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Nurse Barbara Rivenburgh (left) tells Josephine Reynolds about a seven-minute video presentation that describes the three-step procedure of breast self-examination. Initiated by staff at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, the new Mercy Women's Care Center program was designed to dispel myths and unreasonable fears about breast cancer.



At Women's Center, keeping abreast of new health concern

By Joanne Whitaker
staff writer

WOMEN WHO are used to the austere cleanliness of traditional hospital settings frequently stand still for a moment while they digest what they see on entering the Women's Mercy Care Center at St. Joseph's Hospital.

Their reaction prompts a chuckle from nurse Barbara Rivenburgh, who set out to create a special kind of impression when put in charge of developing the for-women-only center for preventive care at the Pontiac Hospital.

Rivenburgh, a 20-year veteran chosen from the hospital's obstetrical department, supervises a diagnostic center that treats its clients in an atmosphere not unlike that of a health spa.

The feminine setting, in soft colors, with walls and tables decorated with pleasant art and art objects, is designed to appeal to women who are sent there to have their breasts examined for lumps and irregularities and to be educated in how to perform self-examinations once they return home.

Rivenburgh was concerned with creating a stress-free atmosphere when she selected the soft-toned wallpaper, carpeting and artworks for the first-floor center. To further enhance the relaxed atmosphere, the staff chose not to wear traditional-

style uniforms while on duty there. THE DECOR is just one of several



Nurse Dorothy Johnson (left) concludes Reynolds' self-examination with hands-on instruction in how to perform self-examination at home. Life-like breast models are constructed to help patients become familiar with the usual appearance and feeling of their own breasts.

Innovations that were built into the center to give women feelings of comfort and security, said Rivenburgh and nurse Dorothy Johnson, who also works in the center. Johnson said health care professionals have discovered that women

don't know a lot about their own health. The staff's job is to work with them in a non-threatening manner to increase their knowledge.

Rivenburgh said the center is the result of the hospital's commitment to women's health. Plans call for it to be expanded to address other women's concerns, including osteoporosis and PMS (premenstrual syndrome).

The idea for a center, she said, was initially introduced by chief radiologist Dr. Raymond A. Gagliardi, the center's medical director. It is interesting, she adds, that the hospital's commitment coincided with commitments by the American Medical Association and the American Cancer Society to promote women's health.

The center, which opened in March and was dedicated in July, is equipped to respond quickly and efficiently. It offers a variety of educational and diagnostic options, explains Johnson.

"Once they come in," Rivenburgh said, "they move right along fairly quickly. We do not keep the patients waiting."

The standard examination and instruction session includes a seven-minute orientation movie, an examination of the breasts that takes another 10-12 minutes, and another five to 10 minutes devoted to an X-ray examination.

Sessions usually conclude with a nurse specialist giving the patient in-



MINDY SAUNDERS

After the video presentation, technician Renee Dysarczyk prepares Reynolds for a mammogram that will create an image of the interior of the breast. Though it is a routine pro-

cedure, most women approach each examination fearful that the film will reveal something that could indicate cancer.

dividual instruction to insure that she is able to conduct follow-up self-examination at least once each month at home. For more extensive examination there is also ultrasound. There are two women radiologists on the staff.

THE CENTER is also equipped with aids to help the nurses and technicians instruct handicapped and non-English-speaking patients.

"We had to meet the needs of the whole community," said Rivenburgh. "The ACS (American Cancer Society) got us a Braille presentation from Washington, D.C. I couldn't find one anywhere."

The manual is also available on tape for vision-impaired patients. And educational material is available in Spanish for patients unable to read English.

THE VALUE of a center devoted to women's health is obvious, Riven-

burgh said. Breast examination is a very personal experience that is frightening to many women. Even though it is a routine examination, a woman is always walking into an unknown.

"There could be something on the films," Rivenburgh said. "It's really very scary. You really never let anybody get out of here when they are really upset."

Rivenburgh said fear is something that the center was designed to address.

Should the examination or an X-ray reveal a mass in the breast, the center is equipped with ultrasound and a sonographer who can determine if the mass is solid or fluid filled.

Where there is extreme concern, she adds, the center makes every effort to have a report in the hands of

a patient's doctor within 24 hours.

Another plus, she said, is that it is a setting in which there is hands-on, woman to woman teaching that creates an atmosphere in which women feel free to ask a lot more questions. Part of the hands-on experience is provided by realistic breast models that allow a patient to feel lumps as they would appear in her own breast.

The center is operated on a referral basis, she said. Johnson added that women may come in without a referral for literature, to see the film or receive instruction in the self-examination technique. Women without a referral can call the center, 858-3870, for information and the names of doctors who practice in the program.

Rivenburgh said that she and Johnson are also available to make free presentations on the center and its program, to groups and organizations. They will also teach breast examination techniques upon request.

Humor the soul of Zalo's footwear designs

By Rustle Shand
special writer

PHILOSOPHICALLY, A metamorphosis is taking place in the shoe industry. If you think of feet only as a means of transportation, a pair of size four or 10 something that have to be shod merely to keep you ambulatory, we have news for you.

According to Zalo, the exuberant designer of extraordinary shoes, feet are a sex symbol and are meant to be highly adorned.

Well, think about it. Women do give off signals with their feet. When they sit, they suggestively drop the foot down from the ankle, or coyly rotate the foot up and down and sometimes plant.

When women stand, they seldom plant their weight firmly on both feet. They usually flex one knee a bit and put the weight on that leg and leave the other foot free to float to the side or to the front. Done right, they succeed in calling attention to the leg as well as the foot.

We all know women love to wear shockingly bright nail polish on their toes. There have also been minor successes from time to time with such foot adornments as toe rings. Everyone knows a woman is not well dressed unless her shoes are wonderful.

Now comes Zalo. His Paradox shoe company takes foot fashion wear beyond what we ever imagined as foot adornment. Zalo's whimsical, witty and highly colorful shoes are nothing less than the ultimate in footwear. His designs take the boring out of basic black and the yawn out of the terribly sensible clothes we're being ambushed with this fall.

WHEN HE accompanied his sizzling fall collection to Roz and Sherm's Bloomfield Plaza store this month, Zalo said, "In the old days, they said you shouldn't call attention to feet. Now it's the thing to do. Ready-to-wear has become so boring and bland that there is no interest in the clothes.

"They're being called clean, because, I guess, they couldn't come up with a better word. As a

result, accessories have become very important. Shoes are so much more with-it right now than the ready-to-wear.

"Women don't want to go out looking plain anymore. Given a choice, a woman would rather walk out with some pizzazz. 'Why should a woman spend lots of money for a new black pump when she already has a pair left over from last year?' he asks.

"Shoes have to be fun," he answers his own question.

Paradox shoes certainly do give a woman an identity. Zalo gives each of his shoe styles a pet name. Is a woman supposed to twirl wearing his "Singing in the Rain," umbrella and raindrop-adorned black patent flats? Or she can be Scarlett O'Hara wearing Clark Gable's picture on her "Tara" boots.

The wearer asks for, and is sure to get, applause when she dresses up in "Clappy-Clap" slippers that give the foot a hand. She can fly through the air in the circus motif aerolite shoes. Or she can be terribly car-conscious — and who isn't? — wearing automobile-unspired flats, appropriately named "Bumper to Bumper."

ZALO DOES not limit his collection strictly to whimsy. He was inspired by classic Chanel, whom he amusingly interprets in a simple, high-heeled pump in black doekin adorned with gold chains. His confident expressions of color are tonally expressed in mosaic for fall in which he artfully depicts wind, earth, fire and water.

"All of the shoes are marvelous for picking up the little black dress," he explains. Also, "a multi-color shoe becomes neutral when worn with color, because the shoes pick up all colors and go with everything."



STEPHEN CANTRELL/staff photographer

Cuban-born Zalo's infectious sense of humor influenced a collection of shoes designed to add pizzazz to the most conservative wardrobe. Above, his "Bumper to Bumper" car shoes, \$125, are racing out of stores. At right, he paid tribute to "Gone With The Wind" anniversary by creating "Tara" boots, \$275, featuring likenesses of Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett Butler. Roz & Sherm, Bloomfield Plaza.

