

Barton on leading edge with enhanced equipment



Barton Auxiliary members view the mammogram machine they helped buy for Barton Memorial Hospital. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe and its environs are not immune to the reality that breast cancer strikes 1 in 8 women in the United States.

Early, accurate detection can save lives. The right equipment can make a world of difference.

While Barton Memorial Hospital has had a **3D tomosynthesis mammogram machine** for about a year, it wasn't until this week that the women's suite was officially dedicated.

If it weren't for the Barton Auxiliary, the hospital likely would not have the machine.

"We thought this would help so many people at one time," Vikki Egry, Auxiliary president, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

This volunteer group through its various fundraising efforts provided the hospital with \$230,000 for the machine. This represents a fraction of the \$7.5 million the group has raised through the years. The machine cost \$402,000.



Tom Davis, head of medical imaging at Barton, talks to Auxiliary members and others on April 18 about the significance of the mammogram equipment. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“We get a lot of new equipment in radiology. It’s not often we get new technology that changes the game. This is the piece of equipment that will change the game,” Len Holmgren said. He is the lead radiologist at Barton Memorial Hospital.

Siemens, the manufacturer, has upgraded the machine at no cost so there won’t be a separate 2D image. A synthesized 2D image will be able to be created out of the 3D image.

“It will cut the radiation almost in half,” Holmgren said.

This technology was recently approved by the FDA. Barton is the first hospital on the West Coast to have it. It will be online in the coming weeks. Holmgren said it should also make

the exam slightly faster.

“This should not be in a hospital this size,” Tom Davis, who heads medical imaging at Barton Memorial Hospital, said of the entire imaging machine. He added that Siemens wants to make Barton a show site with the added device, which is in large part why it was free.

The entire area where the mammogram machine is located has been remodeled into a women’s suite.

Davis said a goal was to get rid of the “institutional feel.”

In a separate room is the outpatient ultrasound room. This is used for obstetrics and other women’s care.

A plaque in the suite explains how all of this came into being because of the generosity of the Auxiliary volunteers.