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Brian Huber/Freeman Staff

Former Waukesha Memorial Hospital employees, from left, Betty Almanza, Ginger Agen, Diana Hall, and Marilyn Neumann thumb through a scrapbook detailing days gone by at a breakfast held Monday for former WMH and ProHealth Care employees as part of the hospital's centennial celebration.

A MORNING OF MEMORIES AT WAUKESHA MEMORIAL

Former employees celebrated at breakfast as part of centennial

By Brian Huber
Freeman Staff

WAUKESHA - There was quite a bit of nodding and smiles as Vi Paulson and those around her viewed a video presentation over breakfast at Waukesha Memorial Hospital on Monday morning.

Paulson was featured prominently in the video talking about her career at Waukesha Memorial, which began by volunteering at age 18, spanned 40 years as a licensed practical nurse, and ended upon her retirement at age 80. So Paulson was a natural choice to appear in the centennial video produced by WMH and shown at a breakfast for about two dozen past and current employees.

"In 50 years, I worked in every department, I'm sure," Paulson said.

She said the video was great and she was surprised that so much of her interview was used. When asked what things stood out in her career, Paulson later said, "I think just seeing people go through so much and be able to get up and go home, those were big thrills in my life. New little babies that were born preemies and turned out to be healthy young people, just so many, many things...."

"I was always happy to be there, it was something challenging every day and I enjoyed it."

Many of those at Mon-

day's breakfast have been meeting for monthly breakfasts at Christina's, continuing the bond that began at work as hospital employees.

ProHealth Care CEO Susan Edwards told the guests this was "your movie because you all are the stars."

"They are a real part of our legacy in the community," she said.

Monday's breakfast was part of ProHealth Care's celebration of its 100th anniversary, which is ongoing this year. As part of it, the hospital assembled a booklet chronicling "A Century of Medical Excellence & Community Partnership," and the companion film that was shown at the breakfast. In addition to Paulson, the video looked at the family of Dr. Paul Fox and his children who followed him into their own medical careers, as well as programs helping babies born prematurely, and collaborations with other community agencies.

A company picnic is planned for Frame Park later this year. And, true to Waukesha Memorial's roots, which are traced back to community support from its very beginning, the public can join the celebration by sharing their ProHealth Care experiences in words and photos and hearing about those of others through its website.

Future sites in the works

Edwards said that Pro-

Health Care continues looking ahead, not only in terms of staying on the cutting edge of technology to provide state-of-the-art medical care, but also furthering its mission of meeting the needs of people in their community. A new cancer care center in the City of Pewaukee and a 24-hour emergency center in Mukwonago are both expected to open next year.

As with many organizations in a community, family is often at or near the roots, and Waukesha Memorial and ProHealth Care are no exception. The Fox family is featured prominently in the video, and Paulson said all four of her children worked at Waukesha Memorial at one time or another, as well as a niece.

Family also proved to be the connected for Ruth Rhinesmith of Waukesha, whose aunt Ceil Hasslinger got her a job at Waukesha Memorial, where Rhinesmith worked for 27 years as an LPN before leaving in 1977.

"I think it's really nice they are doing this for us," Rhinesmith said.

Paulson said she was heartened that most of the group of former colleagues that she knows were able to attend.

"It's fun to get together and remember old times, and everybody supports one another, which is great," she said. "The hospital was great to us; that's why we've kept in touch for so long."

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