

Department Spotlight

As part of a continuing effort to recognize the excellent work accomplished by Tyler employees, a new feature called, Department Spotlight, debuts in this edition of the Tyler Times.

Department Spotlight will highlight department - specific, behind-the-scenes information, which is shared to enhance understanding among departments and promote greater appreciation for the way each department's efforts contribute to the delivery of quality patient care.

In addition to appearing in this newsletter, an expanded version of Department Spotlight will also be an ongoing feature of the recently, redesigned Tyler web site, www.tylerhospital.com.

This month's Department Spotlight shines on the LABORATORY.

TYLER LABORATORY

SERVICES: QUALITY AT WORK

Who hasn't had a general feeling of dread when they need a blood test? It is invasive, and it can HURT! Plus, have you ever had to collect other unmentionable specimens for the lab? How humiliating! For these reasons alone, laboratories often get a bad rap. Also, to some it may seem like hospital laboratory work is just collecting the blood, throwing it on a high-tech instrument, pushing a few buttons, and then waiting for the results to spit out. If it were only that easy!

There are two, primary classifications of staff in our lab: phlebotomists and technologists.

Laboratory

Phlebotomists are typically the individuals that deal directly with patients; so to most people, phlebotomists often are the lab.

Unlike many hospitals that train people off-the-street to be phlebotomists, Tyler's entire phlebotomy staff are graduates of schools for allied medical professionals, and are experienced with all patient age groups.

In addition to a busy in-house phlebotomy schedule, Tyler phlebotomists (and technologists) perform in-home phlebotomy services for patients that are homebound, and unable to travel to the hospital.

Most of Tyler's laboratory technologists (86%) have at least a bachelor's degree, plus, each has completed 12 months of clinical training.

All Tyler technologists are generalists, which means they perform testing in every department of the lab; and all are trained to cover all shifts. This is something the large medical centers are just beginning to train their staff to do.

Without proper specimen collection, and accurate test results, nurses, physicians ... and sometimes other hospital departments, are unable to properly treat patients.

To ensure accurate test results, at least once every 24 hours, for every different test performed in the laboratory, at least two different levels of a material with a known value (known as controls) must be tested as if they were patient specimens. There is a very narrow range into which the results of the controls must fall in order to be acceptable. If the result of the control does not fall within the specified range, the results of patient

testing cannot be reported until the cause of the problem is determined, the problem resolved, the controls acceptable, and the patient tests repeated.

All the testing equipment in Tyler's laboratory utilizes current state-of-the-art technology. The



Barbara Santamour, MT(ASC), is pictured researching the results of a recent lab test.

instruments are sometimes smaller than those used in the larger city hospitals or medical centers where they need to handle larger volumes of specimens, but they utilize exactly the same technology, perform the testing, and report results in the same manner.

Tyler Laboratory staff is thoroughly trained to perform routine maintenance and most equipment repairs.

The equipment is serviced regularly by manufacturers' service representatives to be certain it is functioning properly, and has all the latest updates.

Please be sure to visit the Department Spotlight section of the hospital web site for even more information about Tyler's laboratory.

If you are interested in submitting information about your department for Department Spotlight, please contact the Public Relations Department at extension 301.

NURSES NOTES

Denise Gieski, BSN, MHA
Director of Nursing

The Tyler Times is pleased to introduce a new column, Nursing Notes, written by Denise Gieski, Tyler's director of nursing. This monthly offering is designed to share information and updates on nursing activities and patient safety issues.

Restructuring in the Nursing Department

The Nursing Department, as a whole, is currently undergoing change in the form of restructuring. An integral part of our planning and goal setting process always includes continually improving in the areas of patient safety and quality of care.

The intent of this restructuring is to allow us the opportunity to accomplish activities in two areas: direct patient care and managing the processes and systems that support patient care. In the

past, Nurse Managers have been responsible for both of these areas within their respective departments. We have traditionally been department focused, trying to accomplish many of the same things, but not always together.

We have identified this an area with opportunity for improvement. We needed to find a way to provide a more comprehensive, seamless process to ensure that we are patient-focused, not department focused and that we are able to identify and implement key strategies to continually improve patient care and patient safety.

Restructuring how we do things, and who does them is the current step in our plan of continuous improvement in patient care and patient

safety.

The first phase of the restructuring process involves the OR, Short Stay, Outpatient Chemotherapy and Anesthesia Services.

The Director of Surgical Services, Diane Baker, has responsibility for the management of the processes and systems involving surgical services and outpatient nursing services. The OR Clinical Leader - Peg Rogers - has responsibility for the direct patient care, and daily functions of the OR. The Short Stay Clinical Leader, Jane Murphy, has responsibility for the direct patient care and the daily functions of the Short Stay Unit.

The next phase of the restructuring process will involve the critical care areas : ER, ICU, and MICU. We are currently evaluating Phase One,



Jane Murphy, RN, short stay clinical leader, Diane Baker, RN, director surgical services & Peggy Rogers, RN, OR clinical leader assuming new positions in nursing department.

which is still in the implementation phase, to determine how and when Phase Two will be rolled out and who the key players will be.

The plan for Phase Three is not complete, however, I will keep you updated through this column, as those plans come together.

Keep in mind that we will be continually evaluating these changes as they occur. The critical care restructuring may not occur immediately following Phase One - it will depend on our evaluation, and what other priorities develop in the meantime.

This is an exciting time in the Nursing Department. A great deal of change has already occurred and more is coming!

42nd Annual Antiques and Arts Show October 1

PREVIEW: *October 1, 2004 from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Admission \$10.00 (Good for Saturday Show)*

SHOW: *October 2, 2004 from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Admission \$4.00*
Father Nallin Parish Center, Tunkhannock,

This year's Annual Antiques and Arts Show will feature 17 local antique dealers, a re-upholstery demonstration by Nick's Furniture, along with the Holiday Traditions Shoppe, Nature Niche, Baskets, Antiques and Christmas Quilt Raffles, Country Cupboard, and an all-day Deli.

Two features that were added last year will be reappearing are: **THE TREASURE HUNT**, (an interactive game for a chance to win a prize, and **WHAT'S IT WORTH** (find out the estimated value of your favorite antique). **MEMORIES** (a reprint of the first cookbook done in 1948) will be on sale.

The Committees are busy preparing for this year's Antiques and Arts Show and would like to invite anyone who may be interested in helping out in any of the following areas to join us: **HOLIDAY TRADITIONS** will feature hand painted articles (glass, candles, buckets, ice skates, and tins), hand crocheted and knitted items, hand made wooden toys, ornaments, quilted children's books, aprons and many other traditional holiday items.

This year a special event will be held in the Holiday Traditions Shoppe: a handmade cross-stitched Christmas Quilt will be raffled off.

The committee members have been working on this quilt for over one year, and are very excited about their labor of love. Tickets will soon be on sale in the Kozy Korner for \$1.00 each or six for \$5.00.

If you are interested in helping this committee by doing work at home, or donating supplies or finished items, or helping to sell tickets, please contact Peg Gravell at 833-2572.

The **NATURE NICHE** is looking for help in decorative painting or drying flowers, grasses, berries, etc. for dried arrangements and wreaths. Some items being worked on are birdbaths, hand painted birdhouse gourds, pumpkins, pickle jars, vases, candle holders, flower pots, seashell birdhouses, bouquets, sachets, stamped note cards. If you are interested in helping this committee please call Jill Smith at 996-1105.

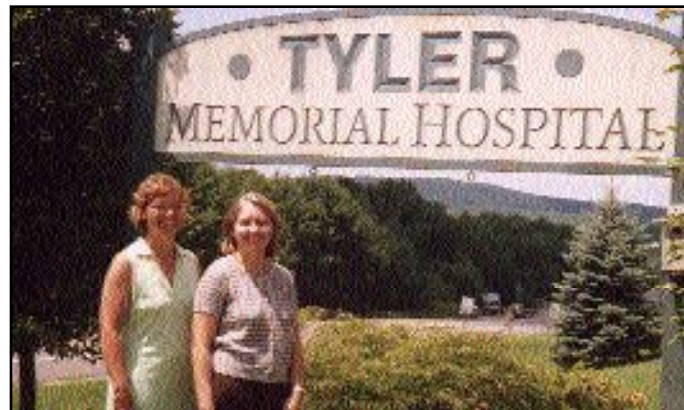
THE ANTIQUE RAFFLE offers three beautiful pieces: a black walnut drop leaf table, Barrister Book Case and a Missionary Granny Rocker. Tickets are on sale at the Kozy Korner for \$1.00 each or six for \$5.00. If you are interested in helping Kathy Ritter or Jackie Davis with ticket sales please contact them at 996-1242.

BASKET RAFFLES are always donated by area businesses, individuals, and departments within the hospital. This year there are 40 baskets being raffled off. Thank YOU for your contribution. If you are interested in helping with basket sales please contact Helen Dewar 996-1105.

COUNTRY CUPBOARD will be making everyone's favorite hard candy and chocolates. If you would like to help please contact Georgia Smith at 936-2391. Baked goods can also be dropped off at Father Nallin Parish Center on Friday, October 1, between 10:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M., and on Saturday, October 2, until noon.

Hostesses are needed to aide the dealers, help in the kitchen and in various departments during the day on Saturday. Please contact Maria Thorne if you are interested 996-1276

We hope you will come and visit the show this year. The committees are working extremely hard and looking forward to a wonderful show! Hope to see you there.



Jill Smith, co-chair and Maria Thorne, chairperson of the Annual Antique Show & Sale- October 1, 2004.

MONEYWISE

Wait for flat-screen TV

High-technology products typically fall in price over time, but flat-screen television sets appear to be stuck. While the prices of computers, cell phones, DVD players and other high-tech gadgets are mainly influenced by the cost of the computer chip they use, flat-screen TV prices are driven by the cost of making the complex screens. Right now there aren't enough plants to keep up with demand.

There could be a ray of sunshine in the future, however. Executives who market LCD sets at Samsung Electronics predict that prices will begin to fall by year's end.

Low-risk places to park emergency monies

Financial planners quoted in Readers Digest suggest placing your just-in-case money in a series of short-term CDs that continuously come due. This provides a higher rate of return without tying up a lot of money and gives the option of using it when needed, penalty free.

If you have \$10,000 to invest, put \$2,500 in a one-year CD in September, then \$2,500 in a one-year in December and March. You'll have \$2,500 plus interest coming in every three months. You can roll it into new CDs or invest more each time it matures.

To shop for CDs, check with you bank or Bank rate.com which lists the best CD rates from banks nationwide. There are no fees when you buy a CD. The penalty for removing money prior to maturity can be up to six months interest.

Familiar face. New Responsibilities

Dawn Hauser, a medical technologist, who has been working part-time in the Tyler laboratory for the past few years, has recently added Communications Specialist to her responsibilities at Tyler.

Dawn was recently hired to work in the Tyler Public Relations Department, with her primary responsibility being the maintenance of the Tyler website: www.tylerhospital.com. (see cover story)

Over the past few months, Dawn has given the website a thorough overhaul, creating a softer, more user-friendly site. "Our website has been very successful, but it was time for a new look," explained Gladys Bernet, director of public relations. "Dawn is a great addition to our communications area."

Dawn earned a BA in Biology/Medical Technology at Lycoming College; and completed a one year clinical internship at Divine Providence Hospital.

Prior to her association with Tyler in 2001, Dawn worked for 13 years as a medical technologist, and later as an instructor in her field. In 1996 Dawn earned an MS in Instructional Technology.

More recently Dawn has worked for several health-related companies designing and developing computer/internet-based training. She also operated her own business, M.E.T.A. Media, Inc., where she designed and developed various web/computer-based communications. While Dawn's primary experience has been in the healthcare field, she has also performed both consulting and development services for a variety of concerns. It has long been her desire to use her combined talents in a small hospital setting.

Dawn may be reached at extension 465.