Throughout her career, Cathey Black has been employed by a variety of businesses and worked a variety of different jobs, but there is only one place she has been employed not once, not twice, but three times – Wilbarger General Hospital.

“I’ve told them, third time is the charm and I’m not leaving this time,” Cathey said with a laugh. “I’m not leaving unless they push me out of here in my chair. WGH is family. When I come to work it is like coming to family. We’re a close knit group and I like that.”

The Oklahoma native was valedictorian of her graduating class at Ringling, Okla., and went to East Central University to study English and become a teacher.

“I always wanted to be a teacher. My mother always told a story of when I was little, about 4 or 5, I would get the chickens and other farm animals together and try to teach them their letters and numbers,” she said with a smile.

After a couple of years of college, Cathey took a break to visit family in Vernon and decided to stay here instead of returning to school. She began working as office manager/bookkeeper for Charles (Charlie) Black, who had a construction company. The couple married in 1974.

“Charlie was an extremely talented carpenter and his company built a lot of homes in and around Vernon,” Cathey said. “We were running three and four construction crews at times.”

After the 1979 tornado, a company from Altus offered Charlie a job as a superintendent over the building of the new TxDOT building on south Main. Charlie began working for the company in 1980 and was with them for 13 years. During that time he oversaw extensive construction work at Fort Sill and the Altus Air Force Base.

For several years, Cathey didn’t have a job outside of the home, but she was busy and involved in school activities involving their children, Eric and Amy, and her step-children, Richard and Erin.

Cathey returned to work in 1988 when she took a part-time job at Vernon Regional Junior College as a secretary for the counselor.

In 1990, Cathey became the secretary for Dr. Don Lamb, who was the executive dean of students and the athletic director. She was also the secretary for the volleyball, baseball and rodeo coaches, assigned dorm rooms and helped with student government. She also enrolled in classes to improve her computer skills.

“I loved working at the college,” she said. “I loved being around the students and helping them.”

Cathey joined the Herring Bank in 1992 as a loan secretary and within a year she was the head secretary and assistant cashier. She gave her notice at the bank in 1996 when it appeared Charlie was going to get a job as construction superintendent for C.R. Anthony’s corporation.

“A week before we were to leave, Anthony’s sold to Stage Stores, Inc. (Beall’s) and they had their own construction team, so Charlie was out of a job,” she said with a shake of her head. “I had already given my notice at the bank and they had hired someone, so I didn’t have a job to go back to.”

For the next few months Cathey helped take care of her mother and her sister, who had macular degeneration. In September of 1996, she went to work as the secretary for two clinical dieticians at North Texas State Hospital.

Everything changed four years later when a fire completely destroyed the couple’s home.

“We lost everything, but it gave us a chance to make a life change,” Cathey explained. “Charlie was not able to work full time anymore, so we decided to move to Kingston, Okla., and live on Lake Texoma.”

While there, Cathey worked for Landmark Bank, NA for six and a half years. In 2007, Charlie died due to renal failure.

“When we left Vernon I never intended to come back. I stayed in Kingston for a year and a half after Charlie passed away, but I was there by myself and all the kids were still here. So, I moved back,” she said.

She joined WGH in 2010 as a part-time human resources clerk/staff scheduler. She left in July of 2012, but returned in June of 2013 as a ward clerk on 3rd Floor.

“At that time our census was low and I wasn’t able to consistently get hours,” Cathey said. “I worked in the business office, in home health, in case management and other areas of the hospital just to get

Continued on Page 2
Growth brings opportunities, challenges

W e have concluded the first five months of our fiscal year and as I reflect on WGH’s performance so far, a few notable operating realities stand out.

First, we are busier than ever. Hospital admissions, visits to our Medical Group primary care practices, and the number of people using our Emergency Department have all been strong. The overall increase in volumes throughout our system have pushed up our gross revenue almost $11M higher than it was just two years ago.

Also of note is even though we are serving more people than we have served in many years, we have continued to be a very efficient organization in terms of both labor and supply costs. We have added jobs to handle our increase in market share, but we have added the very minimum necessary to serve our patients and visitors.

Most important is while we have risen to the occasion of serving more people, we have remained focused on delivering high clinical quality, giving patients an exceptional experience of care, and making sure that our environment is the safest it can be.

With all of this good news, you would think we would be way ahead of budget, wouldn’t you? Well, unfortunately, there are a few factors suppressing our financial performance this year and I want to briefly touch on those in the next few paragraphs.

While it is exciting to be as busy as we are, we are also experiencing growth in bad debt (unpaid bills) and higher than expected deductions from revenue due to an increase in business in Medicare, Medicaid, and the new State Employee’s Blue Cross Plan. These deductions were unexpected, so we have had to make some operating adjustments in order to minimize the negative impact of these realities this year.

We have come a long way over the last few years at Wilbarger General. And the good news is we still have a lot we can achieve as we continue to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of rural healthcare.

In life, nothing is constant except the commitment and perseverance that push us toward every new breakthrough. Since 2015, we have been on an incredible and exhilarating journey to revitalize our community hospital and this year will be no different. We will push our organization through challenges toward new approaches to fulfill our mission and we will persist until we achieve the next level of performance and sustainability.

Thank you all for being the lifeblood of this great organization. Because of you, our future remains incredibly exciting!

Claudia A. Eisenmann, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer

Chili cook-off raises over $550 for RFL team

O ur 2nd Annual Wilbarger General Hospital Chili Cook-off and Chili Feed, was a huge success. The event raised $569 for our Relay For Life team, the WGH Seals.

This year’s Relay For Life event will be held Saturday, April 7, at our Fitness Trail. Our team will also be having a bake sale on Friday, March 23. If you would like to join the WGH Seals, please contact Kathy McClellan at ext. 2804 for information on how to sign up.

Taking first place in the chili cook-off for the second year in a row was Kathy McClellan, while D Creason took second place. Claiming People’s Choice honors was Kim Weaver.

WGH will be hitting the alley — the bowling alley that is — on Friday, March 23, when we have our 2nd Annual WGH Bowling Tournament. The event will be held at the Town & Country Bowling Lanes in Altus, Okla. We will begin at 7:30 p.m., so everyone needs to be at the bowling lanes by 7:15 p.m., if possible. A team consists of 6 bowlers with at least 3 members being WGH employees. We will bowl 3 games and the cost will be $17.12, including shoes and tax, per person. To enter a team, contact Kathy McClellan at ext. 2804. The deadline to enter a team is Monday, March 19.

Our walking group, the WGH Pacers will be forming on Monday, March 12. For those who want to participate in the walking group and can, please meet under the pavilion at 12 Noon to sign up and receive the walking goal for March. Group members will walk a lap on the walking track before going in for lunch. If you want to be a member of the WGH Pacers, but will be unable to make it to the pavilion, please contact Kathy McClellan at ext. 2804.

Sixteen WGH team members received employee PACT Awards for January and February. Receiving an award were: Christy Weatherly, Radiology; Manuel Gomez, Maintenance; Breanna Howery, Med/Surg; Jennifer Edwards, Med/Surg; Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa, Maria Hinojosa.

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the hours. When I turned 65, in April of 2015, I decided I would retire.”

Retirement lasted until July of 2016. On the day Cathey accepted a job at Vernon College, she found out her previous job here in human resources was going to become available.

“I called the college and told them I was sorry, but I had changed my mind and wouldn’t be taking their position. I wanted to come back home to WGH,” she said.

In her position as human resources clerk, Cathey is usually the first contact most new employees have when they join the WGH team.

“One of the neatest parts of my job is that I usually first meet new employees on the phone and then I meet them in person and help them start the process of working here,” she said. “They usually always come in with that ‘deer in the headlights’ look of not knowing where to go or where to start, and I’m able to walk them through everything.”

Along with her children, Cathey’s family now includes grandchildren Briana Escobar, Jared Lindsey, Hudson Rogers, and Sarah Black, and great-grandchildren Maddox and Gideon Escobar.

In her spare time, Cathey enjoys genealogy research, reading, word games and traveling, and she is also the Camp Fire leader for Sarah’s adventure club group.

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Barbie Lytle, Home Health, will be gaining a new daughter-in-law in the fall, as her youngest son, Jay, will be marrying Bre Casey on Oct. 6, 2018, in Lubbock. Jay proposed during a horse drawn carriage ride through the Texas Tech University campus. Bre, who has a 5-year-old son, Braxton, is the eligibility coordinator for UMC Physician Group in Lubbock. Jay is the performance improvement manager for the UMC Physician Group.

At the Elementary School UIL Competition held in January, Sophie Reese, granddaughter of Diane Bumpass, Radiology, took fifth place in 2nd Grade Storytelling. Sophie was the only Central Elementary School second grader to place in storytelling.

There’s a new addition in the Hammonds’ household, as Megan, Home Health, and Lee welcomed son Jake Allen into the world at 11:17 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 8, 2018. The newborn weighed 7 pounds, 15 ounces, and was 21 inches in length. Jake has two older sisters teaching him the ropes, sister Kennedy, 10, and brother Henry, 3.

The newest member of the Dialysis Unit team, Lisa Maben, passed her state boards in January and officially became an LVN.

Three new employees joined the WGH team in February. The new additions to the WGH staff were: Dru Mahan-Limon, Nurse Tech, Med/Surg; Brandon Riggins, Respiratory Therapist, Respiratory; and Robert Pierson, RN, Med/Surg.

Six new employees joined the WGH team in January. Joining the WGH staff in January were: Lynn Babb, Security Officer, Security; Sarahrae Thompson, Security Officer, Security; Lisa Maben, LVN, Dialysis; Ada Montoya, RN, Med/Surg; Rhonda Moore, LVN, Resource Pool; and Kimberly Ford, Certified Coder, Health Information Management.

Fifteen team members will be celebrating birthdays in March. Those with birthdays this month include: 3 – Stephanie Billings, Lisa Petross; 4 – Jerri Hulcy; 6 – Deana Stewart; 7 – Tori Garza; 10 – Lydell Boyce; 11 – Christy Weatherly; 18 – Tifani Acosta; 19 – Elizabeth Fuentes; 22 – Scott Norred; 25 – Troy Pepper; 27 – Tallea Haning; 28 – Mary Thompson; 29 – Juan Zapata; 30 – Jessica Zamora.

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Mark Your Calendar

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 6</td>
<td>Clinical Review</td>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Boardroom</td>
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<td>March 8</td>
<td>QAPI</td>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Boardroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 12</td>
<td>WGH Pacer Kickoff</td>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Boardroom</td>
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<td>March 23</td>
<td>Relay For Life Bake Sale</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Pavilion</td>
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<td>March 23</td>
<td>WGH Bowling Tourney</td>
<td>7:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Altus</td>
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<td>March 27</td>
<td>Board Meeting</td>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Boardroom</td>
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<td>March 28</td>
<td>Managers’ Meeting</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Cafeteria</td>
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John Chilton puts de-icer down on the sidewalk to make it safer for employees and visitors to enter the hospital during a winter storm the last week in February.

WGH team members enjoy the chili cooked by co-workers during the 2nd Annual WGH Employee Chili Cook-off & Chili Feed. The chili feed is a fundraiser for the hospital Relay for Team and raised $569 this year.

Twenty members of the WGH team attended the WGH Foundation Art of Caring Gala, that was held Saturday, Feb. 10. The black-tie optional event included dinner and dancing to the music of The Texas Gypsies, an auction. The fundraiser brought in over $20,000 for the foundation.

Local health care providers stood after being recognized during the gala.