made me feel more confident, and ready



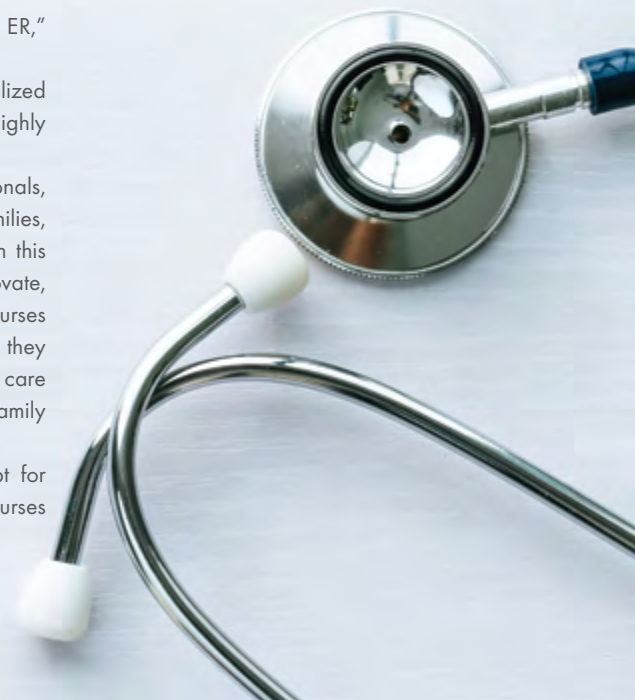
A doctor's kind and gentle touch puts patients at ease in times of great stress and uncertainty.

to take on the stress of working in the ER," King said.

That's due to the individualized training, Buscher said. "We have a highly educated workforce."

In May, health care professionals, along with patients and their families, observed National Nurses Week, with this year's theme of "Nurses Inspire, Innovate, Influence." To be more specific, nurses inspire others through their actions. And they innovate in ways that influence health care delivery, nursing itself, and the patient-family experience.

It's a motto that's more than apt for Natividad. Here's a look at how its nurses embody its spirit:







Natividad nurses are skilled at forming relationships with patients, helping them feel a little more at home.

“We have a highly educated workforce at Natividad.”

— Chief Nursing Officer Nancy Buscher

### Inspire

With professional expertise, Natividad nurses mentored 31 nurse residents over the past two years; provided learning opportunities for 170 nursing students from 10 colleges and universities in 2017; gave orientation, mentoring and continuing support to 81 new hires; continued to upgrade their education, rising from 34% of staff nurses holding bachelor's degrees or higher in 2017, to 49% in 2018; and rose from 58 nurses with national certifications in their fields of expertise to 106.

### Innovate

In their search for improved approaches, Natividad nurses put in place a “Shared Governance” management structure to improve patient care practices, education and research;

used simulation techniques to hone “hands-on” skills in areas including sepsis treatment, postpartum care and pediatric emergencies; helped standardize patient-family communications through a method called MAIDET (Mindfulness, Acknowledge, Introduce, Duration, Explain, Thank You); used tablets for multilingual communication in the Emergency Department and for parents; and created an Intensive Care Unit patient-family booklet including “what to expect during your stay.”

### Influence

In sharing their influence, Natividad nurses began new pre-surgical and Intensive Care Unit protocols to decrease infection rates; placed in the top 10% for Sam Karas Acute Rehabilitation Center patient outcomes, out

of over 800 facilities; won the BETA Award for high-quality obstetrical services for the 10th year in a row; achieved a 10% drop in Mental Health readmissions through post-discharge phone follow-ups; and decreased Emergency Department in-door-to-provider time to under 20 minutes.

All those achievements reflect not only enormous sustained effort by exceptionally capable groups of professionals, but the individual commitment and dedication of each Natividad nurse.

Natividad is proud of its nurses. If you should ever find yourself hospitalized at Natividad, there's no doubt you'll find them a helpful and healing presence when you need it most.



# *the* ROAD *home*

***Rehab services help  
patients recover faster***

By Peggy Spear





Vintner John Boekennoogen is relieved and grateful to be back doing the work he loves.



The Sam Karas Acute Rehabilitation Center is not a large unit, but it makes a big impression. For a Carmel Valley rancher, the center got him well again and doing the things he loves.

It's nothing new for rancher and vintner John Boekennoogen to climb bales of hay. After all, he's been doing it his whole life. So one day last fall, when he saw a stack of hay about 15 bales high, he felt no qualms about climbing it to hook and throw the bales down into his barn.

All alone in the barn, Boekennoogen, 68, tumbled from the stack of bales and fell on his right leg. "I heard a loud 'pop'," he said. "It was the most excruciating pain ever."

He dragged himself to his truck, where he drove slowly using his left leg until he could find a cell signal. He figured he could call his daughter to drive him to the nearest hospital.

They met at The Village in Carmel Valley, and she called 9-1-1. The next thing

he knew, he was sliding onto a gurney in an ambulance.

"Where do you want to go?" one of the paramedics asked him. They were concerned about a spinal injury as well. When Boekennoogen didn't answer, one of the paramedics spoke up. "Let's take him to Natividad. They have the best trauma services."

He was met by the trauma team and prepared for X-rays. As the pain medication settled in, Boekennoogen was able to look around him. "As an old rancher, I was very interested in all the equipment," he said.

They operated on his leg that night, and then the hard work began: Boekennoogen was set up for rehab in the Sam Karas Acute Rehabilitation Center at Natividad.

Boekennoogen said he considered his care the best of the best. "They did a great job taking care of me, and working me hard," he said. "I had physical therapy, occupational therapy and exercise three times a day."

He was in rehab for seven days, and his favorite part was the nurses. "They were outstanding," he said. Within three or four days they had him in a walker, then crutches, then just one crutch.

The center helped him do simple things like navigate curbs and get in and out of the car.

His lesson from all of this? "Don't climb. From now on I point and show the younger guys where to toss the bales of hay," he said.

He also bought a satellite phone, in case anything else should go wrong at the ranch.

All in all, he said the most effective part of his rehab was the cumulative effect of all the Sam Karas Acute Rehabilitation Center staff does. "From physical therapy to occupational therapy to the exercises, it was great. I remember asking a nurse how to get in and out of the shower. They showed me and made it easy," he said.

Still, Boekennoogen is in no hurry to go back. He was even able to get off painkillers early with the help of the staff.

So now it's back to ranching and running his Carmel Valley winery. "The winery is much less dangerous work," he said.

*"Let's take him to Natividad.  
They have the best trauma services."*

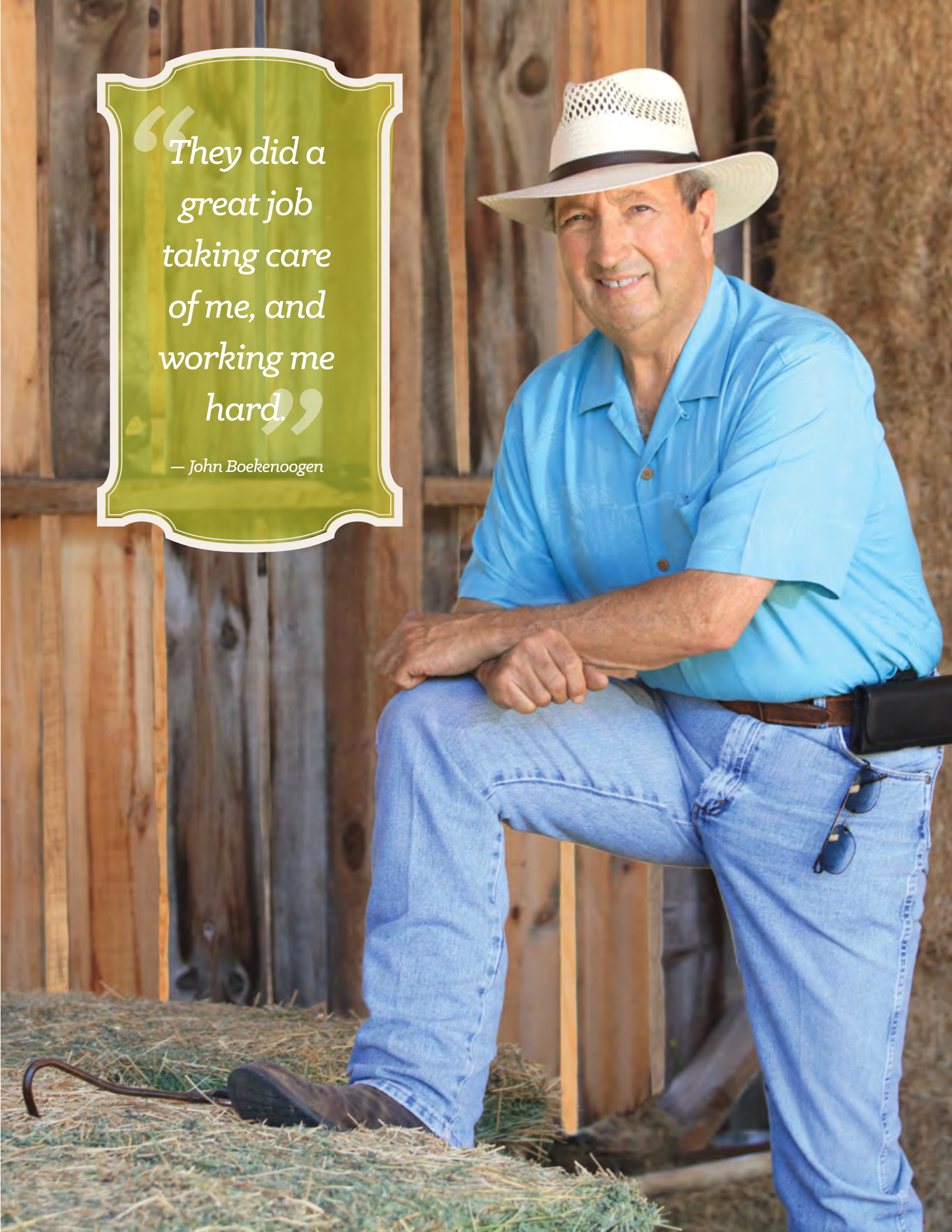
*— First Responder*





*“They did a  
great job  
taking care  
of me, and  
working me  
hard.”*

*— John Boekennoogen*







Sue Antle with her daughter's dog Charlie, who visited her in the rehab center after a fall.

## With strong rehab, Sue Antle didn't need a nursing facility

**A**t 82, Sue Antle of Salinas is aware that common household falls can be dangerous. So, she knew when she slipped in her bathroom one day and had excruciating pain in her ankle that she had done some damage.

Following surgery for a fractured right ankle, Antle was admitted to the Sam Karas Acute Rehabilitation Center at Natividad for inpatient care and rehabilitation.

Antle said they worked her hard — but nothing she couldn't handle. "We had occupational therapy, physical therapy and exercise," she said. "My favorite part was when we would get all the patients in rehab together and exercise together." She said that all

that work was what got her back on her feet, so to speak, so quickly.

In 1982, Antle and her late husband joined forces with the Tanimura family to create Tanimura & Antle, a leading fresh produce grower and shipper in Salinas. They also knew Sam Karas. So, it was comforting to be in the center of his namesake. During the two weeks of her stay, the staff made sure Antle was able to manage curbs and get in and out of the car safely before she left. "They made sure I could do everything I wanted to do," she said.

While the Sam Karas Acute Rehabilitation Center frequently brings in therapy dogs for the patients, Antle missed her daughter Karen Hebl's dog, Charlie. Antle was delighted the center not only encouraged frequent family visits, but allowed Charlie to come visit, too.

"He jumped right up on my bed and made himself at home," she said. Antle also enjoyed meeting the other patients at

the Sam Karas Acute Rehabilitation Center. "It's a wonderful facility," she said.

Her daughters, Karen and Kathy, also sing the praises of the center, especially its staff. "Social worker Jo Ellen Clark helped us through the emotional side of our mom's injury, as well as the practical side," Karen Hebl said.

Hebl said that Antle's whole team — from therapists, nurses, doctors and Clark — met with them and helped make decisions, including whether Antle should go to a skilled nursing facility or go home to recover. They chose home, where Antle gets around in a wheelchair.

"We were so happy with the staff, we made cookies for them after mom got out," Hebl said.

Now Antle is recovering nicely and is doing her favorite things: quilting and playing with Charlie.



# Step Up Step Out

PRACTICE  
profile

By Peggy Spear

- ▶ Rehab center gets patients back on their feet

The medical professionals at the Sam Karas Acute Rehabilitation Center don't just want to get you better so you can leave. They want to get you better so you can go out into the community, live your life, and inspire others to do the same.

That's the personal goal of Medical Director Dr. Anthony Galicia, and one he takes very seriously.

In fact, it's why the Sam Karas Acute Rehabilitation Center is on its way to a national designation for accreditation, is in the top 10% of rehab facilities in the nation and is ranked first in quality in the western division.

Dr. Galicia's response to that? "It's nifty."



## Is Rehab Right for You?

Natividad's goal is to make sure each patient reaches his or her potential when recovering. To reach that goal, the physiatrist—Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) physician—coordinates the efforts of a team of professionals. The team will help identify and set goals. Common problems that can benefit from rehabilitation include:

- Balance and coordination impairments
- Inability to swallow
- Inability to move in bed or from one place to another
- Inability to walk
- Inability to perform activities of daily living such as eating, grooming, dressing, bathing, and homemaking
- Cognitive-perceptual deficits or speech-language problems, in conjunction with physical limitations
- Inability to work or function in the community due to physical impairment
- Weakness or limited motion in arms, legs, or trunk



Rehab can be challenging, but the hard work pays off in the patient's return to a healthy, fulfilling life.

The physiatrist (a doctor who specializes in physical medicine and rehabilitation) goes on to say that a lot of hard work went into making the center what it is today, especially for a county-owned hospital. "We didn't have a lot of extra funds to work with," he said.

But what Dr. Galicia did have was a hardworking staff and Program Director Michelle Toderick, who together took what was a figurative broken leg 15 years ago and turned it into a marathon runner.

After an illness, injury or surgery, rehabilitation care can help patients return to their daily activities. Natividad's accredited care offers multiple therapies, and teaches patients the skills they need to return home with confidence.

The rehab team at Natividad builds strong relationships with patients — and keeps

them working hard. And there is another component to the services at the center: they invite families — even dogs — to be an integral part of the recovery.

Dr. Galicia has watched the center grow, from a time when it had no certified rehab nurses on site — until today, when it has five certified rehab nurses.

One of Dr. Galicia's favorite aspects of the center is that it is team-based: each patient has a nurse assigned to his or her case, a social worker, the rehab nurse supervisor and Dr. Galicia himself. There is also a wide range of health specialists on hand to speed healing.

"We don't want to get patients ready to leave and go to a nursing home. We want to get them home, back into their lives so they can be healthy and happy," he said. "The

entire team at the center has a shared vision and passion for what we do."

In fact, 82% of patients from the Sam Karas Acute Rehabilitation Center go back home after treatment, an astounding number.

Program Director Toderick came to Natividad five years ago with a long pedigree of working in nursing facilities, and her idea was to bring best practices to Natividad. "We needed excellent physicians and nurses, but we needed everyone to step up. And they did," she said.

The Natividad program is focused on three main therapies: physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language therapy. Specific treatment plans are tailored to the individual needs and goals of each patient. These services are



structured to give patients the skills they need to get back home and into their communities. All patients receive at least two of these therapies. Patients do at least three hours of therapy per day, five days per week.

"It's hard work," Dr. Galicia said. "But it's effective, and the patients appreciate it."

"The other nice thing about the center is that we are part of the hospital, so our patients have access to therapists, dietitians, social workers, speech-language pathologists, a therapy activity coordinator and physiatrists," he said.

In addition to the patient's core team, medical care is directed by a doctor who is specially trained in rehabilitative medicine. Each patient is assigned to a medical doctor who will assist the physiatrist in overall care during the patient's stay in the center. This ensures medical stability and the best possible recovery.



Medical Director  
Dr. Anthony Galicia

# Stroke Rehabilitation Program

The Stroke Rehabilitation Program includes specific therapies and services that are helpful to patients who have had a stroke.

The program is staffed by a highly specialized team of health care professionals under the medical direction of the team physiatrist. In addition to the physiatrist and rehabilitation nurses, the following team members are always available to participate in developing a patient's personalized plan of care:

- Physical therapists
- Occupational therapists
- Speech-language pathologists
- Social workers
- Physician consultants
- Registered dietitians
- Psychiatrists
- Respiratory therapists
- Wound care nurses
- Orthotic and prosthetic specialists

## Program Services

- Cognitive and perceptual evaluation and retraining
- Behavioral intervention bowel and bladder training
- Activities of Daily Living (ADL) training
- Oral-motor and swallowing skills assessment and management
- Video fluoroscopic assessment
- Patient and family education and training
- Wheelchair positioning and mobility training
- Gait evaluation and training
- Community re-entry activities
- Home evaluation to assess need for adaptive equipment and architectural modifications
- Support groups to help patients, family and friends cope with changes accompanying the recovery process
- Self-medication management



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# TAKING A **BITE** *out of diabetes*

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Diet is key to winning the  
war against diabetes

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By Marty Metzl









*"I think it's very important that education is given to the patient right after a diabetes diagnosis," Cachola said. "Get educated right away."*

After living with Type II diabetes for almost two decades, Gilbert Cachola feels like he finally has learned to manage the disease.

The turning point came when he took his doctor's advice and enrolled in classes at Natividad's Diabetes Education Center where Certified Diabetes Educator Lupe Bravo, RN, taught him about how food affects his body. The education, combined with a lot of determination, changed Cachola's life. "That's what I'm really grateful for: what Natividad has done for me," he said.

In 2000, a simple blood test at his annual checkup found Cachola's A1C — a blood test that shows the three-month average levels of blood sugar — was high. He was 40 at the time and said the Type 2 diagnosis concerned him.

His doctor gave him a pamphlet about diabetes and a prescription. He saw his doctor every six months, checked his blood sugar daily, and took his medication, but he said he continued eating whatever he wanted. "They just said I had diabetes, and they didn't offer any education," Cachola said. "I really didn't take it seriously in the beginning and just shrugged it off."

Since enrolling in the class Cachola, 58, said he feels like a different person. He exercises regularly and watches everything he eats. "I used to be sluggish, not wanting to do anything at all. I'd just stay at the house inside my room," he said. "Now I like cycling, mountain biking and gardening."

## EDUCATION WORKS

Diabetes education is a valuable tool said Dr. Dana Kent, Medical Director of Health Promotion and Education at Natividad Foundation. The Diabetes Education Center offers education for people of all ages with diabetes and pre-diabetes and is one of Natividad's most successful programs.

The classes are especially important in Monterey County, which has unfavorable

diabetes rates and high pre-diabetes rates in people ages 18-39. Many in Monterey County, especially low-income residents and migrant workers, aren't aware of what people can do to reduce their risk of diabetes, Dr. Kent said.

The Diabetes Education Center services teach people to focus on healthful diets, reducing sugar-sweetened food and becoming more active. "You don't need expensive gyms," Dr. Kent said.

Diabetes educators focus on motivating people to make healthier choices. The center encourages that people get 30 minutes a day of any type of exercise and fill their diets with foods such as non-starchy vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free milk and yogurt.

Cachola said that he found classes about what foods he could eat — and in what portions — extremely helpful. He learned how certain ingredients in foods, such as phosphorus, potassium and sodium, affect his body, and said he's made major changes to what he eats and drinks as a result. Cachola said he now reads labels before he buys foods. "I'll say, 'I can't eat this, but I can eat these other things,'" he said.

In addition to making smart choices at the grocery store, his garden at his Castroville home — once overgrown with weeds — now overflows with corn, tomatoes and strawberries. Cachola said he has cut back significantly on foods he once enjoyed, such as rice and pasta, limiting them to about one meal a month. He's also eating lots of salad and has replaced soda with diet soda and water.

"I do the same cooking, but I watch what ingredients I use," he said. "For example, too much sodium will cause me to retain water and may lead to swelling."

After the four-week class, Bravo and other educators looked at Cachola's A1C test results every three months for the first year and showed him how to read the results. He said they talked about diet and how diabetes could affect his





*"You don't need  
expensive gyms."*

**— Dr. Dana Kent**



health in the long-term. Going forward, he'll check in with the Diabetes Education Center annually for review and to learn about any updates to diabetes management and care.

Cachola has met one-on-one with Bravo to follow up on his progress and recently had his 12-month check-in. So far, he's lost about 20 pounds and said he is much more active.

"I saw the motivation that Gilbert had to learn and make changes," Bravo said. "I wish all my patients were like him."

"I think it's very important that education is given to the patient right after a diabetes diagnosis," Cachola said. "Get educated right away."

November is National Diabetes Awareness Month. To learn more, contact the Diabetes Education Center at (831) 755-6292.



## good eats

### LOW-CARB MORNING GLORY MUFFINS



Here's a healthy recipe from dlife.com recommended by Corinna Zaglmayr, Clinical Nutrition Supervisor with Natividad.



**SERVINGS:** 48  
**COOK TIME:** 18 MINUTES  
**PREP TIME:** 20 MINUTES  
**UNIT:** 1 MUFFIN  
**CARBS:** 5.5 G  
**SAT. FAT:** 4 G  
**FIBERS:** 1 G  
**SODIUM:** 76 MG  
**PROTEIN:** 1 G  
**CALORIES:** 82

#### INGREDIENTS

Cooking spray  
1 cup almond flour  
1/4 cup coconut flour  
1/4 cup flax meal  
3/4 cup whole wheat pastry flour  
3/4 cup unsweetened coconut flakes  
2 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
1/2 tsp ground ginger  
3 large eggs  
1/2 cup coconut cooking oil  
1/4 cup melted butter  
1 medium grated apple  
1 cup grated raw carrot  
2 bananas  
2 tbsp molasses  
2 tsp vanilla

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray two mini muffin pans (each making 24 mini muffins) with cooking spray. Sift the flours, flax meal, baking soda, coconut flakes, cinnamon and ginger together in a large bowl.

In a separate large bowl, whisk eggs, add coconut oil, cooled melted butter, grated apple and carrot, mashed bananas, molasses and vanilla. Mix well. Add the dry ingredients to the wet and mix just until combined. Spoon the batter into muffin tins, filling each to the brim.

Cook for 18 minutes, or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean.





# The Spirit of Natividad

By Hillary Fish



Reverend Lawrence Robles

## Sometimes patients need special care and guidance

With a warm smile and kind eyes, Rev. Lawrence Robles is often seen walking the hallways of Natividad wearing his signature black shirt and white clerical collar. "As a Spiritual Care Advisor, I'm here to connect with patients and their families," he said. "I'm here to comfort, to listen, to pray and to talk."

Known to the Natividad family as Father Lawrence, Robles received his Bachelor of Arts in religious studies from CSU Fullerton and went on to graduate from the American Baptist Seminary of the West in Berkeley. In 2000, he took a position as an Executive Director with the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real, and was later ordained as an Episcopalian priest.

Five years ago, Robles started working with Natividad Foundation's nondenominational Spiritual Care program and said he was surprised by how much he enjoyed his new role. "I was coming from a pretty comfortable job at a church. It was all very manageable and there was no urgency," he said. "At Natividad, I never know what challenges I'm going to face, or who I'm going to meet."

One of those challenges, Robles said, is to overcome barriers enough to build relationships so he can help patients and their families draw upon their religious or spiritual strength.

"We're often meeting people on what might be the worst day of their lives. Patients and their families can experience a wide range of emotions during hospitalization," he said. "Being sick or injured can be an emotionally draining experience."

Founded 30 years ago as a nonprofit 501(c)(3), Natividad Foundation's donors have provided the program funding and resources for the Spiritual Care program at Natividad for decades. Natividad does not receive government funding for religious purposes.

"Natividad's Spiritual Care program exists because of the generosity of donors who believe in its power to help people heal," said Jennifer Williams, President and CEO of Natividad Foundation. "The Foundation's Spiritual Care Advisors provide important emotional and spiritual support for

our patients and their loved ones. They offer a holistic approach to improving the health and well-being of Natividad's patients."

Spiritual Care Advisors like Robles are available to help children, adults and families of all faith traditions explore spiritual questions and concerns that may arise during hospitalization. This important service helps patients and their families who are experiencing concern, anxiety, stress, sudden loss, or difficulties dealing with prolonged illness.

"If I've learned anything, it's to always be prepared to be surprised," Robles said. "It can be almost shocking when I find that our patients are giving me hope. You go into it thinking that you'll be the one to give them hope and strength, but they end up giving it to you."

## Natividad Foundation's Spiritual Care Program

Please consider making a gift and help heal our patients, their families and our community.

For more information or to learn how you can support our Spiritual Care program, please call (831) 755-4187, email [info@natividadfoundation.org](mailto:info@natividadfoundation.org) or visit [www.natividadfoundation.org](http://www.natividadfoundation.org).



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# Distracted Driving

## Leave It in the Rearview Mirror

By Dave Cowan



**P**icture this: You're behind the wheel, cruising along at 55.

You get a text. You look at your phone on the console, pick it up and take a quick peek at the message. Just long enough to see what it is. Time elapsed: about five seconds.

How far do you think you've traveled — Twenty feet? Fifty feet? A hundred?

No, in that five seconds you, your car and your passengers have covered 100 yards, with your eyes off the road. You've gone the length of a football field. Blindfolded.

Even a quick trip is filled with distractions, and they come in many forms: our cellphones, radio knobs and overhead mirrors as we check our hair. And because you're in motion in a big metal machine, any one of those distractions can put you or someone else — maybe someone you love — in jeopardy.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of trauma treated at Natividad, and distracted driving is among the most common causes of collisions. Distracted driving kills over 3,000 people a year in wrecks and injures 431,000. Distracted drivers

cause 10% of fatal crashes and nearly 20% of wrecks with injuries.

As Monterey County's only Level II Trauma Center, Natividad witnesses firsthand the tragedies caused by motor vehicle crashes, the number one killer of American teens. Entire communities are devastated by the actions of one person who makes a poor choice behind the wheel while driving distracted, reckless or impaired.

But the problem persists, and across age groups. Almost three quarters of drivers 18-20 acknowledged texting while driving. Almost half under 35 text while driving.



## QUICK FACTS

75% of drivers 18-20 text and drive

50% of drivers under 35 text and drive

42% falsely believe it's safe



A quick bite behind the wheel is a dangerous distraction.

And 42% falsely believe it's safe.

The other numbers say otherwise. So where does that leave us?

For one thing, you can look at it as an individual choice. Do you really want to stake your life on the next text message? Most likely, you don't.

As it turns out, there are plenty of other choices.

Number One: Don't do it. Accept that it's dangerous to text and drive. Turn off your phone or put it out of reach. And if that's too much to ask, just don't touch your phone while you're driving. Pull over at the first safe spot, or put a trusted passenger in charge of your phone. Or let voicemail handle it.

Just as important: If you know your friend or loved one is driving, don't text them. Likewise, don't do your grooming in a moving car, and park before you eat.

One more thing – It's a distraction all in its own class to slow your reaction time and muddle your perceptions with alcohol. Don't drink and drive and don't let your friends do it either.

To sum up, take three basic steps to keep you, your passengers, and other drivers safer:

- Keep your eyes on the road
- Keep your hands on the wheel
- Keep your mind on your driving

It's just that simple, and just that essential.

For more information about how you can prevent car crashes caused by distracted drivers, visit [Natividad.com/traumaprevention](http://Natividad.com/traumaprevention).



## Avoid G. Reap

Natividad and AMF Media Group created a series of public service announcements aimed at educating – and scaring – young people about the perils of distracted driving. Using everyday occurrences – a conversation with a girlfriend, a drive-thru meal and even a text from mom – the ads show the consequences of distracted driving. The results: A date with the Grim Reaper. Look for these powerful messages this fall on local TV channels.

# DRIVE SMART

## Don't Distract Yourself to Death

SEE



FEEL

THINK



There are 3 main types of distraction taking your eyes off the road, hands off the wheel or mind off of driving.



Texting



Grooming



Adjusting Radio



Eating



Social Media

### ARE LEADING CAUSES OF CAR CRASHES

**YOUNG & AT RISK**

Motor vehicle #1 **KILLER** of American teens

**NEARLY  
3,450  
DEATHS**

**SCARY NUMBERS**  
Distracted drivers account for

**391K  
INJURIES**

**9% FATAL  
CRASHES**

