

CheckUp

this month

**DIAL 98
and \$ave
when calling
between LVHN
and MHC!**
(see page 5)

VOL. 11, NO. 3 • MARCH 19, 1998

LVH Staff & Physicians Collaborate to Reduce Clinical Costs

LIKE A TEAM OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS Huddled around a patient, LVH physicians and other care givers have swiftly responded to a request for help in reducing clinical costs. They're working side-by-side with support staff and administrators to resolve issues that have implications for the survival of the hospital (please see related *Issues & Initiatives*, page 4).

"To carry out our mission of community service, we must be careful not to spend money on services that our patients do not need," said Robert Laskowski, M.D., LVHN's chief medical officer. "Only by being prudent and creative in how we use resources can we ensure that we will have adequate funds to support the expansion of important services and programs the community truly needs."

Early results and the long-range outlook for success are encouraging, Laskowski added.

"We're all very committed to this effort," said Mark Lester, M.D., chief of neurological, surgery of his team, which is examining every aspect of the care of brain surgery patients.

"Our ultimate goal is to make care more efficient by reducing resource consumption," he said. "This will be better for patients, staff and physicians."

Lester adds that he's encouraged by LVH administrations' support for a "coordinated OI effort."

Michael Kaufmann, M.D., chairman of psychiatry, has fielded an interdisciplinary group to reduce the length of stay on the adult inpatient units from 9.3 days to 7.9 days. According to Kaufmann, this will require special focus on improving treatment planning and discharge planning, as well as shifting certain procedures like CAT scans, MRIs and EEGs to an outpatient setting, where appropriate.

A team of cancer specialists led by Greg Harper, M.D., director, John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer Center, is exploring OI savings opportunities through reduced use of special services, surgical procedures and ancillary treatments associated with inpatient care.

"We are undertaking chart reviews in order to develop a disease management strategy to address length of stay," Harper said. "The cost savings opportunity may be up to \$1150 per discharge."

The most important benefit of this process will be the improved care of cancer patients, he added.

Chairman of medicine John Fitzgibbons, M.D., is sponsor of an OI group in interventional cardiology, analyzing

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CLINICAL OI TEAMS

NEUROSURGERY

Herbert Hoover, M.D.
Mark Lester, M.D.
Carol Fox
Kamalesh Shah, M.D.
Wayne Dubov, M.D.
Marjorie Lavin
Perla Reese
Nancy Hibbett
Connie Malick
Daniele Shollenberge

CARDIOLOGY

John Fitzgibbons, M.D.
D. Lynn Morris, M.D.
JoAnn Gruber
Norm Manley
Kevin Flynn
Richard MacKenzie, M.D.
Headley White, M.D.
Monica Yost
Deb Cherney
Jody Porter
Denise Kelly
John Deutsch

OBSTETRICS

Steve Klaska, M.D.
Orion Rust, M.D.
Jeanne Camara
Patrick Simonson
Ruth Davis
Don Levick, M.D.
John Collins, M.D.
Beth Newell
Connie Gioielli
Chris Rock
Craig Sobolewski, M.D.
Edward O'Dea
Oscar Morffi, M.D.
Patrice Weiss, M.D.
Patti Werdann
Renee Gombert
Sue Toth

PSYCHIATRY

Michael Kaufmann, M.D.
Susan Wiley, M.D.
Ralph Primelo, M.D.
Tom Miller
Shirley Giansante
John Boos
Ralph Erickson
Jim Ezrow
Donna Stevens
Bruce Curry
Larry Karper, M.D.
Farhad Sholevar, M.D.
Karen Bretz, M.D.
Richard MacKenzie, M.D.

(OI teams continue on page 2)

Press, Ganey Helps Keep Focus on Customer Service

LVH'S OVERALL PRESS, GANEY SCORE DECREASED BY ABOUT ONE-HALF POINT in the last quarter of 1997, but the good news is the hospital still outranks most other hospitals in the patient satisfaction database.

While many LVH units showed a slight decline in the report, the 3-C heart care unit bucked the trend by improving 2.2 points from 93 to 95.2.

Sharon Chromiak, 3-C patient care coordinator, says teamwork and more efficient work processes contributed to this distinction.

"Everyone's pulling together and helping out," she said.

The current rating period should see further improvements on the unit, as the staff recently introduced a new patient flow system, Chromiak added.

Patient care specialist Laura Kofchak agrees, calling the news "encouraging. We've been working more collaboratively with the cath lab lately," she added. The unit also started using improved patient education materials last fall, which also could



3-C staffers Michelle Christman, R.N. (left), and Janeann Sorber, technical partner, give their patient, Douglas Bachert, the kind of care that brought the unit a 2.2 point increase in their Press, Ganey score.

have helped the satisfaction scores, Kofchak noted.

Units 4A and 4C saw their scores drop in the last quarter of 1997, but things are looking up so far this year, according to Jane Borbe, the units' director. "The surveys look better for January and February," she said.

The improvements can be linked to staff's and management's increased attention to service delivery, Borbe pointed out. "The patient care specialist, patient care coordinators

and I are doing intense daily rounds, interacting with staff and patients. We're observing how care is delivered and seeing if service expectations are being met."

Units routinely receive copies of the completed Press, Ganey surveys as well as letters written by patients. "We acknowledge individuals or teams who are highlighted for their care through E-mail and letters of commendation," Borbe offered. "Areas of concern often result in phone calls

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LEHIGH VALLEY
HEALTH NETWORK

Clinical OI

Continued from page 1

balloon angioplasty and stent procedures. "We're looking at the cost components, including length of stay, and stent and pharmacy prices," he said, adding, "There are some real opportunities there."

The team's also examining the cost differences among the physicians in the cath lab and will educate those with higher costs about changing their practice patterns, citing the "best performers" among their peers.

Reducing the hospitalization time of premature babies (DRGs 386/387) in the NICU is the focus of a group OI effort John VanBrakle, M.D., is spearheading. "Our goal is to reduce LOS by two days and use staff more efficiently," the chairman of pediatrics said. "Ultimately, success in reduction of LOS for neonates begins long before the baby is born and involves many hospital and network resources, such as Home Care."

Robert Kricun, M.D., acting chairman of radiology, is working with a team of clinicians, and resource and

support staff to reduce the frequency of inpatient CT, ultrasound and nuclear medicine tests.

"We know that we do a lot more scans per 100 discharges than many hospitals similar to LVH," Kricun said. "With our outstanding team and available resources, we'll pinpoint the clinical areas where this over utilization occurs and work to change these ordering patterns."

He adds that members of his department will be offering help to the other clinical areas in the project as they address issues related to radiology utilization.

Reducing LVH's cost of routine vaginal births by about half is the goal of the obstetrics team led by Drs. Steve Klasko, ob-gyn chair, and Orion Rust, perinatologist, according to Jeanne Camara, administrator, women's inpatient services. "Many benchmark programs do normal births for \$1,500 each," she said. "We know we can do better than that; we have been able to provide quality care at \$800 in the past."

The "how" includes limiting supplies, tests and procedures in the birthing room to only those that are

necessary, as well as working closely with the family, childbirth educator, obstetrician and pediatrician, Camara continues.

"And the mother who's feeling well and is mobile after delivering should be able to be discharged as soon as she wants, which impacts length of stay," she adds. "We've recently started looking at a 'concierge' program where mom and baby get rest and support without additional expensive medical resources. These programs translate into delivery of care in a more cost-effective manner."

"We're really excited to be working on this project."

by Rob Stevens

LOU LIEBHABER Chairs Regional SAVINGS BOND Campaign

LOU LIEBHABER WAS NAMED GENERAL CAMPAIGN CHAIR OF THE 1998 LEHIGH VALLEY REGION SAVINGS BOND CAMPAIGN. He will spearhead savings bond campaigns throughout the region, and LVHN will sponsor the Annual Savings Bond Luncheon on April 28.

The campaign encourages businesses to support the U.S. Savings Bond program through a payroll savings plan that includes the purchase of savings bonds. The region's goal is \$20 million in sales.

"I'm honored to serve as chair of this year's savings bond campaign," Liebhaber said. "Savings bonds are an excellent investment. Not only do they have attractive features, competitive rates and tremendous safety, but they also help finance our nation's needs."

LVHN will run its own Savings Bond Campaign this year with Muhlenberg Hospital Center from April 9-24. All LVHN employees will receive information on how to purchase bonds through payroll deduction. To participate, employees choose the bond they wish to purchase (\$100, \$200, \$500 and \$1,000 bonds, each of which costs half of its face value) and how much they want deducted from each paycheck and applied toward the bond. Once enough is accumulated the bond is mailed by the government.

Regionally, the campaign will kick off at the April 28 luncheon, scheduled at Lehigh University's Mountaintop Campus. Liebhaber will be joined by former NFL All-Pro linebacker and current FOX football analyst Matt Millen. The event attracts top corporate and industrial leaders throughout the region.

The Lehigh Valley region comprises 14 counties, including Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Schuylkill, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming. ■

CLINICAL OI TEAMS (from page 1)

NEONATOLOGY

John VanBrakle, M.D.
Ian Gertner, M.D.
Janice Mayer
Cathy Bailey
Shantha Mathews, M.D.
Dave Gessner
Anne Snyder
Ruth Davis
Barb Warner
Sharon Smetzer
Rose Hoke
Debra Bubba
Mary Agnes Fox
Mike Barone, M.D.

HEART FAILURE/ SHOCK

John Fitzgibbons, M.D.
David Caccese, M.D.
JoAnn Gruber
Donald Belmont, M.D.
Michael Weinstock, M.D.
Brian Stello, M.D.
Kevin Flynn
Joan Robinson ✓
Molly Sebastian
Kate O'Hara
Patricia Weber
Cathyann Feher
Beth Rokus
Monica Yost

ONCOLOGY

Greg Harper, M.D.
Jay Kaufman, M.D.
Jeff Debuque, M.D.
Gary Marshall
Ray Singer, M.D.
Pat Boyer
Steve Fogel
Pat Matula
Melissa Kratz
Sharnae Cederberg
Andrea Geshan

TRAUMA

Herbert Hoover, M.D.
Kevin Glancy, M.D.
Mary Jean Osborne
Michael Pasquale, M.D.
Juliet Fischer
James Cushman, M.D.

DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING

Robert Kricun, M.D.
Jack Lenhart, M.D.
Alan Wolson, M.D.
Sheila Sferrella
Michael DeSantis
Gina Grabowski
Richard MacKenzie, M.D.
Michael Pasquale, M.D.
Lester Rosen, M.D.
Robert Atlas, M.D.
Robert Rienzo, M.D.
Randal Shelly
Steve Fogel

CT SURGERY

Herbert Hoover, M.D.
Ted Phillips, M.D.
D. Lynn Morris, M.D.
Jody Porter
Kathleen Sullivan
Elizabeth Karoly

VENTILATOR SUPPORT

John Fitzgibbons, M.D.
Rich Snyder, M.D.
Stephen Matchett, M.D.
Mike Pasquale, M.D.
Jay Cowen, M.D.
Mark Cipolle, M.D.
Ken Miller
Elizabeth Karoly

PRESS, GANEY

Continued from page 1

to the affected patients and attempts at service recovery. We talk to them; they value the personal touch."

LVH's "likelihood of recommending the hospital" rating also fell slightly in the quarterly marking period, from 90.2 to 89.1, because of the dip in November to 88.2. January's score rebounded to 89.3, keeping LVH among the best performers in its peer group.

"While our Press, Ganey scores remain above those of two years ago, we need to continue integrating customer service into our culture so it becomes a way of life at LVHN," said Lou Liebhaber, chief operating officer. "This means we monitor our results regularly and find ways to improve when we have to."

Having just started its fourth quarter using Press, Ganey to gauge patient satisfaction, MHC is recording uneven scores. While its October to December marks for inpatient satisfaction fell by a point, outpatient and emergency department ratings rose during the same period, according to Marty Tinsman, director, quality assessment and improvement.

Tinsman attributes the ED's overall 2.1 point improvement to a new policy that allows patients' families to remain with them while the patients are being treated. Previously, family members had to stay in the ED waiting room, a policy originally implemented because of the size of the previous ED, which was relocated to its current site in 1995, Tinsman noted.



Marie Kosalko, R.N., and Anne Panik, R.N., are happy that their department, MHC's emergency room, improved in the recent Press, Ganey report.

"We changed the policy and the score rose quickly in the third quarter," she said. "The largest improvement was on the item information to friends and family, which jumped from 79 to 86.4."

The outpatient area's third-quarter mark, 89, compared to a previous 88.9, reflects patients' satisfaction with parking convenience, the "hotel-like" registration area, "tests and treatments," and amenities like coffee, tea and juice served to patients, Tinsman said. "Ambulatory patients also give us good scores for signage and staff courtesy," she added. ■

by Rob Stevens

New Administrative Director Brings Know-How to LVH

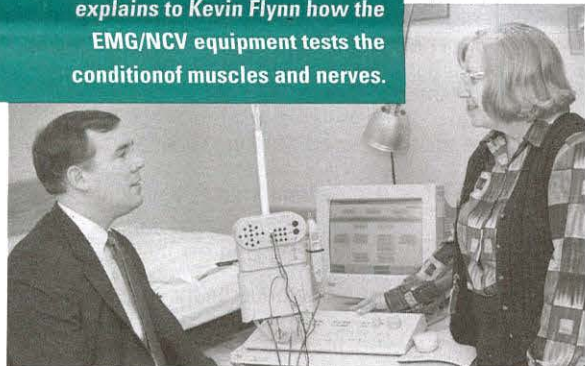
A QUARTER-CENTURY AGO, A 15-YEAR OLD BOY WAS HOSPITALIZED AFTER SUFFERING A SERIOUS KNEE INJURY playing ice hockey. He had X-rays taken, was operated on, and received physical therapy. He recalls waiting two hours to be taken to PT and saw other inefficiencies during his stay.

Many teenagers in the same situation would have spent the week on their back planning how to avoid another costly body check, duck a puck or get a try-out with the Flyers. Following his first lesson on hospital operations, Kevin Flynn left the suburban Philadelphia facility with ideas for making a hospital more efficient. In the years since his accident, he's added volumes to his formal knowledge and work experience in health care, which he recently brought to LVH.

Flynn arrived here last month to fill the role of administrative director for the department of medicine. He's enthused about his boss, the staff and the direction of the network. He's sure he'll be able to put his 18 years in health care to good use, and he's already committed to LVHN, for several reasons.

"I've never been welcomed as warmly as I have here," Flynn said, who left the position of director of primary care development for Mercy Health Network, Bala Cynwyd, to come to LVHN.

Margaret Jessup, director, EEG lab, (right) explains to Kevin Flynn how the EMG/NCV equipment tests the condition of muscles and nerves.



Flynn uses words like "upbeat" and "progressive" to describe the people and atmosphere at LVH. He says he and his boss, Jack Fitzgibbons, M.D., chairman of medicine, share a "great chemistry."

He was equally impressed with LVHN President Elliot Sussman, M.D., and Chief Operating Officer Lou Liebhaber. In fact, everyone he has met is talented and committed to the organization, he says. "This is a great team to play for," Flynn adds.

In his new position, he'll provide managerial and financial oversight of the processes and programs that comprise the department's 12 cost centers, including cardiac rehab, neurology, geriatrics, cardiac cath lab and several others.

The biggest challenge Flynn's facing now is reducing expenses related to cardiology, he says. He's rolled up his sleeves and wants to help the cath lab reach the 25th percentile—not a simple task.

But he's part of a great team, and says he took the job so he could learn from Fitzgibbons. "I sat down with him before I accepted the offer and asked, 'are you staying here?'" Flynn recalls. The chairman assured him he is here for the long term.

That pleased Flynn, and before long he'd moved into the department of medicine, just two doors down from Fitzgibbons. ■

by Rob Stevens



Network Plans Health Center at Trexlertown Mall

YOU'RE A LVHN EMPLOYEE AND YOU KNOW ALL ABOUT HEALTH CARE TRENDS:

- Shorter lengths of stay.
- Managed care's lower rates of payment.
- More outpatient care.
- Fewer hospital-based jobs.

New trends have prompted LVHN to open a new kind of health center for outpatient services in a commercial shopping area. The center will combine primary care, women's health services, wellness education and health-oriented retail shops at the Trexlertown Mall, along Lower Macungie Road, just off Route 222.

Due to open this fall, the 50,000-square-foot facility will include physician offices, diagnostic imaging, classrooms for health education programs and exercise sessions and a unique learning center with a variety of health-related materials and types of media.

"This entire concept is built upon providing health care in places and at times that are convenient for the patient, not just the health care provider," says Patrick Simonson, director of ambulatory care, Lehigh Valley Health Services.

James Dunleavy, senior vice president, health services division, said, "The project involves several divisions of LVHN — the hospital, health services, Health Network Laboratories and the medical staff."

The health services division will work with Anchor Health Partners, which will lease space not only to LVHN, but also health-related retail stores and restaurants. Anchor has also introduced a wellness-oriented ambulatory care center to PennCARE member Doylestown Hospital.

"This is an investment to ensure that LVHN will continue to be competitive in the future," Dunleavy said. "Projects like these have proven to be financially successful. This center and other projects like it may give employees in other divisions of LVHN new and exciting career opportunities."

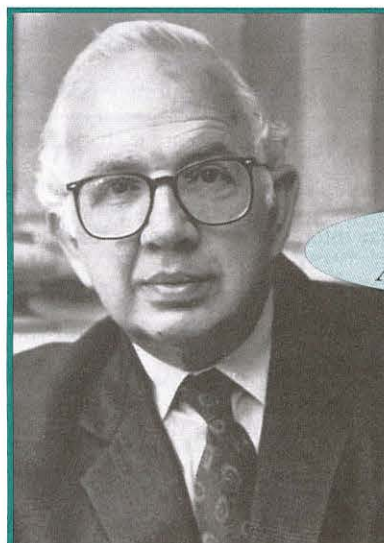
In creating the center, Anchor Health Properties will convert a large vacant commercial building, formerly a Laneco store. The facility will be open throughout the day and into the evening for health promotion and disease prevention functions, as well as community events.

"On any given night, I envision multiple activities in this educational space: exercise sessions, Tai Chi, prenatal classes, drivers' education for older adults, support group meetings, nutritional and exercise counseling, scout meetings, coaches' training for children's sports programs, and students conducting research in the Learning Center," Simonson says. "I believe the center will become an important presence in this community."

Although health promotion and education will be an important component, the majority of LVHN's space will consist of physician offices, including Trexlertown Medical Center and a variety of primary care and specialty physicians who will share "gold key" examination suites, allowing each doctor to see patients for a specified amount of time each week.

"The wellness focus of this new endeavor is an important step in meeting the evolving needs of our community," said Robert Laskowski, M.D., LVHN's chief medical officer. ■

by Mary DeHaven



ARRANGEMENTS FOR RABBI KUSHNER
MADE THROUGH THE
B'NAI B'RITH LECTURE BUREAU

Friends of Nursing MEDALLION LECTURE

TWO FREE
APPEARANCES!

Rabbi Harold Kushner

AUTHOR OF *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*

APRIL 27

■ 1:30-2:45 p.m. CC, Auditorium

■ 7-8 p.m. First Presbyterian Church
2344 Center St., Bethlehem

RSVP by APRIL 20 to 402-CARE



Lou Liebhaber, COO

Issues & Initiatives

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

Clinical OI Key to LVH Expense Control

IN LAST MONTH'S ISSUES & INITIATIVES, I DISCUSSED THE URGENCY OF CONTROLLING LVH'S COST OF PROVIDING CARE.

The hospital had two financially disappointing months recently stemming from lower reimbursement from managed care and Medicare patients. But we are not crippled, because our physicians, staff and network are strong, resilient and committed to our patients.

We have learned through benchmarking that other quality health care institutions achieve excellent outcomes with lower costs, fewer tests and less staff. Our challenge is to reduce our costs per patient while maintaining or enhancing our quality of care. And we're off to a promising start.

Last month, a group of more than 100 physician leaders and hospital administrators spent a day examining ways to reduce costs in 11 clinical areas at LVH without compromising care. These discussions focused primarily on planfully changing ordering habits, resource use and lengths of stay while maintaining or improving quality. Thanks to the creativity and insight of those who participated in this session, we identified opportunities for immediate savings of \$4 million and \$15 million to be reduced from next year's budget if all these targets are met.

These initiatives will continue to be supplemented by significant OI savings in capital expenditures, work redesign, Working Wonders, supplies, administrative and other clinical areas in order to achieve the network's \$22 million OI target for FY99.

Needless to say, this is an ambitious goal, one that I believe we will reach through collaboration, planning and hard work. Much of the credit goes to our physician leaders and their colleagues who will see their clinical OI plans toward completion in their specific departments. We are fortunate to work with such committed people. While the clinical areas have taken the lead in improving our cost position, all other areas of the network also need to be actively involved in this effort.

We can't relax our efforts to redesign how we work. The "old world" approach is no longer valid. In fact, it's costly and inappropriate for the current environment. If we don't change, our downfall will be chronicled in the same history books that describe the Bethlehem Steel experience.

Reducing our expenses will impact our staffing requirements, as wages and benefits account for about 60 percent of our expenses. In reaching our cost-reduction goals next year, we'll need a total of 400-500 fewer employees in LVH departments. Historically, we've relied on routine attrition to achieve staff reductions, which is again our desired method. We're also committed to hiring internally and retraining displaced staff for positions in areas that function at the 25th percentile. The ultimate goal is to adjust staffing as humanely as possible, maintaining respect and dignity for all affected persons.

As each area of our organization continues to examine its work, we will need to reduce our work force. To ensure our greatest likelihood of being able to place existing staff in openings as they occur, staff who face the prospect of change should explore the following available career development alternatives, including: routinely reviewing job postings; considering a career change; talking with your human resources consultant about opportunities that may interest you; retraining for a new role; or thinking about retiring.

We will continue being open with you about the changes the network is experiencing and expecting, and our plans to address them. We are united in our mission of providing the best care possible to our community. Together we are designing the future of Lehigh Valley Health Network. ■

HOW YOU CAN HELP TRIM EXPENSES

The most common advice staff gave us during the employee forums were: "keep us informed about costs and efforts to reduce them" and "involve us in reducing our expenses."

We've been keeping you apprised about our financial situation, and I encourage you to read CheckUp routinely, watch E-mail for updates on LVH expense cutting efforts and talk with your supervisor and colleagues to stay informed. We are making significant progress in the clinical OI areas, but need all staff to continue finding cost saving opportunities.

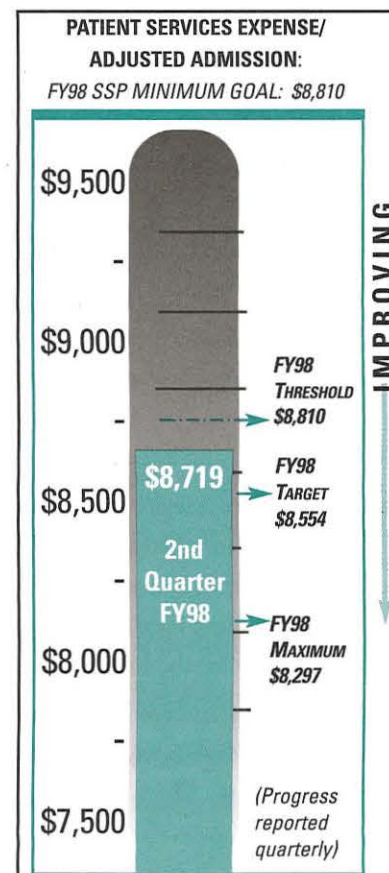
Here are several ways you can help reduce costs:

1. Contact a project leader or sponsor of one of the 11 clinical areas if you have an idea to cut expenses in their area.
2. Revisit the revised Working Wonders program. You'll find it more user friendly with more opportunities for rewards.
3. Look around your work area for ways to improve work processes, reduce waste, enhance revenue. Discuss them with your supervisor and colleagues.

Thank you for your commitment to our network and our community!

CLINICAL OI OPPORTUNITIES

Sponsor / Leader	DRG
M. Kaufmann, M.D. / S. Wiley, M.D.	430-psychoses
S. Klasko, M.D. / O. Rust, M.D.	373-vaginal delivery
J. VanBrakle, M.D. / I. Gertner, M.D.	386-immaturity/ respiratory distress in neonates
	387-prematurity w/ major problems
H. Hoover, M.D. / M. Pasquale, M.D.	486-trauma 487-trauma
H. Hoover, M.D. / T. Phillips, M.D.	106/107-CT surgery
J. Fitzgibbons, M.D. / R. Snyder, M.D.	483-ventilator supt. 475-ventilator supt.
H. Hoover, M.D. / M. Lester, M.D.	1-craniotomy 2-craniotomy
J. Fitzgibbons, M.D. / L. Morris, M.D.	112-invasive cardiology
J. Fitzgibbons, M.D. / D. Caccese, M.D.	127-heart failure
G. Harper, M.D. / G. Marshall	82-respiratory tumors
R. Kricun, M.D. / A. Wohlson, M.D.	diagnostic imaging



February's Service Stars Exemplify Message "ALL HOSPITALS ARE NOT ALIKE"



Rita Heintz, R.N., POSU (left), and the ASU's Mary Jo Kolde, R.N. (middle) and Donna Rose, R.N., were February's Service Stars, because they helped turn a pediatric patient's scary surgery into a "really neat stay."

Eight-year-old Brittany Drosdak's scary experience of getting her adenoids out instead turned into a "really neat stay" — thanks to the nurses on the Ambulatory Surgical Unit and the Pediatric Outpatient Surgery Unit. Their personal touch made this little girl very happy and earned them February's Service Star award. Read Brittany's letter and you'll surely understand. ■

February 13, 1998

Dear Lehigh Valley Hospital,

My name is Brittany Drosdak. I'm eight years old and in second grade. I stayed in your hospital on Jan. 19, 1998 and want to thank the Ambulatory Surgical Unit and Pediatric Outpatient Surgery Unit for a really neat visit.

When my mommy and daddy told me that I had to go to the hospital and get my adenoids out, I was really scared. I was afraid the nurses wouldn't let me take my doll Samantha with me, and I was afraid that I'd wake up in the middle of the operation, and it wouldn't be over.

Then Mary Jo Kolde, Donna Rose and Rita Heintz and the rest of the nurses at Lehigh Valley Hospital talked to me and let me know everything would be OK. The week before my operation, they took me around and showed me a video of a little boy who was afraid to go to the hospital too. That made me feel better.

The next day, the nurses let Samantha stay in the hospital with me. They said Samantha was pretty and even gave her a doctor's hat to wear. They gave me special jammies. Then when it was time for my operation, Mary Jo walked me back and held my hand. I wasn't very nervous anymore.

During my operation, the nurses came out to tell my mommy and daddy I was doing fine, and when I woke up, they let them both by my bedside. After the operation was the best! The nurses joked with me a lot and let me watch movies and eat Italian ice. They even put sweet water in my needle and gave me magic cream for my hands!

When it was time to go home, I was having so much fun that I didn't want to leave. I could've stayed another week. I just hope I can come back next year to get my tonsils out.

My mommy and daddy say the nurses were top notch. If I were a teacher, I'd give them an A+.

Your Friend,

Brittany Alissa Drosdak

Ads Raise Awareness in Northampton County

WHO HAS WISDOM, STRENGTH AND COMPASSION? ASK PEOPLE IN NORTHAMPTON COUNTY. THEY KNOW.

The results of a telephone survey taken last fall show that Northampton County's awareness of Lehigh Valley Hospital has doubled since the advertising campaign began last July.

"For the short time we've been running the campaign, the response has been outstanding," said John Stavros, senior vice president of marketing and planning. "Inpatient admissions are up and calls for patient appointments and physician referrals have significantly increased since 1996."

LVH surveyed 300 households in Northampton County about which hospitals they know and which they would prefer for general treatment, critical care, surgery and specialized care and then compared the results with telephone interviews from 1996.

Not only are more people aware of LVH, but the public's approval of LVH went up by about 10 to 15 percent in all aspects of care from 1996 to 1997. LVH also fared well when compared to other institutions in the region.

"I'm very pleased," Stavros said. "Northampton County views us as a leading institution and the number one choice for heart treatment, major surgery and cancer treatment."

LVHN will succeed throughout the region as the the public continues to learn that our hospital is special, Stavros said. "We have a story to tell and with Muhlenberg Hospital Center added to the family, it can only mean more good things."

Many of the people surveyed think so too.

Fifty-five percent said they believe the merger between MHC and LVH is in the best interest of their community, and 58 percent said they are more likely to seek treatment at MHC as a result.

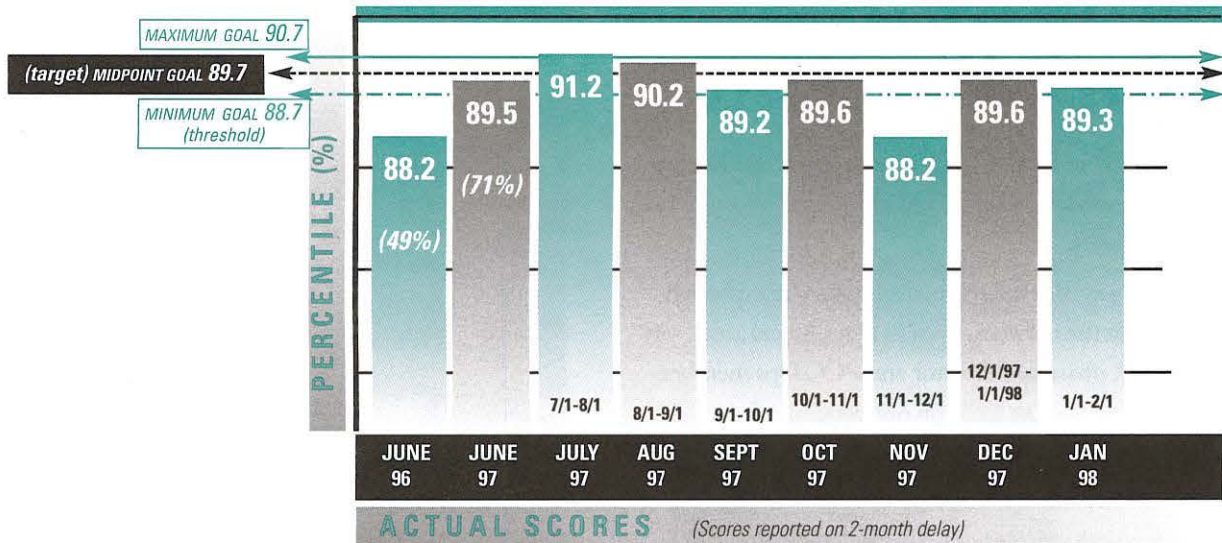
As the organization continues to spread the message of LVHN's wisdom, strength and compassion, Stavros emphasizes that word-of-mouth is also a powerful influence in the community.

"There are still people in Northampton County who aren't fully aware of the breadth and depth of services we provide," he said. "Our employees can play a tremendous role by talking about the hospital and referring friends and neighbors. We are all a spokesperson for the wonderful programs here." ■

by Pamela Maurer

LVH'S SUCCESS SHARING PLAN

PRESS, GANEY PROGRESS: "Likelihood of recommending hospital"



Beginning March 30 DIAL 98 AND SAVE

MHC and LVH can save local call charges between sites. You've heard the commercials and seen the ads. DIAL a specified series of numbers and SAVE big bucks on your telephone bill.

Lehigh Valley Health Network may not be AT&T, MCI or SPRINT, but it's sending the same message. Dial 98 and a three-digit location code before calling between LVHN and Muhlenberg Hospital Center, and you can bypass the local Bell telephone system and save 7 cents per call. John Hart, vice president, medical staff

98 + 861 for MHC + four-digit ext.

services, said this cost savings is possible by connecting telephone trunk lines serving the LVHN /Muhlenberg system. This change will take effect at 5 p.m., March 30. Hart, who supervises telecommunications at LVHN, states, "With the financial challenges facing the hospital, this is a simple way for each of us to help reduce costs. Seven cents may seem insignificant, but when you multiply it over millions of calls, you're talking some serious money."

Employees dialing between telephone systems must remember to dial in the following sequence:

• 98 + the location code (861 for MHC) (regardless of the local exchange 402 for Allentown sites) + four-digit extension.

To dial MHC, you must dial 861 even though some telephone numbers there begin with 882, said Ann Schneck, acting director, telecommunications. And to dial the Muhlenberg Rehabilitation Center, you must still dial 99 plus the seven-digit number.

In the future, other cost savings may result from combining the trunk lines, Hart said, because LVHN will have a larger local calling area. For example, Muhlenberg sites will be able to call Topton without paying a toll charge. Employees can continue to dial only the four digit extension to make calls within and among CC&78, 17&Chew, 2166S12, 1243SCC and 2024SCC. Likewise, at Muhlenberg, employees can dial the four-number extension within the hospital. ■

by Mary DeHaven



LVH CHARTS A WIN WITH CONSOLIDATED GRAPHICS

Zelda Greene, director, medical records (center), relied on "the forms guys," Craig Lafreniere (left) and Paul Fodness, of Consolidated Graphics Communications, to revise patient charts for use with the new document imaging system. In the process, they saved LVH some \$68,000.

EIGHTEEN MONTHS AGO ZELDA GREENE SAW THAT SHE'D HAVE A PROBLEM COST EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTING A NEW document imaging system in her medical records department. She had an inventory of about 800 different patient chart forms—about \$70,000 worth—that had to be redesigned with bar codes by the time the new technology "went live."

"Most hospitals just destroyed the old forms and started fresh with the new ones with bar codes," Greene was told by her project consultant. But she didn't want to waste that amount of money.

Enter "the forms guys" also known as Craig Lafreniere and Paul Fodness of Consolidated Graphics Communications (CGC). CGC had recently replaced Standard Register as LVH's preferred forms supplier. They were enthused about serving LVH and they wanted to help cut costs. In fact, during their first year here, they saved LVH \$200,000 in total costs through lower prices, forms design and use analysis, and improved inventory management.

"Craig and Paul are what we needed in a forms vendor," said Greene, who soon became the head of the forms committee, given the scope of her upcoming conversions. "They are resourceful. You give them your requirements, and they meet your needs."

Since late 1996, Lafreniere and Fodness worked closely with Greene and her committee, redesigning

more than 530 forms when it came time to reorder them and discontinued use of others. When the document imaging system was launched on Feb. 16, CGC's method of phasing in the forms with about 300 different bar codes had resulted in a cost avoidance of \$68,800.

"We're still deciding if we'll redesign or stop using the remaining forms," Greene said. "They're low volume products."

"We try to make ordering the forms as easy as possible," Lafreniere offered, "but that's not all we do."

They also track form use throughout the network, control inventory, alert internal clients when their supplies are low and search for ways to lower printing costs, such as putting several projects on press at the same time.

"We'll even help departments put together their printing budgets," Lafreniere said. CGC's warehouse with LVH's inventory houses 400 different "Pick/Pack" forms, all of which have been catalogued by Fodness and Lafreniere.

"CGC was one of LVH's first preferred suppliers," said Sue Toth, supplier services. "There's no better feeling than kicking off a new program with a win."

Fodness and Lafreniere are at LVH on Mondays and Wednesdays. They can be contacted through E-mail, at ext. 4440 or on pager 830-5660. ■

by Rob Stevens

"There's no better feeling than kicking off a new program with a win."

Sometimes MORE Isn't BETTER

IT WAS A CLASSIC "CATCH 22." LVHN HAD TWO INITIATIVES THAT FOCUSED ON PROVIDING THE BEST EXPERIENCE FOR ITS customers, WHETHER THEY ARE patients, physicians or each other. Staff said in a survey that they supported both, because they help define service standards. Patient satisfaction was on the rise, as shown in Press, Ganey returns. But employees were confused about how PCC and PRIDE related and where they applied.

The solution was to merge the initiatives, to create a stronger, more efficient and effective customer service effort. This occurred early this year, when the PCC operations committee (PCC Ops) invited PRIDE champion Jack Dunleavy to join their ranks.

"It was clear to the Ops team that we need to send a consistent message about the ultimate goal of LVH: to provide a fantastic experience to our customers whether in a clinical setting or elsewhere in the network," said Mary Agnes Fox, chair of PCC Ops and patient care administrator.

Dunleavy couldn't agree more strongly. "PRIDE and PCC go hand-in-hand, because PRIDE was derived from PCC's foundation and Press, Ganey information on patient expectations," he noted. "No doubt about it, the PRIDE initiative absorbs the spirit, content and philosophy of the seven dimensions."

The "extras" in PRIDE are a service promise, behavior standards, service recovery, and reward and recognition, Dunleavy adds.

In this way, the seven dimensions can be expanded throughout the network, even in non-clinical areas, says Fred Pane, pharmacy director and PCC Ops member. "All our efforts must focus on our patients, physicians and each other as customers," Pane added. "We need one set of guidelines for people to follow."

Merging the groups was a timely move, Fox said, and has some operating advantages. "The PRIDE group had completed their initial mission. So blending into one committee will also reduce meetings and other time-related commitments."

Looking ahead, the group will be instrumental in rolling out the PCC/PRIDE initiative throughout the network, MHC included. "We have the go-ahead from Lou Liebhaber to introduce it there, and it makes sense," Dunleavy observed. "MHC also uses Press, Ganey patient satisfaction surveys, so it's a natural."

As natural as good customer service should be for everyone, he adds. "Its focus is very much on interpersonal skills. Clinical competence is assumed. Having the latest technology is a given. It's all in how you respond to your customer at the 'moment of truth.'" ■

by Rob Stevens

A Touch of Class & an Extra Glass

WITH FOOD SERVICES' NEW
CONCIERGE PROGRAM

Patients are getting even more hospitality in the hospital at Cedar Crest & I-78 since food services kicked off its new concierge program this month.

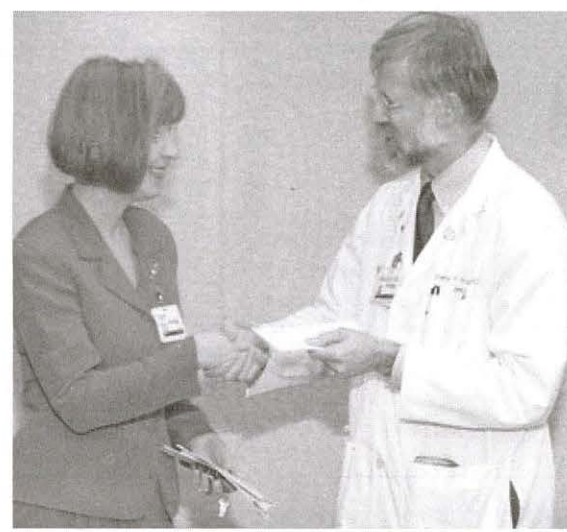
Two food and nutrition service staff members, dressed in formal uniforms, make their rounds to patients with a hospitality cart, serving extra beverages and answering their nutritional questions.

The carts are stocked with hot beverages, assorted condiments and menus for new admissions, plus some additional food items for patients who fall within the bounds of diet.

"The concierges are providing information about diets and description of choices," said Paul Fite, general manager, food and nutrition services. "They are also providing feedback to the kitchen and bridging communication between the nursing and the support partners."

The concierges also take time to talk with patients about their satisfaction, so their preferences can be noted and changes can be made quickly. "This is another program to enhance patient care," Fite said. "The personal touch provided will make the difference between a good meal and a great meal!" ■

by Pamela Maurer



Anne Melick, Atrium Shoppe co-chair, presents a \$12,000 check to Greg Harper, M.D.,

Morgan Cancer Center director, at a reception on Feb. 16, marking the one-year anniversary of the shop.

These funds were proceeds from the shop's first year of operation.

The Atrium Shoppe is the first joint venture of the Allentown Auxiliary and the LVH Auxiliary.

* ISO: local artists, dancers, musicians to volunteer their time...

Lehigh Valley Health Network Primed to Celebrate

THE ARTS IN HEALING

ART CAN SOOTHE AND RELAX THE BODIES AND MINDS OF PATIENTS, HOSPITAL STAFF, families and visitors through music, dance and other forms. Its effects can range from decreasing agitation to increasing attention span. Art can be a powerful tool to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities. It can decrease pain, stress, anxiety and depression, which sometimes come with the roles of patient, hospital staff member, family or visitor.

LEHIGH VALLEY HEALTH NETWORK'S ARTS ADVISORY COUNCIL WILL CELEBRATE THE ROLE OF THE ARTS IN HEALING WITH SEVERAL ARTS-RELATED events in April and May. They're looking for artists, dancers and musicians to donate some of their time to perform in the hospital lobby and cafeteria during scheduled times throughout the day. All volunteers will be graciously welcomed.

TO KICK OFF THE CELEBRATION, the Professional Nurse Council will host its 11th Annual Art Auction to benefit the Friends of Nursing Program, on APRIL 3 at Cedar Crest & I-78. (See article on right.)

Also, the Arts Advisory Council will hold its 11TH ANNUAL EXHIBITION AND SALE, MAY 3-8 in the Kelly Gallagher Atrium in the John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer Center.

Anyone willing to volunteer for art's sake during April and May can contact Kristen Hoffman at ext. 5902. ■

PNC Art Auction

APRIL 3

"AN EVENING OF ARTFUL ELEGANCE"

Cedar Crest auditorium

SPECIAL STAFF PREVIEW: 2 to 4 p.m. (no ticket required)

GENERAL PREVIEW starts at 6:30 p.m.

AUCTION begins at 7:30 p.m.

Auction tickets: \$15/person.

For more information, call Kim Hitchings,

Friends of Nursing director, at ext. 1704.

MAY 2

Arts Advisory Council

11th Annual Art Exhibition and Sale

Opening Reception

Open to public MAY 3-8

Kelly Gallagher Atrium, John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer Center.

PSYCHIATRY GRAND ROUNDS at Muhlenberg Hospital Center

THURSDAY, MAY 21

■ "New Treatment Alternatives in Schizophrenia"

Prakash Masand, M.D.

Professor of Psychiatry, Director, Psychiatric Consultation Service and Psychopharmacology Consultation and Training Program, SUNY Health

Science Center, Syracuse, N.Y.

REGISTRATION: 11:15 A.M.

PRESENTATION: 11:30 A.M.-12:30 P.M.

LUNCH: 12:30 P.M.

THURSDAY, JUNE 4

■ "Unusual Psychiatric Syndromes"

Henry Nasrallah, M.D.

Professor of Psychiatry and Neurology

The University of Mississippi and The Ohio State University

REGISTRATION: 11:15 A.M.

PRESENTATION: 11:30 A.M.-12:30 P.M.

LUNCH: NOON

■ Both programs are free, take place at the Banko Community Center and include a buffet lunch. R.S.V.P. to Janice Santee, 867-8010.

NURSES HELP FAMILIES WITH PROCEEDS FROM ART SALE

THE PROFESSIONAL NURSE COUNCIL WILL KICK OFF A MONTH LONG CELEBRATION AT LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL DEDICATED TO arts in healing, sponsored by Lehigh Valley Health Network's Arts Advisory Council.

On April 3, the Professional Nurse Council will sponsor its annual art auction to benefit the Friends of Nursing program. Proceeds from "An Evening of Artful Elegance" will provide Lehigh Valley Hospital nurses and patient care services staff with resources to develop and implement projects that positively impact and benefit their patients and the hospital.

Last year's event raised more than \$10,000, which was used for seminars and educational programs, scholarships to support nursing education, nursing research and awards to recognize nursing excellence. For example, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) received \$1,000 to provide formal group education classes to new parents of premature babies. The money was used to purchase textbooks for the classes to support the information provided by the nursing staff. The book is called *New Born Intensive Care: What Every Parent Needs To Know*.

"The classes are presented to the parents of premature babies by the NICU and are used to prepare families to feel comfortable about taking the premature babies home," said Sharon Smetzer, director of NICU. ■

by Juan Alvarado
Communities in Schools



Lisa Johnson, of Tamaqua, has been appointed director of development for the Foundation of Muhlenberg Hospital Center.

She will be responsible for all fund-raising efforts for MHC and Muhlenberg Rehabilitation Center, including the annual fund, major gifts, planned gifts and solicitation related to such events as the Golf Classic, Summer Festival and the MHC Society Dinner Dance. Johnson comes to MHC from Miners Memorial Medical Center and Geriatric Center,

MHC PASSES HEALTH SURVEY

MUHLENBERG HOSPITAL CENTER RECENTLY PASSED ITS PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH LICENSURE SURVEY IN WHICH ONLY FOUR MINOR DEFICIENCIES WERE NOTED.

According to Marty Tinsman, director, MHC's quality assessment and improvement, the surveyor spent two days visiting every med-surg unit and a day in psychiatry. She toured the OR and reviewed documentation, medical records and medical staff credentialing, Tinsman said.

"We passed with flying colors," she added. State Department of Health licensure is mandatory for all hospitals in Pennsylvania. The survey is done every two years in the med-surg areas and annually in psychiatry.

"Update on Heart and Lung Surgery" Features Surgical Pioneers

LONG AGO AND FAR AWAY IN HOLLYWOOD, ROBOTS AND LASERS ZAPPED PIZZAZZ INTO science fiction movies like *Star Wars*. But, in just a few years, similar devices could be common treatment tools in operating rooms at leading national medical centers.

World-renowned surgical pioneers will discuss these and other modern medical marvels at Lehigh Valley Hospital's "Fifth Annual Update on Heart and Lung Surgery" on March 28. In addition, a local cardiothoracic surgeon will be honored for his 20+ years of service to his community and colleagues.

The use of lasers to forge blood channels in the heart muscle of patients with advanced angina will be described by Allan Lansing, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Heart Institute at Audubon Regional Medical Center, Louisville, Ky.

Whether a surgeon is one room away or on another continent, robots may soon be the most able-bodied assistants for remote-control surgery. In his presentation, "Robot-Assisted Microsurgery: The Next Frontier in the Development of Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery," Ralph Damiano Jr., M.D., professor of surgery and chief, cardiothoracic surgery, Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine, Hershey, will provide a look at the future of robotics in medicine.

According to Ray Singer, M.D., cardiothoracic surgeon at LVH and program director, "We have been fortunate to be able to present recognized authorities on advances in heart and lung surgery to audiences at LVH since 1993. In addition to the

obvious benefits to the professionals attending the programs, LVH surgeons have incorporated a number of the innovative medical procedures discussed here to improve patient care, shorten length of stay and achieve better clinical outcomes."

Farrokh Sadr, M.D., cardiothoracic surgeon at LVH, will be honored by his colleagues for his contributions to his medical specialty and the care of his patients.

This conference, designed for health care professionals, runs 7:30 a.m. to noon in the auditorium of Cedar Crest & I-78. The course has been approved for 3.6 contact hours for registered nurses and as a medical education program for three credit hours in category one of the Physicians' Recognition Award of the American Medical Association and the Pennsylvania Medical Society membership requirement.

Tuition is free for LVHN and PennCARE members. Registration deadline is March 20. For more information or to register, E-mail Gail Pitsko or call ext. 9390. ■

by Rob Stevens

THE MEETING'S AGENDA ALSO FEATURES:

"Current Treatment of Mesothelioma"
Joseph Friedberg, M.D.
Assistant Professor of Surgery
Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania

"Selection of Tissue vs. Mechanical Valves"
Steven Khan, M.D.
Associate Cardiologist
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center;
Associate Professor
UCLA School of Medicine, Los Angeles

"Gastroesophageal Valvuloplasty:
A New Minimally Invasive Procedure
for Gastroesophageal Reflux"
Farid Gharagozloo, M.D.
Associate Professor of Surgery
Georgetown University School of Medicine
Washington, D.C.

ALERT VIDEO AIRS

THE ALERT PARTNERSHIP'S NEW VIDEO, *BUILDING THE FUTURE BLOCK BY BLOCK*, AIRS ON APRIL 13, 8:30 P.M. ON WFMZ-TV 69.

The half-hour production highlights ALERT's success in working with residents and community police to address crime and drug problems in their neighborhoods. The video premiered in January, when ALERT appeared on the cover of The Morning Call's *Channel Choice TV guide*, and aired again on March 2.



Auxiliary at 17th Teams up on Community Project

Bike Safety DERBY

The Allentown Auxiliary of LVH wants bike riding to be fun AND safe. That's why they're teaming up with national and local organizations to present this FREE Bike Safety Derby for grade-school kids.

Sponsored by the Auxiliary, Allentown Police, Health Bureau and Bike Line.

APRIL 18

10 a.m.-2 p.m.
LVH parking lot at 17th & Liberty Sts.

ATTRACTIONS INCLUDE:

- BIKE REGISTRATION by the Allentown Police Dept.
- THE "HELMET LADY," who will teach bikers how to properly wear their helmets.
- BIKE SAFETY INSPECTION by BIKE LINE of 1728 Tilghman St.
- A "SKILLS COURSE" will be conducted by the Allentown Community Police. Everyone completing the course will be eligible for a DRAWING FOR PRIZES.
- TRAUMAROO, from the American Trauma Society, in conjunction with LVH trauma department, will be on hand for photos.
- The CRASH TEST DUMMIES will distribute literature encouraging the use of seat belts.

RAIN DATE—
APRIL 25

CALL
437-7677 or
437-4265
for more
information.

SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

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

Thirty Years of Service

Erin D. Hertzog
Emergency Service-A

Twenty-Five Years of Service

Carol A. Bury
Master Facilities Admin - EXEC

Janice Blaker
Endoscopy - G.I. Lab

Luann F. Shuman
Outpatient Pediatrics

Twenty Years of Service

Krista J. Casey
Managed Care

Joan E. Santomauro
Supplier Services

Karen C. Dreisbach
Pediatric Unit

Barbara A. Stangl
Info Services Operations

Marsha A. Becker
GICU

Linda J. Engle
GICU

Terry Burger
Infection Control

Fifteen Years of Service

Davina H. Short
Hospice-Skilled Nursing

Donna G. Pilon
5C Medical/Surgical Unit

Susan I. Stauffer
Heart Station

Patricia A. Weber
Clinical Resource Management

Ten Years of Service

Susan E. Kremposky
Obstetrics

Donna M. Haydt
4C Medical/Surgical Unit

Larry C. Pilgert
5C Medical/Surgical Unit

Kathleen S. Osborn
Operating Room

Uma B. Bhatt
GICU

Marlene Mayza
Transitional Open Heart Unit

Francine M. Schafer
6S Adult Psychiatry Unit

Bonita A. Williams
Special Care Unit

Rebecca A. Kahle
Operating Room

Maria Skladany
Special Care Unit

George E. Brucker
6B Medical/Surgical Unit

Jane M. Lawrence-Dye
Lab-Client & Ancillary Services

Patte L. Horwath
6S Adult Psychiatry Unit

Tami L. Pizzuto
6B Medical/Surgical Unit

Donna M. Hettinger
Lab-Client & Ancillary Services

Marion J. Varec
Dept. of OB/GYN

Jeffrey R. Hartenstine
Cat Scanning

Karen Jani
Pharmacy

Katherine M. Lamm
6S Adult Psychiatry Unit

Karin Ford
Emergency Service-C

Erika M. Witt
Transitional Open Heart Unit

Sallie J. Zahour
Dental Clinic

Ten Years of Service

Missed in Feb. Issue:
Leap Year Employees
Hired on Feb. 29

Cynthia A. Heffner
OB Maternal Fetal Medicine

Joseph A. Gallo
Adolescent Psychiatry Unit

Michelle D. McAlouse, R.N.
Open Heart Unit

Wilson R. Vega
Open Heart Unit

Janet A. Caverly
Ambulatory Surgical Unit-OR

Tina L. Wessner, R.N.
Hemodialysis Treatment

Brian R. Stahl
Sp Pharmacy

Joann M. Griswold
Clinical Resource Management

Five Years of Service

Charles F. Smith
General Pediatrics Outpatient

Cynthia D. Rothenberger
Health Promotion & Disease Prevention

Clara Fernandez
Plant Engineering

Elizabeth A. Anton
Volunteers Office

Mary B. Soto
Lab-Client & Ancillary Services

Elizabeth A. Wassil
Sp Pharmacy CC & I78

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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