

## Mercy is First in its Service Area to Offer Hybrid Robotic Heart Surgery

**M**ercy Heart Center is again helping pioneer minimally invasive heart surgery. Members of the hospital's medical staff recently performed the first hybrid revascularization in Stark, Carroll, Tuscarawas, Wayne and Holmes Counties. The procedure combines the da Vinci® robotic single-vessel small thoracotomy (SVST) procedure with angioplasty.

The hybrid offers patients the best of both procedures, minimizing trauma and speeding recovery and healing for eligible patients.

Angioplasty with stent placement remains the least invasive form of revascularization (meaning treatment to restore blood flow to the heart), but a blockage may reoccur within a relatively short time. Open heart surgery that involves bypassing coronary arteries with internal mammary arteries has proven to be significantly more effective than stents and even a bypass using leg veins. However, the surgery requires a long incision, splitting the sternum and spreading the ribs to access the heart.

With the need for only a few tiny incisions, the robotic hybrid combines the minimally invasive nature of angioplasty with the effectiveness of a coronary bypass.

Ahmed Sabe, M.D., medical director of Mercy Heart Center, notes that patients feel like they've been "run over by a truck" following a traditional bypass. "But, after robotic heart surgery, patients feel different," he says. "Several have reported that they didn't even need pain medication after being released from the hospital. It's remarkable."

Aqeel Sandhu, M.D., medical director of Mercy Cardiothoracic Surgery, is pleased with the outcome of the new procedure.

"We restructure the arteries that supply the heart through incisions that are smaller than dimes, resulting in less pain, less blood loss and a faster recovery for patients. In the past, recuperation from this type of major surgery would have taken weeks to months. Now, most are back on their feet much more quickly," says Sandhu.

This robotic technology, Sabe believes, is a formidable new weapon in the battle against coronary heart disease. "The robotic procedures that Mercy is helping refine will greatly enhance patient recovery and satisfaction," he says. "And, in offering them, we are in keeping with Mercy's mission to do what's best for our patients."



*Mark Peercy, a 56-year-old man from Strasburg, Ohio, was Mercy's first patient to undergo the hybrid procedure. Following a successful robotic SVST on several major heart vessels in June, Peercy underwent a planned angioplasty to open a smaller vessel last month.*

October 2009

## Mercy Service League to Present 2009 Harvest Ball

**M**ercy Service League will host its annual Harvest Ball on Saturday, Oct. 17, at the Canton Memorial Civic Center. Proceeds from the gala themed, "I'll Take Manhattan," will help fund the renovation and expansion of the Mercy Emergency Department.

Individual tickets for the event, including a special "Dessert & Dancing" option, are currently available. For more information, call 330-489-1018.



**MERCY**  
MEDICAL CENTER

A nonprofit corporation of

The Sisters of Charity  
of St. Augustine Health System and **UniversityHospitals**  
**HealthSystem**

## A Message from the President and CEO



by Thomas E. Cecconi,  
FACHE, President & CEO

You may be seeing billboards and print ads, as well as hearing radio commercials, about our innovative robotic-assisted heart surgery program. We're proud to be the first in our service area to offer robotic surgery, and we're striving to get the word out. As the area's technology leader, only Mercy provides this advanced heart care in our five-county service area. I hope you'll help us spread the word.

In addition to being a technology leader, we also continue to support the communities we serve through events like last month's American Heart Association Heart Walk and Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Walk to Cure Diabetes. In addition, the United Way of Greater Stark County's annual campaign kicked off with the Day of Caring on September 17, and several of you helped make Skyline Terrace in southeast Canton a cleaner place. My deepest thanks to all who have given of their time, energy and income to serve these and other worthy organizations throughout the year. Between now and November 25, I'd like to encourage you to make a United Way pledge, which will benefit our community.

Finally, I hope every Mercy employee will take advantage of the free shots we're offering for seasonal influenza on October 6 and 7. H1N1 vaccinations – mainly in the “flu mist” form – will hopefully be available in the near future. Mercy Flu Task Force is working hard to fine tune procedures should there be a large influenza outbreak here in Stark County. We want to do everything possible to ensure the safety and wellbeing of employees and patients. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

## Mercy Chaplains: a Caring, Supportive Presence

Every day, people speak to Mercy chaplains about challenging subjects – from spiritual concerns, disease and death to ethical issues and end-of-life care. Skilled at honoring questions that may not be easily answered, chaplains are available to provide a caring, supportive presence for patients, families, employees, volunteers and medical staff members.

In his or her most crucial role – to offer prayer, sacraments, affirmation and spiritual guidance – a chaplain's primary tool is listening to what's spoken as well as what's unspoken. Chaplains can also assist with advance directives and sorting and clarifying ethical issues.

Each chaplain at Mercy holds (or is working toward) board certification and a master's degree in theology or ministry. All have completed a rigorous, 1,600-hour residency in clinical pastoral education (CPE) in the acute care setting.

Assisted by more than 65 volunteer Eucharistic Ministers, Mercy Pastoral Care staff includes manager Judy



Mercy Pastoral Care staff includes (front, left to right) Virginia Shearer, Judy Esway, Sr. Kathleen O'Donnell, Paula Chilson, faith community nursing coordinator, (back) Jane Surmitis, Janice Smith, and Rev. Mark Luecke.

Esway, staff chaplains Rev. Mark Luecke and Sister Kathleen O'Donnell, chaplain associate Janice Smith, casual chaplain Jane Surmitis and support services coordinator Virginia Shearer. Many Catholic priests and Protestant pastors from local churches are also available on an on-call basis.

Mercy Pastoral Care can be reached by calling 330-489-1143. A chaplain is available Mon. – Fri., 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., and on weekends from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. To reach an on-call chaplain at any other time, call Mercy's nursing supervisor.

## Sr. Mary Lois Phillipp Celebrates Jubilee

On September 20, seven members of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine celebrated service milestones during a Jubilee Mass held at Mount Augustine, their Motherhouse, in Richfield. Among them was Mercy's Sr. Mary Lois Phillipp, who was honored for 50 years of service.

Sr. Mary Lois came to Mercy in 1982 as a medical technologist after completing an internship at Mt. Sinai Hospital in Cleveland. Since then she's also worked as an administrative assistant, volunteer services program coordinator and, currently, patient satisfaction ambassador. Prior to her time at Mercy, she taught elementary students at Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Joseph's Schools in Cuyahoga Falls.



## Employees Help Skyline Terrace Shine on UW Day of Caring

During last month's annual United Way Day of Caring, nearly 25 Mercy employees volunteered their time to help "shine up" community rooms and the grounds of Skyline Terrace, a subsidized housing community in southeast Canton.

Patti Bresnahan, Karen Coughlin, Patti Day, Karen Feller, Allison Goshay, Daisy Morris, Connie Smith and John Wright cleaned, scrubbed and organized community rooms and installed phase two of the Peace Wall. Mercy also provided the services of a local carpet cleaning company.

In addition, employees worked with children from Mercy Mission Outreach's after-school program (STARS) to make and distribute "Keep Our Neighborhood Clean" signs and pick up litter throughout the property. Participants in this effort included Rick Antenuce, Elaine Campbell, Kimberly Clark, Angela Cress, Julie Finney, Donna Guigas-Sigman, April Jones, Darlene King, Tracey Majors, Larry Ramer, Richard Regula, Rori Schneller, Lynne Shaefer, Kathy Smithberger and Chelsa Torres.



## UW Campaign Helps Combat Poverty in Stark County

With the latest U.S. Census figures showing the percentage of families who live below the poverty level in Canton now is the highest among Ohio's major cities, the United Way of Greater Stark County's annual campaign takes on even more importance this year.

Mercy's UW campaign –which runs from October 13 through November 25 – offers employees a tangible way to combat local poverty. A contribution of even \$1 per pay can make a difference locally. Payroll deduction is available and pledge forms will be distributed soon.

Employees can direct their donations specifically to families in need or to those without access to medical care by checking the appropriate box on the pledge card. For more information, contact Karen Feller at ext. 1307.

## Heart Walk Action

More than 165 area teams helped raise \$180,000 for the American Heart Association Heart Walk in September. Of Mercy's 21 teams with 141 total participants, Mercy Cash Counters, captained by Jami Offenberger, raised the most on behalf of the hospital. Lifestyle Change Award Winners at Mercy included Sandra Coppolino, Romana (Mandy) Geiser, Jean Mizner and Christopher Shumaker.



# Green Scene

News from Mercy Green Team



## Mercy Kicks Off CFL Campaign

In an effort to conserve energy and resources, Mercy is starting a campaign to replace most incandescent bulbs with CFLs (compact fluorescent light bulbs) over a two-month period of time. CFLs use 75 percent less energy and last about 10 times longer than incandescents.

According to Mercy COO Jeff Smith, Mercy will spend \$1.5 million for electricity in 2009, with rates to go up seven percent next year. He says, "Working together we can be good stewards of our planet and save money at the same time. The CFL initiative is another way to do this."

All departments at the hospital's main campus and satellite facilities will participate by taking an inventory of standard-size incandescents and reporting the information via the MercyNet work-order system. Mercy Plant engineering will replace the bulbs with CFLs and can dispose of the incandescents. Plant engineering can also recycle burned-out CFLs. For more information, contact Rick Antenuce in Plant engineering at ext. 2998.

## Victory Gardens a Triumph

Employee Steve Boger calls his victory garden at Varian Orchards in East Canton a stress reliever. Plus, it's put fresh green beans, tomatoes, green peppers, zucchini, corn and much more on his table this year.

Boger was one of four victory gardeners from Mercy who took advantage of the offer from Reed and Nancy Varian, fourth-generation owners of the Osburg Township orchards. "I live in Canton on a regular-sized city lot," says Boger. "Although I do a lot of flower gardening, I don't really have the space for vegetables. So, when I read about this opportunity, I was excited."

Mercy Green Team co-leader Elaine Campbell notes the collaboration between Varian Orchards and the hospital's green team has been an unexpected perk. She says, "It has been a pleasure working with the Varians. They have shared exceptional opportunities to enjoy their scenic location."

The Varians will offer space again next year for any Mercy employee who would like to grow and tend their own garden. Anyone interested in reserving a plot can call 330-488-0801.



## Mercy Boutique Promotes Breast Cancer Awareness, TWI Artists

In recognition of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Mercy Boutique is sponsoring "Pink Up Mercy" Week during the week of October 19. Any employee who wears pink for breast cancer awareness will receive 10 percent off a Mercy Boutique purchase.

In addition, the Boutique will provide on-site prosthetic fittings in a comfortable, private environment with representatives from Amoena on Fri., Oct. 9; American Breast Care (ABC) on Fri., Oct. 16; and Trulife on Tues., Oct. 20. Appointments are required. On all three days, the Boutique will offer light refreshments, door prizes and a 20-percent-off sale (excluding consignment items).

In partnership with Stark County Board of MRDD and The Workshops Inc. (TWI), the Boutique now offers a line of handcrafted gift items made by local TWI artists. This partnership is the first of its kind between a local gift shop and TWI, which employs individuals age 22 and older with developmental disabilities.

Boutique shoppers can choose from a variety of TWI products, including decorative boxes, cards, trivets, pillows, ceramics, and custom and holiday items. To learn more or make a fitting appointment, call Mercy Boutique at 330-456-9960.

# Employee Matters

A monthly column focusing on important issues that concern our employees

## It's Time for Benefits Enrollment

By Lorraine Washington, Vice President, Human Resources



### Benefits Fair to be Held Oct. 20 – 21

Be on the lookout for your *Flexible Benefits Enrollment* booklet. As I've stated before, spending 30 minutes reviewing this booklet will help you get the most out of your medical benefits. Also, take a moment to review the guidelines

below and plan to attend the benefits fair on October 20–21.

**Health care spending accounts:** they help you pay for non-covered medical items (prescription and physician co-pays, OTC meds, glasses, contacts, etc.) with your annual, tax-free contribution, which is accessible in total on January 1.

**Change in benefits:** unless you have a qualifying event (marriage, divorce, birth, etc.), most benefits can only be changed during open enrollment, which is in October of this year. In the event of an employment status change, benefits needs a status change form (PAF) from your manager.



Eva Sheppard, RN, 10 Main

**Qualifying events:** bring the proper documentation to the benefits office and complete the benefits change form. Benefit changes must be completed within 31 days of a qualifying event or no changes can be made.

**Children on medical insurance:** normally, dependents are covered up to the age 19 or, if they are full-time students, until age 25. Proof of student eligibility will be required every semester.

**Getting a benefits card:** most employees receive a benefits card within five to seven business days of enrollment. However, if you need proof of coverage before that time, benefits can issue a form letter.

**PAL on the paycheck:** You should see earned PAL on your paycheck after completing 90 days of employment.

**Critical care insurance:** it's a voluntary benefit provided by UNUM; representatives can be reached by calling 1-800-635-5597.

**Calls to benefits office:** We strive to return all calls within 24 hours. When leaving a message, be sure to clearly state your first and last name and phone number. Also, check MercyNet under the HR tab for more information and forms.

## Clinic for Seasonal Flu Shots Slated for Oct. 6, 7

Mercy's employee clinic for seasonal flu shots is scheduled for Tues., Oct. 6, and Wed., Oct. 7, from 6:40 a.m. to 4 p.m. in conference room E. The seasonal flu shot is not expected to protect against novel virus H1N1 (also known as "swine flu"). Per the CDC, H1N1 vaccines may be available by the second half of October.

Mercy H1N1 Task Force advises all employees and volunteers who exhibit flu symptoms – including fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue – to not come to work. Flu symptoms are usually sudden in onset. Adults are generally contagious for a period of seven days and children for up to 10 days.

For more information, call employee health at ext. 1322.

**Mercy Compliance Hotline: 1-888-511-4103**

# The Word on Wellness

To learn more about employee wellness programs, check the MercyNet Wellness Page, or contact Kathy Wise, employee health and wellness manager, at 330-489-1479.

## Wellness Center Will Have Grand Opening This Month

The Mercy Employee Wellness Center – with cardiac, strength and group class areas – is slated to open later this month. Orientation sessions will be announced soon.

Membership will cost \$5 per pay and includes most classes and exercise programs. A \$25 enrollment fee is required, but employees who sign up during the first month will have their enrollment fee waived.

## OPTIFAST Takes Off

Eighteen Mercy employees have joined the hospital's new OPTIFAST program, an on-site medical weight management clinic that combines comprehensive lifestyle education and medical monitoring with a meal replacement diet. For anyone still interested in learning more, Kathy Wise, health and wellness director, will offer additional information sessions in October. Details will be available soon.



## Track 'Climb Mt. Everest' Progress on Banner

Employees who join the 27-week Climb Mt. Everest challenge in teams or as individuals will soon be able to track their progress on the Mt. Everest banner across from the cafeteria. Teams and individuals will each have their own flag on the banner.

The challenge, which begins October 5, encourages participants to take the stairs instead of the elevator. Registration forms are available on the MercyNet Wellness page.

## Upcoming Lunch & Learns

Wed., Oct. 7, noon in conference room E  
"Avoiding Auto Crashes and Other Hazards"

Wed., Nov. 4, noon in conference room C  
"Metabolic Syndrome and Type II Diabetes Risks"

Wed., Dec. 2, noon in conference room C  
"Recipes for Holiday Success"

## Holiday 'PiKs' Return

To express appreciation to employees, volunteers and physicians, Mercy will again make holiday portraits available on site. PiK Studios will be offering portrait sittings in the Mercy Hall auditorium on:

- Fri., Oct. 23, from 4 – 8 p.m.
- Sat., Oct. 24, from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.
- Sun., Oct. 25, from noon – 7 p.m.

Each participating family will receive a free 8x10-in. portrait of choice. Portrait packages can be purchased, and payroll deduction is available. Employees should bring their badge.

For a detailed price list, visit the Mercy News tab on MercyNet. To learn more or set an appointment time, please stop by human resources or call ext. 1159.

## Mercy to Hold Medicare Options Events

Medicare coverage and costs change yearly. With the annual coordinated election period starting on November 15, now is the perfect time for those on Medicare or a Medicare Advantage Plan to compare available plans for Stark and surrounding counties. For one-stop Medicare shopping, Mercy will offer Medicare Options Events on:

- Oct. 6 and 27, Nov. 3, and Dec. 1 and 14 at 9 a.m.; and
- Nov. 17 at 5 p.m.

During these marketing programs, representatives from several Medicare Advantage Plans will be on site. In addition, Mercy's Medicare counselor Terri Gursky will also be available to answer questions during the fair. No reservations are required. For more information, call the Senior Friends office at 330-489-1215 or 1-800-223-8662.



## Mystery Employee

Each month, an employee's name is hidden somewhere in this newsletter.

If you see your name with this graphic next to it, you're the lucky winner of a \$25 gift certificate to Tri County Restaurant Association. Please call 330-489-1015 to claim your prize.