

# CheckUp

*this month*

**HOLD the phone!**



Starting March 1, all area codes on MHC campus will change to **484**, and **884** will be the new exchange. Details in February's *CheckUp*.

VOL. 13, NO. 1 • JANUARY 20, 2000

## Special Millennium Edition

### TAKE AN IMAGINARY JOURNEY INTO THE FUTURE!

During the past year, Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary by looking back. Now the new century provides an opportunity to look ahead...and embark on a journey of imagination.

What will life look like in 2030, 2050 and beyond? *CheckUp* asked employees to gaze into the crystal ball and have some fun. If you've never been on the edge, these visionaries will take you there.

*Enjoy their stories!*

## IMAGINE IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY...

### Family Living

*Delores Ebbert,  
LVPG registrar*

The five generations live together in a "family commune" and are preparing a trip to the Disney World of the new millennium: another planet with an artificial atmosphere "created for human habitation," Ebbert says. "People who live there speak a new, unique language."

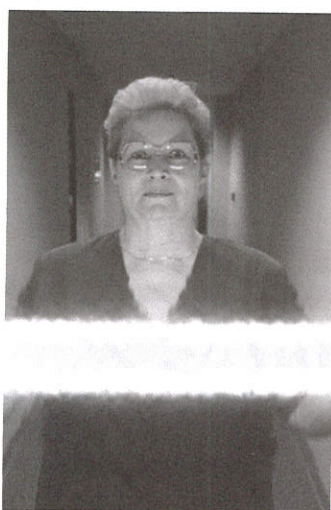
Before the family zips off in their solar-powered vehicle, "they do a health check by scanning their bodies with a wand. The results are wired to their doctor, who appears on their computer to discuss the analysis."

Thanks to "clean air systems and solar-powered transportation that reduce pollutants and prevent illness," the family is healthy. Even great-great-grandma is good to go.

### Relieving Stress

*Janice Santee, coordinator of managed care,  
Behavioral Health Services*

The young woman has a stressful day. "So she puts on a 'mental massage headpiece' and taps into the 'telepathy skills' she learned in her mental management



*Beam me up, Doc! Delores Ebbert scans her body with an imaginary wand, her vision of a health check in the future.*

course," Santee says. "The technique helps people understand each other's thoughts and feelings, thus reducing anxiety."

Later, she and a date dine at a "Super Food" restaurant that serves "specially grown menu items such as St. John's Wort peas," Santee says. "The couple places their palms on a table-top reader, and it tells them what nutrients and foods they need."

After dinner, the woman turns in for the evening. Living in a "smart house," she transforms her bedroom into a star scene and connects to a system that "simulates exercise while she sleeps."

### Having Surgery

*Bob Ruhf, OR project coordinator and  
sterile processing department head*

The patient doesn't travel far for his gall bladder surgery. "The mobile OR, complete with an OR technician, comes to him," Ruhf says.

Meanwhile, one of the country's best surgeons is sitting at home in his lounge chair. "He slips on robotic gloves and a virtual reality mask," Ruhf says. "Viewing crisp 3-D images of the man and feeling the sensations, the surgeon performs surgery from 1,000 miles away."

Requiring only local anesthesia, the procedure is done laparoscopically. "For the patient, it's as simple as having a splinter removed," Ruhf says. "All he needs is a Band-Aid."



*Bob Ruhf (and Bob Ruhf, Bob Ruhf and Bob Ruhf) envisions virtual reality to someday be reality in surgery.*

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**LEHIGH VALLEY**  
**HOSPITAL AND  
HEALTH NETWORK**





## PEOPLE

**Gregory Kile**, executive director, Lehigh Valley Physician Organization, discussed "Exploring Uncharted Waters: Techniques Used to Evaluate and Implement a Medicare and Medicaid Managed Care Strategy" at the Fourth Annual Conference and Exhibits sponsored by the Society for Healthcare Strategy and Market Development in Denver, Colo., last September.

**Rita Mest**, director, medical staff services, recently passed the examination for Certified Provider Credentialing Specialists sponsored by the National Association of Medical Staff Services. The exam tests a candidate's knowledge of the managed care delivery environment in the areas of medical staff law, medical terminology, JCAHO and NCQA standards and information management.

Respiratory therapy's **George Ellis, M.B.A., R.R.T.; Kenneth Miller, M.E.D., R.R.T.;** and **Linda Cornman, B.A., R.R.T.**, recently attended the National Conference of the American Association for Respiratory Care, Las Vegas. Miller and Cornman presented several abstracts: "Comparison of Weaning Methods," "Independent Lung Ventilation" and "A Leak Test to Determine Post-Extubation Strider."

**Tracie Schroder, R.N.**, LVH float pool, volunteered her time last year to help the American Cancer Society (ACS) Lehigh Valley Unit create a patient resource guide, which has been distributed free to area hospitals. Donations are being sought to fund reprints of the guide. *If you want to contribute, call 610-882-4397.* ■

## LVHN Announces Record Community Contribution at Annual Meeting

Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) officials announced a record annual community contribution, reviewed key accomplishments during 1999 and previewed the future of health care in the new millennium at the organization's annual meeting on Dec. 1.

LVHN contributed nearly \$35 million to the community in the fiscal year that ended June 30, 1999: \$18 million in patient care; \$10.7 million in medical and patient education; \$3.4 million for partnerships with government, schools and community organizations; and \$2.7 million for education and prevention.

Kathryn P. Taylor, LVHN's board chairman, cited pressures on health care providers such as lower Medicare payments, more patients covered by managed care, and costly new technology and medicines. "We cannot rest and must continue to lower costs and improve quality to maintain our standing as the value health care leader," she said.

She thanked members of the board of trustees who will leave the board this year, each after 16 years of service: Rev. Dr. Daniel G. Gambet, OSFS, president emeritus of Allentown College of St. Francis de Sales; Donald T. Shire, Esq., retired senior vice president of Air Products and Chemicals, Inc.; and Richard L. Strain, retired executive director of the Bethlehem Area Chamber of Commerce.

She also welcomed newly elected board member John T. Dickson, executive vice president and CEO of Lucent Technologies Microelectronics and Communications Technologies. Four trustees were re-elected to three-year terms: Richard J. Green, Augustine Moffitt Jr., Kathryn P. Taylor and Marvin L. Woodall.

Taylor reviewed some of LVH's honors and accomplishments in 1999: Recognition as one of the top hospitals in the country for the fourth year in a

row by *U.S. News and World Report* magazine; the National Research Corporation's "Consumer Choice" award for the third straight year as a top-rated area hospital and the preferred

provider of heart care services; being named one of the top providers of cardiovascular services in the country by HCIA, Inc.; and Quality Valley USA awards to four LVHN teams.

In his annual address, Elliot J. Sussman, M.D., LVHN's president and CEO, looked ahead to what the future might bring in health research, treatment and prevention.

"New research findings will increase our knowledge of disease," Sussman said. "Improved treatment will hasten a patient's recovery. Better understanding of preventive care will enhance the quality of life for individuals, families and the community."

Sussman stressed partnerships, especially with physicians, and the role LVH's physicians play in training hundreds of medical school students and medical residents to be the doctors of tomorrow.

He cited LVH nurses—two in particular—for providing the care of the future now. Lynn Dashner, L.P.N., gastrointestinal nurse, and Deborah Swavely, R.N., M.S.N., C.D.E., director of LVHN's Helwig Diabetes Center, were both honored with prestigious Nightingale Awards of Pennsylvania. ■



*New LVHN board member  
John T. Dickson of Lucent Technologies.*

*by Brian Downs*

## LVH Cardiac Rehab Announces its...

### HEALTH FAIR

**Wed., Feb. 9 • 7-11 a.m. & 2-7 p.m.**

**Thurs., Feb. 10 • 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

**1243 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., lower level**

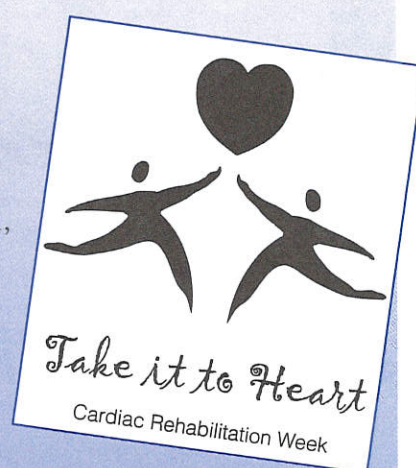
To celebrate Cardiac Rehab Week, Feb. 7-11, the staffs of Cardiac Rehab and the Human Performance Center will hold a health fair...

#### Featuring:

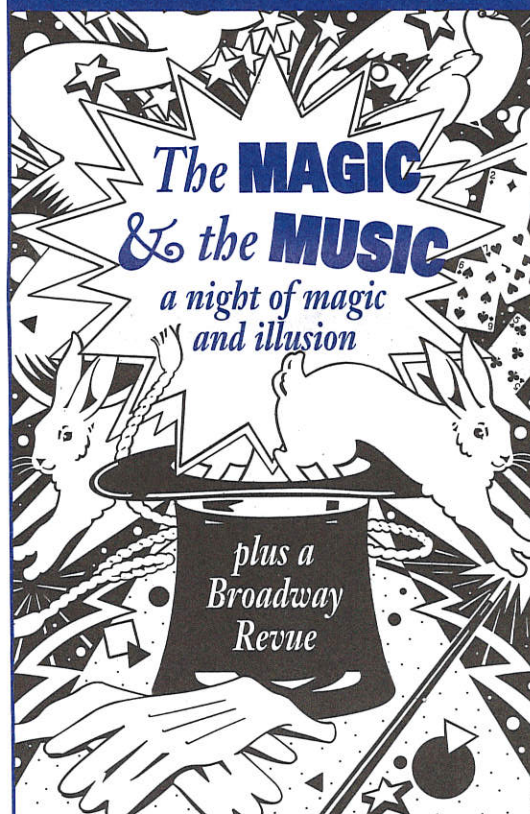
- Flexibility and strength testing
- Blood pressure screening
- Body composition (\$2)
- Cholesterol testing (\$5, includes a five-minute seated massage)
- Chair massages (\$5 for five minutes)
- Tours of Cardiac Rehab and Human Performance Center
- Raffles to win Human Performance Center memberships, t-shirts, a pulse watch and much more.

**Registration required for body composition, cholesterol screening and massages; call 610-402-CARE.**

*Also, during this week the cafeteria at Cedar Crest & I-78 will offer heart-healthy entrees. Stop by for lunch and taste delicious and nutritious meals.*



*Lehigh County Medical Society Alliance presents*



**FRIDAY, Feb. 25, 2000**  
**Brookside Country Club • 7 p.m.**

*The alliance collaborates with Turning Point to assist victims of domestic violence in their journey toward safety and self-sufficiency.*

**For information or reservations, contact Gina Reckard at 610-366-7366.**

## ATTENTION ALL EMPLOYEES! before you dial that number...

Beginning in **March 1**, all area codes on **MHC campus** will change to **484**, and **884** will be the new exchange, i.e.—**484-884-XXXX**.

*Details in February's CheckUp!*



# COMMUNICATION AT LVHHN

## — Not Just Small Talk —

**W**hether your department's scores for the communication and management items on the employee satisfaction survey were high, low or in-between, chances are you're wondering who the top performers are and what they do to earn this distinction. *CheckUp* wanted to share with readers some tips from the top, and went in search of the experts. Below are highlights from interviews with staff and managers of some of those departments, which show that, in most cases, the best practices in communication and management are achieved by consistently putting the PRIDE behaviors into action.

### ASU: Committed to Communication and Customers

The staff of the ambulatory surgery unit (ASU) at 17<sup>th</sup> share a commitment to communication and customer service that is evident throughout their unit. A large bulletin board in the staff lounge displays the network's PRIDE poster in its center, framed with e-mail printouts, meeting minutes, announcements, Press Ganey reports and patient commendation letters.

But information sharing here is more than a paper trail. Unit director Ginny Kovalovich makes face-to-face dialogue a priority through staff meetings, rounds and an open-door policy. Much of the time she uses this contact to deliver pats on the back for positive comments from patients and other accomplishments.

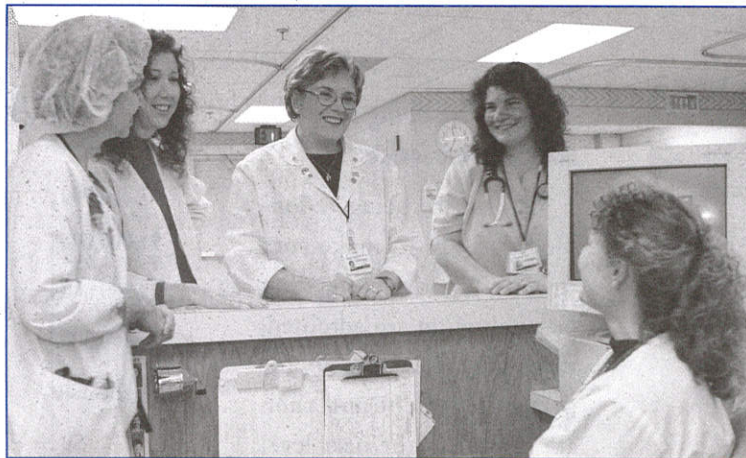
"People need to know when they're doing well," Kovalovich said, who also rolls up her sleeves to lend a hand.

When she's not there, Kovalovich's staff can reach her day or night by calling her cell or home phone, or by paging her. She'll often use e-mail to clarify rumors, praise performance or report patient volumes.

### TIPS FROM THE TOP

*Below are some practices found in departments that scored the highest in communication on the employee satisfaction survey. If they work for the best, maybe they'll also work for you.*

- Hold routine staff meetings
- Post important information on bulletin boards in staff lounges and other areas with high staff traffic
- Encourage formal/informal face-to-face dialogue
- Send, print and post e-mails
- Celebrate birthdays, milestones, other achievements
- Use humor often
- Managers work alongside staff
- Give pats on the back
- Share and post Press Ganey scores and patient letters
- Involve staff in decision making whenever possible



Ginny Kovalovich (center) stops during rounds to chat with (L-R) Laurel Taschler, Maura Kresge, Anita Ambler and Anne Brown.

### MESH/Community Health Staff: Shaping the Future

You might not expect a team that's been together for three short years to rank near the top for communication and management style. But it's the relative youth of community health and health studies' MESH initiative that makes it ideal for its members to help shape their program's future, according to Judy Sabino, vice chair, health care initiatives.

"We're starting something new together and all have a stake in creating it," she said. "There's a sense

of everyone contributing to the program." Lynn Blanchard, vice chair, community initiatives, agreed: "Everyone takes pride in the work they do."

She sees the close proximity of their offices in the School of Nursing as a boost to the team's development.

"There are lots of informal opportunities to interact, like hallway conversations and gathering spots where you see people," Blanchard said. "It's really very relationship based."

And that brings up another R-word that Blanchard claims helps solidify the team: rituals. "We celebrate birthdays at staff meetings and stress the importance of team building, both at work and outside," she said. This includes the group's occasional outing to a bowling alley to roll a few frames.

Whether they're at the office or out in the community, this team shares a simple yet powerful bond, Blanchard said: "People care about each other, like working together and believe in the work we are doing."

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## Capuano Names Two Clinical Administrators

When Terry Capuano assumed the leadership of clinical services at LVHHN in November, she began looking for "professionals with demonstrated leadership skills who are good communicators with positive attitudes" to fill the two vacant administrator positions at Cedar Crest and MHC. Last month, the senior vice president of clinical services named Anne Panik and Molly Sebastian administrator at MHC and CC, respectively. According to Capuano, each nurse brings to her new role years of clinical and supervisory experience at her respective site, as well as the respect of the staff and physicians with whom she has worked.

Panik will have day-to-day operational responsibility for MHC's 3S, 4S, ICU and the cardiovascular care unit, and the emergency departments and psychiatric units throughout the network. She will also act as the liaison with such areas as MHC's pharmacy, lab, housekeeping, food services, cancer services and in-vitro fertilization facility.

Since 1987, Panik held management positions in MHC's emergency department and ambulatory

surgery unit. "Her demonstrated leadership skill and commitment have earned her the respect and trust of all who worked with her," Capuano said.

A 25-year employee of LVH, Sebastian assumes the role of administrator for the medical/surgical and trauma divisions at CC, which include the Burn Center, special care, medical and surgical ICUs,

trauma/neuro unit, transitional trauma, 6B, 7A, dialysis and 5B/C. She previously served as director of the hospital's acute and progressive coronary care units, and transitional open heart unit.

"Molly's management talents, and her enthusiasm and energetic 'can-do' attitude have been instrumental in the implementation of new programs within clinical services," Capuano said.

Each administrator holds a BSN and master's degree, and a track record of successes that will help her forge working relationships with the clinical chairs in her respective areas, she added.

Panik and Sebastian join Cindy Heidt, cardiac and oncology services, and Mike Mueller, rehab services, on Capuano's administrative team. Capuano says she hopes to announce her choice for the ob-gyn/pediatrics administrator by the end of February. ■

*by Rob Stevens*



ANNE PANIK



MOLLY SEBASTIAN





*Lou Liebhaver*

# Issues & Initiatives

Issues & Initiatives is a series of activities providing employees with information about current health care issues at Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network.

## Financial Challenges Strike During First Five Months of FY2000

LVHHN's financial picture dimmed during the first five months of fiscal year 2000 (July-November 1999), a cause for our concern but not for drastic actions. We recently learned that despite our high inpatient and outpatient volumes, the network lost a total of \$1.1 million from the delivery of patient care.

Most of this loss came during October and November, after the network had recorded modest gains during July through September. And though we haven't received December's results yet, we have every reason to believe they won't be much brighter than the two previous months.

### Why have we lost money?

LVH had the largest losses mainly due to longer-than-expected lengths of stay and higher supply costs. The use of new medications and medical products that hadn't been approved by the institution and obtained under negotiated contracts with our vendors put LVH \$1.8 million over budget.

Ironically, we were caring for patients during this time who weren't any sicker than in the previous months, but they stayed in the hospital longer. This raised our staffing expenses nearly \$1 million higher than budgeted.

If we continue on our current pace, we will add 12,596 patient days to our length of stay, equal to \$2.4 million in added staffing and supply expenses.

MHC's revenue budget shortfalls, totaling \$1 million during these five months, were chiefly due to a slight decline in patient volumes, both inpatient and ambulatory. Fortunately, admitting only one additional patient each day to MHC will reverse this trend.

The challenges in our Health Services Division are more complex, stemming from productivity issues in Home Care and Hospice, and unexpected expenses from our Horsham Medical Products company.

In November, we discovered that products and supplies obtained as far back as FY99 hadn't been paid for. Additionally, our Home Care visits decreased significantly without a corresponding adjustment in staffing. Together, these unbudgeted costs totaled nearly \$700,000, a significant expense considering Health Services' already fragile financial condition.

### What are we doing to address these losses?

Efforts are being redoubled at LVH to make sure that only patients needing hospitalization are admitted, that they receive the appropriate treatment and then are moved to the next level of care in a timely manner.

No patient should ever be discharged before he or she is ready. And today, our network offers our patients many options to long hospital stays, options that provide comfort and promote quicker recovery, including Lehigh Valley Home Care, the Transitional Skilled Unit at 17th & Chew, and the new long-term Acute Care Hospital (LTACH) run by Good Shepherd at Cedar Crest & I-78.

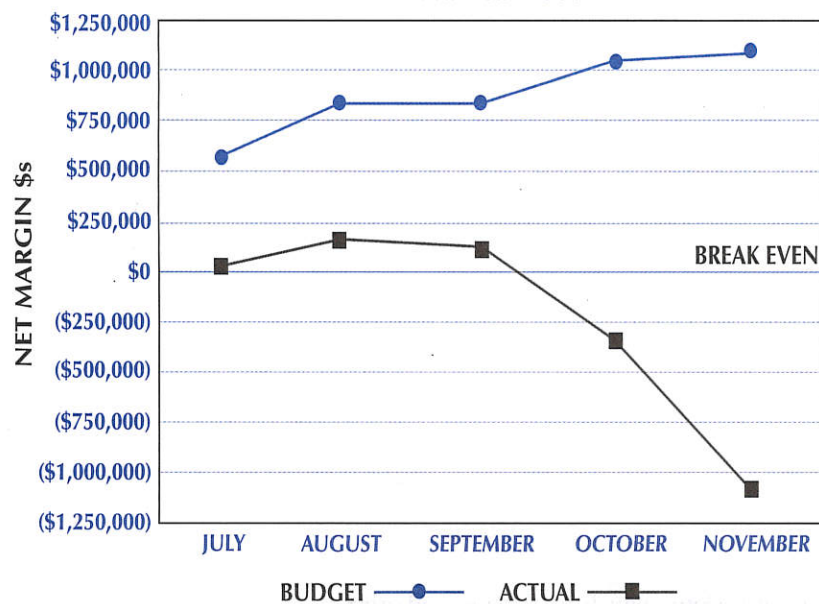
In addition, new policies and procedures for purchasing products and services have been implemented and will be strictly enforced. All items must be approved by our purchasing staff before being ordered. If something is not approved but ordered anyway, the vendor will not be paid and it will be treated as a donation to LVH. These guidelines have been made clear to the companies with whom we do business.

We are confident we'll turn around the financial struggles in Health Services, as well. Changes were made in management and some staffing areas in Home Care, Hospice and Horsham Medical Products, and we believe these first-rate members of our network will have a bright future.

### How will conserving resources and reducing excessive hospital lengths of stay help you help us?

- By having the satisfaction of doing the right thing for our patients.
- By making sure we can afford to invest in all of the things our patients need.
- By reducing stress on all the staff of working in a hospital that is too full. ■

### LVHHN Net Margin From Patient Services Fiscal Year 2000



### Each member of LVHHN can contribute to our financial success in some simple, yet important, ways.

- Work with our case managers to plan discharge goals and options for your patients.
- Encourage members of our medical staff to use our facilities, to provide the best care for their patients in collaboration with clinical staff who are second to none.
- Ask our doctors, "What can we do to make LVHHN a more attractive choice for you?" and "How can we improve service to you and your patients?" Then take their suggestions to your manager and help determine if they can be implemented.
- Encourage family, friends and neighbors to choose LVHHN for their health care needs. You are our chief ambassador in the community.
- Look for ways to cut costs during your daily work. Our Working Wonders program provides incentives for employees who discover how to change practices that result in lower costs while maintaining quality.



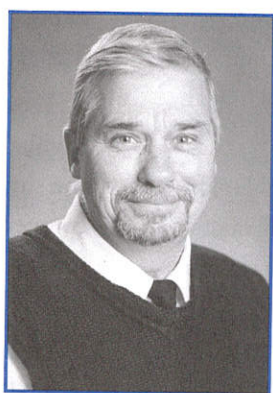
## November Service Star Always Greet Patients With a Smile

Valet attendant Dave Feist does more than park cars—he greets visitors, helps guide them to the appropriate areas and ensures that the parking lots are safe.

The emergency room patients “would be lost without him,” said Lori Keller, a registrar in the ER, where Feist often patrols.

“Always smiling and in a good mood, Dave is always out in the parking lot, in all kinds of weather, helping patients and their families,” Keller said. “He is very kind to our visitors, escorting them by wheelchair, if necessary, and making sure they get immediate attention.”

Making each interaction personal, he once gave shelter to a little girl’s pet bunny during her hospital visit. “He kept the bunny warm in the valet booth,” said Jerry Kresge, director of security. “It’s those little things that our patients appreciate.”



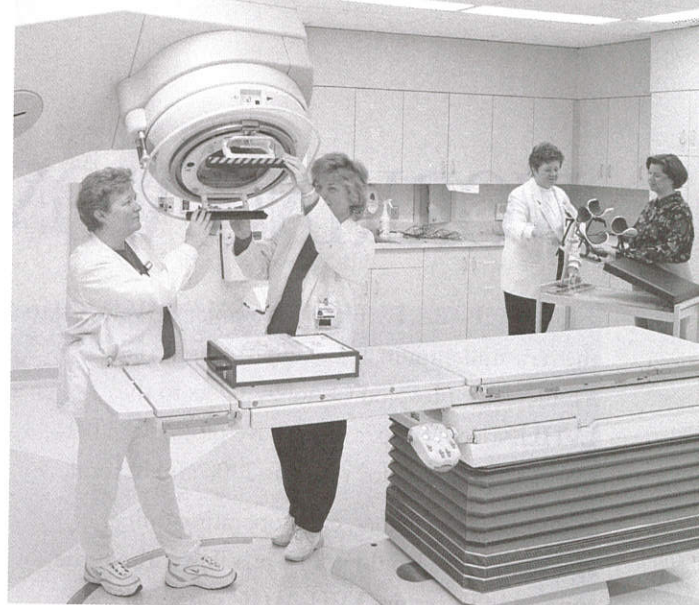
Dave Feist

This November Service Star “truly cares about the patients, more than he worries about himself sometimes,” Kresge said.

And when there’s “tough spots,” such as parking problems because of construction, “we always call on Dave,” Kresge said. “He never personalizes the complaints. He just takes care of the patients.”

An employee for 18 years, Feist began his career in linen services and with coaching from Kresge, worked his way into the security department. “He was the first guy I hired for valet parking, and I knew right away he’d do a great job,” Kresge said. “We’re lucky to have him. He really takes on the job and makes it his own.” ■

by Pamela Maurer



(Foreground L-R) Susan Stahl, radiation therapist, and Susan Eckhart, technical/administrative partner, perform a quality assurance check of the new linear accelerator in the radiation oncology suite at MHC while Darlene Matthias, director, patient care services, and Nancy Early (back right), director, radiation oncology, adjust a breast board.

## MHC Cancer Services Fully Operational

LVHHN Cancer Services at Muhlenberg Hospital Center began providing oncology services in August and became fully operational Nov. 1. With the recent addition of a linear accelerator to the new facility on the first floor of the Kolb Ambulatory Center, patients can now receive the full scope of cancer services on the MHC campus including:

- Radiation therapy
- Chemotherapy
- Blood products
- Bone marrow biopsy/aspiration
- IV infusions
- Therapeutic phlebotomy

The department is also approved for clinical trials, and has tumor registry and social work services on site. Additional services are available through LVH’s John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer Center.

Victor M. Aviles, M.D., chief of medical oncology/hematology at MHC and associate medical director of LVHHN Cancer Services, sees patients at both the new center at MHC and the Morgan Cancer Center. Radiation oncology services in the new center are provided by Allentown Radiation Oncology Associates, including Victor R. Risch, M.D., Ph.D., LVHHN’s senior medical director for radiation oncology, and his associates, Charles F. Andrews, M.D., Clinton H. Leinweber, D.O., and Steven J. Perch, M.D.

For more information, or to tour the new facility or schedule an appointment, call 610-317-5810. ■

by Melissa Wright

## DECEMBER 1999 SERVICE STAR

### She Helped a Family Cope With Tragedy



Fran Feathers, R.N.

It was a family tragedy beyond explanation when the car accident claimed the lives of a mother, a father, a grandfather and a little brother. And it took a special person—Fran Feathers, R.N., of the pediatrics unit—to help the two surviving boys and their remaining family cope with the loss.

“When the older child came into the pediatrics unit, he was alone and scared,” said Cynthia Max, R.N., director of the pediatrics unit. “His younger brother was in the TNICU, and all he asked for was that boy. He didn’t ask for anybody else. God knows what he saw...”

The questions and confusion swirled around the relatives as they dealt with the devastation: How would they explain the tragedy to the boys? How would they help them understand? Who would raise the boys?

“Fran sat with this family, helped them choose the words to use and practiced with them, hoping

somehow to make their journey less painful,” Max said. “She stayed all day and late into the evening hours, slowly leading the boys and their family through the grieving process.”

Feathers not only attended to the family’s emotional needs, but also facilitated a place for them to sleep and eat. “She coordinated the multitude of donations from the community and organized catered dinners almost every night,” Max said. “Noticing that some family members had diabetes, she arranged to have their prescriptions refilled and even picked up the medications herself.”

Her motto: “whatever it takes to ease the pain.” “The family told me they never could have gotten through the experience without Fran,” Max said.

And she continues to help ease their pain with her compassion. “She recently went to visit them in New York,” Max said. “Fran has really become part of their family. She made an unbelievable nightmare bearable for all.” ■

by Pamela Maurer



## UNITED WAY DONATIONS TOP \$219,000

When it comes to giving to the community, this year’s United Way campaign results prove that, once again, LVHHN members continue to reach beyond their prior efforts.

LVHHN staff and physician donations during the 1999 campaign exceeded \$219,000—a \$13,000 increase over 1998—which again earned the network the Community Caring Award. This is the third consecutive year that funds raised were greater than in the previous year, even though 1999’s overall participation rate slipped from 24 to 21 percent.

More than one-half of the total donations from LVHHN in 1999 came from leadership and young leadership givers. LVHHN had 88 leadership givers, who

donated \$1,000 or more to the United Way. This was up from 64 in 1998. Young leadership gifts of \$500 or higher rose from 15 to 36 between 1998 and 1999.

And no United Way Campaign would be complete without incentive prize raffles. The 1999 LVHHN drive featured over 170 drawings, of which the grand prize was a six-day, five-night stay at Treasure Island Casino in Las Vegas, valued at more than \$1,500. That was won by Brett Williamson, director of the Base Service Unit at MHC.

The top prize for a past donor who recruited a new giver, a 32-inch color TV with a price tag of \$850, went to Susan Wallaesa, dialysis coordinator at Cedar Crest and I-78. ■

by Rob Stevens



# WORKING WONDERS IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

5...4...3...2...1...Happy New Year! Welcome to the new millennium at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg Hospital Center. Cheers to the LVHHN leadership, as they have plotted the network's voyage well for the year 2000 and beyond.

But Lou Liebhaber, chief operating officer, says this course would not be possible without the support of the entire LVH-MHC crew and the contributions to the Working Wonders program under the enthusiastic leadership of management engineering coordinator Jackie Straley.

"Our employee contribution to our financial success—specifically through Working Wonders—has been very gratifying and important for both directly helping us improve our cost position and demonstrating a spirit of employee involvement," Liebhaber said.

Since the launch of the program in September 1996, employees have saved the hospital \$4.6 million, with savings climbing substantially throughout FY99 as charted at right. This boost, according to Straley, comes after the implementation of employee brainstorming sessions.

"This was the steering committee's idea," Straley said. "Their goal was to help get the word out, get people motivated, and have them start thinking about new ways of generating ideas and looking for better ways to do things."

It worked! Employees realized they could make an awful lot of money with the Working Wonders program...like the team of employees from several departments who earlier this year shared \$22,500 for their idea. They suggested that Engineering manufacture case work for the Jaindl Pavilion rather than contracting the work out. Their efforts saved LVH \$500,000.

"Reliance on a few people at the top of the organization to generate all the ideas is a dead-end street," Liebhaber said. "Capitalizing on the

intellect, creativity, energy, enthusiasm and ideas of our front-line employees is the key to a vibrant organization."

Yet as LVHHN enters the 21st century, Liebhaber says, "we've only begun to scratch the surface. Economic pressures on health care, competitive forces in the environment, and constant innovation in new drugs, technology and procedures will continue to pressure us to look at ways to increase quality and reduce costs."

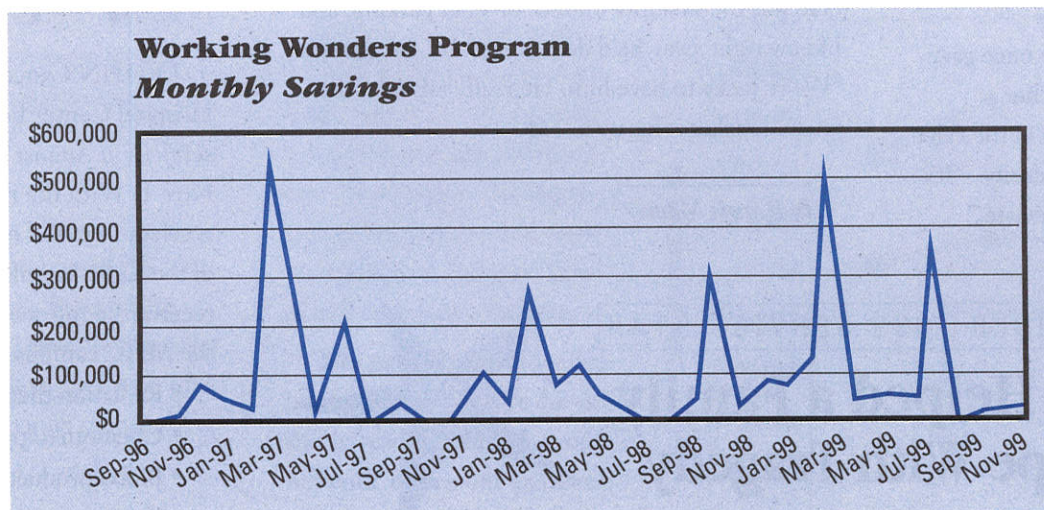
Liebhaber and Straley suggest employees and physicians join forces to question everything they do in search of a better, smarter and more cost-effective way.

"We have reaped much of the low-hanging fruit.

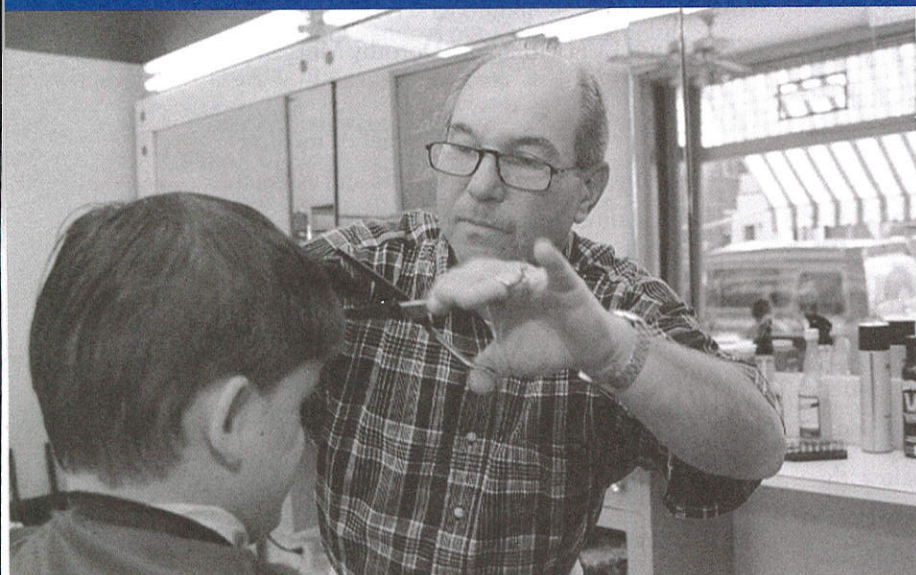
The work will get harder, but if there's any health care organization in the country that is capable of succeeding in this difficult environment, it will be ours," Liebhaber said.

Why? Because the Working Wonders program at LVH-MHC is one of the few employee idea suggestion projects in the country, Straley said. TOGETHER, we can Work Wonders. WOW—what a great concept for the new millennium! ■

by Marion Varec



## A Blood Test, an X-ray and a...Haircut



Al Saccani's barber shop is one of several retail services moving into the Jaindl Pavilion this year.

Strange as it may seem, men visiting the Diagnostic Care Center for a blood test or X-ray can now also "have their ears lowered" during the same trip. Al Saccani, a barber who flashed his scissors and his friendly smile at Al's Barber Shop near downtown Allentown for the past 30 years, opened a new shop Jan. 11 on the first floor of the Fred Jaindl Family Pavilion.

According to Lou Liebhaber, chief operating officer, this is one of several non-health care businesses planned for the newest addition at Cedar Crest.

"We want to offer some retail conveniences to our patients, physicians and staff," he said. This year, the auxiliary will also open a gift shop in the Jaindl Pavilion, specializing in items for new mothers and babies. The Starbucks coffee cart and Spectrum Pharmacy's retail store will relocate there

from the atrium of the John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer Center.

Saccani knows more about the grooming habits of many LVH physicians and managers than most people. "I've been cutting the hair of lots of doctors and

LVH staff for years," he said. "I haven't met anybody at LVH whom I didn't like."

Leaving his shop after 30 years wasn't easy, Saccani admits. But, along with fond memories of the generations of customers he has known, he moved some antique charm from his old shop to his new one: the manual cash register on which he has rung up every transaction.

His long-time customers will also find his prices familiar, because they haven't changed in years. Al charges \$13 per head, whether a customer schedules in advance, as Al prefers, or is a walk-in.

Now, that's something to make going to LVH a cut above your typical trip to the hospital. ■

by Rob Stevens

To make an appointment with Al, call 610-402-5440.

### NOTICE **ILLEGAL** or **UNETHICAL** BEHAVIOR?

LVHHN has a resource for employees—a confidential COMPLIANCE HOTLINE.

If you witness the violation of a law or regulation:

- Speak with your supervisor or manager
- Speak with your department director or vice president
- Seek guidance from your human resources consultant
- Speak with employee ombudsman **Maryann Bulishak, 610-402-8808.**
- Speak with corporate compliance officer **Beverly Snyder, 610-402-5210.**



If the issue remains unresolved, call the toll-free HOTLINE:

**1-877-895-2905**



## Communication at LVHHN

Continued from page 3

### 4S Spells It Out: RESPECT

When employees on her unit are having difficulty working together, Debbie Wilson steps out of the way and encourages them to look for a solution together.

"I tell them to work directly with each other," explained the director of 3S and 4S at MHC. "Otherwise the patient suffers."

"She takes employee complaints as seriously as patient complaints," said Robin Rittenhouse. "She stresses mutual respect." She wants to provide a positive work environment and praises her staff when they pull together as a team.

As a result, the staff have grown closer and more supportive of their co-workers, added Norma Ortiz. "Everyone supports each other through the hard times and good times. It's a good place to work. I come here with a smile and leave with a smile."

### Keeping It Light in Housekeeping

Don Hougendobler's housekeeping staff at MHC says the frequent meetings he held during the merger helped them keep calm in the face of uncertainty. He met with the housekeepers sometimes twice a



Don Hougendobler (left) helps Jason Frable buff a floor at MHC.

Though times are more settled now, Hougendobler continues to talk with staff about hospital and department issues. He made a copy of the employee survey results for each staff member, so they could take part in the action planning sessions.

He enlists their help in designing staffing and cleaning schedules, and seeks their advice on most everything related to their work. "He even asks us our opinions on cleaning products," said Donna Flurer.

week, sat with them at meals and on breaks to make sure they were OK, and invited them to stop by his office if they had a question or concern. His trademark sense of humor also softened the stress, as he kidded and cajoled the housekeepers to keep their minds off of the merger.

### 7B PCCs Support Communication

A paper tree posted in the staff lounge on 7B changes with the unit's monthly Press Ganey scores for patient satisfaction. If it's good news, the branches are covered with leaves. If scores fall, so do the leaves.

Patient care director Maryann Rosenthal knows the importance of keeping her staff focused on patient care. She tries to work alongside them whenever she can, answering call lights, giving medications, speaking with patients' families. She enjoys having contact with the caregivers and their customers.

And if staff on evenings or nights need special attention, Rosenthal and her patient care coordinators flex their schedules to work with them.

"I often ask my PCCs for advice on handling issues because they spend more time with staff," Rosenthal reported. "I have the best PCCs."

"We're here to support the staff," added Donna Polaha, a PCC on 7B. They keep them informed through team and unit meetings, one-on-one interactions, and postings of e-mails and educational information, often with the key information highlighted in yellow. ■

by Rob Stevens

# Holiday Memories

## 1999



ABOVE: Mary Lynch, R.N. (left), shares the warmth of the homey holiday scene with the two unidentified patients who painted the mural on the 6N psychiatric unit at 17th & Chew. Lynch gave encouragement and support to the painters.



ABOVE: (L-R) Shirley Wagner, R.N., Gloria Hamm, R.N., and Noreen Schlegel, R.N., members of the Professional Nurse Council (PNC), hang gift tags on the "Caring Tree." The PNC sponsored the annual collection in December, which benefits hospital employees and their families in need during the holiday season. The trees were located at the Cedar Crest, 17th Street and Muhlenberg sites, yet colleagues throughout the network made a special effort to participate. More than 100 employees and 34 network families enjoyed the gifts. Thank you to all of you that supported and contributed to the collection.



LEFT: Burn Center nurse Gloria Hamm, R.N. (right), and couriers Edwin Eschevarria (left) and John Mancinelli get ready to load and deliver Thanks "giving" cheer to needy seniors in the community. Every year the PNC Community Outreach Committee sponsors "Adopt a Senior" during the holiday season. More than 62 seniors from the Lehigh County Area Agency on Aging were helped by LVHHN employees.



## Imaginary Journey Into the Future

Continued from page 1

### Planning a Baby

Beth Kushner-Giovenco, patient care coordinator,  
Center for Mother & Baby Care

Lee Phillips, research team leader, cardiology

The couple is planning their first baby. "Their enthusiasm is a result of education that begins early in school," Kushner-Giovenco says. "Teaching goes beyond the birds and the bees and emphasizes how to make a family work."

Equally important as life skills is physical health. Genetic engineering tells if their child has potential to carry the heart disease gene. "Years ago, lasers and ultrasounds replaced surgery to clear blocked arteries," Phillips says. "Today, mom just takes a pill so the gene isn't passed on to her child."

## LEHIGH VALLEY PHYSICIAN HOSPITAL ORGANIZATION MARKS 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

The Lehigh Valley Physician Hospital Organization (LVPHO), which marked its fifth anniversary Nov. 3, offers one of the most successful provider-driven managed care plans in the state and region, according to John Jaffe, M.D., LVPHO's executive medical director. Valley Preferred covers more than 50,000 individuals and has contracts with 500 regional employers. Over 2,200 physicians and 14 hospitals participate in Valley Preferred, Jaffe said.

Jaffe and a group of other committed physicians began forming LVPHO six years ago, when it became clear to him that doctors should decide who gets admitted to the hospital, how long a patient should stay, and which medicine or treatment the patient should receive. "Our organization began as a proactive initiative to help the hospital and its doctors deal with what was thought to be the coming wave of managed care," he said.

Gregory Kile, LVPHO's executive director, described the LVPHO as "an organization that has grown considerable over the last five years, evolving into a mature, managed care organization that is providing leadership in care management efforts, in marketing the products of our preferred provider organization, Valley Preferred, in representing our membership in PennCARE and in coordinating all managed care contract negotiations and implementation.

"All this would not be possible without our hard-working, dedicated physician leadership. It was this group that, some six years ago, made a decision to pursue a strategy for collaboration." ■

by Rob Stevens

Science could also allow the couple to choose "the baby's gender and whether the child will have mom's eyes or dad's hair color," Kushner-Giovenco says. However, parents and ethicists decided some years ago that as long as the baby is healthy, they want a few surprises.

### Growing "Old"

Laurene Roth, social worker, geriatrics

Heidi Singer, nurse practitioner, geriatrics

When the older couple turned 65, they didn't retire; they began their second careers. Now in their 100s, they're still as active as ever. "Skiing and rock climbing are in vogue for this generation," Roth says.

Years of completing "homework" from their doc—a requirement of insurance companies—have helped with healthy habits, and new pharmaceuticals have eliminated disabilities from arthritis, osteoporosis and diabetes. Even when organs wear out from age, transplants are no longer needed. "A simple injection revitalizes them," Singer says.



Fashion in the future? Not quite. Heidi Singer (left) and Laurene Roth sport gloves and glasses that simulate the impairments of vision loss and immobility that people experience with age today. If seniors stay healthier in the years ahead, as these women predict, the props may become hip retro Halloween costumes instead.

"In fact, the 'whipper snappers,' those who are 40 and 50, look forward to being octogenarians," Roth says. "It's revered to have all that experience and knowledge." ■

by Pamela Maurer

**Want to Know More?** To continue your journey into the future and learn how LVHNN is getting there...



Check out the network's community service report 1999 on the Intranet at [www.LVH.com](http://www.LVH.com).

## Celebrating 2000 at LVHNN

*In the time it took to say "Happy New Year" at midnight, the region's first baby of 2000, and the very last New Year's baby at 17<sup>th</sup> & Chew, made his debut.*

*At one second after midnight, Margaret Vazquez and Carlyle Bullen of East Stroudsburg became the proud parents of little Stephen Carlenni Bullen—born 7 pounds, 6 ounces.*

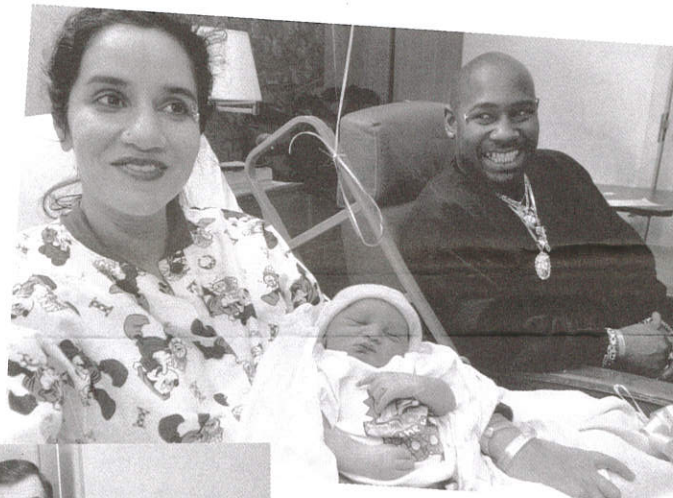


Photo: Don Fisher/The Morning Call



Look forward to next month's **CheckUp**, featuring the staff's hard work on the Jandl Pavilion opening, along with the first baby born in the new Center for Mother & Baby Care!

Along with the new year, LVH celebrated the dedication of the new Fred Jandl Family Pavilion on Jan. 6 with Governor Tom Ridge. "The opening of the Jandl Pavilion launches a new legacy of health care for the Lehigh Valley," Ridge said to a crowd of more than 200. Shown here with local farmer and businessman Fred Jandl (far left), LVH president and CEO Elliot Sussman, M.D., and board president Kathryn Taylor, the governor (center) cuts the ribbon to the Jandl Pavilion.

### SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations to those employees celebrating January 2000 service anniversaries!**  
**Thank you for your continuing service to LVHNN.**

*Service anniversaries for this month will be listed on e-mail. Department heads, please print and post service anniversaries in your departments for your staff who don't have computer access.*

### Employees are invited to a DESSERT SOCIAL

...to visit the

**Good Shepherd  
Specialty Hospital**

**Wednesday, FEB. 16, 2000**

3-5 p.m. • 6th floor

Lehigh Valley Hospital, CC&I-78

If you have news or a story idea for **CheckUp This Month**, send your suggestion by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month for publication in the following month to Rob Stevens, editor, public affairs, 1770 Bathgate, using interoffice mail or e-mail. **CheckUp This Month** is an employee publication of Lehigh Valley Health Network's public affairs department. For additional information, call 610-317-4819. Lehigh Valley Health Network is an equal opportunity employer. M/F/D/V **Want to read CheckUp on-line? Open LVHNN's intranet page—www.LVH.com—and click on the CheckUp logo.**

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