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CONTACT: Stephanie Zinn
231.924.1602



**GERBER MEMORIAL HEALTH SERVICES
PRESIDENT TO RETIRE**

Fremont, Michigan... After 23 years of successfully guiding the Gerber Memorial Health Services (GMHS) organization, Ned B. Hughes, Jr. has announced his retirement, effective August 1, 2008.

Under Hughes' leadership GMHS has emerged as a significant force in the West Michigan health care environment. Recognized – several times – as a Thompson (Solucient) Top 100 Hospital, Gerber Memorial has also earned recognition as the National Outstanding Rural Health Care Organization for 2008, and as one of the 101 Best and Brightest Companies to Work for in West Michigan. GMHS also garnered the Governor's Award for Excellence in the Emergency Department (ED) and Hospital Setting for 2003, 2004 and 2005.

Hughes was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on July 31, 1946. He received his undergraduate degree in Marketing/Management from the University of Cincinnati in 1969. He completed his graduate degree in Hospital and Health Administration at Xavier University, also in Cincinnati. Hughes became President and CEO of Gerber Memorial Health Services in 1985. Prior to coming to Michigan, he was Vice President at Des Moines General Hospital in Iowa, Associate Administrator at Dayton Children's Medical Center in Ohio, and Assistant Administrator at the Toledo Hospital, also in Ohio.

Hughes vision for the organization has always reflected the needs of the Newaygo County community. The need for home health services drove the creation of Continu-Care, the Gerber Memorial Home Health Care Agency. Hughes oversaw the creation of an Outpatient Specialty Services Department where patients could be treated locally by many specialists (oncology, cardiology, ophthalmology, urology, etc.) rather than having to drive to Grand Rapids or Muskegon for services. In 1989 the hospital's second floor nursing unit was converted to New Focus, the Center for Mental Health unit and, after purchasing the Fremont Medical Center building adjacent to the hospital, a \$1.6 million addition was completed to accommodate the additional physicians moving into the area.

Nineteen Ninety-six saw the first in a series of phases to upgrade the organization's facilities and services. Vision 2000 components included a new two-story building to house a modern Birth Center, expanded Emergency Department, a family waiting room and a consolidated radiology area. Immediately following this expansion, new construction produced a three-story addition housing three new operating rooms, an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and new administrative offices. A separate two-story addition provided a private patient hallway connecting the east end of the Family Center with Diagnostic Imaging and a new Women's Center, additional Emergency Rooms, a Caesarian-section/Delivery Room adjacent to the Family Birth Center and offices and education space.

In 2006 the decision was made to move the organization toward a new vision of improving the health of the entire community by focusing on wellness and prevention as well as continuing to care for those that were very ill. Out of that vision arose Tamarac, The Center for Health and Well-Being, a 45,000 sq. ft. medical wellness center housing the GMHS physical rehab programs and a new fitness center and medical day spa. Reaching capacity membership in the first six months of operation, Tamarac has proven to be a highly-valued service and community center.

“Tamarac embodies all the best hopes of GMHS as it moves toward being a well-care organization, not just a sick-care hospital,” Hughes said recently. “If we can help people stay healthy in the first place, rather than waiting for them to get sick before we care for them, they will live longer and have a better quality of life than ever before. We will also have reduced – considerably - the burden of health care costs to the community. Ultimately this will improve everyone’s way of life.”

As Hughes reflected upon his stewardship of Gerber Memorial he spoke wistfully of his retirement. “The Newaygo County community is made up of such warm and welcoming people. Linda (Hughes wife) and I felt at home almost from the first day we set foot in Fremont. We have enjoyed a gracious and happy life here, and will continue to be involved in the community in many different ways.”

Gerber Memorial Health Services is a 77-bed, acute care hospital and health care organization which serves the entire community of Newaygo County. Recognized as one of the 101 Best and Brightest Companies to Work for in West Michigan, and the Outstanding Rural Healthcare Organization of 2008, GMHS services include a 24-hour Emergency Department, Women’s Health Center, Cancer Center, modern Surgical Suites and accompanying ICU Unit, Birth Center, Tamarac - The Center for Health and Well-Being, and Continu-Care Home Health Services. Gerber Memorial Hospital is located in Fremont, Michigan, 45 miles NW of Grand Rapids.

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