Mercy Hospice patients and caregivers were honored and remembered on Nov. 4 during an annual memorial service at St. Michael’s Church in Canton. This event, which marked the 25th anniversary of hospice care in Stark County, also served to introduce the Mercy Hospice “Crossings” exhibit, a pictorial display that pays tribute to the remarkable relationship between patients, families and caregivers. 

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**Captions:**

(Top right and bottom right) This portion of the “Crossings” display – along with nine other groupings – was unveiled following the Nov. 4 hospice memorial service. The exhibit can be viewed during the month of December at Mercy Health Center of North Canton and will travel throughout the community in 2008.

(Bottom left) At the start of the memorial service, Pam Hill and Charlotte Meldrum, members of the Ohio Star Quilters Guild, carry a quilt they and others helped make for the 25th anniversary of hospice. For several years, the guild has been crafting an annual memorial quilt that includes the names of all the families who wish to be part of it.

(Top left) Anne Poleon, manager of Mercy Hospice and Homecare, was one of the speakers during the hospice memorial service. Anne recommends discussing hospice care with family members before someone is diagnosed with a life-limiting condition.
**A Message from the President and CEO**

By Thomas E. Cecconi
President & CEO

In recognition of Mercy’s recent Joint Commission designation as a Primary Stroke Center, I want to commend our multidisciplinary stroke committee, which is under the direction of Dr. Leon Rosenberg, neurologist, and Allison Goshay, administrative director of 2M, 4M and rehab. Each member of that team worked very hard to achieve the Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval. With this certification, our patients and their families can be even more confident that the care they receive at Mercy is of the highest quality.

2008 will be a year of growth for Mercy Medical Center. Not only is our new I.C.U. under construction, I am pleased to report that at the November 30 meeting of the Mercy board of directors, we received approval of architectural design and development fees for the new facility planned for our Jackson Township property at Fulton and Wales Roads. We also received approval for the purchase of a new PET/CT Scanner and for Phase III of the Cardiac Master Plan which includes a new Cath Lab and facility renovations.

Finally, I want to wish each one of you a very Merry Christmas. I hope you have the opportunity to spend this holiday season with the people you cherish most. For those with loved ones in the military – or who cannot be with friends or family members for whatever reason this Christmas – please know that the thoughts and prayers of your Mercy family are with you. May each of you experience a measure of the joy, generosity and warmth that this season – a celebration of Christ’s birth – has come to symbolize.

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**SISTERS of CHARITY HEALTH SYSTEM**

**A Bright Future For A 156-Year-Old Mission**

CSA Health System Launches New Corporate Identity

This autumn marked a new beginning for the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine Health System (Mercy’s joint sponsor) as the organization launched its new name, logo and tagline. Capturing the essence of the health system while promoting the direction of its future, this new corporate identity – Sisters of Charity Health System – better represents how the organization brings a true devotion to healing to all.

Sr. Judith Ann Karam, CSA, president and CEO of the health system, explained that the decision to launch a new corporate identity reflects two years of market research in Ohio and South Carolina.

She said, “Surveys to discern perceptions and awareness of our name and logo involved employees, physicians, board members, volunteers, members of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine (CSA) congregation and external stakeholders. More than 90 percent of survey respondents supported the adoption of a new name and logo.”

The new Sisters of Charity Health System logo – a “radiant cross” – will include this tagline on letterhead and other forms of printed communication: a ministry of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine. Corporate identity images are designed to promote and share the organization’s collective story, a legacy rooted in faith and history.

Too often the tremendous work of the health system’s 20 diverse ministries remains its best kept secret. Sr. Judith Ann noted, “The launch of our new corporate identity celebrates the quality and excellence found in each of our ministries, reinvigorates our advocacy for those in need and invites others to collaborate in our mission and ministry of healing.”

Just one year after their arrival in Northeast Ohio from France in 1851, the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine established their first Catholic hospital. Today, their efforts have grown into a multi-state Catholic non-profit corporation that serves thousands of adults and children each year. With high quality, compassionate care, its family of ministries repeatedly earns national recognition for innovation, efficiency and state-of-the-art medical excellence.

The CSA congregation and health system are deeply thankful for and celebrate the work of all the sponsored ministries. Each employee carries forward the legacy and mission of the CSAs. Because of all who serve, it is truly a bright future.
Mercy Supports Adopt-A-Family Program

In partnership with Catholic Charities of Stark County, Mercy will again offer an adopt-a-family program this Christmas to help those less fortunate in the community. Last year the hospital sponsored 22 area families.

Any department interested in adopting a family for Christmas should contact Chelsa Torres in human resources at ext. 1026.

Author, Breast Cancer Survivor Signs Books At Boutique


Daughter of Dr. Saverio Caruso, a retired Mercy psychiatrist, Josie is an accomplished writer and producer. She is also a breast cancer survivor who currently is undergoing treatment for the recurrence of a rare and noncurable form of breast cancer. In her book, Josie shares personal stories of 79 women and men who journeyed with her through breast cancer treatment. Award-winning photographer Jack Opatrany, a Cleveland native, donated his time to capture memorable black and white photographs of patients in varying stages of treatment, recovery and remission.

The Faces Behind Breast Cancer is available for purchase at the boutique.
Benefit enrollment for 2008 is complete. Those of you who read my column monthly know that I try to focus on issues that help explain our benefit plans or save you money. I will continue to focus on these areas, which brings me to a point I made last year that deserves repeating now:

One of the best things you can do to help manage your medical and dental costs is to spend 30 to 45 minutes reading the 17-page benefit enrollment booklet that was mailed to your home in October. It is a short, easy read and summarizes your medical and dental coverage.

Now, more on dental coverage… I want to be sure you understand our dental program. My understanding from many of you is that you think if your dentist is NOT in the Dentamax plan, you cannot utilize them. That is not true. You can go to any dentist you choose, even if they are not in the network!

Let me explain our relationship with Dentamax.

Dentamax is a network of dentists who have agreed to provide services at specified prices. They are not an insurance company. The benefit of utilizing the Dentamax Network is that all Dentamax dentists have agreed to charge members using a fixed fee schedule that is typically 25 to 40 percent below their usual charges. This provides savings for you and your family every time you visit your Dentamax dentist.

However, if you choose to utilize a dentist outside the Dentamax network, you certainly can do so and you are covered at 80 percent of the usual and customary charges. Certainly, if you utilize Dentamax, your 80 percent should be less because of the negotiated pricing, thus making your dental dollars stretch further.

For example, if a root canal normally costs $1000 and you get no discount, your portion of the $1000 charge is $200. If you utilize a network provider and get a 25-percent discount, the $1000 charge is now reduced to $750 and your portion is $150. On a smaller scale, if your charge is $250 and you choose a dentist not in the Dentamax network, your 20 percent would be $50. If you utilize a Dentamax provider and get a 25-percent discount, the $250 cost is reduced to $187.50 and your 20 percent cost would be $37.50. In the first example, using a network dentist saved you $50 and in the second example, you saved $12.50. (Additional examples of potential savings are included in your benefit enrollment booklet.)

In the end, the choice is yours.

Blessings
“Lasting Impressions” highlights Mercy associates who have recently been recognized for quality, compassionate care by patients, family members, physicians, other associates or individuals in the community. These stories are representative of the many Mercy associates that leave positive, lasting impressions by living out the hospital’s mission everyday.

Impromptu Language Lessons Help STATCARE Patient

Mastering a foreign language usually requires years of study, but Lisa Vaughn, D.O., didn’t have that kind of time when she recently needed to treat a high school exchange student from Japan.

Brought to the Mercy Health Center of Jackson/Massillon by her host family (who could not speak Japanese), the young woman struggled to communicate about her health concerns. So, Dr. Vaughn, a Mercy STATCARE physician, turned to the Web for some helpful Japanese phrases.

According to Barbara Frustaci, Mercy’s offsite service line administrative director, the student was so thankful for Dr. Vaughn’s efforts. “Everyone was at a loss until Dr. Vaughn used the Japanese words,” she said. “The student calmed down very quickly, and Dr. Vaughn was able to diagnose and treat her. She even wrote down some instructions in Japanese so the student could understand how to care for herself.”

Barbara added, “According to our nurses, Dr. Vaughn was just being herself. She has done the same things for others who cannot speak English. Both Dr. Vaughn and Dr. Mark Brado, the medical director of the Jackson STATCARE, are so good at making patients feel valued and treating them with respect and compassion.”

Radiology Employees ‘Go Out Of Their Way’ To Provide Quality Care

Several radiology staff members have recently been recognized for living the Mercy mission. Judy Hadam, administrative director of Mercy Radiology Services, offered kudos to four employees for their supportive, compassionate care.

She said, “Dr. Andrew Gugliemi, D.O., a fourth-year radiology resident, called me to say what an efficient, helpful and knowledgeable staff member Missy Sanders is. He wanted to recognize her for her quick response to his questions and her SpeechQ know-how.

“In addition, Barb Snyder, Nondis Walker and Supan Patel – a nuclear medicine student from Kent State University – all have received praise from Mercy patients. In a note, one of Barb’s patients said she was ‘very helpful and kind’ and commented that she went out of her way to take care of the patient’s needs. Another patient said Supan ‘went out of his way to make me comfortable during a test that would have otherwise been difficult for me.’

“Nondis Walker was recognized by a patient who said she gave ‘excellent’ care. In the letter, the patient went on to say that Nondis ‘took care of me a year ago and I remember her well. She was outstanding. She functions as a very skilled tech and was very caring in the way she gave instructions on positioning for taking pictures. She spoke clearly and distinctly, so it was easy to follow directions. Her manner was respectful and kind. She worked efficiently but gave the impression you were her only client.’”
Mercy Achieves Primary Stroke Center Designation

Ronald McDonald Visits Mercy In Support Of Children, Mercy PALS

Mercy has earned the Gold Seal of Approval™ from the Joint Commission for Primary Stroke Centers following a recent, unannounced on-site review.

The Joint Commission's one-year certification means that Mercy has demonstrated compliance with three key requirements:

1. Compliance with consensus-based national standards.
2. Effective use of primary stroke center recommendations and clinical practice guidelines to manage and optimize care.
3. Performance measurement and improvement activities.

Tom Cecconi, president and CEO of Mercy, is pleased that the hospital's team of stroke specialists is being recognized for the quality, compassionate care it provides.

He said, “We have been taking excellent care of our stroke patients for years. Achieving the Joint Commission's Primary Stroke Center designation reflects the commitment of our highly skilled staff members to provide the very best in stroke management and recovery for patients and their families.”

Each year about 700,000 people experience a new or recurrent stroke, which is the nation’s third leading cause of death. On average, someone suffers a stroke every 45 seconds and someone dies of a stroke every 3.1 minutes. Stroke is a leading cause of serious, long-term disability in the United States, with about 4.7 million stroke survivors alive today.

“The Gold Seal of Approval confirms that Mercy's stroke care program follows national standards and guidelines that can significantly improve outcomes for stroke patients,” said Jim Williams, R.N., vice president and chief nursing officer at Mercy. “We’re very proud of this important accreditation.”

The Joint Commission’s Primary Stroke Center Certification is based on the recommendations for primary stroke centers published by the Brain Attack Coalition and the American Stroke Association’s statements/guidelines for stroke care. The Joint Commission launched the program - the nation’s first - in 2003. A list of programs certified by the Joint Commission is available at www.jointcommission.org.

On the sixth annual World Children’s Day (celebrated Nov. 20), Ronald McDonald visited with Mercy patients as well as students at A Child’s Kingdom, Mercy’s on-site child care facility. In addition to donating a Step2 wagon filled with goodie bags for kids, the Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Northeastern Ohio (RMHC®) gave a check for $500 to Mercy PALS in support of the hospital's ongoing partnership with Canton’s Allen and Compton Elementary Schools.

(Top) Children from Compton Elementary in Canton can now enjoy their own copy of The Polar Express, thanks to Paul Siegfried, the owner of McDonald’s at Mercy. Tom Cecconi, president and CEO of Mercy, holds a $500 check from Ronald McDonald House Charities that will benefit Mercy PALS, a partnership between Mercy and Allen and Compton Elementary Schools in Canton. Pictured left to right are Guy Cecchini (former owner of Mercy McDonald’s), Michelle Siegfried, Tom Locke, Tom Cecconi, Ronald McDonald, Paul Siegfried and Karen Feller, coordinator of Mercy Mission Outreach.

(Right) Dr. Marcia Marhefka (front) and her daughter, Ellie – along with Megan Winters and her mother, Jennifer Winters (back), Mercy pharmacist – enjoy a visit from Ronald McDonald during the annual Thanksgiving feast at A Child’s Kingdom, Mercy’s on-site child care center.
Parking Lot Shuttle Resumes

Employees Reminded of Parking Policies

Mercy began its annual employee shuttle service on Nov. 5, which will continue at least until Mar. 31, 2008. The bus runs regularly Monday through Friday from 5 a.m. to midnight.

On heavy snow days, Mercy Security will direct employee parking to facilitate smooth arrivals and departures. When this circumstance arises, an amber light will be flashing at the entrance to the employee lot.

All employees, physicians, contractors, students and volunteers that drive and/or park a vehicle on Mercy property are required to register that vehicle (year, make and license plate) with security. To register a vehicle – or change information on file – call security at ext. 1250 or contact the department via e-mail/Mox.

Telecom Remodels Work Space

Bonnie McConnell, operator 1, gets comfortable in her new work area in the recently remodeled Telecom department. Telecom held an open house and blessing event on Nov. 7 to celebrate the renovations. In addition to regularly handling thousands of hospital calls, Telecom also manages Mercy’s physician answering service.

Health Observances

Month

- National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month
- Safe Toys and Gifts Month
- Seasonal Depression Awareness Month

Week

- National Aplastic Anemia, MDS Awareness Week (1 – 7)
- National Handwashing Awareness Week (2 – 8)

Day

- World AIDS Day (1)
- International Day of Disabled Persons (3)
- International Volunteer Day (5)
- Human Rights Day (10)
- United Nations International Migrants Day (18)

Mystery Associate

Each month, an associate’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.
Decorating Contest Judging Slated For Dec. 14

Mercy is encouraging all departments to display their Christmas spirit with its annual decorating contest.

Judging will be held Fri., Dec. 14, and human resources must receive notice of all entries no later than Thurs., Dec. 13. Judging will be based on neatness, originality, composition, special effects and theme. The names of the first, second and third place winners will be displayed on the special events board on Mon., Dec. 17. A separate plaque will be awarded for door/window decorating. Contact human resources at ext. 1026 for more information or to register.

Departments must use materials that are approved under Mercy’s fire safety code. Artificial trees and UL-approved lights may be used in non-patient care areas, and lights must be unplugged when the area is unattended. Questions about safe materials should be directed to safety/technology management at ext. 1411 or security at ext. 1250. Door and window decorations are encouraged where patient care or space is an issue.

New Employees

Michael Bianchi..........................................................Dietary
Dawn Bryan ..........................................................Patient Accounts
Pam Cain .................................................................Surgery (OR)
Angela Carlile ..........................................................Float
Angela Crachiolo ......................................................Emergency Dept.
Cathy Danko ..........................................................Float
Barbara Deibel ........................................................Central Sterile Processing
Michelle Divine ........................................................Patient Accounts
Kristine Haney ........................................................CVSCU
Katherine Higgins .......................................................ICU
Bethany Howes .......................................................5 Main – Child & Adolescent
William Lemonte .........................................................Security
William Loos ..........................................................Central Transport
Peter Marshall .........................................................5M – Pediatric/Adult Care
Hilda Mathis ..........................................................IMPACT
Shealee Mitchell.........................................................Emergency Dept.

Christina Mizer .........................................................5M – Pediatric/Adult Care
Christine Moulos ......................................................Physician Support
Naz Older .................................................................Float
Wendy Palcheff ........................................................Float
Sellena Parker ..........................................................Dietary
Julie Parker .............................................................Respiratory Care Services
Tracy Polen ..............................................................Dr. Cisneros
Shelly Potter ..........................................................2 Main – Surgical
Terrill Schade .......................................................North Canton – Work Health & Safety
Care Shiplett ..........................................................10 Main – Medical, Pulmonary
Stephanie Smith .........................................................Float
Charlotte Steffen .....................................................Occupational Therapy
Belinda Surgeon ......................................................Central Sterile Processing
Julie Teal .................................................................Float
Regina Vickers ........................................................Float
Paul Wiseman Jr. ......................................................Emergency Dept.