

Too Late

If you have a tender message, or a loving word to say,
Do not wait till you forget it,
But whisper it today.

The tender word unspoken,
The letter never sent,
The long forgotten messages,
The wealth of love unspent.

For these some hearts are breaking,
For these some loved ones wait:
So show them that you care for them
Before it is too late.

Author unknown
submitted by Karen Welch, PT

Bug of the Month



Microbe of the Month
By Roger P. Freeman, DDS

HICPAC/SHEA Guidelines Debate

Gazoontite! Der scozzle drippen ze grossen. OK, so I'm common. Talk about your pathogen profiling! I also happen to be the most studied bug in bugdom and about the only virus that's on the job, year 'round, worldwide ... a solid epidemic ethic. Remember that when your throat is scratchy, eyes are watering, head is pounding, nose is Rudolph red and you're launching aerial scuds toward your nearest and dearest. Not to mention the outpouring of -- no, not sympathy -- let's just call it "sub nares discharge of an olfactory kind." (Your kids would call it something else, probably not rhinorrhea.)

I'm strictly a humanitarian, one of 100-plus viral cousins known to cause my common-ness. A billion cases every year; \$5 billion in o/c drugs; 22 million lost school days; 50 million days of "reduced activity," and these are just U.S. stats. Imagine my big picture numbers! I may not be front page in Mortality News, but I'm huge on the morbidity circuit. I get around via aerial ah-choo-choo, direct ickos and sometimes on that keyboard, telephone or Playskool set. I'm fond of the chronologically challenged, especially the less than fives.

I hang (so to speak) just north of the epiglottis, frequently taking Route Sicksty-Sicks from eyeballs

Kathy Ritter, RN, *infection control manager*

to lacrimal duct to nasal passage, where I generate the highest concentration of PIM (especially that cute little schlumpen der nosen.) Grandma would like you to believe wearing your coat and galoshes, eating your veggies and exercising will spare you my gifts. Probably not, although some say stress reduction may help. Stress in 5-year-olds?

Prevention? You know the drill, those old saws, handwashing and broken COT. Treatment? Load up on PDR pals for some relief; or ignore me if you can. Either way, I gotcha for a week to 10 days. Linus (the one with the PhD) believed a pound or so of vitamin C daily would help the noseland security. Show me.

For lifetime immunity or a real nice gift, whichever you are closest to seeing in your lifetime, name me and my most common condition.

*Congrats to Gayle Gipson, Annette Kennedy and Kim Byrnes for answering last month's Bug of the Month correctly. The answer was *heliobacter pylori* and *peptic ulcers*. That one was tough so we have an easy one this month. Call Kathy Ritter at ext. 242 if you think you can ID this month's Bug. Good luck to all.*

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

TYLER *Times*

A publication for the employees of Tyler Memorial Hospital

March 2005

Laughing all the way

Remembering Kay Wilson



Kay hated soppy sentiment. She was a person who didn't enjoy being hugged, but in contrast, touched the hearts and funny bone of everyone who knew her.

To those of us who loved Kay, and there are lots of us, Kay was a crazy bundle of silliness and sincerity. She loved to laugh - and relished even more, making you laugh. "I think that laugh is the thing I will miss most about Kay," recalled Denise Gieski, director of nursing. "I'll miss her wacky sense of humor and the outrageous stories. I think the way I'm going to get through these next couple months is to just pretend that she and Harry are in Florida, as goofy as that sounds," she said.

Through teary eyes, Brenna Evans, quality manager, and Kay's boss for the last few years, said: "Kay was a good employee, but a much better friend." Brenna remembers with gratitude how kind Kay was when Brenna was ill. "You could always count on her, in and out of the hospital. She watched my kids and brought me dinner, when I was sick. I'll miss her tremendously."

The day following Kay's death a group of her friends shared 'Kay stories' together. The weeping dissolved into laughter as each person shared a sweet memory.

The stories are familiar now and we gather them around us as protection from the raw pain of her death. "Remember when she stole your flowers? Remember how she spilled her tea all over the nurses' station every morning? How about the time she kidnapped the Teddy Bear and held it for ransom? How about the purple fuzzy lingerie... the trips, the garage sales, the endless lunch rituals, the tomatoes, the pug party, the wait every year for the cherries and the blueberries?"

No one was safe. She harassed the doctors, needled the nurses, teased the volunteers and feared no one. She lived life courageously by using up every second.

When my husband barely survived a heart attack and emergency surgery, she buzzed around me like a bee trying to help. She called, brought food, encouraged me, listened to my fears and made me laugh when I thought all I had left were tears. She was, in short, my friend, for which I will always be grateful.

It's impossible to imagine a world without Kay in it, and even those who she counted as new friends are feeling the loss. "As a new employee, Kay made me feel so welcome," recalled Cindy Eyt, social worker. "She made the transition so much easier for me."

Kay believed that all she really needed to be happy was her ever-patient husband, Harry and her beloved son, Woody. Such love surely can transcend even death. Thanks Kay, we'll miss you.
Gladys Bernet

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Employee of the Year and Annual Awards Dinner



Jim Williams, Tyler 2003 Employee of the Year is congratulated by William Milligan, president/CEO at the Employee Awards Dinner last year.

It's that time of the year when Tyler selects the outstanding employee of the year. To be eligible for nomination, the individual must have been an employee of Tyler for at least one year. Only non-managerial employees are eligible. Employees may nominate as many individuals as desired.

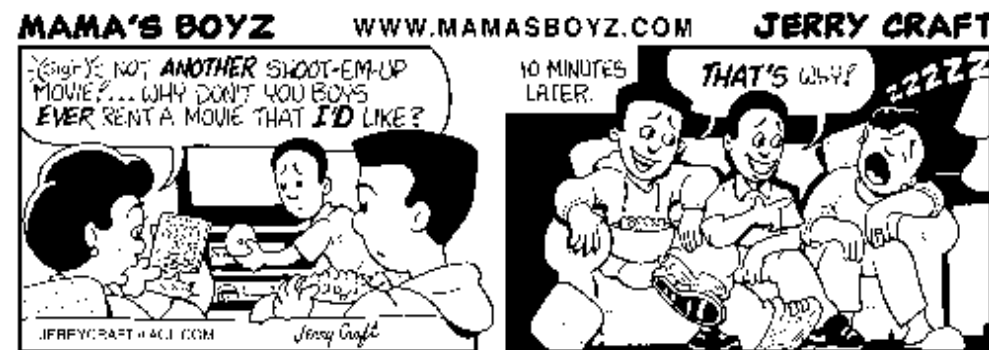
Ballots were distributed with the last paychecks. Please fill out the form and return to the Education Office before March 18. If you need a form, please call the public relations' office at 301.

The Customer Service Committee

will review the nominations and the winner will be announced at the Employee Recognition Dinner on April 22 at the Carriage Inn.

Social hour begins at 6:00 PM with dinner at 6:30 PM. Awards program begins at 7:30 PM. There will be drawings for prizes throughout the evening; music and dancing will follow the awards ceremony.

Awardees are free; non-awardees pay \$12. To make a reservation, please call Nancy Baldwin, accounting at ext. 117. Deadline for reservations is April 14. All employees are encouraged to attend.



Talking to someone with Alzheimer's disease

It can be difficult to know how to communicate effectively with a parent or relative who has Alzheimer's disease. Here's some advice from experts quoted in the Harvard Health Letter:

- * Don't shout. Hearing is not the problem. Speak in a calm, warm tone of voice.

- * Include the person in conversation whenever possible. People in the early stages of the disease complain that others talk about them as if they aren't there.

- * Use simple words and avoid too many pronouns: He, she. Use names instead.

- * Use leading statements rather than open-ended questions. Ask if he would like a cup of coffee, for example, instead of asking what he would like to drink.

- * Make eye contact, touch, and be conscious of your body language. Nonverbal cues become increasingly important as the disease progresses.

- * Say things that express positive emotions. As you leave, for example, say you enjoyed the visit so much.

- * Make the most of the last word. Sufferers often latch on to the last word in a statement, probably because it's the easiest to remember. Ask which he wants to wear, red or blue. He will say "blue." It makes him feel as though he has decided for himself.

- * Don't make him wait. A shortened attention span can make waiting even a few minutes a trying time. Often problems with grooming or eating are the result of waiting for a caregiver to get organized, not the activity itself.

Please welcome the following new employees:

Sherman, Karen
Lab (student)

Cortright, Michele
Med/Surg LPN

Yatonsky, Joan
OR RN

Putnam, Michael
MICU

Sturgis, Barbara
HIMS

James, Jennie
Med/Surg Tech

Renzi, Nina
Med/Surg RN

Robets, Julie
Dietary Aide

Hardy, Michele
HIMS

Tyler, Justin
MICU

Welliver, Sarah
OB RN

Banker, Oradell
OB RN

Bowman, Dale
Short Stay

Spring Break

L M Y K C U T N E K A A R
 C L H P R I N C E T O N M
 L W A S H I N G T O N O S
 U H N H F L O R I D A Z I
 A S C I N C I N N A T I O
 P T S E R O F E K A W R N
 E A T C T V T T I P B A I
 D N A N A A L E A N A N L
 N F T E L L I V S I U O L
 A O E D A P B G Y S S T I
 L R T I B A R O R N A Y S
 Y D A V A R E N A O X A A
 R U T O M A D Z C C E D S
 A K S R A I N A U S T G N
 M E K P D S A G S I N E A
 N N O C U O V A E W S S K

Alabama
Arizona
Cincinnati
Dayton
DePaul
Duke
Florida
Georgia Tech
Gonzaga
Illinois
Kansas

Kentucky
Louisville
Maryland
NC State
OK State
Pitt
Princeton
Providence
Seton Hall
Stanford
Syracuse

Texas
UAB
UConn
Valparaiso
Vanderbilt
Wake Forest
Washington
Wisconsin

Leftover letters make a hidden phrase

Thanks For Your Help

The Public Relations department is always on the lookout for new and better ways to improve the flow of information to employees and the community.

In today's digital age, many people feel that the most efficient way to communicate is the Internet. In an effort to discover if sharing information through our website was something that employees and the community would utilize, we asked for your help - and as usual, you responded. Thank you.

Employees were asked to visit the hospital website, www.tylerhospital.com and complete a survey regarding use of the Internet. Of the almost 50 responses, most were very much in favor of utilizing the Internet for this type of information.

Other good ideas were offered, such as using the secured employee section of the website to store and access hospital policies.

There are many wonderful and exciting things that can be shared using our website. Some of the proposals include an online community newsletter, an online calendar of hospital meetings, classes and events, expanding the variety of mandatory education programs available on the website, etc.

We are always open to your ideas and enjoy hearing from you.

The winner of the \$25 Fireplace Gift Certificate was Megan Murray from OccuCARE. Congratulations Megan!

Nutrition & Food Service Stats

* 18 employees, including manager and dietician

* eight kitchen & cafeteria workers each day.

* Coverage from 5:30 AM until 7:00 PM.

2004 Statistics

* Average 100 nutritional assessments each month

* 23,015 patient trays

* 623 guest trays

* 2,515 volunteers

* 250 employee meals served per day

Costs

* \$12,400.77 (supplying kitchens on Tyler, ICU, SS, ER, and OB)

* 3,567 sodas for kitchens

* Net cost per meal \$6.32 per person (inpatient and employee)

* Guest trays available for \$3.00

* Free breakfast tray for parent/guardian staying with child

The Right Way to Lift

Back injuries are the most common workplace injury. Approximately 25 percent of all on-the-job accidents reported each year involve back injuries and usually happen when employees are lifting something incorrectly. The following tips can help you lift safely:

Lift, push, and pull with your legs, not your arms or back. Bend at your knees, not at your waist, to help you keep your center of balance.

Avoid lifting higher than your shoulder height. Use a step stool or ladder to move objects at these heights.

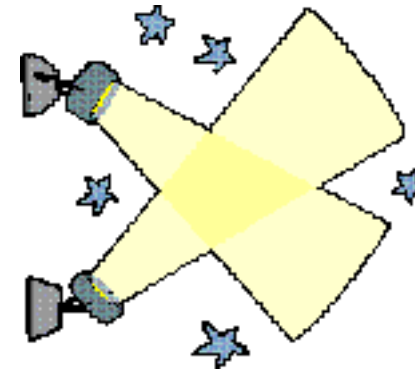
Use a mechanical aid such as a dolly, hand truck or forklift when you need to move heavy or bulky objects.

Turn with your feet, not your hips or shoulders. Reason: Twisting can overload your spine and lead to serious injury.

Carry heavy objects close to the body and avoid carrying them in one hand. Avoid a long reach to pick up an object.

Back injuries can be debilitating. Stay on the safe side and lift correctly.

(Sources: *The National Ag Safety Database, University of Maryland*)



Detective, counselor, quality control manager, production worker, chief cook and bottle washer. What one department at Tyler performs all of these functions? Believe it or not, it's Nutrition and Food Services. This month, our spotlight shines on this hard working, sometimes unrecognized department.

Food. We need it to sustain our bodies, and we crave it to satisfy many underlying needs and desires. It's something we all take for granted, and it is the soul focus of the Nutrition and Food Services (NFS) department.

In addition to preparing three meals each day for inpatients, NFS is responsible for preparing guest trays for loved ones visiting our patients, trays that are ordered between meals, setting up and preparing food for special hospital functions, stocking inpatient unit kitchens, preparing patient snacks, and serving roughly 250 employee meals each day.

According to Sherry Sprague, DTR, nutrition manager, her employees make her job easier. "They are very good at what they do and work together really well to get the job done," she said.

Menus must be checked nutritionally and for portion sizes. If a patient is on a strict diet and orders either too much or too little food, or orders foods that are not permitted for their diet plan, NFS employees are responsible for catching those errors and making modifications.

NUTRITION & FOOD SERVICE

Cleaning up after a meal is often the worst part, so imagine cleaning up after more than 300 people each day!

There are also sanitation procedures that must be done on a routine basis, such as the thorough cleansing of the hot food wells, soaking cutting boards, and vent cleaning.

There is much more to this department than the employee cafeteria. Some employees have voiced complaints over slow-moving cafeteria lines, or that sometimes one person is both serving hot foods and operating the cash register. But, according to Sherry, there are days when there is not enough staff to take care of the patients and the cafeteria.

Carla Morgese, RD, LDN is the clinical dietician for the department. Carla is responsible for assessing the nutritional needs of each patient, and makes recommendations for a wide range of needs, diagnoses, and age groups.

Nutritional assessments must be charted as part of each patient's medical record. Close monitoring of patient weight status and lab results help Carla determine whether a patient is malnourished. If a patient isn't eating, she



Viola Strohl, nutrition & food service, helps prepare one of the 300 plus meals that are served from the Tyler kitchen every day.

recommends alternatives.

"Patients are not here because they want to be. They're sick," Carla commented. "If I can help brighten their day even a little, then I've made a difference," she added.

Food preparation and storage must constantly be monitored and documented. Foods are dated when opened, portioned, and prepared, and food temperatures are closely observed. Meal temperatures are closely monitored, both during the cooking process and as they are being served, to keep them out of the danger zone.

March is Nutrition Month and the department is planning specials every Wednesday. March 2: Seafood salad pita with soup; March 9: Spinach salad and whole wheat roll; March 16: Pizza and small salad; March 23: Chef salad with breadstick; March 30: Tuna salad on hard roll with fresh fruit.

Nurses' Notes

Denise Gieski
Director of Nursing

Update regarding SBN

HAP has recently been in touch with the State Board of Nursing concerning when nurses with a license expiration date of April 30, 2005 might expect to receive license renewal information. Board staff has indicated that nurses should start to receive their renewal notices by no later than February 24.

Remember, you will not be receiving the standard paper application renewal form, but instead information about how to renew the license online. So, you can start looking for the license renewal information on or around February 24, 2004.

I would like to encourage nursing staff to renew online. It will ensure faster processing of the renewals and also free up time for the Board to begin dealing with new graduate temporary practice permit applications this spring.

Also, please remember that if you have moved or changed addresses you need to communicate that information to the Board at least 90 days before your license expiration if that is possible. It is also extremely important to get the disportion of your license to Dorene as soon as you receive it.

ALSO: Congratulations to Ann-Marie Smith who was named to the President's List for superior academic achievement at Luzerne County Community College.

Education News

Thanks to those staff members who helped in the return of the missing Education Tapes. Rewards were given to Lisa Townsend (X-Ray) & Mary Sue Kenny (ER). Thanks.

CPR Classes: April 7, May 12, June 9. Times vary. Please Call Gayle at ext. 281 to schedule.

United Way Raffle

Winners of the raffle for contributions to the United Way are: Portable DVD, *Veronica Bonczek* 25 inch Sanyo TV, *Judy Tylutki* DVD/VCR Combo, *Worthy Kiefer* Vivitar Digital Camera, *Ron Coolbaugh*

Safety "MEET" will be out March 1, 2005.

Joint Commission Corner

It's that time again! We are due for our next Joint Commission Survey this July.

As we did in preparation for our last survey, we will be having "Joint Commission Education Days."

We will be covering a range of topics such as the new survey process, the National Patient Safety Goals, infection control, fire safety, confidentiality and much more.

The scheduled dates are April 4, 8, 11, and 15. There will be morning and afternoon sessions, of which employees will only need to attend one. Attendance is mandatory for all staff and your department manager/supervisor will be responsible for scheduling your attendance.

We will get more specific information to the managers/supervisors in the near future.



Staying Well

Get happy: Dance!

Ballroom dancing or any type of couples dancing burns 200 to 300 calories per hour. That's about the same as a fast walk, but it can be a lot more fun. It has other benefits such as improving posture and giving you a whole-body workout.

Don't know how to dance? Classes are everywhere from adult education programs to gymnasiums and dance studios. Classic ballroom dance includes the waltz, tango, and fox trot, which are easy steps.

Latin dancing features the mambo, salsa, and cha-cha. The fast steps and turns are great fun.

Swing dancing includes everything from slow and romantic to twirls.

Another reason to fight fat

Doctors at Massachusetts General Hospital say obese Americans are rendering medical-imaging equipment increasingly incapable of providing assessments. The ultrasound waves can't penetrate the bodies of very heavy people.

Atkins implicated in gout

Some doctors predict that the popularity of low-carb, high-protein diets such as the Atkins could produce a rise in cases of gout. That's because meats contain purines, a type of protein that metabolizes into uric acid. When the body produces too much uric acid or when the kidneys don't excrete enough, it crystallizes in joints, most commonly in the big toe..

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

Kathy Sabo
John Kelly
C.J. Cornell
Geri Zionkowski
Pam Shields
Tammie Watkins
Michelle Hirkey
Jan Holbrook
Mabel Rosengrant
Judy Abrams *

* gift certificate winner

NOTE: When an employee is nominated for *Caught in the Act*, the employee should be given a sticker and a pin. These items are available from any department manager or through the Public Relations Office. Please call 301, 276 or 281 if additional supplies are needed. Thank you.

A Minute with Milligan

A couple of weeks ago I had the privilege of driving to Florida for my son's wedding.

The primary site of what they call a destination wedding was Key West, a lovely old section of our country with a long history of mosquitoes, trains, boats and smuggling.

In any case, the wedding went off well, much to the chagrin of the parents' constant worry that in-laws will not be good enough for our son or daughter.

I am sure most of us can relate to those worries about our kids, as they never go away no matter their or our own age. In any case the wedding was on a pier at sunset and turned out to be elegantly done with steel band music

My final comment about the trip is that while there were a wide variety of positive experiences, I noticed in my encounters as a customer in visiting restaurants and motels there was a great dearth of caring in most of our encounters with the people who worked in those organizations.

It seemed to me that people were doing so well in their business that they couldn't care less about the customer. How Sad. It also brought home to me in real terms that all of us could identify with clarity and definition the signs of, rudeness, the lack of customer service, and the lack of regard for one another. We even can see it in our own behaviors and become more sensitive to it as we experience it upon our person.

In health care, such as our organization, we are especially focused on patient service. This means we have a responsibility to patients, families, and friends. We need to



not only be concerned for their physical care, but for their emotional and spiritual health as well. I receive positive comments often from the public about our efforts on behalf of their loved ones while in our care. We are not perfect however, and need to remind ourselves about the importance of our jobs in caring for patients' physical needs and for the personal contact that we have with them. This comes home to me with the constant reminder just how important customer service is to any organization and to the people we serve.

One last comment: I must tell you how proud I am of the dedicated staff we have, as it is demonstrated each day for the care of patients and our employee family, and particularly toward the family of Kay Wilson, as we all mourn her loss.

She was a special individual who spent a lifetime working for our patients with a loud laugh and a mischievous smile, while constantly borrowing flowers from her fellow employees.

I would ask that each of us give our support to the family at this time.

William Milligan, Jr.