



News Release

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Columbus Community Hospital nurse retires after 48 years

For Immediate Release

(COLUMBUS, Neb.) – Janet Loseke likes stability and is the type of person who sticks with what she starts.

That is why she has spent nearly 50 years working at Columbus Community Hospital.

As much as she has enjoyed her long nursing career and the steadiness of being with one organization since 1973, Loseke is retiring. Her last day is June 11.

She started considering retirement a couple years ago but put those thoughts on hold because of the coronavirus pandemic.

“I felt like God was calling me to stay here through that and help the staff as much as I could,” she said. “Now that it is kind of over, it’s time for me to go.”

Her knowledge, skill and experience will be difficult to replace.

“Janet has been a great leader in our nursing department,” said Dorothy Bybee, vice president of patient care services at CCH. “She has been supportive of helping people grow and mature in the profession of nursing.”

Loseke is saying goodbye to a career that began when Columbus was home to two hospitals — St. Mary and Behlen Memorial — and only had about 10 physicians working in the community.

“Everything has changed so much,” Loseke said. “I never would have imagined the growth.”

The 67-year-old is director of the acute care unit, a position she grew into professionally after starting as a licensed practical nurse.

She became interested in nursing when she was about 10 years old and living in Leigh. Her aunt, whom she idolized, became a nurse, so she made up her mind to do the same. As a young



adult, Loseke enrolled at Central Community College-Columbus, then known as Platte Community College, to become an LPN.

“I was very naïve when I started,” she said. “I don’t think I stepped foot in a hospital aside from seeing my newborn siblings until I was in LPN school.”

Loseke started working at Behlen, which later merged with St. Mary and was renamed Columbus Community Hospital. After eight years as an LPN, she went back to school at Methodist Hospital in Omaha to become a registered nurse. Later, she earned a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Creighton University, also in Omaha.

She had worked for CCH nearly 30 years when she became the ACU director. In that role, she oversees the ACU, intensive care unit and infusion. She often works 10 hours a day, starting at 5 or 6 a.m.

“When people ask me what I’m going to do when I retire, I say I will sleep past 4 in the morning,” Loseke said with a laugh.

Retirement plans include traveling with her husband, visiting their three children and volunteering at her church.

During her time at CCH, Loseke has been a great mentor.

“She has taught and guided so many nurses, whether that has been an older nurse or a new nurse,” said Sami Wunderlich, service line coordinator in the ACU.

Paige Settje, a registered nurse in the ACU, said Loseke encourages the nursing staff in any situation.

“She’s always been willing to come out of her office to help us,” Settje said. “If you ever had a question or needed help with something, she is there to walk you through it.”

Loseke has taken many nurses under her wing. She has a fondness for working with recent graduates and teaching nurses new skills.

“I don’t think there is anyone who is more supportive of her staff than Janet Loseke, and the staff has loved her because of that,” Bybee said.

Loseke’s leadership skills were instrumental during the pandemic. She took on added responsibilities, including helping acquire supplies, set up negative-pressure rooms for patients, create a respite room for ACU staff and organize COVID-19 immunizations.



Retirement will be an adjustment after such a long career, but Loseke is used to changes. She has witnessed many at CCH. Technology has advanced, and so have surgical techniques.

Working relationships between doctors and nurses have also evolved, creating a stronger sense of collaboration. Progress in medicine has resulted in much shorter hospital stays for patients.

The most challenging of changes for Loseke occurred in 2002 when CCH moved from 18th Street to its current location at 4600 38th St. Loseke remembers coming to the new site with other clinical managers before the hospital opened. They scoped out the empty building to envision how departments would look. She was a little overwhelmed at the thought of becoming used to a new facility.

“I thought that if I would have to go to the emergency room to pick up a patient, I would have to drop bread crumbs to find my way back,” Loseke said.

Like all the new experiences she has encountered, Loseke adapted. She hopes she has taught other nurses how to become used to changes, which are always present in health care.

“I hope I’ve demonstrated it is OK to step out of your comfort zone,” she said. “I also hope that I’ve encouraged staff to be proud of what they do, because they are the ones giving bedside care.”

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Cutline: (Loseke1) Janet Loseke has spent her entire nursing career at Columbus Community Hospital, starting in 1973. She is retiring on June 11.

Cutline: (Loseke2) Janet Loseke wears her nurses’ uniform in 1973, the year she started working at Columbus Community Hospital. She is retiring on June 11 after spending 48 years at CCH.