



Robert Estrada, Jeanetta Taylor, Bonita Wilborn, Marion Clark, Tammie Johnson, and Sheila Dixon helped unveil the new name of South Hampton Community Hospital during the March 12 ceremony.



STAFF PHOTOS: CHRIS MCGATHEY

A maintenance worker does touch-up work on a new sign at the former Renaissance Hospital, now South Hampton Community Hospital.



Longtime physician Cecil Bailey addressed the crowd.



Dr. Elba Garcia talked during the unveiling ceremony.

Another Name For Hampton Hospital

New ownership revives neighborhood facility after yearlong wait

BY DAN KOLLER
Staff Writer

The hospital on South Hampton Road has had many names: Stevens Parks, Dallas Family, Dallas Southwest, Renaissance.

And through all the name and ownership changes, Tammie Johnson has been greeting patients as they check in to the emergency room.

"My face is usually the first smiling face they see," Johnson said.

So it was only fitting that Johnson give the facility its newest name, South Hampton Community Hospital, which was revealed last Friday. Johnson and five other hospital employees pulled a sheet off a sign bearing the new name, with a little help from a couple of

workers on the facility's roof because of high winds.

Johnson submitted five names for a contest that was decided by a vote from the hospital's staff. CEO Ed Downs said there was one key word in the winning entry.

"They wanted 'community' in there," Downs said. "They wanted this facility to be the community hospital of choice."

Friday's ceremony, which was attended by former City Councilwoman Elba Garcia and state Sen. Robert Alonzo, was the culmination of a yearlong comeback. Due to a miscommunication during bankruptcy proceedings, the state ordered the hospital on Feb. 27, 2009 — a day the staff calls "Black Friday" — to discharge its 75 patients within 48 hours and close.

The confusion was cleared up within days, but the damage was done.

"Word traveled like crazy," spokeswoman Mary Ann Kilpatrick said. "So we had these other hospitals recurring in our parking lot, saying, 'Hey, want to come work for us?'"

The hospital was officially purchased in November by Houston-based West Med.

Kilpatrick said plans are in the works for a new ER that will feature 10 private rooms, as opposed to the curtained-off bays in the current emergency room.

"Regardless of the name, the hospital will always be synonymous with top-quality care for its patients," Alonzo said.

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Surgery Breathes New Life Into Teacher

After Keeland's lung transplant, class is in session

BY SILVER HOGUE
Staff Writer

To say Highland Park Middle School teacher Kay Keeland is dedicated to her students is an incredible understatement.

Even when faced with a double lung transplant and confined to a motorized scooter a month before surgery, the University Park resident could not be kept from the speech class she has taught for 11 years.

"I would come to work with my oxygen and take all my medicine," said Keeland, who was diagnosed with pulmonary fibrosis — scarring of the lung tissue — almost five years ago. "I could get through the day teaching. I loved it. The kids helped me out. It was terrific what they did for me, and what the parents did."

The 50-year-old returned to class March 8, an astounding four months after the transplant procedure, and a month and a half after resuming her part-time duties at Eastfield College, where she also teaches a speech communications course.

The feat stunned many parents and HPMS staff members, who watched Keeland's health deteriorate over the past few years.

"She started showing up with oxygen and stuff like that, and then she told me she was really sick," said



STAFF PHOTO: CHRIS MCGATHEY

Highland Park Middle School speech teacher Kay Keeland gives a student feedback. Keeland is recovering from a double lung transplant.

Highland Park resident Janelle Stone, one of several parents who rallied in support of Keeland throughout the ordeal.

Stone said she stayed at the hospital throughout Keeland's six-hour Nov. 25 surgery, and was thrilled to celebrate her 50th birthday with her on March 11.

"I just can't even believe she is still here for her birthday," Stone said. "It's just amazing. She looks great, she's doing great, she is back to teaching and everything."

Keeland, who suffered from chronic bronchitis because of her condition, said the surgery has given her a new lease on life.

"It was traumatic, but it was wonderful because I could breathe again," Keeland said. "I didn't feel like I was drowning, and I felt really blessed. God answers all of my prayers, and all of these people have been praying for me."

Keeland said she officially got on the transplant list at Baylor University Medical Center in July, and never would have made it through the months of waiting and recovery without the support

of other family and friends, especially her daughter, Caroline, and mother, Norma Lynn.

"[Caroline] and my mother have been angels," she said. "They've done everything. The community is unbelievable. It's just a small group of wonderful, dedicated people. That was so healing knowing that people cared about me and they would reach out. I can never repay them for all they've done. I got cards from students. They'd call me and say, 'We love you Ms. Keeland.' My kids are great."

She said the experience has made her a better teacher, and she plans to be an advocate for lung transplant research.

"I see into people now," Keeland said. "I really listen to people. I relate more to the kids. I take the time because I may not have it. Last year, I was kind of planning my funeral in my mind, and I'll see my daughter graduate high school, and graduate college, and I'll see her have grandkids. So I feel like I have a whole second chance."

Longtime friend Cassie Deavers, a substitute teacher

at HPMS, said Keeland's story has been very inspiring to her.

"I knew she had been struggling for quite some time, and it really grabbed my heart," Deavers said.

Keeland said she has no intention of slowing down now that she is back on the job.

"I want to stay teaching," she said. "My life couldn't be better. If something had happened, that would've been OK, because I've had a great life — a terrific life. I've been blessed."

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Methodist to Host Health Fair, 'Biggest Loser' Casting Call

Looking to lose at least 100 lbs. and win 250K? Audition this Saturday

NBC's popular reality series, *The Biggest Loser*, is launching a 15-city cross-country search to find new contestants for the next edition of the hit show. Individuals and teams of two who have at least 100 pounds to lose are encouraged to apply for the new season.

Auditions in Dallas will take place from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday at Methodist Dallas Medical Center, 1441 N. Beckley Ave. in the Hitt Auditorium. The auditorium is located in the Service Building near the intersection of Colorado Boulevard and Bishop Avenue.

In addition to the opportunity to be cast for the show, each applicant for *The Biggest Loser* will get head start on good health. Methodist Dallas will offer a free health fair for contestants featuring motivating speakers with valuable tips on different aspects of good health, healthy cooking tips, simple fitness and motion exercises, and an opportunity to interact with professionals and organizations that will share ways to lead

a healthier lifestyle. Season 6 winner Michelle Aguilari and Season 8 contestant Tracy Yukich will also be present at the event.

The new *Biggest Loser* season begins this fall. Casting producers are looking for outgoing and charismatic individuals and teams of two who have the personality, desire, and competitive edge to vie for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to lose weight, change their lives forever, and compete for a grand prize of \$250,000.

Candidates must be at least 18 years of age and legal residents of the United States. While they will try to see everyone, *The Biggest Loser* casting teams will not be able to line up prior to three hours before the start of the open call. Candidates should bring a nonreturnable photo of themselves (and their partners, if applying as a team). To register for this event, visit thebiggestlosercasting.com.

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