Grateful Patient: Kelly Simer

She was passed out on the floor, physically, mentally and emotionally exhausted. With a husband preparing for a military deployment to Iraq and two young daughters wanting Mom back, Kelly Simer fiercely wished life was different.

This charismatic 33-year-old from Chaska needed emergency help—to fix a condition in her digestive system that would free her from potentially lifelong complications.

Once a 1.5-pound preemie treated for a digestive obstruction, Kelly didn’t experience complications likely related to that condition until later in life. When she ran out of options, Kelly finally opted for surgery at Ridgeview to repair and reroute her digestive system.

Twenty-six days in the hospital, a bout with pneumonia, an interruptive postoperative condition and battles of doubt sitting deep within—was all too overwhelming. But with the tireless encouragement and diligence from Dr. Todd Elftmann and empathetic, personal care from nurses, Kelly became grateful and overwhelmingly appreciative of the talented and amazing staff at Ridgeview Medical Center.

She remembers walking through the halls of the hospital, trying to speed up her recovery—appreciating so many things: the calm environment; the cozy fireplace she visited frequently; generous window views; pretty Christmas decorations; a donor wall recognizing gifts below $500; and most of all, priceless conversations with medical staff on a more personal level.

She endured a difficult surgery and strenuous recovery. But on the day of her release, she’ll never forget the standing ovation from the nursing staff at Ridgeview—a true reflection of the care and compassion she experienced firsthand.

Kelly now graciously donates her time as a member of the Ridgeview Patient Advisory Council and is proud to be listed on the donor wall she noticed on her tireless walks during her stay. She’s giving back, thanks to her warm experience at Ridgeview.
Dear Friends,

What an exciting time to be supporting Ridgeview Foundation and Ridgeview Medical Center! The first several months of Ridgeview’s new Two Twelve Medical Center has demonstrated just how important this health care destination and its services are to the community. That includes the new Ridgeview Specialty Clinic—Pediatric Integrative Medicine program at Two Twelve, which serves kids with chronic illness, acute and chronic pain, complex bio-behavioral problems and emotional challenges. Our Foundation is fundraising in support of this important new program.

Thanks to your philanthropic support, Ridgeview has a new da Vinci Surgical System to enhance our award-winning surgery program! This year’s Golf & Taste Celebration on Monday, June 27, at Island View Golf Club will be raising funds in support of the new da Vinci robot. Mark your calendar and plan to join us for a fabulous, fun party for an amazing cause.

I am pleased to welcome three new members to the Ridgeview Foundation Board: Brian Beniek, Greg Kummer and Jeff Laurel. Brian is a member of the Plymouth Police Department and president of Beniek Property Services Inc. and resides in Mound. Greg Kummer is Trust president for Security Bank & Trust Company and resides in Norwood Young America. Jeff was co-founder and vice president of Marketing and Strategic Alliances of HighJump Software, worked as an industry consultant with IBM and resides in Hamburg. Brian, Greg and Jeff all have extensive community involvement, and we are delighted to welcome them to the Ridgeview Foundation Board.

My family and I have chosen to support Ridgeview because of its vibrancy and leadership in both the medical community and the areas in which we serve. Thank you for joining us with your important support!

Brian Mark, Chair

Ridgeview Specialty Clinic—Pediatric Integrative Medicine

Prescription medications for ADHD, depression, autism and sleeping disorders have grown to astounding numbers—in some cases up 369 percent! There’s an alternative for children, teens and their families looking for an entirely different option that goes well beyond medication.

The new Ridgeview Specialty Clinic—Pediatric Integrative Medicine is led by nationally recognized integrative medicine expert Dr. Tim Culbert, and located in the new Two Twelve Medical Center in Chaska. Dr. Culbert and his team give children access to the best in complementary and conventional medical therapies. Dedicated to healing and supporting children in mind, body and spirit, the program creates holistic solutions for kids with chronic illness, acute and chronic pain, complex bio-behavioral problems and emotional challenges. For more information, please visit www.ridgeviewfoundation.org.
Catherine Klenken, with husband, Jacob, and their son, Milo.

She was a 2005 Ridgeview Health Care Scholarship recipient, recently delivered her firstborn at Ridgeview’s Birthing Center and now works as a nurse at Ridgeview’s Westonka Clinic. Needless to say, Catherine Klenken has a unique connection with Ridgeview.

Catherine remembers how perseverance and passion made a difference during her senior year at Delano High School. She says, “Do what you feel is important to you because in the long run, it will be worth more if you’re doing something you love.” One of 109 students to receive the Ridgeview Health Care Scholarship, she is one of seven people to come and work at Ridgeview.

She remembers attending the Ridgeview Scholarship reception, graduating from St. Scholastica’s Nursing School, and interning at Ridgeview’s Cardiac Intensive Care Unit—all learning experiences. She’s grateful for the care her son Milo received at Ridgeview’s Neonatal Care Unit last September. These positive impressions enhance what she loves to do in a place that has given so much.

Catherine encourages students to research as many scholarships as possible, to help attain their goals and pursue their dreams. Catherine considers herself a true walking Ridgeview testimonial. “When an employee can say, ‘I’d come here as a patient again,’” she giggles, “you know it’s a good place to work.”

Ron Schroer, a retired band director and insurance salesman, and his wife, Bev, don’t consider themselves wealthy … but feel good about giving back to Ridgeview in a way that fits their lifestyle and budget. A 26-inch plasma television with DVD player was purchased when, as a patient in the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit, Ron saw a need and did something about it.

When asked how they feel about this gift, Ron states: “We feel good about it—maybe if you plant an idea, somebody else can do it. It may inspire others to give something that is affordable.” He hopes in time that other families will see the need to make a difference in an affordable way and that all 15 rooms in Ridgeview’s Telemetry Unit will have new TVs and DVD players … all because of philanthropy and the inspiration to do something good for others.

Ron and Bev have been married for 50 years and live in Chanhassen. When not volunteering at Ridgeview Medical Center on Thursdays, Ron also delivers Meals on Wheels, volunteers his time at the Chaska Community Center’s “Let’s Go Fishing” program and enjoys woodworking.

Ridgeview Foundation and Ridgeview Medical Center are grateful to patients like Ron [and his wife Bev] for their philanthropic gifts and kindness. They have made a difference!
Use Your Retirement Savings Before and After ‘Leave a Legacy’

Congress recently extended the Charitable IRA Rollover. This law allows people who are 70½ or older to make tax-free gifts of up to $100,000 per year from their IRA. What a wonderful way to “Leave a Legacy” and support health care for generations to come.

Many individuals have significant assets in their 401(k) retirement savings. Please consider making Ridgeview Foundation a beneficiary of these assets upon your death. If you’ve remembered Ridgeview Foundation in your will, estate, or retirement plan, please let us know so that we can thank you now! For more information, please call (952) 442-6010 or e-mail: foundation@ridgeviewmedical.org.

Classes, Events & Ways to Get Involved

Skin Cancer Screening
Skin cancer accounts for nearly half of all cancers diagnosed in the United States, and early diagnosis increases your chance for the best outcome. Ridgeview physicians are offering free screenings by appointments at the new Two Twelve Medical Center.
Saturday, May 7, 9 a.m.–Noon
Two Twelve Medical Center, Suite 240
111 Hundertmark Road, Chaska
To register for an appointment, call (952) 442-8083.

Women’s Health Seminar:
You Are What You Eat—Choices for Optimal Health
Take charge of your eating by identifying unhealthy habits and learning how to keep hunger under control. Kristin Hansberry, MD, Family Medicine, Ridgeview Chanhassen Clinic, will offer tips to use when eating out and provide some simple rules to follow when grocery shopping for yourself or your family. Learn what to look for on food labels and how you can cut through the advertising.
Thursday, May 19, 6–7:30 p.m.
BayView Event Center
687 Excelsior Boulevard, Excelsior
Includes gourmet appetizers, educational take-home tools and prize giveaways. Advanced registration and payment of $20 is required. To register, visit www.ridgeviewmedical.org/events or call (952) 442-8083.

What Is Reflexology?
Reflexology is a complement to standard medical care. The benefit is the reduction of stress to achieve relaxation. It is based on the idea that each body part is represented in our hands, feet and ears. Pressure is applied to these areas using specific thumb, finger and hand techniques.
Thursday, May 19, 10:30–11:30 a.m.
Presentation by Ellen Hem-Ryan, LAc, CMRT, Ridgeview Spa Therapy, who is certified in acupuncture, reflexology and massage.

This event is free and open to the public and will be held at Southshore Center, 5735 Country Club Road, Shorewood. To register, please call (952) 474-7635.