

CheckUp

this month

INVEST
IN
FUTURES

UNITED WAY
1998 Campaign

Oct. 15-30

See page 8.

VOL. 11, NO. 10 • OCTOBER 15, 1998

LVHHN Intranet Expands Internal Communications Potential

IT'S A JUNGLE OF INFORMATION OUT THERE, OFTEN HARD TO MANAGE AND SOMETIMES DOWN-RIGHT INTIMIDATING. AT HOME AND at work, you have to record, access and keep track of names, numbers, technical data, schedules and much more. Not surprisingly, data overload is common in this information age.

Managing job-related details just became potentially much easier at LVHHN with the launch of the organization's new intranet. A close relative of the Internet, the intranet is a computer-based internal communications tool with different levels of access and possibilities that are nearly limitless.

The construction and use of the intranet are similar to those of the Internet. To "surf" the internal web requires a browser like Netscape Navigator. Just point to it and click, and you're on-line, able to enter the common areas of the intranet and those for which you are an authorized user.

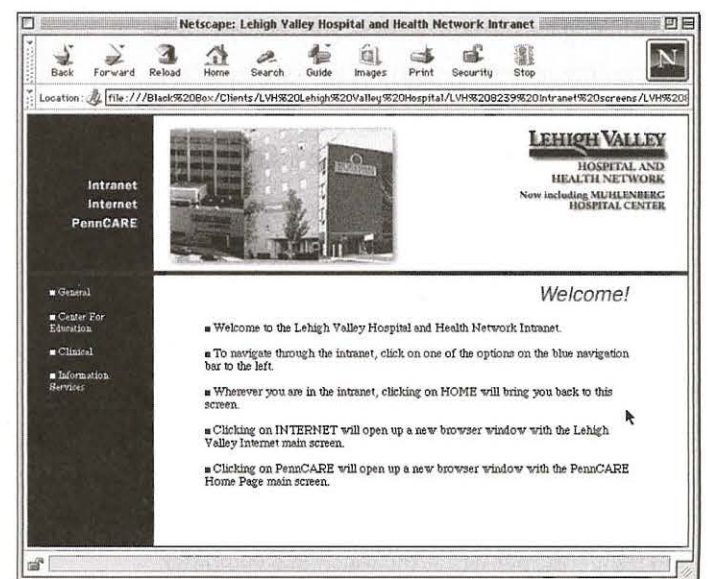
First stop is the LVHHN intranet "home page," which lists all existing passageways, destinations and information, including access to the Internet, E-mail, the PennCARE website and all current departmental home pages. The information services page explains how to use the intranet, with a special focus on creating a home page.

According to Ray Miller, manager of technology initiatives, the LVHHN intranet is starting small and slowly. "It's a work-in-progress. As individuals, teams and departments discover its potential, the intranet will grow in content and usefulness."

Currently, the intranet is read-only and contains publications like *CheckUp this month*, the monthly Press, Ganey reports, care pathways, medical texts and other resources. The eight-volume primary care reference books published by Lippincott-Raven provide comprehensive explanations and guidelines at the click of a mouse. Plans to make the intranet interactive will begin next year, Miller added.

About 1,000 of the 3,500 work stations in the network have browsers that enable them to use the web. And, with the replacement of Windows with the new NT operating system, all computers will be browser-equipped.

"Many multi-site organizations have intranets because they make communicating easier," Miller continued. "The



LVHHN's intranet home page

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"Cath Lab on Film" — (L to R) Troy Swartz, Diane Conley, Tom Gavigan and Brian Mory get exposed to big bucks for their Working Wonders project.

GUY ROSEVELT CAN'T WAIT TO POCKET THE \$900 HE IS EXPECTING TO EARN FROM WORKING WONDERS. "I'M GOING TO DISNEY WORLD!" HE said with a chuckle. "Um, isn't that what you're supposed to say when you get cash from Working Wonders?"

Well, maybe Rosevelt isn't really going to Disney World, but he could if he wanted to. "Oh, I'll definitely find something to do with the money," he said. "And it'll be better than Disney."

Rosevelt, a mechanic in engineering, is one of many who is earning cold hard cash for cost saving ideas. Rosevelt discovered a way to save about \$9,000 in the preventive maintenance of OR sterilization equipment.

Want Some Mo' Money? Learn from Working Wonder\$ Winners

"Three times a year, we replace parts to prevent the equipment from breaking, but I noticed that we were throwing away perfectly good parts," he said. "So we're going to reduce the schedule to twice a year and see how that works. Working Wonders is just a great incentive to look for ways to save money."

Cheryl Kennedy knows that. She scored \$178.

Kennedy, a pharmacy technician, found that refrigerating Nimbox IV medicine for 30 days will save \$1,778. "Because it's a new drug, we relied on the package insert, which indicated that Nimbox is stable for only a few hours. So we were discarding a lot of left over solution," she said. "Then I just happened to read about the refrigeration in a magazine. I was totally psyched."

A team from the cath lab is "totally psyched" about Working Wonders too. They earned a cool \$800 each for their idea to save \$27,307 by not wasting film. Diane Conley, coordinator of support services; Tom Gavigan, a technician; Carl Andreas, an imaging specialist; Brian Mory, coordinator of

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LEHIGH VALLEY
HOSPITAL AND
HEALTH NETWORK

LVHHN Intranet

Continued from page 1

network-wide E-mail system we've used over the past several years was a basic intranet, without the multiple levels of security and other sophisticated features included on advanced intranets."

Information commonly found on intranets include phone directories, policies and procedures, inter- and intra-departmental documents, meeting schedules, the organization's newsletter and many other resources.

Dean Shaffer, media specialist in the Center for Education, Development and Support (CEDS), says his department plans to put "everything we possibly can" on the intranet. This includes multimedia tests and training for medical students and residents, continuing education programs, text books, journal lists and other clinical resources. "This provides a world-wide educational opportunity for the institution," he explained.

"Each department's use of the intranet resources will be driven by its needs and the needs of its key customers," Miller noted. "And it will be up to the department to keep its site accurate and up-to-date."

Putting the drug formulary on-line is one of Fred Pane's top priorities. The director of LVHHN's pharmacy says having the list of approved medicines and their costs per day at the touch of a computer keyboard will help physicians order drugs more

accurately and cost effectively, replacing the bulky binders that get lost and are often obsolete.

"The intranet-based formulary will be user-friendly and easy to update from a single location," Pane said. "Eventually it will eliminate the need for a binder on the patient care unit and in the pharmacy." ■

by Rob Stevens

Surfing the intranet

TO ACCESS LVHHN'S INTRANET:

- ▶ Go to the Program Manager screen of your computer.
- ▶ Click on Netscape Navigator.
- ▶ Your first stop is the LVHHN intranet home page.
- ▶ Click on the "tool bar" on the left of the page to continue.

TO DEVELOP A HOME PAGE FOR YOUR DEPARTMENT:

- ▶ Contact your department's info services analyst.
- ▶ Be sure to follow the Policies and Procedures for using the intranet.

Working Wonders

Continued from page 1

information and statistics; and Troy Swartz, formerly of supplier services (now operations manager of Health Page), worked together to make the project work.

"We sat in a meeting and brainstormed about ways to save money and realized that we were throwing a lot of film away," Conley said. "We used to change the film cassette for every patient. Now, we just splice it and use the excess for the next patient. This saves us about a roll a day."

Working with a team, Conley said, helped the process go smoothly. "It's great because we bounced ideas off each other, and worked it out," she said. "We also have an operations improvement committee that meets regularly, and we have a lot more ideas coming through our department."

Remember, more ideas means more money! Oh and by the way, the phone number for Disney World is (407) W-DISNEY. You just might need it one day. ■

by Pamela Maurer

Benefits Update

Waiting for Direct Deposit? Here's the Payoff!

You've wanted direct deposit but couldn't have it because of the LVHHN payroll program, right? Well, payday is about to get much easier.

Starting in January, LVHHN will be able to execute direct deposits with nearly all local and many out-of-state banks and credit unions. (Note: This benefit will be extended to MHC and MRC employees in the spring when their payroll system is converted to LVHHN's "PeopleSoft" program.)

Open enrollment for direct deposit takes place until Nov. 30. To find out if you can take advantage of this option, just call your bank or credit union. If they can accept the transfer of an ACH file, you're in business. In most cases, the deposit to your account will be made on Friday of pay week—the same day your check is currently dated.

You'll also need to complete an "Authorization Agreement for Direct Deposit" form and forward it to the LVHHN payroll department, human resources, John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer Center. After Oct. 22, the office will relocate to the 1770 Building, so you'll need to send it to the new address. Copies of this form will be supplied with paychecks on Oct. 22, or you can call payroll, ext. 0795, to obtain one.

Need Child Care?

The LVH Child Care Center at CC & I-78 has vacancies in most age groups. The center provides a safe, loving and nurturing environment to the children of LVHHN employees and is now welcoming children of MHC and MRC staff. For more information, please attend an open house at the center, Oct. 20, 5:30-6:30 p.m., or call 402-8969. ■

ABOUT OUR PEOPLE...

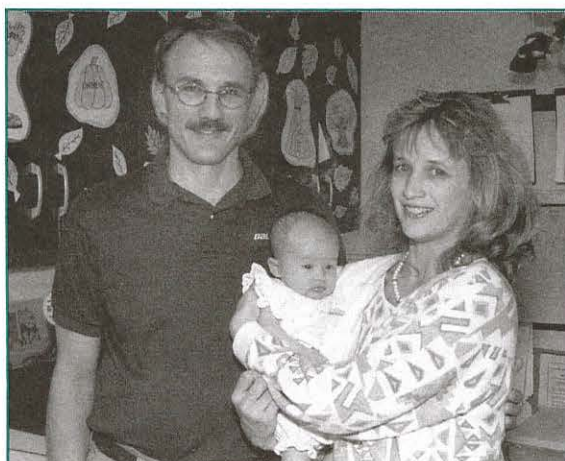


Marie Shaw, director, LVHHN Women's Services and executive director of the Spirit of Women Foundation, was recently named the first recipient of the

Lehigh Valley Keystone Award given by the Allentown-Lehigh County Chamber of Commerce. She was chosen for her efforts in advancing women's health issues, particularly through the development of the Spirit of Women initiative, which has grown into a national program in partnership with *Prevention Magazine* and more than 14 other hospital systems.

According to the Allentown-Lehigh County Chamber of Commerce, the Keystone Award was created "to honor those individuals and companies that unite us, serve as role models or guides, are central to our economic success or remind us to take time and stop and smell those roses."

The LVH pharmacy and pediatrics department received the 1998 Innovative Practice Award from the Mideastern Chapter of the Pennsylvania Society of Health-System Pharmacists for their project, "Reduction of Adverse Drug Events in a Pediatric Unit." This honor was announced at the society's meeting in September, also where pharmacy staff **Cheryl Kennedy, C. Ph.T.**, was named Technician of the Year, and **Janine Barnaby, R.Ph.**, received the Community Service Award.



Tim, Natalie Elizabeth and Stephanie Kita

My husband, Tim Kita and I would like to thank the LVH staff for their kindness during these past few months. I feel very fortunate to work with such outstanding people. Your support and prayers helped us get through a very difficult period in our lives.

A special thanks to those who participated in the bake sale. My husband is recovering at home and his outlook is very good. Our daughter, Natalie Elizabeth, was born July 21, 1998 and weighed 7 lbs. 13 oz. Thanks to the physicians and staff, our family is intact.

— Stephanie Kita

(Editor's note: Tim Kita was shot by a disgruntled employee in June while working at a local food distribution company. His wife Stephanie, an employee on 7A, was eight months pregnant at the time.)

Joan Pirog Earns Spirit of Women Award

Certified nurse practitioner Joan Pirog looks into the eyes of the pregnant teenager sitting across from her at Vida Nueva. "Now," she says, "are you back in school yet?"

The young girl doesn't say anything. She just shakes her head "no."

Pirog pulls a little closer. "You promised me the last time you were here that you would be enrolled. You need to take care of this."

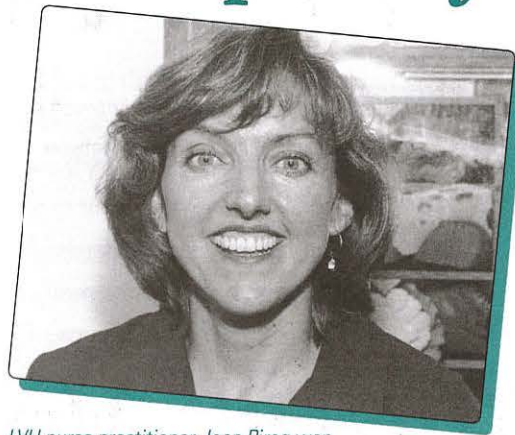
"Yeah, I know," the girl says quietly. "I will."

But will she? Yes, if Joan Pirog has her way.

"This really upsets me that it's already October, and she isn't back in school," Pirog said. "I can't make her do anything, but I'm going to keep bugging her. I plan to meet with her mother and her boyfriend, and hopefully, we can all work out a plan."

Pirog takes the phrase Vida Nueva — "new life" — to heart. Everyday, she touches the lives of the low-income and teenaged mothers-to-be she treats at Vida Nueva, a LVHHN clinic operated with Casa Guadalupe. And for that, Pirog earned the 1998 Spirit of Women Award in the health care provider category.

Pirog joins Michél Lloyd and Megan Ritter, both of Bethlehem, who were community recipients honored as part of the Spirit of Women conference earlier this month. Spirit of Women 1998, an initiative of LVHHN, was sponsored by PP&L Inc. and hosted by Cedar Crest College.



LVH nurse practitioner Joan Pirog won the 1998 Spirit of Women Award in the health care provider category.

Lloyd, Ritter and Pirog are among 45 other regional Spirit of Women award winners who will be recognized at a national forum in 1999. From the regional winners, three will be chosen as national winners.

"I've known Joan for eight years, and she is one of the most positive people I have ever met," said Marie Shaw, director of Women's Health Services. "She does whatever she can to help pregnant teenagers get their lives back on track, even if it means visiting them at home or coming in on her day off. She is somebody that could certainly be recognized on a national level."

Helping others is so important to Pirog that she personally scrubbed floors, painted and stenciled walls and hunted up used furniture to get the clinic off the ground. She's even learning Spanish to communicate better with the Latino families she serves.

"It's hard for many of these girls to trust someone that's not Hispanic," said Damarie Lugo, an outreach worker for the Perinatal Partnership. "But I've seen the way Joan hugs them when they're given unpleasant news. They feel comfortable opening up to her. They just adore her."

Pirog entered health care as a nursing home assistant — the only job available to her at that time. "I wound up loving it, even when I had to work holidays," Pirog said.

That commitment helped her through her biggest challenge in 1993. In a single year, she finished her master's degree, gave birth to twins and suddenly became primary caregiver and sole breadwinner when her husband, Peter, suffered a severe work injury.

"Even during the busiest times Joan has always been available for others," said Vida Nueva medical assistant Tami Jackson. "I've really learned a lot from her."

Today, Pirog's husband is fully recovered, the twins are in kindergarten and she is enjoying her family and her time at Vida Nueva. As always, "new life" will continue to be her mission. "I just love working with women," she said, "and I plan to do it for the rest of my life." ■

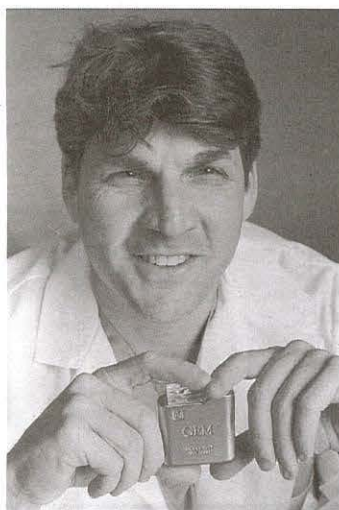
by Pamela Maurer

LVH Electrophysiologists Test New Arrhythmia Device

LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL ELECTROPHYSIOLOGISTS RECENTLY ENROLLED THE first patients in the region in a research study of a first-of-its-kind device designed to identify and treat any rhythm disturbance of the heart. Electrophysiologists are cardiologists who specialize in treating the heart's electrical system.

The Jewel AF defibrillator/pacemaker is a two-in-one device that can correct disturbances originating in the bottom, or ventricle, of the heart, as well as the top, or atrium. The most common of these conditions are atrial fibrillation, a rapid, uncomfortable beat that can be disabling or cause a stroke, and ventricular tachycardia, an often life-threatening, too-fast irregular heartbeat.

The Jewel AF device is approved by the Food and Drug Administration only for investigational use in the United States, though it has been routinely used in Europe since July. LVH is one of 10 research sites in the country participating in phase one of the study, which focuses on testing the dual capabilities of the device. This phase, during which LVH



Electrophysiologist Steve Zelenkofske, D.O., is testing the effectiveness of the Jewel AF device in treating cardiac rhythm problems.

electrophysiologists Steve Zelenkofske, D.O., and Luis Constantin, M.D., expect to enroll 20 patients, will continue until next summer. The second phase will study the Jewel AF's effectiveness in treating atrial fibrillation only. Zelenkofske, LVH's principal researcher in the study, says the Jewel AF offers great benefits to persons with any kind of heartbeat abnormality. "This device has the potential to do everything we need it to do for arrhythmias: identify the specific disturbance and treat it appropriately," he explained.

Cardiac defibrillators have been used routinely since the 1980s to treat abnormal ventricular conditions, while pacemakers were implanted to correct slow heartbeats. "The Jewel AF essentially combines the capabilities of both a defibrillator and pacemaker, a real plus since 40 to 60 percent of patients with ventricular disturbances already have or will develop atrial arrhythmias," Zelenkofske said. "The device also can perform EKGs (electrocardiograms) to record the heart's electrical activity."

Both patients enrolled at LVH this summer had

Home Health Services Improves Referral Process

IN AN EFFORT TO TAKE CARE OF THE "CUSTOMERS" IN YOUR LIFE, IT'S IMPORTANT NOT TO OVERLOOK MEMBERS OF YOUR OWN FAMILY.

That's exactly the philosophy of a new referral system LVHHN's Home Health Services has developed. Now, it is much easier for members of LVHHN to make a referral to Lehigh Valley Home Care, Lehigh Valley Hospice, Health Spectrum Pharmacy or Health Spectrum Medical Products.

"It's one simple process now," said Sue Horwath, clinical resource manager (CRM), who arranges care for patients being discharged from the hospital. "By the time the patient is walking out the door, the home health providers have the information they need for a smooth transition in care."

"Referrals for all offices are called into 610-402-2166," said Michelle Beck, business manager, Home Care. An automated answering system directs callers to choose from: respiratory and medical equipment, answered by a customer service representative; home infusion therapy and other pharmaceutical services, answered by a pharmacist or an infusion nurse; home health and hospice, answered by a registered nurse.

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Lou Liebhaber, COO

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.

Thank You! Gracias! Merci! Danke! YOU JUST CAN'T SAY IT ENOUGH...

"THANKS" IS SOMETHING WE ALL NEED TO SAY AND HEAR MORE OFTEN. THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT THE importance of showing appreciation to each other, our physician partners and our customers, especially these days with our demanding work loads and many priorities. Research confirms the need to thank people OFTEN for their efforts, and there are many ways to do it: a pat on the back, a nice compliment to someone's supervisor or a monetary reward, are just a few.

The Thanksgiving holiday this year will have added meaning for LVH staff. Near the end of November, all eligible hospital employees will receive a check rewarding them for helping the hospital meet its fiscal year 1998's Shared Success Plan (SSP) goals.

In the first year of LVH's SSP, our team rose to the challenge and raised our Press, Ganey score for "likelihood of recommending the hospital" above the minimum target and reduced our expense per adjusted admission close to the SSP maximum. Let's celebrate this achievement!

This reward is senior management's way of thanking LVH staff for their partnership during FY98. You share our vision, challenges, disappointments and successes in caring for our community, despite staffing, financial and work changes. Together, we overcame seemingly insurmountable odds by keeping our collective sights on the outcomes we seek: improved patient care at reduced costs.

The Shared Success Plan was implemented last year with the new compensation plan as a way for LVH staff to earn fiscal year-end payments when the organization achieves patient satisfaction and financial targets, which include a net from patient revenues and reduced patient expense per adjusted discharge. LVPG and the Health Services division have separate incentive programs and don't participate in the LVH SSP.

To qualify for this payout, an LVH employee must:

- Be employed by LVH prior to January 1998;
- Maintain individual performance that is evaluated as "totally achieves expectations" or better;
- Maintain an employment status of .4 FTE (32 hours per pay) or above;
- Not be a participant in any other approved incentive plan; and
- Be employed on the date of the payout and have no active disciplinary issues. Employees on leave of absence on date of payout will be eligible for the lump-sum payment on return to work.

LVH faced extraordinary financial and staffing pressures last year, but you responded with your inspiring commitment and 'can-do' attitude. The organization has chosen to acknowledge our collective efforts in caring for our patients, though we didn't meet our overall bottom line from patient services target, which was a requirement for the incentive payout. The FY99 SSP reward will require the achievement of the three targets.

This year (FY99), our Muhlenberg Hospital Center colleagues are also participating in the SSP, with similar goals. MHC's Press, Ganey targets for "likelihood of recommending the hospital" are: threshold—40th percentile; target—50th percentile; maximum—70th percentile. And because the MHC and LVH budgets aren't yet integrated, Muhlenberg will also have specific targets for expense per adjusted case: \$4,416 (budget); \$4,372 (target); \$4,284 (maximum).

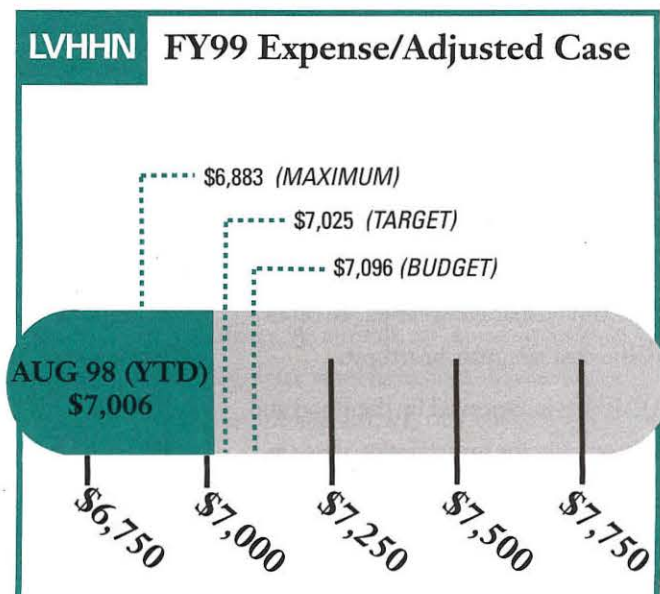
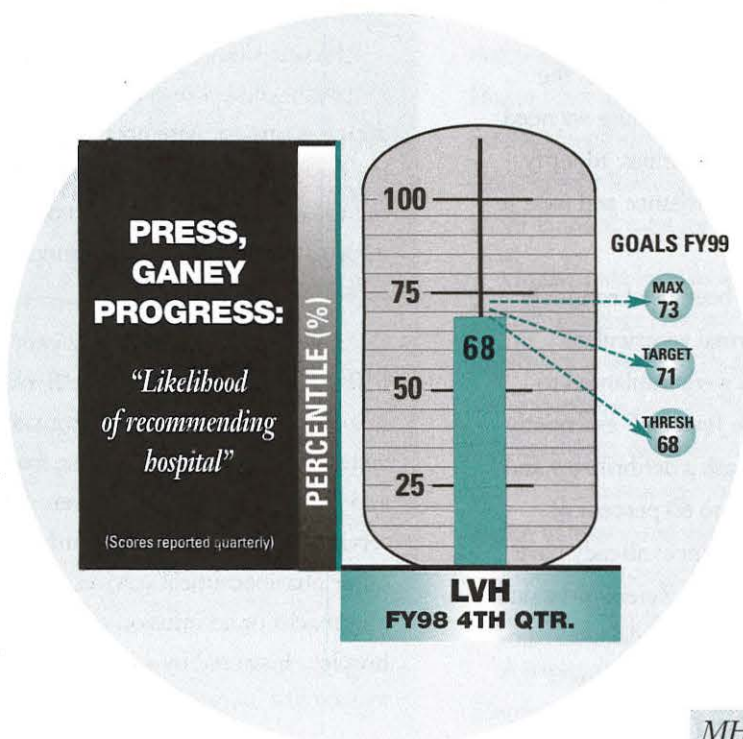
As reported in August's CheckUp, LVH's patient satisfaction targets are: threshold—68th percentile; target—71st percentile; maximum—73rd percentile.

The expense per adjusted case goals for LVH are: \$7,096 (budget); \$7,025 (target); \$6,883 (maximum).

Achieving these goals depends on all of us working together in a customer-focused manner. I'm confident we'll rise to the challenge this year with renewed vigor and creativity. The road isn't smooth and flat by any means; we have challenging months ahead. Let's face them united and strengthened by our shared commitment and the momentum from FY98's success!

On behalf of our organization, thank you for your untiring service to our customers. ■

Progress towards the Shared Success Plan goals will be reported routinely in CheckUp using the charts below.



MHC progress will be reported in November's CheckUp.

SERVICE STAR MAKES LASTING FRIENDSHIPS WITH PATIENTS

"They Never Forget Amy Potter"

WHEN A YOUNG, POOR FOREIGN GIRL MET WITH FINANCIAL COUNSELOR AMY POTTER ABOUT UNPAID HOSPITAL BILLS last winter, Potter didn't pressure her to pay. Instead, she invited the girl and her daughter to stay at her home to ease their financial burden.

Potter clothed them, fed them and finally, helped the girl repair her old car and get a job at Perkin's Restaurant. With Potter's encouragement, the girl got her life on track, enrolled in the community college and found a place she can call her own.

"There are just so many stories like this about Amy Potter," said Sandy Colon, director of patient accounting. "Some people might think that as a financial counselor Amy is trying to get a bill paid, but that is not at all what she is about. Amy often supports these people right from her own pocketbook."

During the last 24 years at Lehigh Valley Hospital, Potter has been more than a helping hand and kind face to those who are unable to pay or understand their medical bills. She has been a friend. And for that, she has earned September's Service Star Award.

"She has hundreds of thank-you notes from the people she has helped over the last two decades," Colon said. "Many of these families continue to write Amy, visit her and invite her into their homes."

There was the Amish couple who faced an hour-long journey each day to visit their severely burned son. Potter arranged for them to stay with a local family and eat free in the hospital cafeteria.



Amy Potter
September's Service Star

In another case, Potter made sure a 4-year-old received anti-seizure medicine at no cost to her uninsured mother. The woman was running from an abusive husband and didn't want to sign up for welfare, for fear the man would find her.

And when another family lost their baby son soon after birth and didn't have money to bury the child, Potter encouraged a local funeral director to donate a plot and perform the burial service at no charge.

"Amy has such a way with people," Colon said. "She can deal with anybody from the flip 16-year-old to the 80-year-old who needs spoon feeding. She'll do whatever she can to get them the help they need, even if it means taking them into her own home. Amy Potter IS customer service." ■

by Pamela Maurer

LVH Sonographer Writes BEST-SELLING BOOKS

BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW THAT A BEST-SELLING AUTHOR works right here at Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network? This writer's first book is so popular that it has been sold in Europe and translated into Polish and Italian.

Janice Hickey, ultrasonographer at Lehigh Valley Hospital, CC&I-78, has written two ultrasound review guides published by Lippincott-Raven Publishers. Hickey collaborated with Frank Goldberg, M.D., a radiologist/pathologist she worked with at Toronto General Hospital in Canada.

The first book, *Ultrasound Review of Obstetrics and Gynecology* published in 1996, is approaching the bestseller threshold for a medical book with nearly 3,000 copies sold. The second book, *Ultrasound Review of Abdomen, Male Pelvis & Small Parts*, was released last month. Hickey wrote both books for student and professional sonographers, residents and radiologists.

The seed to write the books was planted when Hickey was a student studying for tests at Mohawk College, Ontario, where she received her sonography diploma.

"At that time I was unable to find a comprehensive review book that covered all the topics with which I was required to be familiar," Hickey said. "I therefore had to accumulate a vast assortment of review articles, handwritten lecture notes, correspondence course material, materials from seminars and conferences and various textbooks that were informative but too



Ultrasonographer Janice Hickey holds up the two ultrasound review guides that she has written. Published by Lippincott-Raven Publishers, the books are titled *Ultrasound Review of Obstetrics and Gynecology* and *Ultrasound Review of Abdomen, Male Pelvis & Small Parts*.

elaborate for review purposes. Valuable time was wasted sorting through and organizing all the materials to produce something from which I could review."

Hickey describes the books as having lots of images and as few words as possible.

"A picture is worth a thousand words, particularly in what we do," she said. "These books presume a basic knowledge and provide a simple reminder of what we need to know, not necessarily what is nice to know," Hickey said. "I like to think of these books as having the information that you highlight in other texts."

Despite her success, Hickey isn't ready to give up her day job, she said. Writing medical books is not something you do to make money, but it is a very interesting learning experience. Working with a publisher is uncommon for someone in her field, but she would recommend it to anyone who has a lot of time and determination.

"It has been a fun surprise that both books have had this much success," Hickey said.

Surprises are one thing the Canadian-born Hickey is full of. While in Canada, Hickey traveled for eight months as part of a federal government (Canadian) medical team. With her ultrasound machine, she flew in small aircrafts and helicopters to provide medical assistance to remote Indian reservations in the Arctic regions.

Now, *that's* a topic for another book. ■

by Mary DeHaven

The Week the Computer Network Went Down... WHAT HAPPENED?

ONE MINUTE THE STAFF OF INFORMATION SERVICES (IS) WAS TESTING THEIR DISASTER PROCEDURE. THE NEXT THEY almost had a disaster on their hands.

In the eight days following the early August "test," the 5,000 employees of Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network were locked out of their computers and at times, flooding IS with 100 phone calls an hour.

"We turned the system off to test the disaster procedure and when we brought it back up, that's when everything began," said Harry Lukens, chief information officer. "Management and network staff were here literally working around the clock trying to find the problem. We had no sleep and were living on coffee and pizza."

One of LVH's 9,000 devices (printers, print servers, main frames) was flooding the system with messages, causing a "traffic jam" throughout the network. By using a sniffer device and bringing the system down in segments, IS began a laborious process of elimination to find out which one.

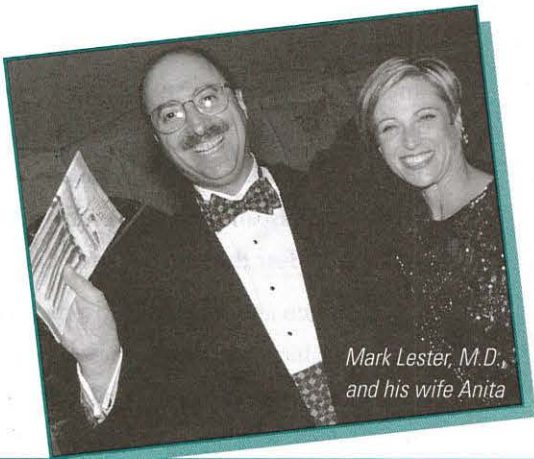
"The network is the nerve center of the hospital, so everyone in IS was very tense," Lukens said. "Trying to pinpoint the problem was like playing hide-and-seek in the Empire State Building. After five days, we were prepared to declare a 'real' system disaster."

In a disaster, IS calls on a recovery company in Philadelphia, which has replicas of LVH's hardware and files. "This way we can look for the problem, and people can still use their computers," Lukens said. "But it costs \$25,000 a day, so it's absolutely the last decision we make."

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NITE LITES on CAMPUS

Glitz & Glamour



Mark Lester, M.D.,
and his wife Anita



Robert Murphy, M.D.,
and Meg McGettigan



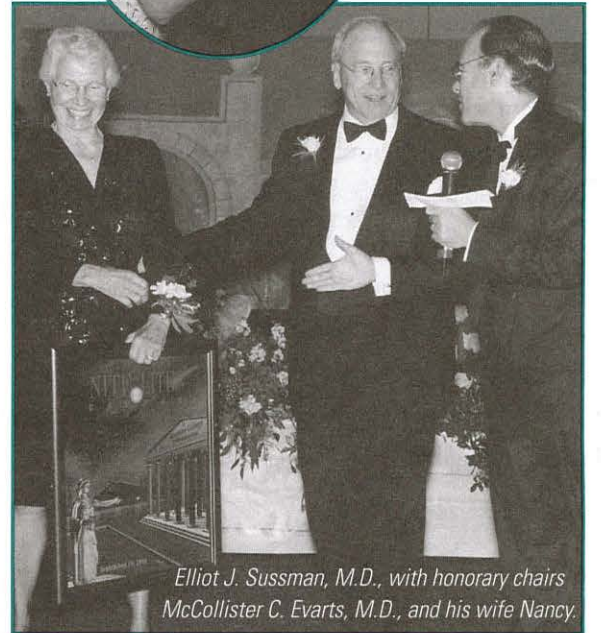
(L-R) John Hart, Diana & Greg Kile, and Jim & Lisa Dunleavy

were definitely the words to describe Nite Lites on Campus, LVHHN's major fund-raising event, which took place on the grounds of Allentown College on Sept. 19.

More than 950 guests browsed over 275 silent auction items, socialized, enjoyed a marvelous dinner prepared by The Wood Company and danced to the sounds of the Bill Harrington Orchestra.

The evening netted over \$200,000, which will benefit the Center for Educational Development and Support.

Congratulations to all who made it happen!



Elliot J. Sussman, M.D., with honorary chairs
McCollister C. Everts, M.D., and his wife Nancy

Wendy Rothrock,
Marie Shaw and
Elliot Sussman, M.D.,
"get down" to
the music.



Integra Business Systems' table



Your Decision To Vote May Affect Your Job

THINK ELECTIONS AREN'T IMPORTANT?
THINK WHAT HAPPENS IN WASHINGTON
REALLY DOESN'T AFFECT YOU MUCH?

Think again.

More than half — 53 percent to be precise — of Lehigh Valley Hospital's budget comes from Medi-care and Medical Assistance. Departments such as Home Care and Hospice depend highly on Medicare and Medical Assistance, with about three-quarters of their combined revenue coming from government sources.

Legislation such as the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 can greatly affect the amount of reimbursement Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network receives for services provided to Medicare and Medical Assistance patients.

For example, Lehigh Valley Hospital will receive

The Lehigh Valley has attracted national attention due to the large number of vacant seats including the 15th Congressional District which covers all of Lehigh and Northampton counties.

\$5 million less in Medicare reimbursement this year as the result of the Balanced Budget Act. Combine that with reductions of \$900,000 for Lehigh Valley Home Care and Lehigh Valley Hospice, \$500,000 for Muhlenberg Hospital Center and \$300,000 for Muhlenberg Rehabilitation Center and you get a FY99 shortfall total for LVHHN of \$6.7 million.

On the state level as well, our elected officials can greatly influence how we work. In June, the state legislature passed the Health Care Accountability and Protection Act (SB 91), which will regulate managed care. Similarly, a legislator representing part of Allentown and Salisbury Township is sponsoring legislation to ensure that Medical Assistance is sufficiently funded and managed to ensure adequate care for patients with special health care needs.

A trip to the polls next month is worth your time. Elections are expected to be close due to the number

of elected officials who have chosen not to seek re-election to the same office. In fact, the Lehigh Valley has attracted national attention because of the large number of vacant seats, including the 15th Congressional District, which covers all of Lehigh and Northampton counties. The position is being vacated by U.S. Congressman Paul McHale, who decided not to seek re-election.

McHale decision has created a domino effect as other elected officials have been seeking higher offices. As a result, an unusually high number of state legislator seats have been vacated including the two state senate districts that cover the majority of the Lehigh Valley. ■

by Mary DeHaven

Electrophysiologists Test Arrhythmia

Continued from page 3

suffered from atrial fibrillation and recently developed ventricular tachycardia, he said.

The Jewel AF is about the size and weight of a physician's pager and is implanted under the skin in the chest wall through a minor surgical procedure.

To qualify for the trial, a person must have heart arrhythmias or a heart muscle abnormality. Prior to enrollment, a complete electrophysiology study must be done to determine if the person could benefit from the experimental device. Potential participants should discuss taking part with their cardiologist. ■

by Rob Stevens

Home Health Services

Continued from page 3

Central Intake expects to receive about 600 calls a month, including 290 for Home Care and Hospice. The information for Home Care and Hospice is typed directly into a computerized patient documentation system and can be retrieved by nurses and therapists in the patient's home through laptop computers.

"These changes have saved the CRMs a lot of time and aggravation," Horwath said.

A combined home health services Central Intake was established July 1997. Initially, Home Care and Hospice, which cover all or a portion of 12 counties, had encouraged the clinical resource managers to call referrals into various branch offices based on the patient's zip code.

"The input from the CRMs was invaluable in helping us design a more customer-focused system," Beck said. "We have opened the Central Intake process to the CRMs first because of the large volume of calls we receive from them. Next, we will inform physicians of the availability of the service."

By January, Home Care hopes to streamline the process even further by having a home health nurse take all information except infusion and pharmacy, which will continue to be handled by Health Spectrum Pharmacy, Beck said.

In addition to Horwath and Beck, the following staff helped redesign Central Intake: Debbie Search, clinical unit leader, Home Care and Hospice, Allentown; Bernadette Krajcirik, manager, clinical services, Health Spectrum Medical Products; Brian Trewella, director of operations, Health Spectrum Medical Products; Joe Borgioni, director, Health Spectrum Pharmacy and Susan Lawrence, administrator, clinical resource management. Since Oct. 1, Beverly Wasko, utilization review manager, Home Care and Hospice, has been managing the Central Intake process. ■

by Mary DeHaven

FAMILY PRACTICE DEPARTMENT AWARDED National Research Grant

FAMILY PRACTICE RESEARCHERS AT LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL (LVH) AND THREE OTHER INSTITUTIONS WERE recently awarded a four-year, \$900,000 grant from the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) to study the inner-workings of primary care practice.

The grant is part of a new \$7.72 million, multi-year research initiative by the AAFP to provide evidence-based research about the value of the integrated family medicine approach to health care. Three grants to research centers were the first awarded as part of the AAFP program from among 65 applicants nationwide. LVH is the only non-university institution to be included in the selection.

LVH is part of a consortium comprising researchers at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland, the University of Nebraska and the State University of New York/ Buffalo that will establish The Center for the Value of Family Practice. The center, to be based in Cleveland, will study the doctor-patient relationship and the process of patient care in "real world" family practices and their local communities. Those findings will be evaluated to determine their effect on patient health and used to develop ways to improve the quality of primary care, said William Miller, acting chairman and program director for the department of family practice at LVH.

"Family physicians provide primary care to the entire family — young, old, male, female. This research will help demonstrate the value of the personal touch, the importance of building a relationship and a sense of trust with your doctor," Miller said.

Until now, there has been only a limited amount of research into the patient-centered medical approach that characterizes family practice, according to Kurt Stange, M.D., Ph.D., of Cleveland, director of the new center.

"Medical research tends to look at narrowly defined aspects of specific diseases and, while this is important, it is not enough," said Stange, an associate

professor of family medicine at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. "We need new scientific knowledge about the kind of health care that affects the majority of Americans on a daily basis."

Because the work of the center represents a new kind of research — research that occurs in the exam room rather than the laboratory — it will use new research methods. This will include directly observing the interaction between doctors and patients. In 1995, researchers associated with the center became the first to use direct observation in a large-scale study.

"Many of the family doctors on staff at LVH will take part in this research," Miller said. "This participation should enhance the quality of care and help us integrate the best high tech medicine with the best in personalized care and the art of listening."

The AAFP initiative includes five components that address the pressing need to enhance family practice and family practice research: development of research centers; funding to create advanced research training opportunities for family practitioners; funding for support of practice-based research networks; development of partnerships with managed care organizations to jointly fund research; and advocacy.

The results of research into the structure and process of family practice will ultimately affect millions of Americans, according to Joseph Scherger, M.D., chair of the AAFP's Research Initiative Task Force. "Patients make 186 million office visits to family doctors each year. That's 84 million more visits than to physicians in any other specialty," said Scherger. "We want to deliver the best care we can, using state-of-the-art medical knowledge with state-of-the-art application."

The other two grants were awarded to the University of Michigan and the University of Missouri-Columbia. ■

by Constance Walker

THE HEALTH CENTER AT TREXLERTOWN TAKES SHAPE...



The "T-zone" hallway of LVH's Health Center at Trexlertown is constructed with curved walls and capped with a circular ceiling inset. Construction is expected to be completed by late December. On Oct. 1, members of the Health Center team held a reception for the Trexler Mall merchants. James Dunleavy, senior vice president, Health Services, and Patrick Simonson, director of ambulatory services, briefly described the project while other team members mingled with their new neighbors.



INVEST IN FUTURES

Please Give Generously...

1998 LVHHN CAMPAIGN OCT. 15-30

Our network goals—

- 23% participation
- \$165,000 raised
- 50 Leadership gifts

(This year's campaign includes all LVHHN entities.)

See your Departmental Campaign Champion for information, including incentives, or call Linda Durishin, 402-3060 or Maureen Sawyer, 861-7065.

LVHHN invests in

- Healthy Children
- Healthy Families
- Healthy Neighborhoods

CORRECTION: Last month's *Issues & Initiatives* stated that LVH patient satisfaction surveys are sent directly to Indiana for processing by Press, Ganey. It should have explained that the surveys are returned to LVH's patient representatives ONLY for initial screening and then are forwarded to Press, Ganey. There is no opportunity to alter the data when the surveys are in the patient representatives' office.

Computer Network Went Down

Continued from page 5

Just in time, IS found the culprit: the print server for radiology. (A print server is a large PC that routes documents to the printer).

"Apparently, after testing the disaster system, every device came back up normally, except this print server," Lukens said. "When we finally found the problem, it only took us 10 seconds to fix. We just replaced the communication board."

IS is now investigating why the print server failed. "Like a vacuum cleaner or a TV, these things break," Lukens said. "But we certainly have learned from this. As the network gets bigger and bigger, problems aren't always going to be easy to diagnose. To keep up with growth and technology, we're looking at upgrading our equipment and investing in management tools to diagnose problems and prevent them from happening again." ■

by Pamela Maurer



Recreation Committee ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Thursday, Nov. 19th — 6 - 8 p.m.
Friday, Nov. 20th — 7 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Anderson Wing Lobby and
Classrooms 1, 2 and 3

All crafts are hand-made by LVHHN employees.

RADIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Open House

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26
3 - 5 P.M.

*Tours of renovated department every
30 minutes, beginning at 3:15 p.m.*

LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL —
17th & CHEW, 2ND FLOOR

Light refreshments will be served.

SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to the following employees on their October 1998 service anniversaries! Thank you for your continuing service to Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network.

Thirty-Five Years of Service

Bonnie Badawi
GICU
Janet M. Valente
Sterile Processing

Thirty Years of Service

Loretta J. Buss
Dept. of Psychiatry

Twenty-Five Years of Service

Marie I. Koutsouros
Home Care—Home Health Aide
Mary C. Sebastian
Acute Coronary Care Unit
Louann A. Mellinger
Neonatal ICU

Twenty Years of Service

Virginia L. Gower
Blood Bank
Felecia A. Solomon
Blood Bank
Sharon G. Smith
Allentown Family Health Spec
Diane K. Bidwell
3C Staging/Monitored Unit

Lynn E. Dashner
Endoscopy-G.I. Lab

Francine Gaines
Medical Records Transcription

Lynne C. Amato
Human Resources Administration

Maura E. Kresge
Ambulatory Surgical Unit-Staging

Geralyn M. Ford
Ambulatory Surgical Unit-Staging

Theresa Ceci Miorelli
Pre-Admission Testing

Gregory P. Miller
Supplier Services

Ten Years of Service

Nancy W. Lerch
Mental Health/Retardation

Tammy Faust
7A M&S Nephrology Unit

Kathleen M. Baker
Physical Medicine

Tammara Neal
Pharmacy

Roberta S. Rothermel
Information Services Operations

Lachrisicia Hart
Heart Station

Laurel Taschler
Ambulatory Surgical Unit

Milagros Q. Constantino
Progressive Coronary Care Unit

Lori M. Fuehrer
Operating Room

Pamela Gonsalves
Sp Pharmacy CC & I-78

Janice C. Larson
Neonatal ICU

Dorothy E. Dougherty
Histology

Judi S. Holgate
Patient Accounting

Ken Hahn
Courier Services

Tara M. Bonsell
Physical Medicine

Frank E. Zieger
Courier Services

Five Years of Service

Kristy A. Blake
Community Health

Deborah L. Brooks
Radiation Oncology

Rosemary M. Grace
Radiation Oncology

Julie A. Handwerk
Tamaqua Hospice-Home Health Aide

Helen Koshensky
Pocono Hospice Skilled Nursing

Thomas O. Miller, Jr.
Partial Hospital Adult Psychiatry

If you have news or a story idea for **CheckUp This Month**, send your suggestion by the 20th of the month for publication in the following month to Rob Stevens, editor, public affairs, 1243 SCC-PA, 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 ext. 3000. Lehigh Valley Health Network is an equal opportunity employer. M/F/D/V

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