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PRESS RELEASE

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Ten Years of Fun and Fitness CRMC Wellness Center Celebrates 10th Anniversary

It is hard to believe that ten years have passed since the doors first opened to the public at the CRMC Wellness Center. On October 7, 2012, Cherokee Regional Medical Center will hold an Anniversary Open House to celebrate the efforts of those that helped to make the project a reality as well as showcase the center's plans for the future.

Looking back, the original concept of a community wellness center came about in the 1970's but the project never came to fruition due to lack of funding. Efforts were made in the 1980's to revive the project but, again, it failed to gain traction due to funding issues. At that point, it did not seem likely that a facility of this type would be built within the immediate future so Cherokee Regional Medical Center (known as Sioux Valley Memorial Hospital at the time), opted to offer community wellness and fitness services on a smaller scale. While these services were valid substitutes at the time, the concept of a community wellness center continued to intrigue many of those who had supported the project from the beginning.

In the late 1990's the concept of a community wellness center came back to the forefront when an anonymous donor, who was later revealed as Mary Beck Doupe, pledged \$1,000,000 to be used toward the construction of senior living and community wellness facilities. It was at this time when Cherokee Regional Medical Center began to ponder the idea of taking on much of the financial burden to build and manage such a facility.

Under the guidance of CRMC leadership, hospital employees pledged \$129,821, and an additional \$950,022 was raised from within the community to supplement the funds from the Mary Beck Doupe pledge designated toward the construction of a wellness facility. From there, the City of Cherokee stepped up to support the project by supplying free water for the Wellness Center, and CRMC took on the balance of the construction, equipment and staffing costs.

After years of trying, the ground breaking for the current 32,000 square foot facility took place in May of 2001. Approximately 17 months later, on October 7, 2002, the CRMC Wellness Center officially opened its doors and has not looked back. Since then, hundreds of thousands of visits have been recorded from not only Cherokee County residents but from those residing in the surrounding counties as well.

“We have received many compliments over the years from various people who have used the facility. Even ten years later, it looks almost as nice as the first day we opened,” boasted Denny Taylor, CRMC Wellness Center Manager from 2002-2012. “No matter where they come from, most people are amazed that a community our size can sustain a facility of this caliber,” Taylor added.

“When you consider the amount of effort that went into the fundraising and planning to make the Wellness Center a reality, it does not surprise me that our staff and members have maintained a tremendous amount of pride in the facility,” said John Comstock, CEO of Cherokee Regional Medical Center. “They have treated it like it was their own, and in a way, I guess it is,” he added.

The facility houses a full gymnasium, zero entry pool, racquetball courts, 1/8 mile walking/jogging track, cardiovascular/weight equipment plus much more. Judging by the number of visitors through the years, it is obvious that many people throughout the Cherokee area are seeing the benefits the CRMC Wellness Center provides in helping them to lead healthier lifestyles.

“We have something for virtually every age group and fitness level,” said Matt Hoskinson, who took over for Taylor as the CRMC Wellness Center Manager earlier this year. “We are proud of what we have been able to offer the area over the past ten years, but we will continually update the equipment within the facility and offer new programs to change with the times. Fitness should be for a lifetime, and trust me; the CRMC Wellness Center is here for the long haul.”

Anyone interested in learning more about what the CRMC Wellness Center has to offer is encouraged to attend the Open House on Sunday, October 7 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

“We have a fun afternoon planned. Bring the whole family and help us celebrate,” said Hoskinson. “There will be kids’ activities including large inflatables, snacks, and a few surprises throughout the event.”

In addition, the first 100 people through the door will receive a free commemorative t-shirt. At 1:30 p.m. there will be a short program that will feature Cherokee resident and former NFL Pro Bowler, Adam Timmerman speaking on the importance of keeping kids physically active, an original song performed by Charlie Leissler, and a brief overview of the past 10 years as well as plans for the future.

If you have any questions regarding the 10th Anniversary Open House or membership in general, please feel free to call the CRMC Wellness Center at 712.225.6858 for more information.



Photo- Groundbreaking of the CRMC Wellness Center in May, 2001.



Photo- CRMC Wellness Center in October, 2001, one year before opening.



Photo- Red Ribbon cutting for the CRMC Wellness Center, October 2002.



Photo- The CRMC Wellness Center in 2012. The facility boasts a full gymnasium, zero entry pool, racquetball courts, 1/8 mile walking/jogging track, cardiovascular/weight equipment, and offers a variety of fitness classes and programs for virtually every age group and activity level.