



Positive Findings

March 2005

Monthly Newsletter

TELERRADIOGRAPHY COMING TO SCH

Hospital Awarded \$35K Competitive Grant From ORCA

The Office of Rural and Community Affairs in Austin announced March 16 that Sweeny Community Hospital is one of seven Critical Access Hospital chosen to receive a Rural Health Technology Investment Grant.

SCH requested approximately \$35,000 to buy telerradiography equipment, a computer server and workstation for the ER, and to upgrade the telephone line to accommodate the service. Of 39 hospitals that applied, only 7 received funding.

Telerradiography uses computers and telephone lines to transmit digital images of X-rays and CT scans to off-site radiologists, who then interpret the tests and transmit the



The Next Big Thing

In the evening light, the entrance to The Fountains really shines. SCH representatives, assisted living consultants and construction officials went through the building March 14, inspecting it for details or repairs that still need to be done. Another "punch list" inspection is planned next week. The Fountains is tentatively expected to open in April.

results back to the hospital in a matter of minutes. Grant Officer Rhonda Moran prepared and submitted the detailed, 44-page application in January. SCH will receive an award letter and contracts

next week.

A revised spending plan may be submitted for state review to capitalize on bids received after the grant's deadline, with any savings used for more equipment.

SCH Gets \$3,700 Education Grant From Regional (Trauma) Advisory Council

The East Texas Gulf Coast Regional Trauma Advisory Council (aka "The Rac") has awarded SCH a \$3,700 grant for trauma care provider education. Grant Officer Rhonda Moran submitted the proposal in early January, and funding awards were announced at a RAC meeting in March.

The grant money must be spent on education for physicians and nurses who work in the Emergency Department. Courses to be paid for include Advanced Trauma Life Support, Trauma Nurse Core Curriculum (TNCC) classes,

TNCC instructor courses and Emergency Nurse Pediatric Courses for up to four nurses.

Among 15 area emergency providers who received funds were Brazosport Memorial Hospital, \$2,500 for education; Angleton-Danbury Medical Center, \$4,000 for education, and Central EMS, \$2,371 for equipment.

Tentative plans are to work with ADMC and BMH to organize local TNCC classes, which could help reduce the overall cost of the programs for everyone involved.

Birthdays

March

- 6 Judy Davis*
- 7 Robert Smith
- 13 Sheryl Denny
- 20 Cheryl Trafton
- 22 Gail Macek
- 24 Lois Wells*
- 26 Shirley Ems*



April

- 2 Ricky Ideus
- 4 Lola Paige Cathy Sisson
- 6 Eutabelle Albritton*
- 7 Olga Schulte*
- 10 Tellie Williams
- 11 Cathy Rodgers *
- 12 Meeghan Dietz Yolanda Huerta
- 27 Mary Christian*
- 28 Lisa Allen

* Auxiliary

New Employees

- Meeghan Dietz The Fountains
- Odell Wyche Sr. Environmental Services
- Marc Bailey Maintenance
- Melanie Schaefer The Fountains



CALENDAR

'Interactions of OTC & Herbal Medications'



In observance of National Inhalants & Poisons Week (March 20-26) SCH employees

and volunteers are invited to hear Jennifer Bundens, community education specialist for the Southeast Texas Poison Control Center, speak on the dangers of mixing herbal and over-the-counter medications. For information, call Rhonda Moran, Ext. 155.

1:30 p.m. Wednesday March 23
Conference Room

Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)

This 16-hour course teaches emergency interventions in a variety of situations involving pediatric patients. Textbook included. PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED. Call Ext. 197.



Fee: \$75 for SCH employees.
\$150 for others
8-5 April 7-8
The Wellness Center

Occupational Therapy Open House



The public is invited to tour Sweeny Community Hospital's hand therapy and pediatric rehab clinic for an open house, as the occupational therapists at Brazoria Hand & Upper Extremity Rehabilitation and Brazoria Pediatric Rehabilitation explain their services. For information, call 798-9190.

3:30-6:30 p.m. April 14
211 N. Brooks, Brazoria



Above left: Eutabelle Albritton, Olga Schulte, Eleanor Adkins and Delta Barnett were among the volunteers who brought refreshments to open house for the new ED in February. Above right: Lois Wells and Shirley Ems sold cookbooks, too.



At left, Delta Barnett and Dorothy Hamlin prepare desserts for the annual spring tea and fashion show. At right, Charlotte Phillips and Judy Davis helped wrap gifts in the final fund-raiser of 2004.



SCH Auxiliary Raises Money, Spreads Cheer

The last five months have seen a whirlwind of activities for the ladies of the Sweeny Community Hospital Auxiliary, as they prove once again how valuable and effective a force of volunteers can be.

It began in November and December with the Tree of Remembrance, a raffle, pictures with Santa and the miniature horses, and a gift-wrapping service that earned a combined total of \$1,570.

In February, the Auxiliary provided refreshments for the two Emergency Department Open Houses, which drew nearly 200 visitors.

On the eve of moving into the new ER, the Pink Ladies came through for the hospital again — this time stocking the new ER with cakes, cookies, dips and chips for

the hospital employees who would be working all night for the big move.

The annual Spring Tea, Fashion Show and Raffle in February was a runaway success, with a total of 256 tickets sold. Although they finally ran out of food and had to issue a few refunds and apologies, the Pink Ladies earned \$554 on the raffle and \$2,178 on the luncheon after expenses. Doris Follett and Edna Earle Pettigrew were recognized as top ticket-sellers for the event.

Gloria Harrison of Sweeny won the raffle's top prize, a framed doily. George Payne of Lake Jackson won the crystal vase, and Joni Winscott of Sweeny won a gift certificate to Sweeny Coiffures.

Next on the agenda? Rest, then sales of engraved bricks for The Fountains.

A Posting From 'The Cheerful Oncologist' Web Log

<http://thecheerfuloncologist.blogspot.com/>

Medical oncologists are often asked to see patients who have abnormal physical findings or X-ray results but have not yet been diagnosed with a particular type of cancer. Sometimes when a malignancy presents in multiple locations it is difficult to determine where it originated. If the source of the cancer can be found then the treatment can be better tailored for that specific type.

Since doctors love to show off their powers of deduction and intuition they usually rise to this challenge and begin to hunt for the clue that will solve this mystery. The result can be surprising and sometimes change a patient's prognosis for the better.

For example, I remember a patient who had to undergo exploratory surgery for a pancreatic mass after a needle biopsy was unrevealing. He was found to have pancreatic lymphoma, not the typical devastating diagnosis of carcinoma. He achieved a complete remission with relative ease.

Before recommending scans or operations though oncologists must conduct the ancient and hallowed rite called the *taking of the history*. During this crucial interview they seat themselves before the patient, nodding in a rhythmical cadence while they listen as if wearing a Roman collar. Crucial information about the patient's symptoms and medical past are recorded and then a key question is asked which brings a pause, like a penitent admitting a mortal sin in the dark-curtained booth. The confessor's response can frequently portend both the final diagnosis and the prognosis. The question is, "Do you smoke cigarettes?"

Patients who answer yes can be considered to have lung cancer until proven otherwise.

I happened to meet such a patient recently who had multiple lung nodules on chest X-ray. The source of these nodules was not apparent and I considered several possibilities, but as we reached *that point* in the interview and he

replied that he had smoked for over 30 years, I realized it would be foolish to consider any other type of cancer — he just looked like someone with lung cancer.

"Doc, I haven't been sick my entire life but for the last couple of weeks I've been coughing and getting short of breath," he said, "and my right hand is cramping up on me." On exam his right hand had more than muscle spasms -- it was nearly paralyzed. Within a day he was diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer. The remainder of his life could now be seen as clearly as a mountain appearing out of the misty clouds, a coffin resting on its peak.

How did this man end up sitting in my office rubbing his claw-like hand, waiting for me to schedule a CT scan of his brain to confirm what I almost assuredly knew?

Would he have chosen to smoke all those decades ago if he knew he would die from lung cancer? It seems unlikely that any sane person would, but one forgets the stranglehold myopia has on the young, who are essentially incapable of visualizing themselves as old, let alone dying.

Those who take up smoking in their teen-age years may know it is unhealthy, but can they actually perceive how awful the consequences will be if they contract a tobacco-related malignancy?

I imagined my patient as a young man just out of school and starting his adult life, buying his first pack of cigarettes after work and unwittingly taking the first step toward a death ...

... Not all smokers die of cancer, of course, and not all cancer victims are smokers. But those who decide to become addicted to the "coffin nail" should take a moment to ask themselves: "Is it too late to change?"

Medical oncologists are like homicide detectives. We can find out how a death occurred and why it occurred. We just can't bring the deceased back.

posted by Dr. Craig Hildreth @ 12:15 AM March 7, 2005



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Dr. Anil K. Sinha Latest Surgeon To Join SCH Staff

Dr. Anil K. Sinha, a general surgeon based in Lake Jackson, has expanded his practice and now offers patients the option of having their surgeries at either Sweeny Community Hospital or Brazosport Memorial.

Dr. Sinha is certified by the American Board of Surgery in general, vascular and laparoscopic surgery. He is also proficient in endoscopic procedures.

He is a graduate of the Texas A&M University Health Science Center College of Medicine and did his general surgery residency in New York. In 2002, he became a fellow of the American College of Surgeons.

For appointments or more information, call 285-2828.



Dr. Sinha

Snoop Scoop

Colleen Smith and family are big fans of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo concerts, and this year she splurged on five \$77-per-person tickets to hear country singer **Gretchen Wilson**. Before heading to the concert, Colleen's family gathered for an afternoon barbecue at home with all the trimmings — ribs, potato salad, corn on the cob. So they were still plenty full when they arrived at Reliant Stadium and learned that their "expensive" tickets included free, all-you-can-eat refreshments all night long.

"You had to pay for alcoholic drinks, but everything else was free — hot dogs, Cokes, nachos, buffalo wings, you name it," Colleen says. "It was a great deal."

If you're interested in a similar deal, Colleen says the seats were on rows 101 to 103 and were "arena floor seats" in the blue section.

Congratulations to **Crystal Johnson** and **Delores Merchant** for being elected to the Sweeny Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. Now they can compete for our loyalty, as they are both selling tickets to the Pride Day Barbecue, scheduled for 4-6 p.m. April 30. The drive-thru will be behind City Hall. Tickets are \$7 each.

Sweeny/West Brazos EMS has two fewer bachelors with the recent weddings of **Rusty McAlvain** and **Bo Kostelnik**. Congratulations to them and their brides.

Rhonda Moran was among new members named to the United Way of Brazoria County Board of Trustees on March 1. The United Way hopes to have more participation from West of the Brazos institutions.

Audrey Bess's 9-year-old grandson, **Neal Kenneth Bess** of San Antonio, was one of four students in his third-grade class who made perfect scores on the TAKS test. He got the good news on March 9, two days before his 9th birthday. Neal's parents are **Sally** and **Nick Bess**.

The Wellness Center welcomes **Debra Hobbs**, a physical therapy assistant student at Wharton County Junior College. For six weeks beginning March 21, Debra will work full time with **Jason McCarey**, P.T. A., to fulfill the clinical requirements of her degree.

U.S. Army Spec. **Lloyd Paige**, 23, son of **Lola Paige**, has been assigned a new job in Iraq. Lloyd now drives a Hummer to transport civilians from unit to unit.

Five people are running for three slots on the Sweeny Hospital District Board of Directors. On May 7, voters will choose from among **Darrell Young**, **Peggy Schurtz**, **Lanny Henderson**, **Drew Jolly** and **Ernelle Orr**. Members of the board serve unpaid — but fun-filled — two-year terms.



New employee? Guess again. This is country singer Gretchen Wilson.

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

— Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965)