



News Release

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Hospital Gift Shop opens to the public

For Immediate Release

(COLUMBUS, Neb.) – The Columbus Community Hospital Gift Shop is now open to the public. The shop is new and improved, thanks to the hospital's current renovation and expansion project.

"I'm excited about the expansion of our gift shop and am looking forward to people being able to shop in it," said Mike Hansen, president and CEO of Columbus Community Hospital (CCH).

Anyone can shop in the gift shop — you don't need to be a patient, visitor or staff member. "We wanted to create a destination shopping location for our whole community," said Angie Ramaekers, director of volunteer and guest services at CCH. "We encourage people to come over — we have fun and unique items you may not be able to find in other stores in town."

Ramaekers is part of a team that is in charge of purchasing merchandise for the shop. The team visits national markets twice each year to scout for new vendors and discover high-quality products people cannot find elsewhere.

The shop offers various items, such as baby gifts, children's books, handmade blankets and tea towels, jewelry, faith-based gifts, purses, snacks, sweets and more.

Some of the new products Ramaekers is particularly proud of are baptism items, including baptismal gowns, bibs, picture frames, teddy bears and Bibles. The shop carries options for both boys and girls in an array of different sizes and prices. "We found there was an absence of those items in our community," Ramaekers said. "We are a very faith-filled community, and we wanted to meet that demand."

The renovated gift shop also has a cooler with fresh flowers. The floral arrangements are available for purchase as part of a partnership between the hospital and Blossoms Floral and Home.

The gift shop began as an auxiliary fundraiser about 40 years ago in the former hospital at 3005 19th St. In the beginning, a team of volunteers ran the shop and sold a few select items for



patients. The hospital now runs the shop with three paid staff members and volunteer assistance as needed.

Though the days of the auxiliary fundraiser are over, Ramaekers said today's gift shop still carries some of the custom items from the original shop.

"That legacy of the auxiliary from so many years ago still runs through today," she said. "Our handmade quilts and tea towels are some of our most sought-after items. Our current shop is a great mix of time-honored and modern items."

The Gift Shop is located inside the hospital near the main entrance. It is currently open from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. from Monday to Friday. The hospital plans to extend those hours to include evenings and weekends soon.

"It's bigger and better," said Hansen. "We are eager for more and more people to come in and visit our patients and shop."

For more information on the Gift Shop or its products, call 402-562-4470 or visit www.columbushosp.org.

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