

# CheckUp

## this month



VOL. 12, NO. 8 • AUGUST 19, 1999

## MHC Projects Position Network for New Century

The dramatic transformation of the MHC campus that starts this month will bring new, improved or expanded services and facilities that better position the hospital and Lehigh Valley Health Network to provide high quality, affordable and accessible health care in the new millennium.

"The development that we see on the MHC campus underscores the network's commitment to build on the hospital's legacy of providing its community with solid medical services," said Elliot Sussman, M.D., LVHHN's president and CEO. "Only because of Muhlenberg's core clinical strengths and talented staff are we able to bring new services and partnerships to the campus to create a regional resource so vital to our future."

### New Cancer Center Opens this Month

The first new service will be the cancer facility at MHC, which will treat its first patients this month in renovated space on the first floor of the Kolb Ambulatory Center. As a satellite of the John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer Center at LVH, the MHC cancer center will provide chemotherapy and radiation therapy.



The chief of MHC oncology and hematology and associate director of the JDMCC, Victor Aviles, M.D., will serve as director of the medical oncology services. He recently joined LVHHN from the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania. Comprehensive radiation oncology services, under the direction of Victor Risch, M.D., Ph.D., chair, radiation oncology, will be introduced in October.

According to Gregory Harper, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Morgan Cancer Center, collaboration between the facilities' staffs has been critical. "This new cancer center is fully integrated with the John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer

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## LVHHN Celebrates a Century of Caring with a Trio of Events

Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network is 100 years old this year, and it's time to celebrate. Celebration of Community, the year-long observance of the hospital's 1899 founding, jumps into high gear next month with a trio of special events at Agricultural Hall in the Allentown Fairgrounds.

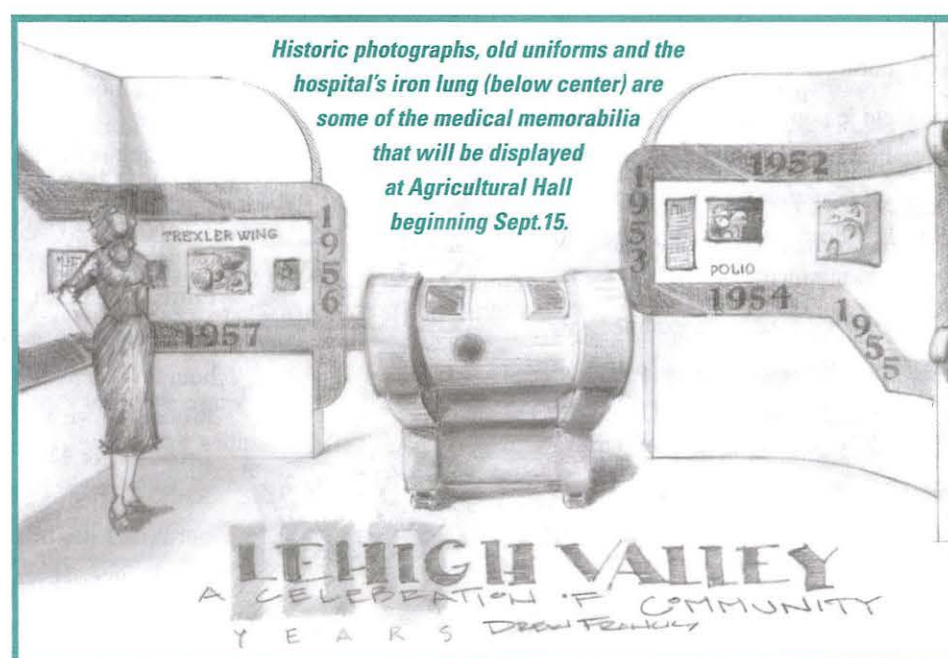
Leading the lineup will be two free events: a "walk-through-history" exhibit featuring The Allentown Hospital and its community; and Seniors' Horizons, the Lehigh Valley's information and entertainment fair for people 50 and over. Both events take place Sept. 15, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sept. 16, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The festivities culminate on Sept. 18 with Puttin' on the Ritz Nite Lites, LVHHN's fourth annual black-tie gala.

The Celebration of Community historical display will take viewers back to turn of the century where the streets were unpaved, transportation was by horse and buggy and The Allentown Hospital was brand new. People will enter the historic tribute through a replica of the hospital's original facade. Inside, modular displays will feature hospital

founders, nursing and an iron lung that was used to treat people with polio in the 1950s. The story will come to life through a time line of historic photographs and newspaper articles, hospital memorabilia, antique uniforms and out-moded medical equipment. The display will include an outstanding collection of historic automobiles from a local private collection.

"Our hospital has a century-long tradition of caring for the community," said Sheryl Hawk, public affairs manager. "Over the years, we have collected an amazing array of medical memorabilia, and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary provides the perfect opportunity to share it."

A high point of the birthday bash will be a swinging tour of hit tunes, as Bobby Mercer's Orchestra presents



Artist's rendering of "Walk Through History" exhibit.

**LEHIGH VALLEY**  
HOSPITAL AND  
HEALTH NETWORK

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## MHC Projects in New Century

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Center, and with LVH's cancer services. It will provide on-site access to the highest quality cancer care for patients and families served by Muhlenberg Hospital Center."

### Psychiatry Units to Merge

Ground-breaking is slated for early September for the two-story wing that will house the network's combined inpatient psychiatry units. The decision to consolidate the MHC and LVH programs resulted from a study that showed that integrating them in MHC's central location would improve the high quality of care, decrease costs and improve patient and family access to the services.

"This consolidation of inpatient psychiatric services also allows us to bring together a talented staff, enhance the continuum of psychiatric care across our network and position us to compete more effectively in the region," said Michael Kaufmann, M.D., LVH's chairman of psychiatry.

### Bringing Children's Services Closer to Home

A partnership forged last year between LVH's Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia will bring a pediatric outpatient specialty medical center to MHC's campus next summer. The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Specialty Care Center of the Lehigh Valley, as the new MHC facility will be called, will be built on the north side of the hospital near the outpatient entrance. Its specialists will provide pediatric and adolescent services currently unavailable locally. MHC's ambulatory surgery unit and a pedi-

## Join Your Co-Workers for an Open House at Cancer Services at MHC

Aug. 26 • 2-7 p.m.

First Floor  
Kolb Ambulatory Center

*See next month's CheckUp for details on a celebration of MHC for the new millennium, Sept. 21*

atric ambulatory surgery unit will occupy the first floor of this new building.

"More than 1,000 children and their families must travel outside our area each year for specialized medical care," said John VanBrakle, M.D., LVH's chairman of pediatrics. "Our goal is to provide most of the pediatric resources these children need within their own community, a tremendous benefit to the children and their families."

Through this partnership, cancer services for children are being provided by Julie Stern, M.D., the first Children's Hospital pediatric oncologist/hematologist based in the Lehigh Valley. She currently sees patients at the Allentown Medical Center, 401 N. 17<sup>th</sup> St., and will move her practice to MHC when the new center is complete.

### Hope for Couples Struggling to Conceive

Later this year, couples struggling with infertility will welcome the opening of a reproductive endocrinology and infertility lab on the third floor of the Kolb Ambulatory Center. "This new in vitro fertilization facility, one of only two in the U.S., ensures an

optimal environment for developing embryos, thereby maximizing pregnancy rates while minimizing the risk of multiple births," said Albert Peters, D.O., LVH's chief of reproductive endocrinology and infertility. Peters will collaborate in the new facility with embryologist Katie Worriow, Ph.D.

### Added Physician Office Space

The hospital's plans to build a three-story medical office building (MOB) north of the existing MOB meets a dual need. With completion of the construction more than a year away, the MOB is already well on its way to being fully occupied. Much of the first floor is already designated for a fitness center, and the entire second floor has been leased to Lehigh Valley Cardiology Associates.

The magnitude of renovation and construction will require utility upgrades and the construction of a new central utilities building, as well as improved campus roads and parking changes, and all may be inconvenient to people who come to the campus to receive care, work or volunteer.

But the improvements will be well worth the months of challenges and sacrifices, said Stu Paxton, senior vice president of MHC operations. "These new clinical services will enhance the care options of the citizens of Northampton County and the entire Lehigh Valley who take advantage of Muhlenberg's central location. These benefits become critical with the growth of regional approaches to health care and increases in managed care penetration." ■

*by Melissa Wright*

## LVH Celebrates with Trio of Events

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"100 years of American Music" on Sept. 15, 5 to 8 p.m. The performance marks another LVH milestone, the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the department of community health and health studies.

Held in conjunction with LVH's centennial celebration, the sixth annual Seniors' Horizons promises participants a healthy dose of information, education and entertainment.

"Seniors' Horizons encourages healthy independent living," said Susan Hoffman, executive director of Vitality Plus. "It is a tremendous community resource for the area's older adults and will be particularly exciting this year with many more vendors, historical displays as part of the 'walk-through-history', great entertainment and forums to help heighten awareness of key legislative issues for older adults."

The event will feature a legislators' forum and the Seniors' Horizons volunteer awards, as well as more than 100 exhibits with information on products, housing options, support groups and other services for older adults. Health and fitness experts will be on hand to answer questions, share resources and offer advice. Other highlights include fashion and fitness

shows, magic, music and a wildlife demonstration. The event is sponsored by Vitality Plus, the American Association of Retired Persons, and Lehigh and Northampton Area Agencies on Aging.

Everyone who attends the two-day celebration is eligible to win a trip for two to Cancun, Mexico. The four-day, three-night holiday, including airfare, was donated by AAA Vacations, The Travel Store.

The festivities will culminate on Sept. 18 with Nite Lites, LVH's annual black-tie fund-raiser. This year's Nite Lites theme—Puttin' on the Ritz—will feature the walk-through-history exhibit during the cocktail hour and silent auction. Guests will then proceed down a replica of New York's Broadway & 42nd Street before entering Radio City Music Hall. "In keeping with our Nite Lites tradition, we're planning a simply superb evening!" Hawk promised.

This year's beneficiary of Nite Lites, the department of community health and health studies (DCHHS), is dedicated to education and community service projects that directly benefit the citizens of the Lehigh Valley. The funding will enable the DCHHS to measure health status and to evaluate LVH's efforts to improve health in the communities it serves. Sponsorships and single ticket purchases are available till Sept. 1, by contacting Jacquelyne Cox, director of annual giving, at 610-402-9121, or Robert Serow, senior vice president, development at 610-402-9118. ■



## Benefits update



### Special Supplemental Life Insurance Offered

**Sept. 13-17**

Do you want more life insurance coverage? Have you been refused coverage because of a medical condition? If you answered yes to either question, here's a one-time offer you can't refuse.

From Sept. 13-17, CIGNA Group Insurance—the network's insurance carrier—will hold open enrollment for LVH staff to obtain life insurance coverage equal to their annual salary (up to \$100,000) without requiring medical review. This opportunity to purchase supplemental life insurance coverage through CIGNA's Group Universal Life is open to employees working 16-40 hours per week. During this enrollment period, no medical condition can prevent you from being approved for this coverage.

Whether you already have GUL coverage and want to increase it to the plan's maximum, or if you have been turned down for supplemental life insurance, this is the time to act. Outside of this special enrollment period, you will be required to identify any medical conditions you have.

CIGNA representatives will hold informational sessions during the enrollment period, the dates and times for which will be listed on E-mail. You can obtain an enrollment kit through human resources or at a presentation. Applications for Group Universal Life must be submitted to human resources, 1770 Bathgate, no later than Sept. 17. ■



# Carol Schaffer Named VP of Home Health

**C**arol Schaffer could have gone anywhere. She chose Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network.

With advanced degrees in nursing, business administration and law, and experience as the former president of a \$120 million post-acute care subsidiary of the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Schaffer was being recruited by organizations throughout the country, including a major academic medical center.

"I was attracted by the level of commitment to the community at Lehigh Valley Hospital," said Schaffer, newly appointed vice president of home health. "LVHHN is staffed by a lot of talented people, making it a very progressive institution."

The community focus and progressive attitude are particularly important during a period of reductions in reimbursement in the home health industry.



Carol Schaffer, R.N., M.S.N., J.D., M.B.A.

"Some organizations in the country are reducing their home health services," Schaffer said, "but home health will remain a significant part of the hospital's continuum of care."

Schaffer will lead Lehigh Valley Home Care, Lehigh Valley Hospice and Health Spectrum Medical Products and Pharmacy.

"I am pleased with the quality of the home health staff, their commitment to their patients and their strong work ethic," she said.

With this strong foundation, Schaffer is confident

she'll achieve her initial goal: improve operating efficiencies while maintaining the focus on the delivery of high-quality patient care. Before joining LVHHN, she was president and chief operating officer of Metrix Health Resources Inc., a management services organization that worked with home health agencies nationwide.

Before establishing Metrix, Schaffer was president and chief executive officer of CCF Health Care Venture Inc., a subsidiary of Cleveland Clinic Foundation.

"LVHHN is very fortunate to recruit a home health professional of Carol's caliber," said James Dunleavy, senior vice president, Health Services. "She's an excellent addition to the Health Services management team." ■

by Mary DeHaven

## Health Spectrum Receives Joint Commission Accreditation

Health Spectrum Medical Products and Pharmacy will receive Joint Commission Accreditation, according to preliminary results of a survey conducted in July. The unofficial results are subject to review by the Joint Commission. Official notification of accreditation is expected later this month.

Health Spectrum scored a 93 out of a possible 100. The Joint Commission surveyors complimented Health Spectrum on the quality of care it provides, its level of patient satisfaction and its performance improvement program.

"This achievement validates the quality of our programs," said James Dunleavy, senior vice president, health services. "It is a tribute to every employee working with physicians and other health care providers to give the best care possible to our community."

The eight-and-a-half-day survey involved site visits to all Health Spectrum Medical Products facilities in Harrisburg, Horsham and Allentown, and Pharmacy locations in Muhlenberg Hospital Center, Harrisburg and Allentown. ■

by Mary DeHaven

## THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREENER... Except When It's Burning!



HealthPage's Dave Sherer and Joe Shigo always considered "putting out fires" part of their jobs. There are last minute requests to install, repair and replace phones, and other emergencies they handle in stride.

But how prepared were they for the real thing?

Returning to their base of operations at Cedar Crest on the afternoon of July 8, Sherer (far left) and Shigo spotted smoke rising from the lawn near the edge of Cedar Crest Blvd. The all-too-parched grass was aflame, probably caused by a carelessly flipped cigarette butt from a passing motorist. The fire was heading towards a line of evergreen trees. On the other side were occupied parking spaces.

Sherer and Shigo, who are more familiar with phone lines than water lines, thought fast—they went for a hose.

"Someone was watering the flowers at the entrance to the site, about 25 feet away," Shigo recalls. "Dave grabbed the hose and pulled it over, and I turned it on."

Their quick reactions kept the fire from spreading to the trees, and possibly to the cars parked on the other side. Shortly after their cool response, a fire truck from the Salisbury Fire Department arrived to finish the job.

It was all in a day's work for guys who are used to handling plenty of burning issues. ■

by Rob Stevens

## EMPLOYEE SURVEY RESULTS LATE Key Issues Identified

The delivery of complete results of LVHHN's employee satisfaction survey has been delayed, because Press Ganey initially provided incomplete reports and wasn't able to meet data processing requirements within the network's original time frame.

"This is a major disappointment to us since we will not be able to keep our commitment of reporting the global findings by Aug. 30," said MaryKay Gooch, vice president of human resources. An entire set of reports is expected from Press Ganey by the end of September, she said. But for now, only the most general findings can be shared, with the understanding that the details are forthcoming.

"We can only report with certainty that several key areas of concern were identified through the surveys: communication, trust and the extent to which employees feel their opinions are valued," Gooch said.

"But we're not comfortable analyzing the results and starting to take action until we have complete information." Press Ganey is rerunning several initial reports that contained minor coding errors and preparing custom documents for LVHHN that will help staff and managers understand the data from the questionnaires completed in June by more than 3,000 employees.

"We have asked Press Ganey for more complex reports than what they're accustomed to providing," she continued. "We asked for comparative results for the network, each division and all departments, requiring them to produce 24 lengthy reports." Also, some

600 pages of comments from the surveys are being sorted by theme and for cost centers with more than 10 employees, which will help explain in detail the key findings.

Comprehensive results of the survey were scheduled to be provided this month by Press Ganey. A network-wide report was to be shared throughout the organization. Department-specific results were to be provided to the appropriate managers.

The abundance of completed surveys could also have slowed Press Ganey's processing time. Gooch said their customer service representative commented that LVHHN had an "overwhelming" response.

"With such a great completion rate, we want to be sure the information we get is complete, correct and usable. We owe that to our employees."

Employees will be informed of all progress and new developments through routine E-mails, which can be posted in departments. The "Voice-Raisers," the employee advisory group for the survey process, will review the complete reports in early October and recommend steps to share them with staff and create action plans.

Next month's *CheckUp* will showcase the departments that achieved the highest participation rates in the survey. In October's *CheckUp*, overall results will be shared, issues for improvement identified and guidelines for using the results provided. ■

by Rob Stevens





Lou Liebhaber, COO

*Lou Liebhaber*

## 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.

# Survey Issues Relate to Communication, Trust and Employees' Opinions

I hope you read the article on page 3 that gives the general results of the employee satisfaction survey and explains why complete results were delayed. The key findings from the initial reports reflect your concerns with communication, trust and the value that LVHHN places on your opinions.

In all honesty, I am concerned by these findings, because I believe our organization makes formal and casual communication a priority. But as I considered the results, I felt a sense of optimism that we had conducted the survey, and you spoke so honestly about your concerns. It's likely these issues wouldn't have otherwise surfaced with such prominence and prompted us to ask questions that will help us delve into the meaning of the results.

For example, I want to know more about why communication and trust were highlighted as the most critical areas needing improvement. I also want you to help me understand what effective communication would look like and how a sense of trust can be gained. The worst thing we could do now would be to bury our heads in the sand and "explain away" the survey results. I don't want to do this, nor do I think do you.

To live up to our commitment to improving communication and the trust you feel at work, we'll first need to understand more fully the key findings by division, department and shift.

Unfortunately, we can't do that immediately, because a number of technical problems occurred during Press Ganey's preparation of the results. For example, the 10,000 comments that respondents filled in first have to be sorted so they are meaningful and identify trends that can be addressed. Also, we need them to provide comparative results for the network, each division and all departments. This is quite an undertaking that will require more time to complete.

I promise to keep you informed of our progress along the way. So for now, the most meaningful conclusion we can draw from the reports is that we have a great deal of work to do together to analyze and address the critical issues you have identified.

The success of LVHHN as the leading provider of health care to our community is rooted in our tradition of open and effective working relationships. And communication and trust are necessary to create and nurture these connections.

LVHHN is like a patient who has been told by his doctor that he has a serious but curable illness. The patient has a choice: Does he fall apart, become depressed and avoid treatment that will cure him? Or does he draw from lessons he has learned about facing adversity and turn a challenging situation into an opportunity for personal growth?

The task before us is clear, and the need is critical. In the coming months, we will have opportunities to ask for and give advice to each other on how we can understand our illness, design a treatment course and become a stronger organization from the experience.

Thank you for caring enough about LVHHN, your patients and our community to share your opinions on issues that are critical to our success. I hope you'll also take the time to help us find constructive solutions. Because if we don't do it, who will? ■

## Service Star "Truly Loves" Educating Patients

Through the community outreach program "Living with Congestive Heart Failure," pharmacist Joe Tomko has a "contagious enthusiasm" when working with the chronically ill patients, said Wendy Robb, chronic disease coordinator.

"When getting ready to put on his program, Joe stands there with a grin on his face and says 'I love this,'" Robb said.

Tomko—July's Service Star—is among a dietitian, psychologist and expert from cardiac rehabilitation who set up rotating stations where they educate patients in 15-minute increments.

"When it's time to switch stations, Joe just wants to keep talking and talking," Robb said. "I've been there when the lights are going out, and he's still standing there answering questions. He shares



Joe Tomko  
July's Service Star

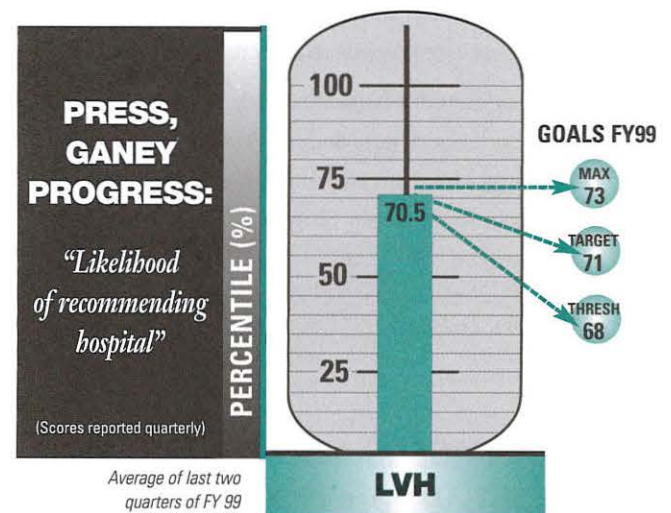
his expert knowledge in such an upbeat way, it gives chronically ill people hope."

Going beyond the hours required for his job, Tomko volunteers weekends and evenings to participate in the program. He also works with pharmaceutical reps to get "freebies" for attendees of the class. "Medication dispensers, flyers, pamphlets, fanny packs—he always makes sure he has something to give away," Robb said.

In fact, Robb said, working with Tomko has been "one of the best parts of my job. He truly loves what he's doing and it's so refreshing. His enthusiasm catches on for the whole group." ■

by Pamela Maurer

### LVH SHARED SUCCESS PLAN PROGRESS (AS OF JUNE 30, 1999)



### LVHHN FY99 Expense/Adjusted Case

