

## MEDICAL BRIEFS

### American Legion donation

Garden City Hospital received \$2,800 from the 16th District of The American Legion, Department of Michigan, for the purchase of a pediatric pulse oximeter. This piece of specialized equipment will be used to monitor the heart rate, respiration, integrated pulse and oximetry of sick children.

The money was made available to the hospital through The American Legion's Tabs For Tots Program.

"We are very appreciative to the American Legion for the money to purchase this specialized piece of equipment that will help us treat children," said Gary Ley, president and CEO of the hospital. "Many pieces of medical equipment have to be made especially for children because of their physical differences. It is so nice to have an organization like The American Legion become a partner with Garden City Hospital in providing health care to the children of the community."

### Skin cancer study

Beaumont doctors are the only ones in southeast Michigan participating in the Sunbelt Melanoma Trial, a research study to help develop a more effective treatment for melanoma.

Until recently, surgeons removed all the lymph nodes in the area of the melanoma to determine if the cancer had spread. However, studies have shown this subjects many patients to a major operation without improving their life expectancy.

In the research at Beaumont, doctors use sentinel node biopsy to determine if the cancer has spread. With sentinel node biopsy, the doctor injects dye at the cancer site to determine which lymph node drains the cancer site. If this "sentinel" node is found to be free of cancer, then other lymph nodes are assumed to be cancer-free also. If the sentinel node is affected by cancer cells, the patient may benefit from further treatment.

Once the severity of the cancer is determined, study participants will be randomly picked to receive: observation only; lymph node removal via surgery; or lymph node removal plus interferon. All study participants will be followed up for 10 years.

Call Beaumont's Cancer Clinical Trials office at (248) 551-7895 for more information. The office coordinates research for many cancer treatments and is currently involved in more than 100 research trials.

### Cancer survivors

Scott Burton, award-winning comedian, national champion juggler, cancer survivor and author of *A Life In The Balance*, will bring his one-man show - *Looking for Laughter in all the Wrong Places* - to the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center's annual Survivors' Day celebration.

This free community event will be held 1-3:30 p.m. Sunday, June 10 at Washenaw Community College, Morris Lawrence Building, 4800 East Huron River Drive, Ann Arbor.

More than 300 cancer survivors from across Michigan, along with family members and health-care professionals, will gather to celebrate life and enjoy Burton's high-energy and life-affirming show describing his cancer survivorship.

The event is free and open to the public. Registration and additional information is available by calling (800) 742-2300 and entering category #5275 or by visiting [www.cancer.med.umich.edu/sharesurvivorsday.htm](http://www.cancer.med.umich.edu/sharesurvivorsday.htm).



First-hand experience: St. Mary Mercy Hospital board member David Parr (left) listens as Dr. Vali Orandi, a radiologist and the hospital's chief of staff, explains the procedure he is performing. Parr is wearing a protective 30-pound lead apron.

## St. Mary Mercy program pairs doctors and community members

BY RENEE SKOGLUND  
rskoglund@oe.homecomm.net

Dressed in a white lab coat, Dr. Ken Watson, superintendent of Livonia Public Schools, spent the morning observing the busy activity of St. Mary Mercy Hospital's emergency room and the afternoon getting an angle-eye view of a carotid artery repair in surgery.

As a hospital board member, Watson was part of the hospital's new community outreach program that allows selected community members to view hospital activities up close and personal. The Healthcare Partnership Program, which debuted May 9, paired four hospital board members with doctors from various disciplines - radiology, oncology, cardiology, surgery and the emergency center - for two four-hour sessions.

The program is modeled after St. Joseph Mercy Hospital's well-established, bi-annual Community Associates Program, which involves six community members for a two-day experience of shadowing doctors. Both St. Joseph's and St. Mary Mercy are members of Trinity Health, the third largest Catholic health system in the United States.

"I wasn't disappointed," said Watson of his experience. "The doctors' routines are anything but routine to me."

Dr. John Ilijas, the surgeon who performed the carotid artery procedure, said he was surprised Watson didn't faint. Reaming and patching carotid arteries (located on both sides of the neck) damaged by arteriosclerosis can be quite bloody. However, Ilijas liked having an outside observer.

"He was very good, very attentive. He didn't say much, which is good. He



Doctor-teacher: Dr. John Ilijas (left) discusses the carotid artery repair board member Ken Watson, Ph.D., is about to see in surgery. Afterwards, Ilijas said he was surprised Watson "didn't faint."

asked a lot of questions afterwards. Having lay people is always interesting. They're new to the field. It's exciting to tell our story to them."

Making the rounds with Ilijas afterwards, Watson said he developed a new appreciation of the doctor-patient bond. "I saw the patients looking up (at the doctor) with such hope in their eyes. It's a tremendous responsibility."

In addition to Watson, board members included Dr. Richard McDowell, president of Schoolcraft College; Susan Rosick, publisher of the Observer Newspapers; and David Parr, a principal for Allstate Insurance Company in Southfield.

St. Mary Mercy doctors included Dr. Vali Orandi, radiology; Drs. Ash Gokli and Michael Colice, emergency room; Dr. John Ilijas, surgery/general; Dr. Syam Zampani, cardiology; Drs. John Harb and Omar Majid, surgery/urology; and Dr. Harmesh Naik, medical oncology.

Board members were chosen for the pilot program; however, as the program expands to a twice-yearly event, participants will be selected from among educators, legislators and civic leaders, business and automotive executives, editors and reporters of local newspapers, Chamber of Commerce executives and community advisory boards, said Julie Sproul, director of marketing and public relations for St. Mary Mercy.

In other words, participants will be people who can get the word out on the good things going on at the hospital.

### A success

"It was a privilege to have board members here," said Dr. Harmesh Naik, a medical oncologist. I hope I convinced Mr. Parr that we provide cutting edge cancer therapy. I wish he could have spent two days with us. I would consider this a very successful pilot."

"Nobody has ever come to my department before. I thought it was wonderful," said Dr. Vali Orandi, a radiologist. He emphasized that St. Mary Mercy has advantages over other hospitals. "This is not a teaching hospital. If you come in a 2 a.m. with a heart attack, you have an institution-trained cardiologist seeing you."

Naik and Orandi's remarks echoed the sentiments expressed by other doctors and program participants at a dinner afterwards. The Healthcare Partnership Program's initial run was a success, they said, a solid public relations venture for the hospital and an opportunity for community members to see what doctors and hospital medical staff do best - care for patients.

"I'm pleased to be part of an organization where people are so compassionate and dedicated to patient care," said Susan Rosick.

Please see UP CLOSE, D5



Consulting: Dr. Syam Zampani, cardiologist, discusses heart catheterizations with board member Richard McDowell, Ph.D., president of Schoolcraft College.

## Today's treatments take fear out of schizophrenia

The treatment of mental illness has advanced a long way since Dr. Phillippe Pinel was first to order his psychiatric patients unshackled from the hospital walls in 1793.

Yet despite today's effective therapies, many afflicted with schizophrenia and related disorders remain confined by societal misperceptions, fear and ignorance.

To help free the more than 2.5 million Americans who suffer from the effects and misunderstanding of the debilitating illness, the National Schizophrenia Foundation is proud to announce May 24 as national Schizophrenia Awareness Day. This is the fourth annual observance for building public awareness of schizophrenia-related disorders.

Affecting about one percent of Americans, schizophrenia is a biologically-based brain disorder. Estimates of annual treatment costs range from \$32.5-\$65 million annually.

Striking more men than women, signs of the disease generally appear between the ages of 18 and 26. Symptoms include hallucinations (both auditory voices and images), paranoid delusions, delusions of grandeur, feelings of confusion, apathy and disordered thoughts. The German derivation of schizophrenia translates to "splitting of the thought process."

Schizophrenia does not involve multiple or split personalities; it is not contagious; and it is not a reason for discrimination, isolation or banishment.

### Pioneer

A pioneer in the humane treatment of patients suffering from mental disorders, French physician Phillippe Pinel startled his colleagues when he ordered his staff to free mental patients from the chains anchoring them to the walls of the men's "insane asylum" in Paris.

Since Pinel's day, medical researchers have confirmed that persons with schizophrenia-related disorders are not violent dangers to society, particularly when adequately treated with medicine and other therapies.

One major public misperception is that schizophrenia is a mental disorder with no basis in biology, said Dr. Rajiv Tandon, professor of psychiatry and schizophrenia researcher at the University of Michigan. Researchers have discovered that schizophrenia is a disorder of the brain with clear abnormalities in structure, function and chemistry.

"With the breathtaking advances in brain and drug research, we can treat patients earlier and more effectively," said Tandon. "This stability can translate to their families, their employers and their communities."

Please see NO FEAR, D5

**We want your health news**

There are several ways you can reach the Observer Health & Fitness staff: The Sunday section provides numerous venues for you to offer newsworthy information including Medical Database (upcoming calendar events); Medical Newsletters (topic-oriented news items in the medical field); and Medical Briefs (medical advances, short news items from hospitals, physicians, companies).

We also welcome newsworthy ideas for health and fitness related stories. To submit an item to our newspaper you can call, write, fax or e-mail us.

**CALL US:**  
(734) 953-2128

**WRITE US:**  
Observer & Business Newspapers  
One North Main Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48106  
Fax: (734) 953-2128

**FAX US:**  
(734) 953-2128

**E-MAIL US:**  
rskoglund@oe.homecomm.net