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Businesses, Clinics Join SWMC In 'Thinking Pink'

LIBERAL, KS - Southwest Medical Center's Think Pink Challenge just completed its fifth year with the theme "In Hunt Of Pink October".

"In the Business division, we started with 10 entries, but were ended up with eight when two local businesses ran out of time to decorate," explained SWMC Radiology Director and Think Pink Event Chairperson Kelly Denton. "It was really close, but Golden Plains prevailed again this year with their detective theme."

Coming in a very close second was Wheatridge Park, who had a Starlight Theme.

Other businesses who participated included Southern Office Supply, Hutch's Store #117 (south side of Liberal), Epic PCS, KSCB, Flowers by Girlfriends and Fashion Tree Boutique. The businesses that had to withdraw were Liberal Good Samaritan Center and Dillons.

According to Denton, there were only three entries in the Medical office category of the contest this year, as two offices ran out of time to decorate due to busy schedules.

"For the third year in a row, the winner of this category was Dr. Mariana Lucero's office who had a carnival theme," Denton said. "Second place went to Seward County Health Department."

The other entrant this year was Dr. Dora Davis and Steve Cauble's office. Those office that had to pull out of the competition were Taduran Sports Medicine and Southwest Medical Clinic Dr. Virgilio Taduran, Dr. Javenal Jabel and Heidi Riley.

In the SWMC department category there were six entries: Radiology, OB, Med/Surg, ICU, Environmental services and Plant Operations.

"The winner of this category was the Med/Surg nurses with a theme of 'Fight like a girl'", Denton said. "Radiology came in at a close second place with a Scooby Doo mystery theme."

This year's entries were judged by cancer survivors Donna Lagunas, Jo Velasquez and Lisa Nelson. Janie Jacobs joined the judges for the business and clinic categories.

"Those who participated were judged on three areas: creativity, use of pink relative to space and educational material," explained SWMC Public Relations Director and Think Pink Committee member Nancy Kletecka. "All three of these areas must be utilized. Since we started this program, there have been some who just missed taking home first place because one of the areas was not included in their decorating plans."

According to Kletecka, the creativity this year, as in years past, went above and beyond.

"When people went in to Dr. Lucero's office, it was really like going to a carnival," she said. "They had a 'big top' tent set up, staff was dressed in clown attire ... the patients they saw that day loved it as well with some even wanting their photos taken with staff. Golden Plains Credit Union staff all wore matching pink t-shirts and the detective theme they used was right in line with our overall theme this year. Both Golden Plains and Dr. Lucero's office utilized all three of the judging criteria very well."

The staff at SWMC also rose to the occasion.

"Our Med/Surg and OB departments both ended up with the same theme of 'Fight Like A Girl' and

both did exceptionally well in their decorating,” Kletecka said. “Med/Surg nurses even hosted a ‘knock out’ fight with one fighter representing the nurses and the other representing cancer – of course Med/Surg nurses were the victors. Our Plant Operations crew really drew attention with their theater and the environmental services crew were ‘sweeping away cancer’”.

The events of Think Pink week include a breast cancer awareness seminar, which took place October 14 at SCCC/ATS.

“Dr. Lamberto Flores was great – he talked to those in attendance about a number of topics important to women’s health,” Kletecka said. “And the cancer survivor Lisha Banning who was our other guest speaker was phenomenal – there wasn’t a dry eye in the place after her testimony.”

The seminar included viewing of the Think Pink video “Your Life In Three Words” created through the joint efforts of SWMC staff and Epic PCS. A portion of that video featuring Golden Plains Credit Union aired on Good Morning America in July.

“Chris Garrison of Epic PCS was the videographer for this project. He did an awesome job for us,” Kletecka said. “We will be showing it again at our health fair planned for October 23 at the Seward County Activity Center.”

Kletecka and Denton are proud of those who took part in the annual Think Pink event.

“All of those who entered are winners because they are stepping up and making a difference with breast cancer education and awareness for the community – that is really what matters,” Kletecka said. “It’s not whether or not you get awarded a first place – it’s being a part of something that is very important.”

“We thank all those who participated and helped bring awareness and education to the community of Liberal,” Denton added. “We hope to see you again next year and have even more participate.”

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