Growing up, Amanda was always the one to “take care” of her friends. Almost like a mother figure within her group, she welcomed opportunities to tend to her siblings and playmates if they suffered a scrape or bruise in the back yard. Her parents could see Amanda’s career path forming even before she herself did.

A very good student throughout high school and college, Amanda worked hard and had a true passion for learning. Her caring nature never diminished.

In health care, advancements happen daily. Techniques, treatments, medicine, procedures and more are constantly developing and improving. It is imperative to keep abreast of what’s happening, as that contributes to quality patient care. Opportunities for professional enhancement abound and this fall there are some exciting events being offered.

At Family Hospice and Palliative Care, we not only expect our staff to take advantage of these offerings, we believe in presenting educational seminars that will enhance the skills of our professional partners.

Dementia patients account for a significant portion of hospice patient diagnoses, and with that in mind, Family Hospice and Asbury Heights are presenting “Namaste Care: Quality of Life at the End of Life,” Thursday, October 18 at Asbury Heights in Mt. Lebanon. This day-long event provides six educational contact hours for RNs, SWs, NHAs and Personal Care Home administrators — and is open to the public. Joyce Simard, the founder of Namaste Care, will be among the presenters discussing: the meaning and purpose of Namaste Care; evaluation of the positive effects of Namaste care in dementia patients; and the holistic approach to end-of-life care.

Namaste Care takes place in a calming environment. The program is based on “the power of loving touch” approach to care and has successfully been implemented across the United States and in other parts of the world.

On Thursday, October 26, Family Hospice presents “Hospice and Physical Therapy: Making the Most of Life,” at Presbyterian Senior Care’s Westminster Place in Oakmont. This seminar, which provides two free CEUs for RNs, SWs and NHAs, addresses an important aspect of end-of-life care. Participants will receive instruction in these areas: the purpose of hospice and palliative care; the hospice Medicare entitlement; evaluation of the physical and functional abilities of patients at end of life; and review of the physical therapist’s role in assessment of caregiver ability and environmental safety.

Most people understand physical therapy as a rehabilitative exercise following an injury or surgery, but when it comes to hospice, it helps patients achieve comfort. “For a bed-bound patient who can’t even roll over, his or her muscles tend to get stiff, and this can cause pain,” explained Bill Shepard, Family Hospice physical therapist and a presenter at the October event. “Range of motion exercises help keep the patient mobile.”

Amanda spent her entire professional career caring for others and enriching her own education and knowledge. She took advantage of opportunities. Please do the same, not only for your own benefit, but those you serve.

For more information and to register:

“Namaste Care” — please contact Eric Horwitz at 412-651-5853, or ehorwitz@familyhospice.com. $30 registration includes contact hours for professionals; lunch and Joyce Simard’s book for all attendees.

Hospice & Physical Therapy — please contact Amy Rabo at 412-826-6104, or arabo@srcare.org. Program is free.

Rafael J. Sciullo, MA, LCSW, MS, is President and CEO of Family Hospice and Palliative Care and Past Chairperson of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. He may be reached at rsiculo@familyhospice.com or (412) 572-8800. Family Hospice and Palliative Care serves nine counties in Western Pennsylvania. Its website is www.familyhospice.com.
A potentially treatable blood vessel abnormality in the brain may be the cause of Parkinson’s Disease in some patients, according to a study published in the journal Neurology International by a team of leading physicians and neuroscientists at Pittsburgh’s Allegheny General Hospital (AGH).

Recognized worldwide as one of the premise authorities on diseases associated with vascular compression of cranial nerves, the study’s lead author, Peter Jannetta, MD, is credited with developing the modern surgical technique to treat such conditions. Called microvascular decompression (MVD), the procedure involves repositioning compressive arteries in the brain and placing a protective pad between the artery and the structure it is compromising.

It was in course of treating a patient for the cranial nerve disease trigeminal neuralgia who also suffered from Parkinson’s Disease that Dr. Jannetta first observed the possible role of vascular compression in Parkinson’s. In addition to vascular compression of the left trigeminal nerve, the patient also had notable compression of an area of the brain called the left cerebral penduncle. The cerebral penduncles are two cylinder-like nerve bundles in the brain stem that convey motor information to and from the brain to the rest of the body.

After performing MVD of the left trigeminal nerve, Dr. Jannetta decompressed the patient’s cerebral penduncle by mobilizing and repositioning the offending artery. The results were stunning. By post-operative day five, the patient’s Parkinson’s symptoms, including severe tremor and rigidity, had disappeared. She remained symptom free for 18 months, after which she suffered a full recurrence. A follow-up MRI scan showed new compression of the non-treated right cerebral penduncle by the opposite posterior artery for 18 months, after which she suffered a full recurrence. A follow-up MRI scan showed new compression of the non-treated right cerebral penduncle by the opposite posterior artery for 18 months, after which she suffered a full recurrence.

For more information, visit www.wpahs.org.

BBF, a 53-year old Pittsburgh-based international charity, has provided over $3.4 billion of medical supplies, textbooks, food, seeds, and other humanitarian supplies to people around the world in over 140 countries.

With the help of gifts from the general public, corporations and the US government, in the first half of 2011 BBF sent product contributions to those in need in 54 countries. These shipments were the equivalent of 110 tractor trailer loads. Also, BBF furnished supplies for 126 medical and humanitarian hand-carrier mission trips.

BBF accepts pre-approved simple, yet functional, hospital equipment and short-dated supplies with a shelf life of at least six months remaining. BBF then matches these goods with the needs of hospitals, mission groups and partner organizations around the world.

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8th Annual Reindeer Ball: A Storybook Christmas

Pittsburgh Mercy Health System is sponsoring its 8th Annual Reindeer Ball, a spectacular holiday children’s gala, Sunday, Dec. 4, 2011, from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Westin Convention Center Hotel, Downtown. Dance along with Madeline, Clifford, Curious George, Junie B. Jones, Mrs. Claus, Rudolph, and other favorite characters to “A Storybook Christmas.” Craft art projects, decorate holiday cookies, and enjoy face painting, balloon and caricature artists, a child-friendly buffet, and more.

Proceeds from the evening benefit A Child’s Place at Mercy, an invaluable Pittsburgh Mercy Health System advocacy program that serves children who are suspected victims of child abuse and/or neglect, as well as children in foster care. The program relies on the generous support of private individuals to help achieve its mission.

Tickets are $80 for adults and $45 for children. For information, mail Development@mercy.pmhs.org or phone 724.934.3357 or 724.934.3358. To purchase tickets, visit www.pmhs.org/events.

UPCI Team Finds Key Oncoprotein in Merkel Cell Carcinoma

Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI) have identified the oncoprotein that allows a common and usually harmless virus to transform healthy cells into a rare but deadly skin cancer called Merkel Cell Carcinoma (MCC). Their findings, published in the Journal of Clinical Investigation, could improve diagnosis for MCC and may help in understanding how other cancers arise.

Three years ago, Yuan Chang, M.D., and Patrick S. Moore, M.D., M.P.H., in the Cancer Virology Program at UPCI, discovered a new human cancer virus, called Merkel Cell polyomavirus (MVC), that causes most cases of MCC. But until now, it was not clear how the virus triggered cancer development.

To figure that out, lead author Masahiro Shuda, Ph.D., UPCI research associate, and the team systematically examined the viral proteins that might trigger cancer cell growth. After establishing human MCC cell lines, the scientists learned that knocking out a viral protein called “small tumor protein,” or sT, stopped the cancer cells from replicating.

When they introduced sT into healthy cells in the lab, the cells took on the characteristics of cancer cells.

“This was a surprise because the viral sT proteins from other similar viruses that cause cancers in laboratory animals do not directly increase cancer activity in cells,” Dr. Shuda said. “Once we found this, we had to next understand the biological mechanisms that make MCC’s sT a cancer-causing protein, or oncoprotein.”

The MCV sT triggers a cellular process called “cap-dependent translation” that allows certain cellular oncoproteins to be made, Dr. Moore explained. Although the cancers caused by MCC are rare, the virus is important because it helps scientists pinpoint cell pathways that are key to more common cancers. These cancers also might activate cap-dependent translation through a DNA mutation rather than through a virus infection.

In related studies recently published by the team in Emerging Infectious Diseases, MCC was shown to normally infect four out of five healthy adults, where it remains a silent resident in skin cells without causing any symptoms. Only when specific mutations occur in the DNA of the virus for example, by ultraviolet light exposure does it have potential to cause cancer. The researchers are now working to identify new agents to target MCC cancer cells that may be more active and less toxic.

MCC is the first virus in the family of polyomaviruses shown to cause human cancer, but six other polyomaviruses have recently been discovered as apparent infections of people, and scientists are actively seeking to find out if they are additional, cancer-causing viruses as well. MCC is the second human cancer virus found by the Chang-Moore laboratory, which previously also discovered the virus causing Kaposis’s sarcoma – the most common cancer among AIDS patients.

Other co-authors are Hyun Jin Kwon, Ph.D., and Huichen Fung, Ph.D., both of the Cancer Virology Program. The research was funded by the National Institutes of Health, the American Cancer Society and UPCI. Dr. Chang is an American Cancer Society Professor of pathology, and Dr. Moore is an American Cancer Society Professor of microbiology and molecular genetics, Pitt School of Medicine.

For more information, visit www.upci.upmc.edu.

For more information, visit www.upci.upmc.edu.
University of Pittsburgh Receives $67.3 Million to Translate Science into Therapies

A University of Pittsburgh institute aimed at accelerating the pace of translating science into real-life treatments for patients has received $67.3 million from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to expand its work over the next five years.

Pitt’s Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) is among 10 institutes nationwide to receive renewed funding in recognition of its successes during the first five years of the Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) program. The program is administered by the NIH’s National Center for Research Resources (NCRR).

The renewal underscores the success of Pitt’s CTSI, through which researchers have used novel computer software to improve the diagnosis of breast cancer, brought researchers together as part of the Sleep Medicine Institute to advance research into sleep disorders, and funded research into the efficacy of low-cost prescription drug programs, among many other initiatives.

The other institutions are Columbia University Medical Center; Mayo Clinic; Oregon Health and Sciences University; Rockefeller University; University of California, Davis; UC San Francisco; University of Pennsylvania; University of Rochester; and Yale University.

Together, the institutes represent a $498 million renewed commitment on the NIH’s part in support of the CTSA consortium.

The renewal awards endorse the success of the University of Pittsburgh’s CTSI and its sister programs in creating a framework for scientists to move beyond the traditional silos of science to collaborate on promising research and find the training and resources to move those projects ahead.

These grants, which have now been awarded to 60 academic health centers nationwide, help scientists collaborate on research that applies to a broad range of diseases. CTSAs fund institutions also work with industry, manufacturers, patient groups and nonprofit organizations to ensure that potentially life-saving new drugs and devices reach the public faster. Pitt’s CTSI was established in 2006 with a $83.5 million NIH grant. It is a collaboration among Pitt, UPMC, Carnegie Mellon and the University of Pittsburgh and other institutions in the CTSA consortium.

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St. Clair Announces New Hires

Adam D. Tune, M.D. has joined the St. Clair Hospital pain management program.

Dr. Tune is certified by the American Board of Anesthesiology and earned his medical degree at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio in Texas. He completed a residency with a clinical focus in pain medicine and regional anesthesia, as well as a fellowship in interventional pain medicine at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. Dr. Tune is a member of Keystone Anesthesia Consultants. He resides in Mt. Lebanon with his wife, Jesse, and their three children.

St. Clair Hospital has also named Joseph Thaner, Director of Business Development. Thaner most recently served as Director of Practice Management at West Penn Allegheny Health System. He earned his Master in Health Administration from the University of Pittsburgh and received his bachelor’s degree from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Thaner resides in Regent Square.

For more information, visit www.stclair.org.

Patient First Names Director of Medical Support

Patient First announced that Robert Guillory has been appointed Director of Medical Support (DMS) for Patient First’s Mechanicsburg center. In this role, he will work closely with the center’s Medical Director and supervise Mechanicsburg operations, including the front office staff, nursing staff, X-ray, laboratory, equipment maintenance and prescription inventories.

Prior to joining Patient First, Guillory served in the United States Navy for five years as a Registered Nurse. His experience includes duty as an Emergency Room, Intensive Care Unit and Flight Nurse. Guillory was also a supervisor at Carlisle Regional Hospital in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Guillory received his Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

For more information, visit www.patientfirst.com.

The Alliance Announces New CEO

The Alliance for Excellence in Hospice and Palliative Nursing (The Alliance) recently announced its new Chief Executive Officer, Janis Faehnrich, RN MSN MBA. The Alliance includes the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association (HPNA), National Board for Certification of Hospice and Palliative Nurses (NBCHPN ®), Hospice and Palliative Nurses Foundation (HPNF). Faehnrich is from Brecksville, Ohio and will begin her new role as CEO in October. She will be succeeding Judy Lentz, RN MSN NHA, who will be retiring from the position in 2011. Faehnrich received her BSN and MSN from Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. She also received a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) from Cleveland State University in Cleveland, Ohio. She has extensive international professional experiences, including serving as a Case Management/Disease Management Educational Leader in South Africa and Cuba. Faehnrich also completed a hospice executive MBA study in London, England.

Faehnrich was the founding Executive Director of the Hospice Network of Northern Ohio, which later merged with Hospice of the Western Reserve in 1991. She then developed and operated a care management department for MetroHealth System in Cleveland, Ohio. She went on to hold several roles with the Cleveland Clinic, including Director of Nursing for the Cancer Center and Senior Director of Care Management.

During her tenure with Concordia Care as CEO from 2001 to 2009, Faehnrich engineered a financial and operational turnaround for the PACE program, expanding the program to a second site, increasing census by 55% in five years, and implementing sound fiscal oversight that allowed this the program to achieve permanent provider status. Prior to accepting her new role as CEO of HPNA, Faehnrich was Vice President of Clinical Relations with COMS Interactive, LLC.

For more information, visit www.hpna.org.

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Grove City Medical Center Welcomes Drs. Donald A. Walters & Peter J. Molloy

Dr. Walters completed medical school at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, followed by a residency in Internal Medicine at the Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh and a fellowship in Gastroenterology at West Penn Hospital. He completed his final year of training at St. Luke’s Medical Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he completed an advanced endoscopy fellowship including biliary and pancreatic endoscopy. Dr. Walters is board certified in Gastroenterology.

During his residency and fellowships, Dr. Walters has participated in numerous research studies involving various aspects of gastrointestinal disease and endoscopy. Also to his credit are a number of publications and presentations at national meetings. Dr. Walters is currently a member of the American Medical Association, American Gastroenterology Association, the American College of Gastroenterology and the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, where he has served as a member of the Practice Management Committee.

Dr. Molloy completed his medical school education at the State University of New York - Stony Brook School of Medicine. He subsequently was an Internal Medicine resident at Monmouth Medical Center, New Jersey, and completed a Gastroenterology fellowship at West Penn Hospital. He previously was Chief of Gastroenterology and Fellowship Program Director at West Penn with the academic rank of Associate Professor of Medicine, Temple University.

Dr. Molloy has authored more than 20 peer-reviewed publications, including book chapters, review papers and articles. He has presented at numerous national meetings and is currently on the National Affairs Committee of the American College of Gastroenterology. He is board certified in both Internal Medicine and Gastroenterology.

For more information, visit www.gccepca.org.

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Healthcare Professionals in the News

West Penn Allegheny Health System Appoints Robert Keenan, MD, Chief Quality Officer

Robert Keenan, MD, has been named Chief Quality Officer and Vice President at Allegheny General Hospital (AGH) and West Penn Hospital.

In addition to serving as the chair of AGH’s Medical Executive Committee, Dr. Keenan is currently Chief of Thoracic Surgery for West Penn Allegheny Health System, Director of the AGH Center for Thoracic Surgery, and a Professor of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery with the Drexel University College of Medicine.

In his new role, Dr. Keenan will provide leadership in developing a quality and patient safety infrastructure. He will also develop strategies that will bring a consistent approach to quality measurement and a culture of shared best practices across both campuses.

He will help to lead a coordinated, team-based effort to develop, monitor, assess and improve outcomes in the safety and efficiency of inpatient and outpatient care. In addition, he will be responsible for quality, data analysis, measurement, outcomes, process improvement, patient/staff safety, accreditation, clinical risk management, infection control, and will serve as a liaison with external agencies, including The Joint Commission, a non-profit organization which accredits and certifies more than 19,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States.

Dr. Keenan joined Allegheny General in 2000. In addition to being a skilled surgeon and physician leader, he has led dozens of clinical research studies, and published more than 200 articles, books, chapters and/or abstracts. Dr. Keenan resides in Fox Chapel.

For more information, visit www.wpahs.org.

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Two locations – North Fayette and Cranberry
New Employees Join Altoona Regional Health System

Gayle Conner of Roaring Spring has been hired as a development associate for the Altoona Regional Health System Foundation for Life, a private, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization which exists to inspire gifts from individuals, foundations, corporations and other entities to support the preservation of health care in Central Pennsylvania.

Conner’s responsibilities will include management of the Foundation’s donor records and annual giving program. In addition, she will assist and help manage fundraising events and volunteer committees and work to help develop new stewardship and fund-raising programs for the Foundation. Conner previously served as program coordinator of volunteers at AseraCare Hospice in Altoona and as a marketing/development assistant at Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries in Hollidaysburg. She graduated from Penn State Altoona with a bachelor’s degree in Communications/Public Relations.

Rebecca C. Miller, M.D., has joined the Altoona Regional Health System Medical Staff in the Department of Emergency Medicine. Dr. Miller received her medical degree from Drexel University, Philadelphia. She completed her residency training at Temple University Hospital.

Tracy R. Prematta, M.D., also joined the Altoona Regional Health System Medical Staff in the department of Pediatrics & Newborn (Allergy & Immunology). She practices with Central Pennsylvania Asthma & Allergy Care, 501 Howard Ave., Suite 201A, Altoona. She is board certified by the American Board of Pediatrics and is board eligible for the American Board of Allergy, Asthma & Clinical Immunology. Dr. Prematta received her medical degree from Penn State University College of Medicine. She did her residency at Penn State Hershey Medical Center, where she also received fellowship training in allergy and immunology.

Matthew M. Pontzer, D.O., has joined Altoona Regional Health System Medical Staff in the department of Psychiatry. He will practice with Behavioral Health Services. He received his medical degree from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine. He did his internship and residency at National Capital Consortium, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C.

For more information, visit www.AltoonaRegional.org.

New Executive Vice President and Chief Medical Officer Appointed at Jefferson Regional

John J. Dempster, president and CEO of Jefferson Regional Medical Center, announced the appointment of Richard F. Collins Jr., MD, as executive vice president and chief medical officer, with oversight of clinical quality, risk management, case management and medical staff services.

Dr. Collins previously served as vice president and chief medical officer, and vice president of medical affairs at Jefferson Regional Medical Center. He was an orthopedic surgeon for 25 years and was affiliated with Steel Valley Orthopedic Associates. He has served as president of the medical staff and chief of orthopedics, Department of Surgery. He also served on Jefferson Regional Board of Directors, including five years as chairman.

Dr. Collins was affiliated with the former Braddock Medical Center, serving as president of the medical staff, chief of surgery and member of the board of directors and executive committee. He also was an assistant clinical instructor in orthopedics at the University of Pittsburgh.

He graduated from Duke University, Durham, N.C., and George Washington University Medical School, and completed his internship and residency in general surgery at Hartford Hospital, Hartford, Conn. He completed an orthopedic surgery residency at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Dr. Collins served as a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy Medical Corps, stationed at Quantico Naval Hospital, Va. His professional affiliations include the Pennsylvania Medical Society, Allegheny County Medical Society and the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons.

For more information, visit www.jeffersonregional.com.

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Hospital Council Names New Vice President

Hospital Council of Western Pennsylvania recently named Tom Aubel as vice president of Payer Relations and Data Management. He joins Hospital Council with 22 years of experience as a financial analyst and director of managed care.

In this new position, Aubel will focus on representing members to all government and commercial payers. He will serve as Hospital Council’s primary contact for all commercial healthcare plans as well as conduct analysis on reimbursement methodologies and assist members with Medicare, Medical Assistance and regulations issued by Pennsylvania’s Department of Public Welfare. He will also work with several Hospital Council member committees and work groups.

In addition, he will be responsible for producing Hospital Council’s long-standing financial and human resources surveys and will work with members and Hospital Council staff to produce new surveys and provide additional data to members.

This new position was created as an outcome from Hospital Council’s recently-completed strategic planning effort, Harper said.

Prior to joining Hospital Council, Aubel served as director of Managed Care for Heritage Valley Health System in Beaver, Pennsylvania. He also held positions at Mercy Health System, Pyramid Health, South Hills Health System (now Jefferson Regional Health System), Advantage Health Plan and Healthamerica/Riverside Health Plan.

He holds a master’s degree in Business Administration from Robert Morris University in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania and a bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in Indiana, Pennsylvania.

Hospital Council of Western Pennsylvania is a non-profit trade association representing more than 65 providers in a 30-county region. Members include acute care, specialty and long-term acute care hospitals as well as long-term care providers. Hospital Council provides its members with data, information, advocacy, education and other services.

For more information, visit www.hcwp.org.

Saint Vincent Names New Chief Nursing Officer

Saint Vincent Health Center welcomes Maureen Melia Chadwick, RN, MSN, NE-BC as Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer of Saint Vincent Health System.

A 25-year veteran of Saint Vincent, Chadwick has held various leadership positions, including director of inpatient cardiology, director of the Saint Vincent Heart Labs and her most recent role as director of the Endoscopy suite, Short Stay/Pre-admission Unit and Urology Suite.

Outside of Saint Vincent, Chadwick has been an adjunct faculty member at Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, where she has taught nursing research, management and capstone courses for the past two years.

Chadwick is a graduate of the Mercy Hospital School of Nursing in Pittsburgh. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Pennsylvania State University and a Master of Science in Nursing from Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh.

Chadwick is a member of the American Organization of Nurse Executives and Association of periOperative Registered Nurses. She has also been published in several national nursing journals.

For more information, visit www.saintvincenthealth.com.

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Diskriter Inc. Announces Executive Director, HIM Operations

Diskriter announced that Kelley Iezzi has joined Diskriter as Executive Director, HIM Operations. Iezzi will supervise, lead and assist transcription operation team members to ensure the timely delivery of quality transcribed documents to assigned accounts. She will also oversee new business implementations and project management with an emphasis on customer service and serve as a liaison for Diskriter’s global operations team.

Iezzi comes to Diskriter with more than 18 years of experience in the healthcare industry. She began her career as a medical assistant and a medical transcriptionist before becoming a Quality Auditor. In her most recent position as Director of Transcription with a Florida-based firm, Iezzi was responsible for the hiring and training of new staff, implementation of speech recognition systems, monitoring the workflow of more than 50 accounts and staffing and maintaining the schedules for 110 Medical Transcriptionists and Editors throughout the United States and globally.

During this time, she successfully reduced error submissions from 28% to less than 5% company-wide.

Dedicated to quality, Iezzi performed bimonthly audits for all staff to ensure that they maintained 98% or greater quality. She also integrated new clients and new platforms. Iezzi, of Shaler Township, is a graduate of Medlan School of Allied Health in Pittsburgh, where she earned High Honors.

For more information, visit www.diskriter.com.

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Outside of Saint Vincent, Chadwick has been an adjunct faculty member at Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, where she has taught nursing research, management and capstone courses for the past two years.

Chadwick is a graduate of the Mercy Hospital School of Nursing in Pittsburgh. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Pennsylvania State University and a Master of Science in Nursing from Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh.

Chadwick is a member of the American Organization of Nurse Executives and Association of periOperative Registered Nurses. She has also been published in several national nursing journals.

For more information, visit www.saintvincenthealth.com.

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Diskriter Inc. Announces Executive Director, HIM Operations

Diskriter announced that Kelley Iezzi has joined Diskriter as Executive Director, HIM Operations. Iezzi will supervise, lead and assist transcription operation team members to ensure the timely delivery of quality transcribed documents to assigned accounts. She will also oversee new business implementations and project management with an emphasis on customer service and serve as a liaison for Diskriter’s global operations team.

Iezzi comes to Diskriter with more than 18 years of experience in the healthcare industry. She began her career as a medical assistant and a medical transcriptionist before becoming a Quality Auditor. In her most recent position as Director of Transcription with a Florida-based firm, Iezzi was responsible for the hiring and training of new staff, implementation of speech recognition systems, monitoring the workflow of more than 50 accounts and staffing and maintaining the schedules for 110 Medical Transcriptionists and Editors throughout the United States and globally.

During this time, she successfully reduced error submissions from 28% to less than 5% company-wide.

Dedicated to quality, Iezzi performed bimonthly audits for all staff to ensure that they maintained 98% or greater quality. She also integrated new clients and new platforms. Iezzi, of Shaler Township, is a graduate of Medlan School of Allied Health in Pittsburgh, where she earned High Honors.

For more information, visit www.diskriter.com.

Saint Vincent Names New Chief Nursing Officer

Saint Vincent Health Center welcomes Maureen Melia Chadwick, RN, MSN, NE-BC as Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer of Saint Vincent Health System.

A 25-year veteran of Saint Vincent, Chadwick has held various leadership positions, including director of inpatient cardiology, director of the Saint Vincent Heart Labs and her most recent role as director of the Endoscopy suite, Short Stay/Pre-admission Unit and Urology Suite.

Outside of Saint Vincent, Chadwick has been an adjunct faculty member at Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, where she has taught nursing research, management and capstone courses for the past two years.

Chadwick is a graduate of the Mercy Hospital School of Nursing in Pittsburgh. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Pennsylvania State University and a Master of Science in Nursing from Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh.

Chadwick is a member of the American Organization of Nurse Executives and Association of periOperative Registered Nurses. She has also been published in several national nursing journals.

For more information, visit www.saintvincenthealth.com.

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For more information, visit www.diskriter.com.
Murrysville Resident Wins Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser Award

James S. Hamilton of Murrysville has been named the Association of Fundraising Professionals—Western Pennsylvania Chapter’s (AFP-WPA)’s Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser of 2011. Hamilton will be honored at AFP’s National Philanthropy Day Celebration, which will be held on November 17 at the Sheraton Station Square.

Hamilton was co-nominated for this award by Forbes Health Foundation and the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh, which are two of the organizations for which he volunteers. He has been a member of the Forbes Health Foundation Board for six and a half years, and his involvement with the YMCA spans three decades.

Now retired, Hamilton served for many years as a senior vice president at Federated Investors and brings a wealth of business and financial expertise to his board roles. He is a dedicated steward who watches carefully over donor funds. Hamilton and his wife Mary have been married for 47 years and live in Murrysville. Together they have raised two children, Michael, and Rebecca. He is the proud grandfather of four grandchildren, Ethan, 10, Evan, 8, Eli, 5, and Eric, 3. Mr. Hamilton is on the board of the Franklin Township Municipal Sanitary Authority. He is also involved with the Murrysville Community Library and is member of the Session at Beulah Presbyterian Church.

The Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser Award recognizes volunteers who have demonstrated exceptional leadership skills in recruiting, coordinating, and motivating volunteers for fundraising projects, contribute personal time and effort to one or more nonprofit organizations, and influence a fundraising program’s financial success. For more information, visit www.wpaelps.org.

UPMC Cancer Centers Announces New Associate Director of Adult Neuro-Oncology Program

Jan Drappatz, M.D., a leading expert in brain cancer treatment and research, has been appointed associate director of UPMC Cancer Centers Adult Neuro-Oncology Program, and associate professor of neurology and medicine with the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. Dr. Drappatz joined Pitt and UPMC Cancer Centers on Aug. 15 from Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Harvard Medical School, where he served on the faculty and as an attending physician in the departments of neurology and oncology. Dr. Drappatz received his M.D. from the Johannes Gutenberg University School of Medicine. He completed residency training in neurology at the Partners Neurology Residency Program at Massachusetts General Hospital and Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and completed his fellowship training in neuro-oncology at Dana-Farber. For more information, visit www.medschool.pitt.edu.

Baptist Homes Announces New Hire

Baptist Homes Society, a provider of premier senior living services in the South Hills of Pittsburgh, with two communities, Baptist Homes in Mt. Lebanon and Providence Point in Scott Township, recently named Jeff Barber as Assistant Director of Nursing at Baptist Homes. Jeff is responsible for the Nursing Center. Jeff has previously worked at Golden Living in Oakmont and at UPMC Mercy Burn Trauma CVICU. He has been an RN for 18 years and attended Slippery Rock University.

Vincentian System Announces New Appointments

Linda Parkinson was appointed director of rehabilitation services for the Vincentian system, overseeing all aspects of inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services and programs. She previously served as Vincentian’s outpatient rehabilitation manager from 2008 to 2011. Parkinson brings nearly 20 years of therapy and management experience to the position. Most recently, she worked as director of outpatient programs at HealthSouth. She earned her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Pittsburgh and Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy from Misericordia University.

Michele Dolby was hired as community liaison for the Vincentian system to enhance the communication and coordination of services between hospitals, physicians, churches, other community members and the Vincentian system’s senior communities. Dolby brings 15 years of healthcare experience to the position, and eight years of long term care admissions and social services experience. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in sociology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

For more information, visit www.vcs.org.

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Mount Nittany Health System recently announce the appointment of Robert J. Wunar, MHA, CMPE, COPM, to vice president of Mount Nittany Physician Group.

Since 2005, Wunar served as the Executive Administrator for the Department of Otolaryngology of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) overseeing fourteen subspecialties, and all aspects of the clinical, research and academic lines of business in the department, including 40 clinical faculty, 25 residents, 12 fellows and 15 research faculty at nine sites. Prior to UPMC, Wunar was the Senior Executive Director at the Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia and has held several progressive roles with KPMG in Kansas City, MO and Dallas, TX. Wunar received a Master of Health Administration with a concentration in finance from Washington University School of Medicine in Missouri.

Mount Nittany also announced the addition of Alexander Szymanski, MD, to its cardiology practice. A graduate of the Pennsylvania State College of Medicine, Dr. Szymanski completed his residency and fellowship as chief fellow at the Pennsylvania State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center. Dr. Szymanski has performed research with the Penn State Heart and Vascular Institute.

Dr. Szymanski will provide cardiac services at the Mount Nittany Physician Group’s Park Avenue practice, which is located at 1850 East Park Avenue in State College. Mount Nittany offers a full range of cardiac services, including interventional catheterization and cardiac rehab.

For more information, visit www.mountnittany.org/physiciangroup.

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The Conemaugh Physician Group welcomes psychiatrist Anseruddin Mohammed, MD to the Behavioral Medicine Department at Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center. Dr. Mohammed will see children, adolescent and adult patients.

Dr. Mohammed attended medical school at Deccan College of Medical Sciences in India. He also traveled to England where he was Senior House Officer of Psychiatry at the Northamptonshire Healthcare National Health Service Trust.

Dr. Mohammed completed his residency in general psychiatry at Loyola University Medical Center near Chicago where he served as the Chief Resident and was awarded resident of the year, 2008-2009. Prior to coming to Memorial, he completed a fellowship in child and adolescent psychiatry at Michigan State University.

Dr. Mohammed was attracted to Johnstown by its scenic beauty, friendly people and the sophisticated facilities found at Memorial. “It’s a beautiful area. The fall colors on the mountainous landscape here are amazing,” says Dr. Mohammed. “I am impressed at the range and depth of hospital facilities offered at Memorial”.

Fellowship trained in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Dr. Mohammed has completed research on the association between inflammatory cytokines and suicidality. He will work with adult, child and adolescent patients on issues including attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, bipolar disorder, depression, anxiety, anger problems and schizophrenia using psychotherapy and pharmacotherapy.

When he is not practicing medicine, Dr. Mohammed loves to spend time with family and enjoys traveling. An avid technology enthusiast, he stays current with the latest advancements in information technology. Dr. Mohammed also hopes to explore Johnstown’s outdoor scene and spend some time fishing.

For more information, visit www.conemaugh.org.

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The Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center Welcomes Psychiatrist

Anseruddin Mohammed, MD

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Heart Surgery Program at Forbes Regional Hospital Recognized as One of Nation’s Best for Second Year in a Row

The heart surgery program at Forbes Regional Hospital has once again been recognized by The Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) for its overall performance and patient outcomes. Forbes Regional’s McGinnis Thoracic and Cardiovascular Associates surgical group received three stars, the Society’s highest possible rating, in a comprehensive assessment of the nation’s heart surgery programs. Forbes Regional is one of just three hospitals in Western Pennsylvania lauded by the Society for having above average patient outcomes and the only one to receive the three-star rating for two consecutive years.

The STS heart surgery group rankings are published in the September 2011 issue of Consumer Reports Magazine.

More than 90 percent of the roughly 1,100 surgical groups in the United States that perform cardiac surgery were evaluated for the latest STS report. Based on a variety of quality performance measures and patient outcomes achieved during the period of July 1, 2009 to July 30, 2010, the report assigns each surgical group a star rating. Programs that performed below average received one star, those that performed as expected received two stars and above average programs received three stars.

Since the Ed Dardenell Heart and Vascular Center opened in March 2008, 633 open heart surgeries have been performed at Forbes under Dr. Culig’s direction. In addition to heart valve, aneurysm, and coronary artery bypass surgery, the Ed Dardenell Heart and Vascular Center offers a wide variety of comprehensive heart services such as cardiac catheterization and interventional cardiology and invasive peripheral vascular procedures, including interventions.

The center also includes a cardiothoracic intensive care unit (CTICU), accredited chest pain and stroke centers, diagnostic testing (stress testing, echocardiography, EKGs), an electrophysiology (EP) lab, a telemetry unit, and a step-down unit.

For more information, visit www.wpahs.org.

National Award Honors Rape Prevention Advocate

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) and the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA) are pleased to present Alison Hall, Executive Director of Pittsburgh Action Against Rape, with the annual Gail Burns-Smith Award. Hall will be honored during the National Sexual Assault Conference in Baltimore on Sept. 14-16.

The award, jointly sponsored by ATSA and the NSVRC, is named in honor of Gail Burns-Smith who committed her life to strengthening the partnership between advocates in the sexual violence prevention field and those working in the area of sex offender management and treatment.

Hall has been with the Pittsburgh Action Against Rape since 2004, and like Burns-Smith, she continues to build effective partnerships. Hall’s accomplishments include establishing the Allegheny County Sex Offender Management and Containment Program (SOMAC) and being the driving force behind Pennsylvania’s first sex offender specialty court.

ATSA is an international, multi-disciplinary organization dedicated to preventing sexual abuse. For more information on the treatment and management of individuals who have sexually abused or are at risk to abuse, visit www.atsa.com.

The NSVRC, founded by the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, serves as a comprehensive information center related to sexual violence and its prevention. For more information on training, technical assistance and prevention resources on sexual violence, visit www.nsvrc.org.

Conemaugh’s Family Medical Center Achieves NCQA Level 1 Recognition

Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center’s Family Medical Center has achieved Level 1 Recognition for Physician Practice Connections®-Patient Centered Medical Home™ by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). The Patient-Centered Medical Home standards emphasize the use of systematic, patient-centered, coordinated care that supports access, communication and patient involvement.

The Family Medical Center located at Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center is a teaching facility where residents see patients of all ages under the supervision of experienced faculty physicians. Some of the common procedures performed in the Family Medical Center include minor skin surgery and suturing, colposcopy, cryotherapy, gynecological exams, EKGs, splinting, anoscopy and spirometry.

For details, visit www.conemaugh.org.

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HealthGrades Names Jameson Hospital Among Best in Nation for Gynecological Surgery

A report released last month by HealthGrades, the nation’s most trusted source of physician information and hospital quality outcomes, names Jameson Hospital 5-Star rated in gynecological surgery. HealthGrades’ report found that women who undergo gynecological surgery at 5-Star rated hospitals experience 35 percent fewer complications. Their analysis uses three years of data from 2007 – 2009 to comprise the 2011 top performing hospitals in gynecological surgery.

“The benefits of being at a 5-Star rated hospital extend beyond just the operating room,” said Divya Cantor, MD, MBA and HealthGrades Senior Physician Consultant. “From pregnancy and childbirth to more serious interventions such as hysterectomy, surgeries to treat incontinence, ovarian and other cancers of the reproductive organs, women can optimize their chances for receiving the highest possible quality of care by researching and comparing the clinical outcomes of hospitals and doctors in their area,” said Divya Cantor, MD, MBA and HealthGrades Senior Physician Consultant. A key finding of the HealthGrades 2011 Obstetrics & Gynecology in American Hospitals report indicated of the 19 states studied, nine percent of women undergoing gynecologic surgery experienced an in-hospital complication. If all hospitals performed at the level of the best hospitals, 35% of these complications (30,675) could have been potentially prevented.

Jameson Hospital is dedicated to delivering the very best in quality care paired with exceptional customer service. Earlier this year, The Maternity Care Center at Jameson Hospital was ranked in the top tier in the U.S. for patient satisfaction. Compared to all Obstetric and Gynecological Hospital Units in Press Ganey’s national database, Jameson Hospital ranked at the top scoring in the 99th percentile for the first quarter 2011. Jameson Hospital was also recognized this year by Highmark QualityBLUE with a 100% rating for innovative practice and quality outcomes for QualityBLUE’s Surgical Safety initiative. For more information, visit www.jamesonhealth.org.

Kenneth Neil Wagner Honored as a 2011 Emerging Regional Leader

During the ASHE 48th Annual Conference and Technical Exhibition, Kenneth Neil Wagner, CHFM, with Heritage Valley Health System, in Sewickley, PA, was recognized as an Emerging Regional Leader Award recipient. This influential award is presented to one ASHE member from each of ASHE’s ten geographic regions for their leadership and accomplishments in the field of healthcare engineering and facilities management.

A member of ASHE since 2008, Kenneth is actively involved with his ASHE local chapter, the Pennsylvania Society for Health Facility Engineering, helping to enhance the field of healthcare facilities management. His work ethic, dependability and common sense approach to handling and solving problems demonstrates their commitment to the profession and to the Society. As a recipient of this year’s award, Kenneth will be invited to attend ASHE’s annual leadership training program and to serve as a volunteer on selected ASHE committees/task force which will significantly impact the future of ASHE.

For more information, visit www.heritagevalley.org.

ASHE President, George (Skip) Smith presents Kenneth Neil Wagner with the Emerging Regional Leader Award
Lynette Fair, RN receives a prize from Mona Philson, Public Relations, during GCMC’s recent celebration of their Highmark QualityBLUE Program achievement. Along with having a 97-cent lunch, employees with “9” and “7” in their personal identifiers, such as birth date, employee number and telephone extension won a variety of prizes. Summer interns Dave Johns and Nicole Moretti also participated in the event.

HealthGrades Names ACMH Hospital Among Best in U.S. in Gynecological Surgery

A report released by HealthGrades, the nation’s most trusted, independent source of physician information and hospital quality outcomes, named ACMH Hospital #1 in Pennsylvania, among the top 5% in the nation, 5-star rated for Gynecological Surgery. ACMH Hospital is a recipient of the HealthGrades Gynecologic Surgery Excellence Award for 2011. HealthGrades’ report found that women who undergo gynecological surgery at 5-Star rated hospitals experience 35% fewer complications. ACMH Hospital is committed to providing women with the highest possible quality care.

Both ABC Women’s Care and Women’s Healthcare Associates provide a comprehensive array of obstetric and gynecological services devoted to women’s health and well-being. A strong focus on current diagnostic and treatment techniques is maintained, ensuring the highest standards of care are met. The network of women’s health specialists at ACMH Hospital offers one-on-one communication with the patient, guaranteeing a thorough and personalized experience.

John Lewis, President and CEO of ACMH Hospital, explains the approach to women’s healthcare

Key findings of the HealthGrades 2011 Obstetrics & Gynecology in American Hospitals report include:

- In the 19 states studied, 9% percent of women undergoing gynecologic surgery experienced an in-hospital complication. If all hospitals performed at the level of the best hospitals, 35% of these complications (30,675) could have been potential prevented.
- While hysterectomies are the most common gynecological procedure performed in hospitals, comprising 79% of all the inpatient gynecologic surgeries, the number has decreased substantially. Since 2002, the number has declined 31%.

For details, visit www.acmh.org.

Grove City Medical Center Celebrates Quality Score

Grove City Medical Center employees were treated to a 97-cent lunch recently in celebration of a major organizational accomplishment. The hospital’s second year of participation in Highmark’s QualityBLUE Pay for Performance Program achieved a score of 97%, thereby attaining the maximum reimbursement level for the coming fiscal year.

This score is based on performance in four hospital-chosen indicators: readmissions, surgical safety, deep vein thrombosis and Emergency Department throughput. Mary Blank, MPH, CIC, CPHQ, of Highmark’s Hospital Performance Management Department has supported Grove City Medical Center’s participation in the program over the past two years.

Grove City Medical Center’s innovative approach to preventing unnecessary hospital readmissions has garnered recent attention by the Hospital and Health Systems Association of Pennsylvania, or HAP and the Wall Street Journal.

For details, visit www.gcmcpa.org.

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Five Students Graduate From Penn College Radiography Program at Mount Nittany Medical Center

Five students from the Pennsylvania College of Technology’s Associate of Applied Science degree program in Williamsport, have completed approximately 1,600 hours of clinical work at the Mount Nittany Medical Center to fulfill their graduation requirements. The ceremony took place at the Community Arts Center in Williamsport on Aug. 6. Graduates included: Ryan A. Bellis, Penn Argyle; Autumn R. Dixon, Houtzdale; Tracey Schultz, Llewellyn; Joseph Haber, Matamoras; and Garret Anderson, NY.

Tracey Schultz was also given the Excellence and Customer Service Award, presented by Mount Nittany Medical Center at an awards ceremony on Aug. 5, held at the Penns Inn on the Penn College campus.

The clinical semesters along with the academic, prepare the students to take the AART (American Registry of Radiologic Technologists) exam for certification, according to Nicole Tanner, clinical supervisor at Mount Nittany Medical Center.

Medical radiographers provide patient services using imaging modalities, as directed by physicians qualified to order and/or perform radiological procedures. Visit www.mountnittany.org to learn more.

Saint Vincent Physician Receives PA Award

Saint Vincent Health Center hospitalist Eardly Wickramasinghe, MD was recently awarded the Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) Physician Award for Community Voluntary Service. He will be presented with his award at the October PAMED House of Delegates meeting in Hershey.

The catastrophic Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004 inspired Dr. Wickramasinghe (Dr. Wick) to inaugurate the Erie County Medical Society Rescue Effort. Dr. Wick was active on both sides of the ocean as he organized collection efforts in Pennsylvania and the distribution in Sri Lanka. More than $180,000 was raised and nearly 140 cartons of medical supplies distributed which made the reconstruction of an entire community possible — including 32 homes.

In 2006, Dr. Wick organized the “Start Your Day Right” breakfast food collection drive to benefit the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania. He organized 104 Erie County physician offices for a drive that collected and distributed 2,017 tons of healthy breakfast foods for the needy.

Dr. Wick, in 2009, initiated the “Sheltering the Community” program which created and administered a team of Erie County Medical Society physicians to conduct bi-monthly medical clinics at the main homeless shelters maintained by the Erie United Methodist Alliance. These clinics provide general medical assessments and screenings to many dispossessed parents and children.

In 2010, Dr. Wick led the planning and implementation of the Erie County Medical Society’s “Health Fair in Perry Square.” This event, which took place in the Erie’s downtown park, provided health screenings which uncovered a half dozen previously undiagnosed glaucoma patients and an equal number of those suffering from diabetes. The fair volunteers dispensed much-needed medical information and informed members of the underserved community of the free resources available to them. The health fair also collected groceries for the local food bank and secured the on-promises donation of multiple units of blood.

Dr. Wick was nominated for the award by Erie physician Thomas Falasca, DO. For more information, visit www.saintvincenthealth.com.

Monongahela Valley Hospital Continues to Grow

Since the decline of the steel industry in the late 1970s, major new construction has been rare in the Mon Valley—with the exception of Monongahela Valley Hospital (MVH). MVH, bucked the trend in 1976 when ground was broken for its current campus in Carroll Township. In 1984 when the Charles L. and Rose Sweeney Melenyzer Pavilion and Regional Cancer Center opened and again in spring 2011, when the hospital embarked on a new $25 million construction project.

“As the Mon Valley community moves forward, we need to build on our strengths and the hospital is at the heart of the community,” said Louis J. Panza Jr., president and CEO of MVH. “When we provide medical care and services to meet the needs of the people we serve, we are not only helping to make people well, but the hospital is serving as an economic stimulator for the region.”

MVH is a 210-bed acute care hospital that is the only independent community hospital in the region that provides state-of-the-art cancer and wound care therapies. Two years ago, a multidisciplinary team of physicians, administrative staff and board members joined together to determine what was needed to move forward to most effectively serve the medical needs of the community. They identified the need for additional larger, technologically advanced operating suites with an expanded recovery room, cutting-edge cancer therapies and a more convenient wound care center.

VEBH Architects designed the new additions. They have worked with MVH for more than 20 years, including the design for the Hospital’s Emergency Department expansion completed in 2006 and the Melenyzer Pavilion addition which was finished in 2003. This project to improve the surgery, cancer and wound care facilities will be completed early next year. The Hospital is also working on other infrastructure enhancements that will roll out in phases over a period of three and a half years.

“The design addresses nicely some of the constraints presented by Mon Valley’s site. We were able to meet the Hospital’s needs for expanding key areas and allowing them to integrate efficiently with the existing departments,” said Robert Bodnar, President of VEBH Architects.

The areas of concentration include:

● An expansion of the Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment and Wound Care Management program within the first floor of the Sweeney-Melenyzer Pavilion

● The addition of new Image Guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT) equipment with the Sweeney-Melenyzer Pavilion which will require thicker housing

● Expansion of the Hospital’s first floor to add four new operating suites at 600 square feet each.

In all, the proposed expansion will increase the size of the Hospital by nearly 16,000 square feet. However, more important than the bricks and mortar is the impact these updates will have on patient care.

“These renovations — the high-tech, state-of-the-art operating rooms, radiation oncology treatment, and the hyperbaric oxygen in the wound care center, not only help the current staff to provide better care for our patients, but enable Monongahela Valley Hospital to attract and recruit new physicians, new talents and very highly specialized surgeons,” said R.G. Krushan, M.D., president MVH Medical Staff.

“We want to treat everybody like our own family member, so that they don’t have to travel far out of their way for their care.”

The VEBH design team is working with the Hospital to include patient-friendly amenities such as simulated skylights in the cancer care expansion where extended treatments or procedures are sometimes necessary. For more information, visit www.vebh.com.

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In all, the proposed expansion will increase the size of the Hospital by nearly 16,000 square feet. However, more important than the bricks and mortar is the impact these updates will have on patient care.

“These renovations — the high-tech, state-of-the-art operating rooms, radiation oncology treatment, and the hyperbaric oxygen in the wound care center, not only help the current staff to provide better care for our patients, but enable Monongahela Valley Hospital to attract and recruit new physicians, new talents and very highly specialized surgeons,” said R.G. Krushan, M.D., president MVH Medical Staff.

“We want to treat everybody like our own family member, so that they don’t have to travel far out of their way for their care.”

The VEBH design team is working with the Hospital to include patient-friendly amenities such as simulated skylights in the cancer care expansion where extended treatments or procedures are sometimes necessary. For more information, visit www.vebh.com.
Windber Medical Center Opens New Nursery

Windber Medical Center recently held a ribbon cutting ceremony in honor of the grand opening of their new Nursery. In attendance for this historic event were members of the Board of Directors administration, nursing staff, and physicians.

With the growing number of deliveries at Windber Medical Center, the newborn nursery was expanded to accommodate four additional infant bassinets. The 1,033 square feet of new space provides a larger work space for staff and even more personalized care for our newborns. There is also an isolation room, a lactation support room, and an infant examination/treatment station.

The obstetricians, pediatricians and staff provide all aspects of comprehensive prenatal and postnatal care at the Maternal Child Unit at Windber Medical Center. The experienced doctors and nurses provide expert labor, delivery, newborn and post partum care, using current Obstetrical and integrative care techniques. They provide a supportive environment for the laboring mother, her infant, her significant other, and her family.

The new nursery was made possible by a $250,000 grant and generous donations from numerous businesses and individuals in the area. This marks the completion of phase 1 of Windber Medical Center’s Capital Campaign with phase 2 being the expansion of the Emergency Room.

For more information, visit www.windbercare.org.

Cutting the ribbon at the opening of the new nursery at Windber Medical Center is Board member Timothy Leventry, President and CEO Barbara Cliff, Board members J. Ted Hollern, and Board Chairman the honorable David C. Klemanktik.

Allegheny General Hospital Opens New, State-of-the-Art Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit

Allegheny General Hospital (AGH) announced last month the opening of a new, state-of-the-art neurosurgical intensive care unit (NICU) that will provide patients with access to one of the most advanced facilities of its kind in the country. The unit, located on the 7th floor of AGH’s Snyder Pavilion, began admitting patients a few weeks ago.

Dedicated in honor of pioneering AGH neurosurgeon Peter Jannetta, MD, the new 22-bed NICU was designed to meet the unique needs of neurosurgical patients and the medical teams who care for them, said Jack Wilberger, MD, Chair of AGH’s Department of Neurosurgery.

“The immediate post-operative period is a critical time in the recovery of patients who have undergone invasive, often life-saving neurosurgical procedures. The design of this new unit and the leading edge technology that we have incorporated into it will greatly enhance our clinical capabilities and afford patients their best chance of having a successful treatment outcome,” Dr. Wilberger said.

The new NICU features 22 large private patient rooms and was conceptualized with significant input by physicians and nurses from the hospital’s neurosciences and critical care programs. Design elements intended to optimize patient care and safety, family comfort and the staff’s work environment were all driven by patient caregivers.

One of the unit’s key technological innovations is its use of a boom system that suspends all patient care equipment from the ceiling, providing the medical team with complete, unobstructed access to a patient’s head at all times. Placing important equipment such as medical gas lines and imaging portals on overhead movable consoles also allows each ICU room to be quickly manipulated to accommodate additional medical equipment when necessary, including a portable, mobile CT scanner.

“Mobile CT is an important capability in this critical care setting. Patients who have undergone surgery for a brain tumor, aneurysm or traumatic injury often require follow up CT imaging during post surgery hospitalization to assess the brain’s healing process and detect any complications,” said Khaled Aziz, MD, Director of AGH’s Center for Complex Intracranial Disease and Director, Division of Neuro-Critical Care.

“The ability to obtain CT images quickly and without having to move a very sick patient out of the ICU setting is extremely advantageous,” Dr. Aziz said.

In addition to mobile CT, the new NICU is equipped with a full spectrum of sophisticated diagnostic and therapeutic technologies designed to enhance the care of critically ill neurosurgical patients, including intracranial pressure monitoring, brain oxygen monitoring, transcranial doppler ultrasound, invasive hemodynamic monitoring and continuous electroencephalogram (EEG) monitoring.

The NICU is staffed by a multi-disciplinary team of expert clinicians, including specialists in neurosurgery, neurology, critical care, neuro-radiology, anesthesiology, nursing, clinical pharmacy and physical therapy.

“Technology is wonderful, but it is the exceptional dedication and caliber of those who take care of our patients at the bedside that truly distinguishes this program. There is no more talented or experienced staff in the region,” said Antonios Zikos, MD, an AGH critical care specialist and Medical Director of the NICU.

A Level 1 trauma center that is also designated as a Spine Surgery Center of Excellence, Primary Stroke Center and Comprehensive Epilepsy Center, AGH affords patients access to the complete spectrum of neurological critical care services around the clock. The hospital’s NICU annually admits more than 1,500 patients.

For more information, visit www.wphospitalnews.com.
New Garden Brings Healing to Children, Peace to Parents

A new 10,000-square-foot therapeutic garden has been created at The Children’s Institute of Pittsburgh. The Nimick Family Therapeutic Garden was specially designed to help kids with disabilities heal and learn, and to help parents refresh their spirits.

A Path Leads to Delightful Features

A gently meandering path leads visitors—on foot or crutches, in wheelchairs or with walkers—through a range of delightful features. They include:

- A treehouse accessible via a gently sloping ramp
- The Ann M. McGuinn Fountain of Hope, an interactive fountain shaped like a giant sunflower (the official flower of The Children’s Institute); kids can control the water’s flow by touching the controls or just rolling past in their wheelchairs
- A Sunflower Pavilion for relaxing in peaceful shade
- Raised planting beds that allow kids to learn about gardening as they develop fine motor and speech/language skills
- Plenty of benches where adults and children can rest and relax—including a special bench that surprises those who sit on it with pleasant recorded sounds
- Flowers, shrubs and ornamental grasses with a variety of colors, textures, shapes and scents to generate interest throughout the year

The garden, with special nighttime lighting, also features extraordinary sculptures by Albert Guibara. This world-renowned California artist designed the Sunflower Pavilion, the Children’s Wishing Well, and the whimsical and entertaining pieces scattered about the garden.

Multi-Sensory Experience

The therapeutic garden is a multi-sensory experience, designed to appeal to sight, hearing, smell and touch, and it was created with major input from children, parents and staff.

Kids wanted plants that would attract birds and butterflies. They wanted not only a treehouse and a fountain, but to be able to touch the water. Parents loved the idea of getting their kids outside—in a gentler space than the facility’s more active playground—and they themselves wanted to be able to reflect and unwind in a quiet atmosphere, away from indoor distractions.

All those desires—and more—are satisfied by the new garden.

David K. Miles, President and CEO of The Children’s Institute, said, “The garden provides a wide range of benefits. For young patients at our Hospital and students at our Day School, growing flowers and herbs is fun, and can be integrated into schoolwork and physical, occupational and speech/language therapies. Parents can enjoy the garden with their children, or relax and restore their spirits in privacy. And our neighbors are welcome, just as they are at our playground.”

Honoring Parents with a Special Gift

The garden, which stretches along the Shady Avenue side of The Children’s Institute’s facility, was created by Christina Astorino and her colleagues at New Dawn Garden Design in Pittsburgh. The garden was made possible through a million-dollar grant from the Nimick Forbesway Foundation, whose trustees are the three adult children of the late Florence and Thomas Nimick: Cathleen Nimick of Aspinwall, PA, Victoria Nimick Enright of Madison, WI, and Charles L.H. Nimick of Great Falls, VA.

Cathleen Nimick was a long-time member of the Board of Directors, and three-term Board President, of The Children’s Institute. When she died in 1981, her husband Thomas Nimick, a member of the Advisory Board, became the first man to be asked to join the organization’s active Board. He continued his service on the Associate Board of The Children’s Institute until his death in 2007.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE UNDERSTOOD

Therapeutic gardens have become popular in recent years, but their benefits have long been realized. In 1859, legendary nurse Florence Nightingale wrote that “a variety of form and brilliancy of colour in the objects presented to patients are an actual means of recovery.” Recent research has shown that, after spending time in a hospital garden, 95% of respondents reported positive changes in mood. Other literature shows that gardens are very likely to reduce stress, and likely to reduce pain and depression.

Those are among the reasons The Children’s Institute Miles says “We’re excited about this extraordinary addition to our community.”

For more information, visit www.amazingkids.org.

Finalists Announced for the 2011 Fine Awards for Teamwork Excellence in Health Care

Nine local healthcare teams are finalists for the fourth annual Fine Awards for Teamwork Excellence in Health Care. The awards, which are presented by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) and The Fine Foundation, honor teams of healthcare professionals for achieving breakthroughs in healthcare quality, safety and efficiency.

“JHF formed the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative 13 years ago in an effort to increase the quality of healthcare and lower the cost by removing errors, waste and bad practices,” said Karen Wolk Feinstein, president and CEO of JHF. “This year’s finalists prove that increasing quality and lowering costs are attainable goals.”

A distinguished national selection committee chose the nine finalists after evaluating 40 nominees, from across Western Pennsylvania, on the basis of measurable and sustainable breakthroughs in patient care and safety achieved during calendar year 2010.

This year, one award will specifically recognize a team from a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), long-term-care facility or physician practice. In addition, one award will honor a team whose project has demonstrated sustained excellence over three years.

When we initially created these awards, we had a strong focus on hospitals. However, over the years we started to receive note-worthy applications from other types of healthcare institutions,” said Milton Fine, president and CEO of The Fine Foundation. “We also thought it was important to honor healthcare teams which not only achieve a breakthrough, but also maintain that level of excellence over time because that is the key to really transforming health care.”

This year’s Finalists are:


The winners will be announced on November 17, 2011 during an awards ceremony at the August Wilson Center for African American Culture. Four awards — Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze — will be awarded and distributed as follows:

- Platinum: $25,000 divided equally and presented to team members; $5,000 awarded to corresponding facility

Gold: $15,000 divided equally and presented to team members; $5,000 awarded to corresponding facility

Silver: $10,000 divided equally and presented to team members; $5,000 awarded to corresponding facility

Bronze: $7,500 divided equally and presented to team members; $5,000 awarded to corresponding facility

For more information, visit www.jhf.org.

Around the Region

Nimick Family Therapeutic Garden
Allegeny General Hospital
Chosen as Test Site for Innovative Investigational Myasthenia Gravis Medication

The Myasthenia Gravis Association of Western Pennsylvania at Allegheny General Hospital (AGH) has been selected to participate in a clinical trial of a new investigational medication believed to have the potential to treat myasthenia gravis, a chronic, autoimmune neuromuscular disease that can be controlled but not cured.

The trial investigates the safety and effectiveness of CK-2017357, an investigational new drug which earlier clinical trials suggest may increase muscle strength by a different mechanism than traditional medications used to treat myasthenia gravis, said neurologist George A. Small, MD, Medical Director of the AGH Myasthenia Gravis Center.

“This is a novel substance that increases muscle strength, but not by affecting the patient’s immune system as other drugs do,” Dr. Small said. “Most therapies for myasthenia gravis depress the immune system’s functioning, and one of the most common therapies, prednisone, has numerous side effects.

“It also works differently than the most common medication used for short-term symptom relief. This is a new approach that could benefit many myasthenia gravis sufferers who are not adequately treated by current medications and therapies.”

Myasthenia gravis is characterized by muscle weakness that increases with activity. Weakness in myasthenia gravis most often affects the muscles which control chewing, swallowing and eye movement, followed by the muscles that control the arms and legs.

Myasthenia gravis is caused by antibodies that attack the connections between muscles and the nerve fibers that control them.

Medication that improves the connection between nerve and muscle, as well as treatments that suppress the body’s immune function are the most common treatments, but myasthenia gravis can also be treated with plasmapheresis, a process that removes abnormal antibodies from the patient’s plasma, or thymectomy, the surgical removal of the thymus gland.

The AGH Myasthenia Gravis Center is one of about 15 centers nationwide selected to participate in this Phase II clinical trial. The trial is funded by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke and CytoKinetics, Inc., the California company that discovered and is developing CK-2017357.

For more information, visit www.clinicaltrials.gov and reference identifier NCT01268280.

Area Physician Prepares to Peddle 240 miles for Chronic Kidney Disease Awareness

Dr. Harry Pote is preparing to once again ride hundreds of miles on his bicycle to help raise funds and awareness to help those with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD).

Dr. Pote will be among the hundreds of riders to join this year’s Tour DuVita, a 240 mile trans-poconos ride that will take participants through the states of Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York. A Conemaugh Physician Group internal medicine specialist, Dr. Pote completed a 2 year fellowship in nephrology, the study of kidney disease.

“Kidney disease is a serious problem that affects 30 million Americans. One in nine Americans actually has kidney disease, but few know it,” says Dr. Pote. “I am among many people involved in the country riding in the event and raising funds for The Kidney TRUST. The mission is to create a world of hope, health, action and engagement for those affected by chronic kidney disease. It is so important to raise awareness about CKD because, if caught early it is possible to slow down or even stop the disease all together.”

Initial stages of CKD rarely show any symptoms and there is no cure for the disease. Risk factors of CKD include diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and family history. People over the age of 60 are at a higher risk of developing CKD as are those who are overweight and those who smoke. Certain ethnic groups including African-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans are also at an increased risk.

To train for the ride, Dr. Pote has been swimming and biking. Last year his sons and daughter joined him on the ride; this year his daughter Kristin will participate with him again.

Anyone wishing to support Dr. Pote’s efforts can log on to www.tour-duvita.org. Donations can be made by clicking the button titled “Sponsor Me Now” then select Kristin or Harry Pote.

The Children’s Home of Pittsburgh & Lemieux Family Center Announces New Board Officers

The Children’s Home of Pittsburgh & Lemieux Family Center announces the election of new officers to its board of directors effective July 1, 2011. After serving for two successful years, Charles J. Vater’s term as board president has ended. Vater, of Pittsburgh, continued to play an instrumental role in The Children’s Home’s new facility, built in 2007 and located in the Friendship area of Pittsburgh. He is an Attorney with Tucker Arensberg, P.C., specializing in estate and trust law as well as business and succession planning and has been a board member since 1999.

Elected as incoming president of the board is Eric R. Boughner. [Picture attached] Boughner, of Upper St. Clair, is a Managing Director with BNY Mellon and has been a board member since 2007.

Other officers include Emily Landerman Goldberg, who will serve as vice president. From Pittsburgh, she is the Director of Business Development for A. Martin & Co. and has been a board member since 1992.

Alissa A. Meade, of Pittsburgh, will to serve as the board’s treasurer. Meade is a Manager with the Allegheny General Hospital’s Health Care Group and has served on the board since 2009. Maureen S. Oehrle, of Pittsburgh, will continue to serve as the board’s secretary. Oehrle is a mother-of-two with vast expertise in event planning in Washington D.C. She has served on the board since 2007.
PA Hospitals Receive 2011 Achievement Awards

Eighteen of Pennsylvania’s innovative hospital programs—dealing with issues including care transitions, infection prevention, medication administration, youth sports safety, physician engagement, physician leadership, treatment of pediatric bipolar disorder, reduction of readmissions in heart failure patients, discharge planning, and supply chain management—have been named winners of The Hospital & Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP) 2011 Achievement Awards. Entries were received from 168 hospital programs across the state.

“These 168 programs are examples of the commitment hospitals and health systems make—every day, in good times and bad—to their patients, communities, and employees,” said HAP President and CEO Carolyn F. Scanlan. “The 18 awardees are among the most innovative and creative in the health care field, and we salute their accomplishments.”

“HAP’s Achievement Awards program began in 1978 as a way to recognize the innovation of Pennsylvania’s health care organizations,” Scanlan said. “HAP member hospitals and health systems look and operate very differently now than they did back then, particularly in this era of reform. But one thing has not changed: their commitment to quality and continuous improvement as they deliver care in their communities.”

The 2011 Achievement Award Winners:

Workplace
- The Children’s Institute of Pittsburgh—The “A” Team: Acknowledging and Appreciating Amazing Employee Achievements
- Taylor Hospital, Ridley Park—Creating a Culture of Physician Service Excellence to Enhance Physician Engagement
- Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown—Enhancing Physician Leadership Development Through Action Learning Projects

Community Benefit
- Allegheny General Hospital—Suburban Campus, Pittsburgh—Community Health and Wellness Education Program
- Taylor Hospital, Ridley Park—Youth Volunteer Program: Where the Hospital Becomes the Classroom
- University of Pittsburgh Medical Center—Playing it Safe: Making Youth Sports Safer in Our Community

Patient Safety
- Bryn Mawr Rehabilitation Hospital, Malvern—Medication Vests Improve Medication Administration Process
- Mercy Hospital of Philadelphia—The Effects of a Concerted Hand Hygiene Improvement Program on Reducing Hospital-Acquired Infections

Patient Care
- Grove City Medical Center—Transitions in Care
- Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, Pittsburgh—Early Identification and Treatment of Pediatric Bipolar Disorder
- Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown—Using Teach Back to Reduce Readmission Rates in Hospitalized Heart Failure Patients

Operational Excellence
- Magee Rehabilitation Hospital, Philadelphia—“WOW” Discharge
- The Chester County Hospital, West Chester—Achieving Excellence in Supply Chain Management by Reducing $1.8 Million in Expenses
- Abington Memorial Hospital, “The Green Team” – Best Practices in Operational Excellence
- Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, Pittsburgh—Prevention and Early Intervention in Behavioral Health
- Abington Memorial Hospital, “The Green Team” – Best Practices in Operational Excellence

Innovation Award (tie)
- Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, Pittsburgh—Prevention and Early Intervention in Behavioral Health
- Abington Memorial Hospital, “The Green Team” – Best Practices in Operational Excellence

Details about the award winning programs are available online at http://www.haponline.org/resourcecenter/awards.
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For more information, please contact Joan Mitchell for independent living, Michele Bruschel for Nursing Admissions, or Lisa Powell for Assisted Living at 412-341-8250, www.ashburyheights.org.

Baptist Homes Society
Baptist Homes Society, a not-for-profit organization operating two continuing care retirement communities in Pittsburgh’s South Hills region, has served older adults of all faiths for more than 100 years. Baptist Homes, nestled on a quiet hillside at Mt. Lebanon, serves nearly 300 seniors. Providence Point, a beautiful 32-acre site in Scott Township, has the capacity to serve more than 800 residents. Both campus and community environment and environment yet both provide a full continuum of care, including independent, assisted living, personal care, home care support, rehabilitation therapies, skilled nursing, and hospice care. Baptist Homes Society is Medicare and Medicaid certified. Within our community, you’ll find the a lifestyle and level of care to meet your senior living needs. To arrange a personal tour at either campus, contact: Sue Lauer, Community Liaison, 412-572-8398 or email slauer@baptisthomes.org. On the South Hills Campus: 489 Castle Shannon Blvd., Mt. Lebanon (www.baptisthomes.org). Providence Point: 500 Providence Point Blvd., Scott Township (www.providencepoint.org).

Kane Regional Centers
Kane Regional Centers provide residential skilled nursing care and rehabilitation for short-term and long-term needs. The centers – located in Glen Hazel, McKeesport, Ross Township and Scott Township – offer 24-hour skilled nursing care, hospice and respite care, Alzheimer’s memory care, recreational therapy and social services. Visit www.karecenter.com or call 412-622-8000.

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RTConnections LLC has been dedicated to improving clinical and professional practice of nurses that are skilled in the role they play in the delivery of healthcare. Through consulting services, workshops, in-services, research consultations and education, we have contributed to meeting the needs of today’s nursing professionals. Owned and operated by Renee Thompson, a nationally recognized consultant in the fields of computer applications in health care and surrounding areas, RTConnections helps nurses become heroes. If you are looking to re-energize nurses in your organization, RTConnections can help. For more information, contact Karla Horton at 412-445-2653 or visit www.rtconnections.com.

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In the community

The Children’s Home of Pittsburgh & Allegheny County
Established in 1893, The Children’s Home of Pittsburgh is an independent non-profit organization whose purpose is to create and maintain a

www.phospitalnews.com
Health Care Event & Meeting Guide

2011 AHIMA Convention and Exhibit
Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City, Utah
October 1-6
Visit www.ahima.org for details

International Street Medicine Symposium VII (ISMS VII)
Hampton Inn Philadelphia City Center-Convention Center Hotel
October 5-7
Call 412.232.5739 to register.

Health Care Compliance Association’s East Central Regional
Annual Conference
Co-Sponsored by Western PA Chapter of HFMA
Regional Learning Alliance Center, Cranberry Township
October 14
For details, www.hcca-info.org

2011 Hillman Cancer Center Gala: ‘A Future Without Cancer
Consol Energy Center
October 19, 5:30 p.m.
Register online at www.hillmangala.org

Be a Rockstar: Hot Service Line Strategies
The Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Hollywood, FL
October 19-20
Call 412-364-8200 or visit www.corazoninc.com

Education Day Extravaganza
Sponsored by Western PA Chapter of HFMA
Regional Learning Alliance Center, Cranberry Township
October 20
Visit www.wphfma.org for more information.

PA State Nurses Association Summit 2011
University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown
Oct. 27-28
Register at www.panurses.org/summit.

Pennsylvania Organization of Nurse Leaders Annual Symposium
Nursing Leadership: Advocates for Healthy Communities
Crown Plaza Hotel, Harrisburg, PA
Oct. 26-27
www.panurseleaders.org

18th Annual Ambulatory Surgery Centers Conference
Improving Profitability and Business and Legal Issues
Westin Hotel, Chicago, IL
Oct. 27-29
Call 703-836-2090 or visit www.ascassociation.org/chicagoOct2011.cfm

Pittsburgh Chapter of American Association of Legal Nurse
Consultants Fall Conference
La Roche College, Zappala College Center
November 5
For details, visit www.aalncpittsburgh.org

National Business Coalition on Health 16th Annual Conference
Pointe Hilton Tapatio Cliffs Resort, Phoenix, AZ
Nov. 7-9
www.nbch.org/2011-Registration

5th Annual National Conference on Health Disparities
Charleston Marriott Hotel
November 30-December 3
Register at www.buildinghealthycommunities2011.com

8th Annual Reindeer Ball: A Storybook Christmas
Hosted by Pittsburgh Mercy Health System
Westin Convention Center Hotel
Dec. 4, 4-7 p.m.
For tickets, visit www.pmhs.org/events.

UPMC’s 16th Annual Children’s Ball
Carnegie Science Center
March 10, 2012
Email ogina@pmshf.org or call 412.647.4285

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340 Francine Court, NE, Atlanta, GA 30328-5233
Phone: 412.475.9063 • Fax: 770.392.3303
Email: hdkart@aol.com • Website: www.wphospitalnews.com

HARVEY D. KART
Publisher
412.475.9063 • hdkart@aol.com

DANIEL CASCIATO
Assistant to Publisher
412.607.9808 • writer@danielcasciato.com

KRISTEN KART
Director of Marketing
kristenkart@wphospitalnews.com

BETH WOOD
Art/Production

Contributing Writers
Daniel Casciato
Christopher Gusat
Elizabeth Pagel-Hogan

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