1989-12

Connections: December 1989

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Boston University
Season's Greetings
Holiday coverage of the various events occurring this month within the Hospital will be featured in the January issue of Connections.

- Governor makes appointment to UH Trustee Board

PAGE 3
- UH M.D. journeys to earthquake-stricken homeland of Armenia

PAGE 5
- Safeguard yourself against crime this holiday season

PAGE 8
- Fuller basketball league gears up for third season of competition

The monthly newspaper of The University Hospital • December 1989

PARKING CHANGES
Lots A, B merge; Lot C entrance relocated
Changes in parking in Lots A, B and C were implemented in mid-November and others are scheduled to occur, according to BUMC Parking Director John Sullivan. Although some of these changes had been planned for some time, Sullivan said, they were precipitated earlier this fall by two events: The completion of a Boston Water and Sewer project in a portion of Lot C, and the transfer of a portion of Lot A to the city to accommodate Boston City Hospital parking needs for patients, employees and visitors. “These modifications were designed to improve conditions and to better ensure the overall safety and welfare of our parkers,” Sullivan said.

The changes are as follows:
- Lots A and B: The space remaining, after the transfer of spaces to BCH, was merged with Lot B to form one lot, known as

continued on page 2

Employees dig down deep during 1989 Giving Campaign

More than 400 Hospital employees ushered in the season of giving during this year’s Employee Giving Campaign by donating more than $38,000 to the U-Help Fund, the Child Care Fund and the United Way of Massachusetts Bay.

The campaign, held each October, this year raised $12,215.45; $6,615.45, and $19,450.30 for each cause respectively, as of November 17, and gifts are still coming in.

Medical-Dental Staff honored at 8th Annual Brunch

More than 80 physicians of the University Hospital were honored on Sunday, Nov. 5, at the Eighth Annual Medical-Dental Staff Recognition Brunch, held at the Marriott Hotel in Copley Place.

Charles P. Tiff, M.D., the president of the Medical-Dental Staff, served as the master of ceremonies for the day, while John F. Cogan Jr., the outgoing chairman of the UH Board of Trustees gave opening remarks. Cogan stepped down this month after serving 17 years as chairman of the board.

continued on page 2

8 staffers named Black Achievers

Eight UH employees have been named as Black Achievers for 1990, and will be honored along with other Boston-area Black Achievers on Thursday, Jan. 18, at the Marriott Hotel at Copley Place. The UH honorees are Carolyn Baker, Pharmacy; Joanne Hall-Brinton, Anesthesiology; Sandra Wedgeworth, Patient Financial Services; Linus St. Louis, Paint Shop; Deborah Lee, Environmental Ser-continued on page 2

HERE’S TO YOU—Charles P. Tiff, M.D., president of the Medical-Dental Staff, raising his glass in salute to his fellow physicians during the 8th Annual Physicians Brunch on Sunday, Nov. 5.

HARVEST FESTIVAL—John Moran, director of Environmental Services, center, draws the name of a prize winner during the Employee Giving Campaign’s final event on Oct. 26. Holding the box is campaign coordinator Deborah Heath-Maki, right.

“I would like to thank each and every employee who contributed to this year’s campaign,” said Hospital President J. Scott Abercrombie Jr., M.D. “During a time when finances are particularly tight, I am grateful for your kindness and generosity.”

This year’s campaign differed in several respects from past campaigns: A new option for giving allowed staffers to help coworkers who may be in need by donating to an expanded “U-Help/Helps You Fund.” In addition, the campaign was conducted via direct mail, rather than through direct
48 hours of corporate-paid volunteer work is required to serve as their role models in the Black Achievers Program. UH has participated in the Black Achievers Program for the last 20 years, with more than 300 students involved in the program each year. The program has been successful in providing opportunities for students to gain valuable experience and develop leadership skills.

Real estate listings available
In the market to run an apartment or purchase a home? The University Hospital Department has current and up-to-date listings for more than 100 apartments or homes for rent or sale in Metropolitan Boston. For more information call Lorraine Green at 867-1388.

BRANCH

G. Richard Paul, M.D., the immediate past president of the Medi- cal Dental Staff, presented awards to the homeless shelter staff in the 20th year of service, while TIIH presented to those with 25 years or more of service. Following is a list of those recognized: FHT: Mary E. Fisher, M.D., Gyneco-logy; Robert H. Friedman, M.D., General Surgery; Robert T. Keane, M.D., Urology; Richard H. S. Moon, M.D., General Surgery; A. Ted Kolnick, M.D., Urology; and Thomas J. M. Reardon, M.D., General Surgery. Also, Stephen Roskel, M.D., General Surgery; John L. Anderson, M.D., Medicine; Elihu S. M. Shaffir, M.D., Radiology; and Thomas F. B. H. Keenan, M.D., General Surgery. Also, Narendra B. Oza, Ph.D., Radiology; Richard A. Calabri, M.D., Orthopaedics; Eliot M. Slater, M.D., Anesthesiology; and Jonathan E. Darr, M.D., Radiation Therapy.

Hospital mourns loss of Frances Abercrombie
UH President J. Abbott Brevard, M.D., expresses his thanks for the support he and his family received from many Hospital staff following the recent death of his wife, Frances. A funeral service for Mrs. Abercrombie will be held at the University Hospital on Monday, Nov. 6, at the St. John the Evangelist Church in Wellesley Hills. Many Hospital staff attended the service for Mrs. Abercrombie, who died suddenly on Friday, Nov. 2. Your expressions of kind words have helped us during a difficult time, thank you,” Abercrombie said.

UH physician makes a medical pilgrimage to earthquake-stricken homeland of Armenia
UH urologist Richard K. Babayan, M.D., recently spent two weeks in earthquake-stricken Armenia, teaching new surgical techniques to surgeons in the Soviet-occupied country. Babayan, a member of the Democratic National and Democratic State Committees, has been appointed to the UH board by Governor Michael Dukakis. The state charter that established UH in 1859 gave the Massachusetts chief executive the right to name five citizens to the UH board. Babayan, a broad for women in politics, has been active in the Democratic Party for three decades. She is a founding member and coordinator of the Massachusetts Coalition for Women’s Appointments and the Boston Network for Women in Politics and Government, and a founding member of the Massachusetts Women’s Political Caucus. Since 1979, Taffman has served as program director for “Employment for Women in Political and Public Services Careers” at Boston College. Babayan has been listed in Who’s Who of American Women since 1975 and is a member of the New State Development Commission.

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Nurse alumnae associations gather for annual meeting

Karen K. Kirby made honorary member

Senior Vice President for Nursing Karen K. Kirby was named an honorary member of the Massachusetts Memorial Hospitals Association Atrium Heart Study (MMHAAS), at the group’s annual reception and business meeting on Nov. 4. Kirby announced last month that she will leave her position on Jan. 1 to pursue other career interests.

Corresponding secretary Eleanor Tenney, 89, a 1923 graduate of the Massachusetts Memorial Hospitals

"As I look back on my mere seven years [at UH], it is quite remarkable [to see] what we have been able to achieve together. Your spirit has clearly motivated me and my staff."

Karen K. Kirby

School of Nursing, cited Kirby for her loyalty and commitment to the Association. "We will miss you dearly," she said, "You always have a place with us."

Said Kirby, "On Jan. 1, I will leave my post as the head of nursing at this institution, but I will never all my memories and appreciation for you—the real founders of what is great about Nursing at this Hospital today was demonstrated by three UH staff on November 9, at the annual President’s Council breakfast meeting, which was held at the Computer Museum. Robert H. Friedmann, M.D., director, UH Medical Information Systems, discussed the potential of the Telephone-Linked Computer (TLC) system, which allows a patient’s outside computer system to monitor the progress of medicated patients over the phone. Lynn Crane, project manager for the Hospital’s installation of the Baxter OMEGA system, discussed the new technology which will affect staff in patient-related and direct patient care areas. Patricia Dunn, O.V.N., of the New England Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center, discussed the advances being made in computer-assisted nursing.

Open Tain Tan, M.D., a member of the Hospital’s Dermatology Department, was honored as a Woman of Achievement by the Big Sister Association of Greater Boston at a black-tie dinner reception on Saturday, Nov. 18, at the Hyatt Regency in Cambridge. Tan was recognized as a pioneer in the laser treatment of burn scarring in children.

If you would like to highlight your or your colleague’s achievements, contact Cynthia Pavlides, at 4482R.

Karen K. Kirby

National Operating Room Nurses Day observed at the Hospital

UH’s operating room nurses observed National Operating Room Nurses Day on Tuesday, Nov. 14, with an informational display on Atrium 2. According to force Cantu, R.N., C.N.O.R., "the day is set aside annually to promote education about the role of the operating room nurse."

"Here at UH, there are a total of 34 registered OR nurses who provide quality patient care during the perioperative stay, in cooperation with the surgical team."

According to Cantu, many of the Hospital’s OR nurses are certified, although certification is not mandated for a nurse to work in the operating room, recently certified by the National Certification for Perioperative Nurses, Inc., were UH staff C. Lynn Toner, Richard Burns, Katie Stokes and Marion Richardson, QA/UM manager Glinnis LaRoza, and Stromgren said. This person also will eventually chair the QA/UM committee, which governs the activities of Quality Assurance and Utilization Management.

In monitoring length of stay for all routine and ICU admissions, the UH staff has begun to assign a target length of stay to each patient—upon routine admission—according to his or her diagnosis. The staff then monitors the length of stay, looking at the patient’s medical record for the 100th percentile, Stromgren said. The role of the ICU medical director will be expanded to include the monitoring, managing and accounting for the admission of patients to the unit, as well as length of stay. Stromgren noted.

A key factor in reducing length of stay at this step is the elimination of all preparative days that are not medically indicated, according to the director of Medical Records. "For instance, a patient may require laboratory tests that are not performed on the day of his or her admission or the two days of premedication testing," Stromgren said. "Eliminating prep days will be an additional shot in the arm to reducing average length of stay of 9.5 days has been budgeted for fiscal year 1990. Since we are able to lower our ALOS from 10.84 days over the course of FY99, this figure is very achievable."

By screening all admissions for rooming reasons and monitoring a patient’s care at certain intervals during his or her stay, the UH staff can evaluate whether a patient’s admission, tests, treatments, and length of stay, are “necessary and appropriate,” according to Stromgren. “That is, if a patient is sick enough to require, or continue to require, the care and service that are given here at UH.”

The UH staff is currently comprised of UH coordinators Lysenda Burns, Katie Stokes and Marion Richardson, QA/UM manager Glinnis LaRoza, and Stromgren said. This person also will eventually chair the QA/UM committee, which governs the activities of Quality Assurance and Utilization Management.

Don’t let crime spoil the holidays

While the holidays are a time for musing and good cheer for many, a few may use this time to take advantage of the way. Kevin Tuohy, UH Security manager, offers these suggestions to avoid becoming a victim of crime this holiday season:

• Don’t carry large sums of cash in anticipation of holiday shopping. Do not cash your paycheck and keep the money with you at work, until you’re on your way home.
• Avoid leaving packages in your car for safekeeping. If you must leave them in your car, store them out of sight.
• Don’t respond to a plea for charity from a person representing a charity that you don’t recognize as legitimate.
• Be especially alert in crowds, particularly when shopping. Crowds attract pickpockets.
• Be concerned about the security of your residence if you lose your wallet, handbag or keys.

Marilyn Castillo, Admissions: 1 shop during the morning hours and I don’t shop in downtown Bos­ ton.

Edward Arora, Design Services: I usually don’t avoid it. I’m stuck right in the middle of it.

Helen Gibson, Microbiology: ‘I don’t avoid it, I get caught right up in it. I love the hustle and bustle.’

Judy Wilson, Microbiology: ‘I don’t avoid it. It’s too much work to shop during the holidays so I avoid it.’

Utilization Management is a ‘shot in the arm’ to ALOS

While the term “average length of stay” (ALOS) may sound quite abstract to some, it affects everyone. For example, it affects every UH employee directly or indirectly; it affects visits to the healthcare system. The following article was written to make people aware of the Hospital’s goal of reducing average length of stay and maintaining quality.

The staff of the Utilization Management (UM) section of the Department of Medical Records has a vested interest in reducing average length of stay.

Monitoring and evaluating patients’ length of stay is a key aspect of their job.

To ensure more careful spending of UH dollars while maintaining quality of service, the UM staff is taking part in a Hospital-wide Utilization Management Program, which is targeted to reduce Hospital expenses by $1.5 to $2.2 million through the reduction of 10,000 patient days and 3000 days of in-patient care utilization.

Recent information management program were well attended by management staff from many Hospital departments. Although the staff of Utilization Management, which incorporates Quality Assurance, will monitor each step of the program, its concentration is in two primary areas:

To screen and monitor all admissions for their appropriate care areas.

To help in the establishment and monitoring of a policy to reduce length of stay for all routine and intensive care unit (ICU) admissions.

Already seen ALOS drop

“We’ve already seen a dramatic drop in length of stay,” said Bonnie Stromgren, the director of Medical Records. At the end of the fiscal year, the average length of stay at UH’s ALOS has fallen below 10 days. “We will keep a planus, but in the short¬term, I see ALOS continuing to drop,” she added. According to Hospital President Scott Abromszick, M.D., an average length of stay of
1989 Employee Giving Campaign Results

continued from page 1

solicitation; this approach—while it drew a smaller total response—proved to be a money-saver for the Hospital.

The elimination of volunteer solicitation represented a savings of more than $100,000 to the Hospital in 1989, according to Deborah Hecht-Levy, campaign coordinator. "Considering this aspect, the amount of money raised this year was in line with what we expected," Hecht-Levy said. "We do hope the number of dollars raised and employee participation will increase beginning next year."

On Thursday, Oct. 26, approximately 250 employees attended a Harvest Festival, the campaign’s final event which featured such delights as apple cider, pies and sliced donuts. Throughout the day, more than 100 prizes were given away, including two grand prizes: The women, and their prizes, were: Arlene Meyers of Reimbursement, $1,000 gift certificate to Joyce. Also, Bill King, Computer Services, a six-month membership to the Boston Harbor Hotel; Patricia Jenkins, Nursing, $50 gift certificate to either J.C. Brown, Environmental Services; Sally Ruff, Development, two tickets to Durgin Park; Susan Ceur- see, Material Management, $50 gift certificate to the Boston Center for the Arts; and Catherine Tosney, Nursing, a six-month membership to the Boston Harbor Hotel; Kathleen Smith, Infectious Diseases, $50 gift certificate to the Boston Center for the Arts; and Catherine Tosney, Nursing, a six-month membership to the Boston Harbor Hotel.

Senior Action Phone-a-thon
given a valuable boost by UH

From the editor: This letter was originally sent to Donald R. Giller, U.H. vice president for Marketing/Planning/Development, by Stephen R. Phelan, director of Special Events for the Massachusetts Senior Action Council, Inc. The following is an excerpted version of the letter.

I am writing to express my thanks to you and the people at the University Hospital for your assistance and support during our 1989 Phone-a-thon.

I know you are very familiar with the work [that the Massachusetts Senior Action Council (MSCAC)] has been doing. The goals of improving the lives of senior citizens in Massachusetts is certainly an enormous task but is made easier with help from friends like you. That is why it is so important to take time to express our thanks.

Our 1989 Phone-a-thon was a great success, and the assistance that you provided, coordinating all the components from telephones to parking, made a hectic time run smoothly and efficiently. The ‘Medical Center was a great location for our Phone-a-thon and we MSCAC are grateful to you and everyone at the Medical Center for your part in this event. From the Mass. Senior Action Council, as well as the thousands of seniors who made donations across the Commonwealth who will benefit from the proceeds of our Phone-a-thon, our heartfelt thanks.

Make a ‘Promise to Protect Medicare’

Hospital staff, trustees and auxiliaries are asked to write to President George Bush urging him to keep the federal government made 25 years ago to provide quality health care for the nation’s senior citizens. Under the ‘Promise to Protect Medicare’ campaign of the American Hospital Association, hospitals across the country have embarked on a letter-writing drive to the President. The campaign was joined by the American Hospital Association. Medicare funding in the budget that the Bush Administration will submit to Congress for fiscal year 1991. The provision of fair funding for Medicare, as well as additional resources to fund Medicare program reforms—including teaching and disproportionate-share hospital payments—is essential to the survival of hospitals like the University Hospital,” said Donald R. Giller, vice president for Marketing/Planning/Development.

The U.S. House of Representatives has approved legislation to extend Medicare for the first time since its enactment in 1965. The Senate, however, has yet to act on the measure.

UH staffer Gloria White: A playwright, actress and poet

Love of the arts

White’s interests in the arts date to her childhood. At age 12, she wrote and produced a play which was staged at the YMCA in her hometown of Fitchburg, at age 17, she made her acting debut in a Fitchburg Stratton Playhouse production of William Lava’s “Pique.” Beginning at age 30, White has sold her works to the arts to obtain her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in literature from Northeastern University. White has never pursued—or desired—a professional career in history. By working at various jobs and saving through the years, she has been able to purchase a condominium to travel and to stage her productions. White said she has struck a balance in her life. "Work doesn’t interfere with my art and my art doesn’t interfere with my work; I need both of them.”

Still, the 53-year-old said she looks forward to retirement, at which time she’ll devote all her energy to writing and acting. “It’s really what my life is all about,” she acknowledged.
Spotlighter does her part in Boston's war against drugs

As a pharmacist, Pharmacy manager Kimberly Mu-Chow, Pharm.D., knows the dangers of drugs. That's why her involvement with the Boston Public Schools Task Force Against Drug Abuse is so important to her. Mu-Chow, the Spotlight Award winner for December, believes that education at an early age is crucial to the prevention of drug abuse. "As pharmacists, we need to do what we can to help fight the illegal use of drugs and drug dependency," she said. Mu-Chow's affiliation with the Boston Public Schools began in 1988, when the Pharmacy sponsored an anti-drug abuse poster contest for the city's fourth graders, which she helped coordinate. The contest allowed students who were already enrolled in a drug and alcohol education program called "DECIDE," to be creative with their anti-drug themes, while at the same time to be educated on the dangers of drugs.

Test your home for radon gas

Radon test kits and analysis are available to BUMC staffers through the Radiation Protection Office for $20. The Environmental Protection Agency recommends that every home be tested for radon, a naturally occurring radioactive gas. For more information, call x7052.

Fuller basketball season gets under way

In addition to the UH teams, this season's second Moran is composed of teams from the Goldman School of Graduate Dentistry and Boston College. "This year promises to be a bumper season and one with many surprises," said Bob Filmore, the league manager and referee.

Anyone with questions about the program can call Filmore at 266-8800, ext. 204.

This article was written with information provided by Filmore and his assistant, Robin Benton. The two will provide periodical updates throughout the basketball season.

For sale:
- 1986 Ford Escort GT coupe, sporty, low mileage, 5-speed, moon roof; comes with 3-year warranty, $5,200 or b/o. Call Kathy T. at x8300.

For rent:
- Furnished rooms, St. Botolph and West Newton streets, quiet, owner-occupied; refrigerator, microwave oven, sink, $260 and $360 a month, 1st and last deposits, references required. Call 267-7715.

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