Our community took advantage of free and low-cost screenings Saturday, June 3. Screenings for stroke, vision and diabetes were held along with blood work. Participants learned if they were at risk for heart problems, talked to a pharmacist about medications, learned about cancer care and prevention, and sampled healthy foods, among other things. Hundreds of middle school- and high school students also took advantage of free sports physicals.

Mark your calendars for HealthFest 2018, Saturday, June 2!

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Book helps cope with loss

K. Jenee Walker, MD

“Good Night Beautiful Daughter. Good night Beautiful Mother.” – That’s the way every day ended for R. Jenee Walker, MD, since she was a young girl. That exchange between this mother and daughter took place in person or over the phone thousands of miles away. However, their nightly custom ended about 10 years ago when Walker’s mother passed away, leaving a big hole in her life. “Good Night Beautiful Mother” is now the title of Walker’s book to help people cope with loss. It’s the story of her journey to healing.

Following her story, at the end of the book, Walker leaves readers with 14 tips that she says helped them in their grieving. It is my hope that ‘Good Night Beautiful Mother’ will have the same heart connection with readers who found the book ‘I Love You Forever’ by Robert Munsch endearing.

Readers may notice that none of the drawings show a face.

In fact, Chloe, a medical student at Loma Linda University School of Medicine, painted all of the pictures. The cover of the book is from a drawing that her daughter Chloe gave her as a gift a few years ago.

“The book is written very simply and with many illustrations,” Walker explained. “I was reluctant to put the book out there,” Walker explained. “It’s so simple to have been written by a doctor. But sometimes fewer words are better. Many books have a lot of words, making them hard to digest during a difficult time in someone’s life. I wanted to give readers practical tips to help them in their grieving. It is my hope that ‘Good Night Beautiful Mother’ will have the same heart connection with readers who found the book ‘I Love You Forever’ by Robert Munsch endearing.”

That “heart connection” is how Dr. Walker describes the bond that people who have suffered loss share with one another.

The cover of the book is from a drawing that her daughter Chloe gave her as a gift a few years ago. In fact, Chloe, a medical student at Loma Linda University School of Medicine, painted all of the illustrations.

Readers may notice that none of the drawings show a face.

“This book is a universal story,” Walker said. “The faceless pictures allow readers to put themselves in the shoes of the patients. It helps us make a heart connection.”

Following her story, at the end of the book, Walker leaves readers with 14 tips that she says helped her, as well as her patients, in dealing with emotions such as anger and sadness while leading her to rediscovering peace and joy.

Junior Nursing Academy

CAMC’s department of professional nursing sponsored its first junior nursing academy June 6 - 8 to show younger students the exciting opportunities and rewards that nursing has to offer and to help establish an educational path that will lead them to a professional career in nursing.

Reaching out to students before high school gives them the knowledge to select the correct preparatory high school classes. It also provides the incentive and support students need to excel.

Hospitals across the country have been affected by a nursing shortage for several years. Nurses are the largest component of the health care workforce. West Virginia’s demand for nurses continues to grow as nurses age and retire and fewer students pursue the profession.

CAMC’s junior nursing academy exposed students to the wide variety of nursing specialties including the cath lab, simulation center, operating rooms and many nursing units.

CAMC Foundation Hospitality House

Construction workers spent several months renovating the former Ronald McDonald House near CAMC Memorial Hospital.

In December 2016, the Ronald McDonald House moved to the CAMC Women and Children’s Hospital campus, leaving its old facility near CAMC Memorial Hospital empty.

CAMC already owned the property and leased the building to Ronald McDonald House for $1 per year.

The CAMC Foundation will support the hospital hospitality house to serve as a low to no cost alternative to area hotels.

This facility serves family and loved ones of adult patients who need a place to stay while they are in the hospital or receiving outpatient treatment.

The CAMC Foundation Hospitality House has 10 bedrooms. Amenities include access to a kitchen, on-site laundry facilities, a great room with a television, computer lab, and a meditation and prayer room for guests to use during their stay.

Staff at the house are working with the community to assist in providing financial support, meals and a “home away from home” for the guests to help ease their worries during their stay.

CAMC celebrated the 30th anniversary of the opening of the medical rehabilitation center at CAMC General Hospital, April 26.

To commemorate the milestone, three people were inducted into Med Rehab’s Wall of Fame in recognition of their achievements in the community and sports.

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What's the first thing you do when you wake up in the morning? If you're like 50 percent of other smartphone users, you reach for your phone before you do anything else.

Smartphones are an essential part of our lives – keeping us connected to friends, family and co-workers. Nearly 70 percent of U.S. adults own one and use them for about 90 minutes a day.

About half of people who access camc.org and CAMC PatientLink are using a mobile device, and there is a need to provide quick and convenient access to key CAMC services for patients and visitors.

CAMCGo will offer these helpful features in an easy-to-use app:

- Find a doctor
- Find a location
- Hospital routes – step-by-step directions with photos to departments and locations within CAMC hospitals
- Health news
- Events calendar
- Emergency notifications
- Access to PatientLink, CAMC’s patient portal
- Make a donation (CAMC Foundation)

CAMCGo will launch later this summer for Apple and Android devices.

Physicians participated in a virtual reality experience that simulated what it is like to live with epilepsy at CAMC’s 2017 Epilepsy Conference June 3.

Physicians were equipped with special eyewear, wrap-around video glasses and earbuds connected to an iPod Touch that deprived them of their own familiar senses. Virtual reality also further augmented their manipulation of touch, taste and smell.

The virtual reality experience was part of the one-day conference focusing on current trends in epilepsy care.
Kidney Transplant Center celebrates 30 years of new beginnings

Since 1987, the CAMC Kidney Transplant Center has provided a crucial service to patients suffering from kidney disease. As the only kidney transplant center in West Virginia, CAMC has transplanted more than 1,500 kidneys in patients ranging from 16 months to more than 80 years old.

There have been many advances made in the transplant process over the past three decades. One of the most notable is minimally-invasive kidney removal, making living donation much easier on the donor. Transplant surgeon Shih-Chieh Jeff Chueh, MD, PhD, performs kidney removals from a single incision.

CAMC has also invested in a piece of equipment that keeps fluid flowing through the donor kidney while it’s waiting for transplantation. This keeps the kidney viable longer and increases the chances of a successful transplant.

The kidneys are responsible for removing liquid waste and urea (resulting from the breakdown of protein-containing food) from the blood in the form of urine. Kidneys also help regulate blood pressure, balance salt and electrolyte levels in the body and regulate the acid-base balance.

When a patient has end stage renal disease, these functions are jeopardized, which usually means the patient needs dialysis to help cleanse the blood of waste. End stage renal disease is not reversible, so a transplant is the only permanent solution.

Patient recipient Mickey Johnson was on dialysis for 21 months before receiving a new kidney. He was diagnosed with malignant kidney tumors in 2012, and after surgery to remove the tumor from one kidney, he was told the other tumor was inoperable because of its location. After his kidney function deteriorated he had to be placed on dialysis. Before his transplant, he was fatigued most of the time and described himself as “disgusted.”

On May 4, 2016, Johnson received his transplant and has resumed an active life, getting back to the gym and volunteering.

“We’re really grateful for all the doctors, nurses and renal transplant team – they’ve been fantastic,” Johnson said. “It’s a good place to have something like this done and know you’re in good hands.”

Living donation

The Kidney Transplant Center has been putting more resources into living donation over the past few years. Through patient and community education, the center has helped create awareness about the opportunity for family members, friends or even complete strangers to donate a kidney to someone in need.

To be a donor match, the donor and recipient must have compatible blood types, and the donor will be tested for antibodies that could negatively impact the transplant. If a donor ends up not being a match for their designated recipient, there is still a chance for the donor to help. The donor could be placed in a donation swap, in which the two willing donors who were not candidates for their own loved ones could donate to a stranger, while guaranteeing their loved one received an organ as well.

Living donors typically have a six week recovery period and then can get back to their normal lives. Since opening in 1987, the Kidney Transplant Center has transplanted 263 living donors.

“Our living donors have done remarkably well and recover quickly,” said Alice Jones, RN, transplant coordinator. “But the best part of living donation is seeing the connection change between donor and recipient after donation. The gratitude exhibited by the patient and the humility of the donor to be able to provide such an incredible gift is amazing.”

Importance of donation

From pledging to donate at the end of life to giving an organ while living, life-saving transplant surgery has happened thanks to the incredible generosity of donors. In 2016, patients from CAMC donated 64 organs, more than half of which were kidneys.

But the need continues. There are currently 159 patients of the Kidney Transplant Center still waiting for life-changing transplants. In 2016, patients from CAMC donated 64 organs, more than half of which were kidneys.

To learn more about the services offered at the Kidney Transplant Center, visit camc.org/kidney.