The time has come to “open the gift” and make an amazing dream come true for Wisconsin’s children.

Four years in the making, the state-of-the-art American Family Children’s Hospital in Madison is almost ready to open its doors. With a Community Open House set for July 29 (see below) this world-class pediatric healthcare facility will soon become one of the greater Madison area’s crown jewels.

“We cannot wait to unveil this incredible resource to the community,” says Donna Sollenberger, president and CEO of UW Hospital and Clinics. “Most families, thankfully, will never see their child hospitalized. Should the need arise, however, any child, parent, grandparent or friend that enters our children’s hospital will be awed by this facility that is designed around a child’s and family’s every need.”

The six-story American Family Children’s Hospital will replace the existing UW Children’s Hospital currently located within the UW Hospital and Clinics building that opened in 1979. With more parents wanting to be with their children around the clock, the need for a more spacious, stand-alone children’s hospital continued to grow over time.

“We knew this was a great idea to better serve our young patients,” Sollenberger says, “but we knew we would need the money to build it.”

In March 2003, American Family Insurance stepped forward to help make this plan a reality. With

—Continued on page 2
unprecedented generosity, American Family announced a $10 million gift to spearhead the “No Finer Gift” fundraising campaign to build a new children’s hospital in Madison. Ultimately, some $41 million will have been raised from the community toward the $78 million initial cost of the hospital. A second phase of fundraising is also underway to complete pediatric operating rooms, a radiology suite and a 24-bed surgical inpatient unit.

“Offering these amenities to hospitalized children means lots of space for parents and family to be comfortable, including a sleep bed in each room. This is a truly healing environment, and many others will be incorporated throughout the interior design. Larger inpatient rooms, more than double the size of those in the existing hospital. This means lots of space for families and children at the American Family Children’s Hospital,” says Dr. Meade. “As a result, our gift will fund a space known as the Laurie Meade Pet Visitaton Room.”

The specially equipped room will provide families a designated area in which they can bring their children’s pets into the hospital, allowing for visits similar to the one Laurie had with Beck.

“We cannot think of a more meaningful way to give something to other families who are experiencing what our family did with Laurie,” says Dr. Meade. “We only hope that having this special place will allow families the same kind of inspirational memory we had when Beck came to visit Laurie.”

For more information, please visit goodnightned.com, a website tribute to Laurie Meade that includes several photographs.

In April 2004, Laurie Meade of Watertown was only 32, yet fighting for her life. Courageously, she was battling a complication of her double lung transplant two years earlier for cystic fibrosis. She could not speak, and a tracheotomy tube helped her breathe. As was typical for Laurie, she stoically tried to mask that her spirits were low, but her family knew better.

Knowing that Laurie needed something to lift her spirits, people close to her wanted to help. Her brother, Bob, finally hit on the perfect idea—a visit from her dog, Beck.

“I had heard that Laurie loved animals,” recalls Theresa McDonald, RN, a UW Hospital and Clinics trauma nurse who cared for Laurie. “I am an animal lover too, so when I started talking about animals one day, she just lit up. I kind of knew right away what had to be done.”

With several family members and hospital staff helping out, arrangements were quickly made for Beck to come to the hospital and spend a few precious minutes with Laurie.

“It was a challenge to move Laurie outside because of her physical constraints and the limitations of her breathing equipment,” says Theresa. “With several staff members assisting, we moved Laurie outside when suddenly, the steps carries Bob with Laurie’s dog in tow.

“The color in Laurie’s face was incredible,” says Theresa. “Laurie’s expression lit up the whole corner of the hospital. There was not a dry eye to be seen, even from the doctors.”

Laurie’s mother, Kitty Ricciardelli of Waukesha, says the visit between Laurie and Beck lasted no more than 10 minutes, but it meant the world to her daughter.

“Nobody on earth loved her pets more than Laurie did,” says Theresa. “That short visit Laurie had with Beck gave her the will to fight to the end. Nothing else could have inspired her this way, and no one who was there will ever forget it.”

Inspired by the emotional impact of Laurie’s goodbye visit with Beck—who is alive today at age 9—Laurie’s family was determined to find a way to make sure other patients could spend time with their pets as she did.

Shortly after Laurie’s death on May 5, 2004, her parents, Kitty and Bob, sister Andrea, brother Bob and their families—along with Laurie’s surviving spouse, Dr. Jeffrey Meade of Watertown—created a special fund to memorialize her. Proceeds from this fund, which are raised through an annual benefit known as the Fur Ball and memorials to Laurie, have been donated to the American Family Children’s Hospital, which will open in Madison later this month.

“Laurie’s parents and I wanted to carry on her memory in a way that will benefit terminally ill children at the American Family Children’s Hospital,” says Dr. Meade. “As a result, our gift will fund a space known as the Laurie Meade Pet Visitaton Room.”

Sollenberger.

Laurie’s emotional goodbye to pet inspires AFCH gift

“A Dream Comes True” continued from page 1

A DREAM COMES TRUE

From the members of the business community to the kids’ lemonade stands, people from every walk of life partnered with us to build this hospital,” Flad says. “It really is a standing tribute to the incredibly giving nature of this community, the state and the alumni of the University of Wisconsin.”

How will the American Family Children’s Hospital make a difference in the lives of children? Compared with the existing UW Children’s Hospital, the new facility will offer:
• An aesthetic design featuring an “All Things Wisconsin” theme. Natural features of Wisconsin—such as farmlands, prairies, the Lake Michigan shoreline, the North Woods and many others will be incorporated throughout the interior design.
• Larger inpatient rooms, more than double the size of those in the existing hospital. This means lots of space for parents and family to be comfortable, including a sleep bed in each room.

• Expanded Hospital School rooms and play areas, including a separate School Room for children with cancer.
• A Town Square that will welcome patients, families and visitors. Here, families and friends can rest on benches in a park-like setting and visit the “drug store,” a pharmacy that will not only dispense critical medications, but also house a toy-filled gift shop.
• A sibling care center known as Tyler’s Place. “Offering these amenities to hospitalized children and families actually helps kids heal faster,” says Sollenberger. “That is why we are so excited to open our doors.”

Laurie Meade dresses her dog, Beck, in a hula shirt. A special room in the American Family Children’s Hospital will be named in Laurie’s memory.
James Blunt’s popular ballad, “You’re Beautiful” was, quite fittingly, one of Kristina Schultz’s very favorite songs. A beautiful child herself, 9-year-old Kristina of Marshall died this past April at UW Children’s Hospital after a nearly six-year battle with acute lymphocytic leukemia.

Diagnosed in August 2001 on her fourth birthday, Kristina was loved by everyone she met. Along with her parents Lori and Darryl and 6-year-old sister Hanna, Kristina became an instant listener favorite of the annual Z104 Connie and Fish Cure Kids Cancer Radiothon—a three-day event that raised a record-breaking $670,000. More than 2,300 listeners either phoned or donated online over the 39-hour Radiothon this past May.

“We absolutely loved Kristina,” says Connie of the popular Z104 Connie and Fish morning team. “When we started the Radiothon back in 2005, Kristina was the very first patient we interviewed on the air. We fell in love with her and her family right away and were thrilled to have her back in 2006 when she was in remission. Losing Kristina this year was so heartbreaking for Fish and me, but it only reinforced why we spend three days on the air trying to help fight this horrible disease.”

Inspired by Kristina’s incredible courage, Connie and Fish dedicated the 2007 Cure Kids Cancer Radiothon to Kristina.

“Kristina would have been so thrilled by this,” says her mom Lori, the principal at Royal Oaks Elementary School in Sun Prairie. “She just loved Connie and she really loved squirting Fish with Silly String and just giving him a hard time.”

Kristina’s dad Darryl, says that despite undergoing two bone marrow transplants, several years of chemotherapy and too many hospitalizations to count, Kristina’s concerns were usually focused on others.

“She was always asking about other kids who were sick and she wanted to grow up and be a bone marrow transplant doctor. She just wanted to put her experience to use in a way that would heal other people.”

Jeff Tyler, vice president and market manager for Clear Channel Radio in Madison, says Connie and Fish’s ability to connect with so many families such as Kristina’s explains much of the event’s success.

“All of this is a great example of the power of the human experience. We’ve been able to connect with our listeners in a very personal way. This is something that’s unique to our format and our station.”

Jeff Tyler, vice president and market manager for Clear Channel Radio in Madison, says Connie and Fish’s ability to connect with so many families such as Kristina’s explains much of the event’s success.

“Also,” he adds, “keeping the dollars right here at UW Children’s Hospital is so important to our listeners,” he says. “It gives them the chance to make a real difference in the lives of their neighbors who are going through tough times. We look forward to another great event next year.”
Cheers for Volunteers: 
A big thanks to the Junior League of Madison

Margaret Mead once said “A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” “Normalizing the hospital experience for children and their families can be one of the hardest challenges for those who want to offer their time and resources.”

In 2004, the Junior League of Madison first partnered with UW Children’s Hospital to create and implement a Family Fun Activity program to improve the quality of life for patients and families.

“Normalizing the hospital experience for children and their families can be one of the hardest challenges for those who want to offer their time and resources,” said Mary Kaminski, director of Patient and Family Services. “However, the members of the Junior League of Madison understood how every activity, even for one child, was beneficial.”

Mary Argall, co-chair of this year’s Family Fun Activity program, had many opportunities to observe firsthand how these activities and events transformed the lives of children and family members.

“Anything we could do to enhance the hospital experience for children was rewarding in itself,” Mary says. “One of the most profound and emotional memories I have is observing a teenage patient sing the national anthem prior to our hospital rooftop gathering to view the Rhythm and Booms Fireworks Festival in Madison.”

In addition to the many events hosted by the Junior League of Madison, members recently collected items to assemble 250 Parent Care Packages to be given to parents whose children are admitted to UW Children’s Hospital through the Emergency Department.

“UW Children’s Hospital is a special community all in its own,” says Argall, “and our members have unselfishly shared their time, talents and treasures to make the Family Fun Activity program a success.”

Members of the Junior League of Madison recently presented UW Children’s Hospital with Parent Care Packages (shown here) as well as six new portable DVD players for patients. Pictured from left to right are Julie Auenson, LWCH Child Life Specialist; Winnie Chan; Sarah Scheib; Mary Argall; Kristin Frems; and Mary Kaminski, Director of Patient and Family Services.

Some of 250 Parent Care Packages were distributed to parents of hospitalized children by the Junior League of Madison.

“Anything we could do to enhance the hospital experience for children was rewarding in itself.”

AFCH clinic appointments begin August 27

While the Grand Opening festivities for the American Family Children’s Hospital will take place at the end of July (see cover story), August 27 is the first day in which patients with outpatient clinic appointments will be seen in the new facility. (Inpatients will be moved on Wednesday, August 29.)

If your child has a clinic appointment scheduled at the American Family Children’s Hospital on or after August 27, we want to be sure you get to the right place. Here are some tips to keep in mind.

• The American Family Children’s Hospital has its own parking ramp and parking entrance. We suggest you no longer park in the UW Hospital and Clinics parking ramp, which is farther away.

• As shown in the map at right, you will want to enter via University Bay Drive instead of Highland Avenue. Once you head north on University Bay Drive, the AFCH parking entrance will be approximately 100 yards ahead on your right.

• The Pediatric Specialty Clinics—where all outpatient appointments take place—are located on the 2nd floor.

If you have any questions about a future appointment or need to make an appointment with one of our pediatric specialists, please call (608) 263-6420.

The American Family Children’s Hospital is located at 1675 Highland Avenue. Easy access is from University Bay Drive. Please visit uwhealth.org/kids for more information.
Summer 2007 is off and rolling, now that Gear Up for Kids, one of the Madison Area’s favorite cycling events, has again put a smile on the faces of 500 riders.

An annual fundraising event that supports community safety programs and patient and family needs at UW Children’s Hospital, Gear Up appeals to everyone from hard core cyclists to families with small children. With four course lengths (1, 10, 25 and 50 miles) plus breakfast and a picnic lunch included, Gear Up is a great way to spend a Saturday.

“This event really attracts a great mix of people,” says UW Children’s Hospital Events Planner Beth Pinkerton. “It is a pleasure to see so many people have fun while supporting efforts to promote public safety and assist our patients and families.”

Gear Up for Kids 2007 raised $48,000 and was presented by Pacific Cycle, with additional support from Z104, Clear Channel Madison, Isthmus, Madison’s CW and Famous Footwear.

Gear Up for Kids Gets summer off and rolling

Kelly Ruder takes a break after completing her ride.

Chris reaches the home stretch.

Rachel, 6, gets her bicycle helmet checked.

Christina reaches the finish line.

Tim Morgan (center), vice president of Staff Electric Co. in Madison presents a $25,000 gift to the American Family Children’s Hospital to UW Hospital and Clinics facilities officials Andy Howick (left) and Terry Wilkerson (right).

Green Bay Packers Kevin Barry (left) and Mark Tauscher (right) recently paid a visit to 13-year-old UW Children’s Hospital patient Emily.

Mary, 7, poses “on the set” during filming for a new television commercial for the American Family Children’s Hospital.
Imagine having your name (or that of someone you choose to honor) permanently included in the new American Family Children’s Hospital that opens in Madison this summer.

Similar to brick or tile campaigns that support construction of new hospitals, convention centers, theaters or other community facilities, Shape the Way offers you or your organization the opportunity to be visibly recognized while helping the American Family Children’s Hospital’s fundraising campaign reach its goal.

All tiles—from individuals, businesses or associations—will be displayed together in a beautiful montage as shown in the illustration below.

Priced at $100 (small), $500 (medium) or $1,000 (large), Shape the Way tiles will be installed in phases, based on the sequence in which orders arrive. Already, more than 1,200 Shape the Way tiles have been purchased. Tile space is limited, so please act now to ensure we have room for your tile.

For Jodi and Matt Roberts of Pardeeville, the decision to purchase a Shape the Way tile was an easy one. When he was only 3 weeks old, their son Cooper was successfully treated at UWCH for sepsis, a condition in which the entire body is fighting severe infection. On February 22, Cooper celebrated his third birthday; he is doing just fine.

"Without UW Children’s Hospital, I doubt that our son would have made it. When we heard about ‘Shape the Way,’ there was no question about us buying a tile. This hospital is a part of our lives forever; and now we will forever be a part of the hospital."

All of the information you need to purchase a Shape the Way tile can be found online at nofinergift.org/shapetheway. Printed brochures are also available at several UW Health clinic locations, or you can contact Shape the Way campaign manager Jim Gilmore at jgilmore@uwhealth.org or (608) 262-7665.