

Speaking of Safety

Braking versus downshifting

When going down a long hill in a car with an automatic transmission, should you brake or downshift to let the transmission slow the car?

Manually shifting to a lower gear during a long descent makes sense. It allows the engine's resistance to control the car's speed. That's true on both automatic and manual transmissions.

Some pickup trucks and trucks used for towing now have automatic transmissions with "logic" that sense hilly terrain. They hold the car in a lower gear for longer periods.

Don't downshift unless you are going down a long steep hill. Frequent manual downshifting can increase automatic transmission wear.

While a brake job costs about \$300, transmission repairs can cost \$1,000 or more.

Keep batteries from kids, pets

Little batteries look harmless enough. If a toddler puts one in his mouth, however, it could cause a choking or serious burns if the battery chemical has leaked out.

Remember that dogs could think a discarded battery is a toy. If they bite the battery, their mouths, tongues, and gastrointestinal tracts could be burned.

Keep an eye on bicycles

Warmer weather means more people are riding their bikes to work. Here are a few tips for drivers on how to share the road:

* Respect bike paths. Don't use them as extra roadway.

* Where there are no bike paths, remember that a human life is at stake as you pass a rider. Don't pass too close or too fast.

Bug of the Month



Microbe of the Month
By Roger P. Freeman, DDS

They don't call me a special pathogen for nothing, folks. I figure if they had a prison for pathogens, I'd be the really ugly one in solitary ... indeed, the one who put the capital "D" in deadly. These days I'm being called an "emerging" pathogen, like I'm some kind of newbie, a mere RNA rookie. Someday they'll probably discover I've been snoozing and scorching for millenniums, just a little crowd-averse. Who invited you tourists to the rain forest, anyway?

Since Dr. Murphy's pic immortalized my first close-up in 1976, my "crook"-ed body has come to symbolize the ultimate biohazard. You want high profile terror, you get me. But nyah nyah, you still can't ID who or what provides my Web hosting in spite of the usual bat-advocates, rodent reservoirians and bird buglers.

I'm a tough one to get your arms around, breaking-out unannounced, forgoing incubation, moving about via body fluids and nasty needles, crashing the locals and especially their healthcare workers. Some of us can do the aerosol thing, too. WHO (not who) figures I've killed about 1K to date, but there you go ... I'm so bad I seem to burn myself out before I can get too far, so far.

Kathy Ritter, RN, *infection control manager*

I don't get much love, always being handled by big bullies wearing puffy "containment" leisure suits in some BSL 4 basement. Definitely a mother-in-law room, upgrades requested. I was a cause celebre in '94 thanks to the best seller, *The Hot Zone*, a colorful account of my talents, especially if you're into bleed-outs and orificio multiplexium. HZ described my little tete-tete with the folks in Reston, Va., USAMRIID and Ft. Detrick, Md. Did I hear some lab monkeys asking for the ventilation and A/C to be turned down? My handlers got tad testy about the what-ifs, i.e., what-if the Reston strain had been able to jump species, or, what-if the Zaire strain could be spread by aerosol. Not to mention those annoying reports of "weaponizing" in the former Soviet Union ...

Name my "emerging" filoviral self and decipher for me the world's most confusing acronym, USAMRIID.

Roger P. Freeman, DDS, is a dental infection control consultant and president of Infectious Awareableness.

The answer to last month **Bug of the Month** was rhinovirus and the common cold. Congratulations to Gayle Gipson, Tom Evans and Carol Jonas, all of whom had the correct answer.

If you think you might have the correct answer to this month's Bug of the Month please call Kathy at ext. 242. Leave a message if I'm not in. You too could be the winner of a fabulous prize. Thanks for playing.

TYLER Tim

A publication for the employees of Tyler Memorial Hospital

April 2005



Tyler welcomes new anesthesiologist

Diane Baker, RN, director surgical services and Diana Norieka, director medical staff services, welcome new Chief of Anesthesia, Charles Mancuso, MD. Dr. Mancuso comes to us from Maimonides Medical Center, Brooklyn, New York. Dr. Mancuso is very appreciative of the warm welcome given him the Tyler medical staff and employees. He and his wife, Luran, live in Rush.

What did we learn?

No matter where your sympathies are in the, now completed, drama surrounding the life, dying and death of Terri Schiavo, at the core of the struggle is the fact that Mrs. Schiavo did not have an advance directive to guide her family

Perhaps the good that will come from this national anguish is that a public discussion of these issues pushed, even Michael Jackson, off the front pages for a few weeks.

The fact that life support is withdrawn daily from patients is undisputed. What makes this case unique is the

inability of the family to agree on whether the withdrawal, in this case, was the correct course of action.

As a 26 year-old, Mrs. Schiavo, like most people her age, wasn't thinking about illness and death. She was busy just living her life.

But tragedy did strike, and an advance directive might have spared her husband and family the burden of making this decision without her.

It is never too early, to plan for the unthinkable. Every patient admitted to Tyler is asked about an advance directive. (see *Schiavo* on page 4)

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Employee of Year Nominees for 2004

Congratulations to the employees nominated for 2004 Employee of the Year. Winner will be announced at the Awards Dinner on April 22 at the Carriage Inn.
Mary Robbins, Business Office
Ann Fisk -Ware, Laboratory
Lisa Townsend, Imaging

Barb Houck, RN, ED
Sharon Kintner, Business Office
Vicki Ross, IT
June Kukuchka, RN
Cardiac Rehab
Michael Gaylord, Purchasing
Paula Moeller, HIM
Debra White, Laboratory

Dear Tyler

The following two letters were sent to the Nursing Department.

February 23, 2005

Dear Caring Ones,

This is long overdue, but I thanked God many times for the loving care and patience I received from each one of you, each time we met.

I couldn't believe that after gall bladder surgery, I never had any pain. Thank the Lord! Thanks for everything.

Sincerely,

Dear Mrs. Gieski,

Just a short note to say thank you for the excellent nursing care my son received while at your hospital. The RNs in the Emergency Department and on the floor were knowledgeable and polite. They are a credit to your institution.

Sincerely,

This letter sent to the Tyler Foundation, was accompanied by a check for \$1,000.

To Tyler memorial Hospital, this donation is on behalf of the fabulous nursing care received by my wife, while a patient. these nurses are to be commended for their dedication to their profession.

Sincerely

Please forward your letters of appreciation to the Public Relations Department. Names are withheld to protect patient privacy, and letters may be edited for space and clarity.

Education Update

CPR Quiz and Demo on April 7, starting at 12:30 PM and at half hour intervals ending at 3 PM. Call to reserve your spot.

Next CPR Class on May 12.

Disaster Preparedness Classes (*various times*)

May 3, 4, 5 & 6.

Everyone should have completed the Safety Meet and HIPAA Security. If you have not completed these programs and are having trouble getting computer time, please call Gayle at 281.

New test for Alzheimer's

The inability to identify 10 everyday smells, from smoke to soap, can be used to predict Alzheimer's disease. The smell test is as effective at diagnosis as a memory test and better than a brain scan. Doctors at Columbia Presbyterian Medical center say scientists have long known that the brain's smell center is hard-hit by Alzheimer's.

The inability to identify smoke tops the list in the test, followed by menthol, leather, lilac, pineapple, soap, strawberry, natural gas, lemon, and clove.

Customer Service Word Find

Thank you to Gayle Gipson, RN, education manager for creating this word find to help us brush-up on our customer service skills. How many can you find? If you have an idea for a puzzle, call Gayle @ 281 with your suggestion. Good luck!

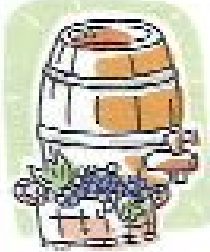
Customer Service

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d n m s r p p y e v k u p k t
q o r t a i t l x c m r e h y
r i l l f t d b a y o y o f k
e t w a f n i b z b d u v h n
l s k t a x d s l q g q l e a
a e l h n e f e f h f x e u r
t u o e e i m e t a o k t p c
i q y f a o a f i d c m r s j
o u a k l r u l r m r t w e c
n p l e h l n u p m p a i t e
s g t s u r v e y m h r w o n
h h y e c i v r e s o f o e n
i e l b a n o s a e r c e v r
p g c u s t o m e r k d a c e
l p o n q x c r z o s h t w y
    
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complaint
cranky
customer
feedback
handle
help
improve
learn
loyalty
needs
problem
question

reasonable
relationship
reward
satisfaction
service
survey
thoughtful
upset



May 6th Wine Tour Reservations Due

Time is running out for reserving your spot on Tyler Memorial Hospital's Wine Tour. Don't miss out on the opportunity to explore the wine country on Seneca Lake, NY. On Friday, May 6th, we will be touring the lake with planned visits to Fox Run Vineyards, Anthony Road Wine Company, Prejean Winery, Four Chimneys Farm Winery, Woodbury Vineyards & Ashley Lynn Winery. The day will include lunch and a wine-making tour. Reservations and payment are due by April 15th.

Limited seats are still available - contact Pamela Shields at 996-1152 for reservations.

Wine Tour

Friday, May 6th

\$35.00 per person

(includes: transportation, snacks, lunch, wine-making tour and all testing fees)

Remember the
**INCOME TAX
FILING
DEADLINE**



April 15, 2005

Volunteer Service Stats

Volunteer Assignments

Information Desk
 Patient Transport
 Courier/Public Relations
 Caring Companion (O.R. waiting room)
 Menu Assistant
 Clerk
 Kozy Korner
 Volunteer Office (customer satisfaction surveys)
 Chaplaincy / Teddy Bear Makers
 Store Room
 Medical Records/H.I.M.
 Mail Room
 Maintenance

Average Monthly Statistics for Tyler Volunteers

959 charts prepared
 \$750 gross per day (average)
 10,000 copies made
 93 patients transported
 316 specimens transported (blood, urine, etc.)
 173 x-rays transported
 122 blue identification cards
 43 flowers delivered
 86 mail & paperwork items delivered
 500 paperwork duties (marking 'x' on documents for signature)
 250 chaplaincy visits
 20 bears delivered (to newborns and sick children)
 2 boxes enveloped stuffed

Teddy is Star at Film Debut



Teddy Tyler is surrounded by new friends from the second-grade class of Roslund Elementary School where the film, "Teddy Goes to Tyler" was recently debuted. The film was produced by the Tunkhannock High School Drama Club. (Photo courtesy Nathan Milner, Wyoming Press Examiner.)

Teddy, the long-time Tyler symbol of friendship, made a visit to Roslund Elementary School last month.

The occasion was the debut of "Teddy Goes to Tyler," a short film produced by the Tyler Volunteer Department in conjunction with the Tunkhannock High School Drama Club.

According to Maria Thorne, volunteer director, the film was developed to help children feel more comfortable about receiving care at the hospital.

Using only a coloring book detailing a trip made by Teddy to Tyler, the students developed the script, shot and edited the film.

The film depicts Teddy ignoring his parents' cautions about climbing trees, and of course, having a little mishap.

The film chronicles Teddy's care, which begins with the Tunkhannock Ambulance Squad's on-site evaluation of his injury, followed by a trip in the ambulance

to Tyler. In the emergency department Teddy meets doctors, nurses and technicians, who care for him. After x-rays and a leg cast, Teddy is discharged to his parents.

After the film, the second-graders talked with Maria about the film and what the children had learned.

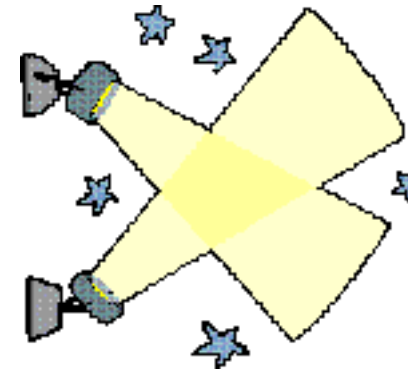
"I think the kids really have a better understanding of the hospital, and won't be so anxious if they need to visit," she explained.

The film is a box office hit with requests for viewings already coming in. "We have been doing tours of the hospital with Teddy for decades now," Maria said. "This is another opportunity to reach even more children in our community."

Maria distributed bags to each child filled with Tyler gifts and information on safety issues.

Special thanks goes to Teddy, aka Holly Greene, HIM.

To schedule a tour or view the film, please contact Maria at 276.



VOLUNTEER SERVICES



Tyler volunteers, like the Wednesday group above, are being honored on April 18, National Volunteer Day. L-R: Seated, Diane Sheldon, Director, Maria Thorne, June Wood, Jill Jones, Ellie Roberts, Midge Keeble and Marion Naylor

Tyler has a proud history of volunteerism. It was, in fact, volunteers who spearheaded the creation of Tyler almost 60 years ago.

Have you ever wondered how some of the day-to-day Tyler tasks get done, or for that matter, who does them?

Jobs we all take for granted, such as transporting patients, information and materials between departments, copying documents, collating charts, mail sorting. These are all crucial assignments performed every day by our volunteers. What would we do without our volunteers?

Today, Tyler volunteers are

involved in all aspects of the hospital's services. There are over 100 active, adult volunteers, that log an average of 15,000 - 16,000 hours of service each year. Even more astounding is that the average age of our volunteers is between 75 and 80 years young.

In addition to the adult volunteer program, Tyler also has a summer Junior Volunteer program, which offers middle and

high school students an opportunity to serve, learn, and get a taste of medical careers.

According to Maria Thorne, director of volunteers and a certified administrator of volunteer services, it takes a special person to become a volunteer. "I love being around our volunteers and their enthusiasm; they just love what they are doing, and it fills me with a tremendous amount of respect and admiration," she commented.

One of the biggest challenges Maria faces is recruiting younger volunteers. The need for healthcare professionals

is growing because as Baby- Boomers age, their need for medical care increases. Maria thinks that hospitals need to take a more proactive approach in encouraging young people to pursue the healthcare industry. "They are our future. If we don't get them involved now, there may be little hope for the future of healthcare in general," Maria explained.

Tyler volunteers, like Kozy Korner veteran, Betty Platt, Meshoppen Township and Front Desk volunteer, Anne Shaefer, Tunkhannock Township, give selflessly of themselves every day.

"I really like to help people and meet new people," Anne explained. "You feel like you're doing something good and helping others a little when you volunteer." Betty echoed those feelings. "I like taking care of people," Betty explained. I took care of my husband and sister before they died. Then a little later, I started volunteering to help others," she said. A 10-year volunteer for orthopedics, Betty now works regularly in the Kozy Korner.

According to Peg Gravell, Tyler volunteer since 1995, "One of the greatest pleasures of being a volunteer is the "thank you" you get for doing something you love, especially when you are not expecting it," she said.

National Volunteer Week is April 17 - 23, with April 18 designated as National Hospital Volunteer Day. Take time to show your appreciation to the wonderful Tyler volunteers.

(See related volunteer story on page six.)

Nurses' Notes

Denise Gieski
Director of Nursing

Environmental Rounds

Based on findings from the recent DOH survey, a group of people representing the Patient Safety Committee and the Health and Safety Committee, have formed the Environmental Rounds Group (ERG). The ERG will be conducting unannounced departmental surveys to look at infection control and safety issues. Rounds will be conducted twice per month.

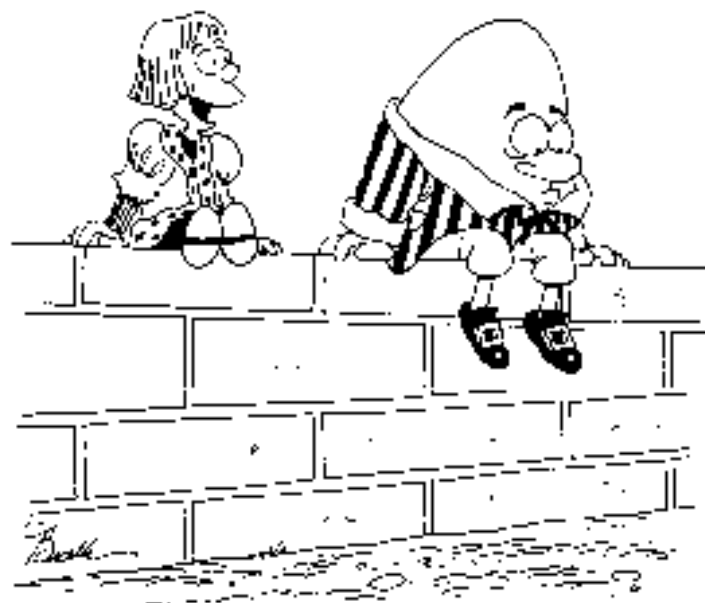
Some of the things we will be looking at in all departments include:

- * appropriate storage of items;
- * cleanliness;
- * electrical outlets, switches and equipment;
- * food only in designated areas; hand towel dispensers;
- * appropriate hand washing.

In clinical departments, we will also look at things like:

- * isolation patients;
- * soiled linen;
- * needles, syringes and medications secured;
- * temperature checks in refrigerators;
- * medical waste.

If the department manager is available when the rounds are being conducted, they are invited to participate. Remember, these are unannounced visits, just like the follow-up DOH survey will be. Results of these rounds will be forwarded to the Patient Safety Committee and the Health and Safety Committee, as appropriate.



"OSHA rules, SMOSHA rules! What could possibly go wrong?"

(Schiavo cont'd from page one)

If the patient has an advance directive, it is noted on the chart. If not, the patient is offered the opportunity to complete one.

What should you know about advance directives?

The most important thing to know, is that a living will is only activated in the event that you become terminally ill or incapacitated to the extent that you cannot speak for yourself - and, (*and this is a big and*), your doctor confirms that you are not expected to survive.

This distinction is very important. Some people believe that once an advance directive is completed, if an individual is struck by a car, he or she may not be aggressively treated. This is incorrect.

Copies of the form given to Tyler patients, as well as a brochure explaining advance directives are available through the public relations office. Some websites, such as Medlawplus.com, sell forms.

Experts advise that a lawyer be consulted when preparing living wills to make sure the document, like the one distributed by Tyler, is prepared according to Pennsylvania law. Wherever you get the form, it needs to be signed by two witnesses.

After completing the document, make copies and share with your physician and family. It is wise to discuss your wishes with your doctor to be sure she agrees with your choices, and is willing to carry out your wishes. The same is true for family members.

A medical power of attorney, which is the second part of an advance directive, allows you to designate someone to act for you even before you reach the end-of-life stage. For instance, your agent could have access to your medical records, pay your medical bills or talk to your doctors if you have Alzheimer's or another debilitating disease.

A medical power of attorney is also another safeguard in the event that there is a disagreement among family members.

The following were honored through the *Caught in the Act* program for March:

Rosanne Purdy
Debra White
Linda Greene
Bonnie Jennings
Ed McGowan
Linda Sabatelle *
Jennifer Very
Sharon Cavallo
Robin Pascoe
Carol Hatton
Jim Williams

Denotes winner of monthly gift certificate.

Joint Commission Corner

Brenna Evans, RN

Everyone should be signed up for the Joint Commission Education Days. Sign up is required so, if you are unsure of when you are attending, please check with your Department Manager.

The morning session runs from 7:30 AM to 11:30AM, and the afternoon sessions runs from 12:30 PM to 4:30 PM. We need to start on schedule so please be prompt. Also remember the Blue Room tends to get warm so dress appropriately.

Our application for survey has been completed and accepted. Right now we only know that the survey will be between the middle of May and the middle of August. However, they will notify us thirty days in advance. As we are notified we will spread the good news!

A Minute with Milligan

Spring is here, or is it?

Some of the signs are that the red wing black bird, the robin and the killdeer all have returned once again; but the snow and cold seem to tell another story.

Days will come and go and we will see the slow growth of the grass and early flowers and the warming of

days. One has to wonder sometimes about the complexity of it all occurring: such as how does the earth change the tilt of its direction in order to allow spring to occur once again?

Then there is the miracle in the growth of flowers and the timing of these events at just the right moment. This all points to a supreme authority of the universe who has created this wonderful event for all of us to see.

As one looks to our own organization, it becomes remarkably clear that like the complexity of nature, hospitals are some of the most complex organizations in existence.

Just thinking about the efforts of one patient being admitted, the carrying out of functions by a wide variety of staff each carrying out a function of patient care, testing, writing, directing activities all in the process of assisting in the diagnosis, treatment, and final outcome.

Often I am amazed at how efficient



Carol Hatton, laboratory technologist is congratulated by Tyler President, William Mulligan, for helping to identify Malaria in a patient. April is

we are in dealing with and providing these services to a multitude of individuals - all at the same time and without a great deal of fuss and confusion.

This past week I received a call from Dr. Rodger Sayre advising me that once again one of our own staff members should be recognized for being outstanding.

It seems that Dr. Sayre had a patient in the hospital that exhibited some unusual symptoms. Thanks to the efforts of Carol Hatton, from the lab, who identified that the patient had malaria, the good doctor was able to appropriately treat the patient.

Many thanks on behalf of Dr. Sayer and his patient to Carol for an outstanding job and service.

We need to acknowledge that everyone in the organization deserves recognition and thanks for their efforts.

It is a time for rebirth as Easter is honored and the time for spring.