

OUR OPINION

EDITORIAL BOARD

JOE VANDERHOOF

president and publisher

DEREK OSENIENKO

executive editor

KEN HALL

editorial page writer

Community members

Nolly Clines, Jonnie Wesley-Krueger, James Taylor

EDITORIAL

The new hospital reflects old values

The new Orange Regional Medical Center opens next week in the Town of Wallkill, consolidating services that have until now been offered at the hospitals in Goshen and Middletown and bringing new levels of health care to the region.

That's a lot to talk about right there, and we can be sure that patients and their families will spread the word soon after the first ambulance rolls into the emergency room, the first baby is delivered and the first meal comes into one of those private rooms.

Before then, it is just as important and perhaps even more appropriate to talk about some other details.

Looking back, it is obvious that members of the board of Orange Regional picked a very bad time to try to raise millions of dollars and pursue this ambitious undertaking.

The health-care climate in the United States is unsettled, with little sign of clarity or consistent direction. More people are out of work, and in a nation where health insurance is linked to employment, that means more will be struggling to pay hospital bills. Those who rely on government programs such as Medicare and Medicaid worry that they, too, will be facing higher bills or more restrictions. All of this only magnifies the challenge for hospitals dedicated to making sure that everyone gets appropriate care.

Hospitals cost a lot of money, and the board could not have known at the start of this venture just how volatile the economy would be and how that would affect the people who needed to contribute to make this a success. They went ahead,

they never wavered when the bad news came and in the end, they did it. They came up with a plan, they asked for money and the community responded in ways large and small. The Gerry Foundation and the Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan helped clear away a huge obstacle, buying the Arden Hill Hospital and Horton Hospital campuses for later resale. That helped secure needed approval from the state.

Those who worked at the two hospitals were just as important. Through a program allowing employees to donate some of their pay, the fundraising effort took in almost \$1 million, about \$200,000 more than the goal, and physicians raised \$2 million. That meant that in March, long before the finishing touches were evident on the new site, the leaders of the campaign could announce that they had exceeded their goal, raising \$21.18 million.

The new hospital will offer care in ways not possible at the two older campuses and that, in turn, should be able to attract more specialty services, allowing patients to get what they need near their homes without having to travel. The investment so far will be magnified as more offices and support services spring up near the hospital. And all that will help assure people and businesses that this region is a good place in which to live, work and stay.

Most important, all of this new technology, all of these new procedures and all of the shiny new equipment are reflections of something much older and more traditional – a community that cares about its people.

TIMES HERALD-RECORD

SERVING
THE CATSKILLS
AND HUDSON VALLEY

Ex-teachers claim payback in suit against Storm King

Case cites retaliation for helping alleged rape victim PAGE 7

HUDSON



TOM BUSHEY/Times Herald-Record

Tours begin at Orange Regional Medical Center's new hospital on Friday in the Town of Walkkill after the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

ORMC celebrates state-of-art facility PAGE 5



METS ROLLING Beat Nats; win streak at 5 games

PAGE 59

SUNDAY SAVINGS
OVER \$260 IN
COUPONS INSIDE



West Point's Eisenhower Hall Theatre 2011 ~ 2012 Season

Broadway! Comedy! Concerts! Dance!

Subscribe Now at IKEHALL.COM

650 celebrate at ribbon-cutting

Dignitaries extend thanks to contributors

After years of planning, fundraising and construction, about 650 people turned out Friday to see Orange Regional Medical Center cut the ribbon on its new hospital, set to open Aug. 5.

Hospital President and CEO Scott Batulis, state legislators and other dignitaries congratulated and thanked all who helped make the new facility possible, including philanthropist Alan Gerry, who made a large donation to the project and cut the ribbon at the ceremony.

The hospital will have 353 private rooms, 40 intensive-care-unit rooms, a 10-bed Level 2 neonatal intensive care unit, a dedicated pediatric unit and 50 emergency room treatment areas.

Lou Heimbach, chairman of the hospital's board, summed up the day's significance with these words: "We did not miss the future."

Christian Livermore



ON THE WEB

TO SEE more photos, go to recordonline.com/ormc.



TOM BUSHEY/Times Herald Record photos

Top: Attendees gather on Friday at the Orange Regional Medical Center ribbon-cutting ceremony in the Town of Walkill. The new hospital will open on Aug. 5. Above: The hospital's marketing and public relations director, Marcy Manheim, leads a tour. Left: Hospital President and CEO Scott Batulis addresses the crowd.



HEALTH CARE



By Saturday, Aug. 6, the new Orange Regional Medical Center in the town of Walkkill will be open for business.

New beginning for regional health care

Two aging hospitals become a single modern one

BY KATHY KAHN
kathy.kahn@nyjournal.com

If Orange Regional Medical Center's new hospital were running for office, no one would miss its campaign signs. They are visible everywhere you look in the region, touting the opening of the new campus Aug. 5.

With 353 private rooms in a 21st century technology centered setting, Orange Regional's new facility has no doubt it will attract quality physicians and patients from around the region to its new town of Walkkill location and become a destination for residents on both sides of the Hudson River.

Since the initial merger of Arden Hill Hospital in Goshen and Horton Hospital in Middletown in 2002, combining the two aging hospitals under one new roof was never far from its board of directors' minds. After bringing new CEO Scott Batulis on board in 2006, the ball started rolling.

After several sites were analyzed, the 61-acre parcel on Main Street in Walkkill was chosen: a prime location for the 600,000-square-foot building, thanks to its easy access to Interstate 84 and Route 17/future Interstate 86 and its ability to grow the campus for future needs. ORMC plans to keep its current walk-in clinic and other established services along Crystal Run Road, which is fast becoming Orange County's "medical mile."

✦ One challenge was how to move forward with the ambitious project. Both Arden Hill and Horton needed to be sold in order for ORMC to take the next step — getting shovels into the ground. Thanks to some creative thinking with The Gerry Foundation and Community Founda-

tion of Orange & Sullivan Counties, both buildings were put into a development corporation that netted an additional \$10 million in a lease-to-purchase deal. Alan and Sandra Gerry sweetened the pot by donating \$5 million to the hospital. The new hospital's entry wing is named in their honor.

Along with the Rowley Family, who helped underwrite the hospital's new maternity wing with a 10-bed neonatal intensive care unit, many local philanthropists, donors, hospital physicians and workers literally pooled blood, sweat, tears and donations from their own pockets to raise the additional funding needed to make the new ORMC a reality.

The total cost was \$350 million, with more than \$260 million acquired through the New York State Dormitory Authority; another \$48 million in HEAL (Health Care Efficiency and Affordable Care Laws) grants and a capital campaign that raised nearly \$22 million from avid supporters, all of which helped ORMC hit its financial goal. The lease arrangement to purchase the two old hospitals enabled ORMC to literally hit the ground running. (There has been no public statement regarding tenants or prospective buyers at the former hospitals.)

It has been three years since the new hospital first broke ground; it is now poised for its ribbon cutting. Despite the economic climate, no one involved let it dampen the resolve to get the new hospital built. "It could not have been done without the total support of the community," said Batulis before the opening date was announced, "and I've had a great board to work with and many supporters who want to see quality health care here in the region."

Gifts, loans crucial for hospital

BY STEVE ISRAEL
Times Herald-Record

TOWN OF WALLKILL — The monumental new Orange Regional Medical Center set to open Friday might not have been built if it weren't for the millions of dollars and strategic influence of Liberty cable TV magnate Alan Gerry — the same ingredients he employed to save range's partner, Catskill Regional.

Gerry's help for the two hospitals and his key role in their alliance are a cornerstone of the Sullivan County native's master plan to use his considerable resources for the region's health.

Just three months before the state deadline for Orange Regional to close its financing, in November 2007, the state said it had to sell the buildings of its merging hospitals, Horton and Arden Hill.

Otherwise, the deal for the new hospital couldn't proceed.

This couldn't have happened at a worse time for a tick sale of the two massive buildings, as the real estate market was beginning to tumble.

Gerry's \$16 million — in the form of gifts and loans — allowed the creation of two corporations that essentially bought the two hospitals.

The deal was so complicated — with the money first going to the charitable Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan — that Gerry loaned legal and financial advisers Orange Regional to assist in negotiating it.

"It wouldn't have gotten built without him," says Jody Levitan, treasurer of Orange Regional's board of directors. "That purchase is critical. If that hadn't happened, it could have put us under."

ON THE WEB

The new Orange Regional Medical Center opens Friday at 707 E. Main St. in the Town of Wallkill. For coverage of the opening as it unfolds, go to recordonline.com.

"If you're looking for heroes, it's Alan," says state Sen. John Bonacic. "He was the linchpin."

Gerry, who decades ago turned a storefront TV repair business in Sullivan County into Cablevision Industries, one of the nation's first and

largest cable TV companies, says he's merely doing what he can to help the region he still calls home.

"I basically filled a need," says Gerry, 81, who also built Bethel Woods Center for the Arts.

"I basically filled a need. Why wouldn't you be interested in improving medical facilities in the place where you live?"

ALAN GERRY

Cable TV magnate and doctor who paved way for new Orange Regional Medical Center in Town of Wallkill

"Why wouldn't you be interested in improving medical facilities in the place where you live?"

That's the reasoning Gerry used to help rescue Catskill Regional in the same year he saved Orange Regional, when Sullivan's only hospital was on life support.

Back then, in 2007, Catskill, which had already received millions from Gerry and had its birthing unit named after his parents, was on the brink of bankruptcy.

Lost over \$8 million

It had lost more than \$8 million in three years. It had laid off more than half of its 1,000 workers. Crystal Run Healthcare had pulled its dozens of doctors from Catskill because of what it said was the hospital's poor quality.

Plus, the national organization that accredits hospitals found several deficiencies at Catskill.

So with Bonacic acting as point person, Gerry and his staff stepped in.



TOM BUSHEY/Times Herald-Record

Alan Gerry gave \$16 million in gifts and loans which assisted in the process of building the new Orange Regional Medical Center. Gerry and his wife, Sandra, attended the ribbon-cutting Friday in the Town of Wallkill.

The old Catskill Regional board of directors was dissolved. Catskill and Orange Regional formed an alliance, with the CEO of Orange heading the organization that runs both hospitals.

Gerry's chief of staff, Darrell Supak, became vice president of the new Catskill board.

"You essentially created a

half-billion-dollar a year business," says Supak, explaining that Catskill and Orange now share medical resources, departments such as human resources, and Crystal Run doctors.

And now, along with a new hospital in Orange made possible by Gerry's millions, Catskill will, in a few months, open a

new emergency room, thanks in part to Gerry's \$2.5 million donation.

"Thank goodness, with a new board and new administration, we were able to help turn things around," says Gerry. "These are our towns, our counties. We just try to fill their needs if we can."

sisrael@th-record.com

Orange Regional Medical
will be open for business.

enter's new hospital were running for office, no one would miss its campaign signs: They are visible everywhere you look in
g of the new campus Aug. 5.

1st century technology-centered setting, Orange Regional's new facility has no doubt it will attract quality physicians and
in to its new town of Wallkill location and become a destination for residents on both sides of the Hudson River.

en Hill Hospital in Goshen and Horton Hospital in Middletown in 2002, combining the two aging hospitals under one new roof
f directors' minds. After bringing new CEO Scott Batulis on board in 2006, the ball started rolling.

zed, the 61-acre parcel on Main Street in Wallkill was chosen: a prime location for the 600,000-square-foot building, thanks to
4 and Route 17/future Interstate 86 and its ability to grow the campus for future needs. ORMC plans to keep its current walk-
services along Crystal Run Road, which is fast becoming Orange County's "medical mile."

ive forward with the ambitious project. Both Arden Hill and Horton needed to be sold in order for ORMC to take the next step
ind. Thanks to some creative thinking with The Gerry Foundation and Community Foundation of Orange & Sullivan Counties,
development corporation that netted an additional \$10 million in a lease-to-purchase deal. Alan and Sandra Gerry sweetened
to the hospital. The new hospital's entry wing is named in their honor.

. who helped underwrite the hospital's new maternity wing with a 10-bed neonatal intensive care unit, many local
al physicians and workers literally pooled blood, sweat, tears and donations from their own pockets to raise the additional
ew ORMC a reality.

n, with more than \$260 million acquired through the New York State Dormitory Authority; another \$48 million in HEAL (Health
> Care Laws) grants and a capital campaign that raised nearly \$22 million from avid supporters, all of which helped ORMC hit
rrangement to purchase the two old hospitals enabled ORMC to literally hit the ground running. (There has been no public
r prospective buyers at the former hospitals.)

the new hospital first broke ground; it is now poised for its ribbon cutting. Despite the economic climate, no one involved let it
new hospital built. "It could not have been done without the total support of the community," said Batulis before the opening
a had a great board to work with and many supporters who want to see quality health care here in the region."

ite of the art – and some extra heart – to the Hudson Valley region. Its 30-bed psychiatric inpatient ward will have a private
ss to the outdoors, a first for ORMC. It will also offer a healing garden for patients to enjoy at the front entrance, along with
isiting as well as a place to smell the flowers for those who wait for loved ones receiving outpatient treatment.

0 private bays of Level II trauma care, and outside its ambulance doors, a helipad is the first thing you notice.

ecommendation from the Berger Commission, which deemed it should shed 100 beds from its two former hospitals. That's
y room will be private, helping to cut down on the rate of infection and offering more patient privacy.

re being put on ORMC to get ready for its official opening on Aug. 5.

rtunity for the Hudson Valley," said Batulis. "It's beyond exciting to see the new hospital grow every day, complete with
> health records and portable carts that allow nurses to connect directly to the pharmacy in place."

emony celebrating the end of electronic health records training the two hospitals' equipment, staff and records will all be
ady for the public the day the doors open. "It sounds hard to believe, but we are going to get it done." Batulis' energy can and
or even stifling heat will not dampen ORMC's opening Aug. 5.



[Hudson Valley](#)