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# Connections: March 1994

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# CONNECTIONS™

The monthly newspaper of BOSTON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER HOSPITAL • March 1994

## Inside

Balady works to  
reduce the risk

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
MEDICAL CENTER  
HOSPITAL

88 East Newton Street  
Boston, Massachusetts

## BUMCH joins forces with East Boston Neighborhood Health Center

*Hospital town meetings provide  
glimpse into Medical Center crystal ball*

**B**oston University Medical Center Hospital and Boston City Hospital are now formally affiliated with the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center, the result of a partnership agreement that has been in the works for over a year, according to Hospital President J. Scott Abercrombie Jr., MD. This partnership, in turn, lays the groundwork for BUMCH and the East Boston center to explore jointly acquiring Winthrop Hospital, he said.

Abercrombie made these announcements at the latest in a round of town meetings he's held during the last year to bring employees up to date on the Hospital's strategies for positioning itself within the evolving health care market. At this meeting, held on Tuesday, Feb. 8, Abercrombie said he's confident

that BUMCH will emerge as "a force to be reckoned with" in the Boston hospital market.

As part of the new formal affiliation, the Hospital intends to use the East Boston center as a training site for primary care medical residents.

Should the joint acquisition of Winthrop Hospital take place, BUMCH would provide the capital to acquire and renovate the institution, a 100-bed facility now in bankruptcy, and East Boston would contribute the services of its primary care physicians. The alliance would enable the East Boston center, with more than 250,000 clinic visits a year, to expand its thriving service across the Boston Harbor into such communities as Chelsea, Revere, Everett, Saugus and Winthrop, Abercrombie said. In turn, the

*continued on page 8*

## Mobile patient library rolling again



Be watching the hallways for Shandell Martin, left, and Jacquetta VanZante as they and two other Phillis Wheatley Middle School students start the mobile patient library rolling again on patient floors. Under this Hospital program, now in its second year, eighth grade students from the Roxbury middle school distribute books and other reading materials via wheeled book carts to all patient floors. The mobile patient library is run on Mondays and Tuesdays between the hours of 12:30 and 2:30 p.m. The four students who are participating in the program this year are Anacelia Torres, 13, Shanille Tarrant, 14, Martin, 14, and VanZante, 14. The students were selected based on their strong academic performance and good attitude at school.

## NFL star no disappointment to Hospital employee and father

**T**hough the ending to the Buffalo Bills' football season may have caused many fans to shake their heads with discouragement, there was one fan who held his head up with pride. Hospital employee Bill Brooks' all-time favorite player—his son and namesake—has done a great job on the football field all year long, as far as he is concerned.

Only a modest man like Brooks, operations manager of housekeeping in the Department of Guest Services and a 33-year Hospital employee, could keep the accomplishments of his son a secret from many people who work here. Bill Brooks Jr., a 1986 Boston University alumnus, is one of the top wide receivers in the National Football League. He remains one of the greatest Boston University Terrier football players of all time, having set seven school receiving records that stand to this day. He was inducted into the Boston University Hall of Fame in 1991. In 1986, Brooks Jr. was a fourth-round draft choice of the Indianapolis Colts and was named the American Football Conference (AFC) Rookie of the Year. Last winter, Brooks Jr. became a free agent and signed a three-year contract with the Bills.

Those who do know of the younger Brooks' accomplishments have raised the father to celebrity status at the Hospital—a position Brooks reluctantly accepts for himself, and, more willingly, for his son.

"I am so very proud of my son," Brooks says, even after the Bills lost their fourth straight Superbowl on Jan. 30. "He was very upset after the game—I knew how much he wanted to win. He even

*continued on page 4*

## International Festival scheduled for April 28

**W**ith music, dancing, feasting and merriment, the Hospital will celebrate cultural diversity during the second annual International Festival on Thursday, April 28.

The event will take place between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. in various areas of the Hospital. Employees are encouraged to dress for the day in their native attire, within the boundaries of the Hospital's dress code.

The entire Hospital will feature exhibits from around the world, while various music acts are scheduled to rotate between the

Atrium Pavilion and the SkyLight Dining Pavilion during the festival. In addition, the Hospital will be decorated with posters from all over the world, and the dining pavilion will feature various international dishes.

This year's event promises to be just as festive as it was last year, says Dan

Wilson, the employee relations manager, and shorter lines in the dining pavilion are planned.

Watch for updates on bulletin boards around the Hospital and in the April issue of *Connections*. ■



## Give blood this month and get a prize

**T**hose people donating blood or platelets to the Hospital's Blood Bank community outreach program this month have a reward in store: Local businesses have contributed gift certificates for various goods and services as prizes for donors.

The prizes that can be won this month are coupons toward the purchase of a pizza at Figs Restaurant, in Charlestown, coupons toward the purchase of a meal at The California Pizza Factory; a Division Sixteen restaurant gift certificate; coupons for movie rentals at Videosmith or a free one-month membership at

Beacon Hill Athletic Club. All who donate blood or platelets during March are eligible to win one of the prizes. The Hospital's blood donor room is located in the H building, room 416. For more information, contact Stacie Verdi, the donor services coordinator, at x8-7833 (638-7833) or x8-7855 (638-7855). ■



## Newsmakers

From January through mid-February, numerous Hospital health professionals served as expert sources for various media stories:

**H**ospital neurologist Marilyn Kassier, MD, was interviewed by MedStar Communications about the prevalence of "headbanger's whiplash" among young people who are fans of heavy metal music.... Barbara Gilchrest, MD, chief of the Department of Dermatology, was interviewed by Medical News



Barbara Gilchrest

Network about photoaged skin (skin that has aged prematurely due to overexposure to the sun). Gilchrest was also interviewed by WLVI-TV about how to keep skin healthy during the winter.... Ronald McCaffrey, MD, head of the Section of Medical Oncology, was interviewed by WHDH-TV about the probability of an upcoming cure for leukemia.... Hospital urologist Irwin Goldstein, MD, was interviewed by WLVI-TV and the *Boston Herald* about how aging may contribute to impotence.... Hospital dermatologist Howard Koh, MD, was

interviewed by *The New York Times*, *Health* magazine, the *Boston Globe*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Economist*, *Glamour* magazine, *Health and You*, *Skin and Allergy News*, the Medical News Network and WBZ-TV about the importance of using sun protection.... Michael Holick, PhD, MD, chief of endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism, was interviewed by WBZ-TV and WCVB-TV about the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis.... Robert Krane, MD, chief of the Department of Urology, was interviewed by MetroWest Cable about the prevention and treatment of prostate cancer.... Hospital urologist Richard Babayan, MD, was interviewed by WBZ-TV about non-invasive treatments for prostate cancer.... Robert Lerman, PhD, MD, director of the Evans Nutrition Group, was interviewed by WCVB-TV's "Chronicle" on the usefulness of certain weight loss products.... Hospital dermatologist Gary Rogers, MD, was interviewed by WBZ-TV about the lack of effectiveness of over-the-counter products touted as helping to reduce signs of aging.... Margaret Polito, RN, MPH,

associate director of the Hospital's Home Medical Service, was interviewed by *Boston University Today* about the Home Medical Service.... Sanford Auerbach, MD, director of the



Sanford Auerbach

Hospital's Sleep Disorders Center, was interviewed by WHDH-TV about sleep disorders. Auerbach was also interviewed by the *Patriot Ledger* about the use of the drug Cognex in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease patients.... Michael Blaszyk, BUMCH executive vice president of corporate services, was interviewed by the *Boston Globe* and the Massachusetts Hospital Association's *Monday Report* about the Hospital's planned acquisition of Winthrop Hospital.... Hospital oncologist David McAneny, MD, was interviewed by the *Boston Herald*, the *Medical Tribune*, the *American Association for the Advancement of Science's Science Update* and the *Daily Free Press*, regarding a vaccine for colon cancer.... Hospital vascular surgeon James Menzoian, MD,

was interviewed by *Reader's Digest* about the effects the country's blood shortage has had on elective surgery for his patients.... Hospital cardiologist Daniel Levy, MD, was interviewed by *Ladies Home Journal* about the correlation between hypertension and cardiovascular disease.... Hospital gastroenterologist Ciaran Kelly, MB, was interviewed by Medical News Network about controlling hospital-acquired diarrhea.... Joseph Loscalzo, MD, PhD, BUMCH chief of cardiology, and Helen Hollingsworth, MD, director of Asthma and Allergy Services, have appeared on the first two programs of WBZ-TV channel 4's "Health Matters," a series of consumer-oriented health and medical news shows being sponsored by the Hospital. ■



Joseph Loscalzo

## Minority education aim of new heart association task force

**B**lack women are at an unusually high risk for developing cardiovascular disease, and Hospital cardiologist Gary Balady, MD, is leading a task force with prevention education on its mind.

Balady, the chairperson of the Committee on Cardiovascular Risk Prevention of the Massachusetts affiliate of the American Heart Association (AHA), has established a seven-member task force aimed at educating local minority populations, initially in Roxbury and Dorchester. The strategy is to work with three groups—neighborhood health centers, churches and community activity centers—to conduct a needs assessment of the most effective way to educate members of the community about cardiovascular health. The needs assessment will determine what goals the task force should set, Balady says.

After assessing data gathered through the Hospital's Cardiac Rehabilitation Program, which demonstrates a higher prevalence of coronary risk factors among black women, and reading about nationwide statistics, Balady determined that black women are at an unusually high risk for cardiovascular disease. (The Cardiac Rehabilitation Program, now in its ninth year at the Hospital, is an exercise and risk factor reduction program for individuals with known heart disease.) In fact, of all populations in the United States, black women are most apt to die after suffering a heart attack. These facts are out there, but very few people know about them, Balady says.

There are six standard risk factors for coronary disease: high blood pressure, being overweight, smoking, a high cholesterol level, having diabetes, and being physically inactive.

The task force has been established to have a permanent position within the AHA to develop and implement a cardiovascular risk prevention education program for minorities in general, Balady says. "We don't just want to have a blood pressure screening one day and disappear," he says. "We want to educate as many

people as we can so they in turn can educate others in their community. This is ground breaking work we are doing. If we are successful, I'm hoping the national office [of the AHA] will implement our program in other urban areas.

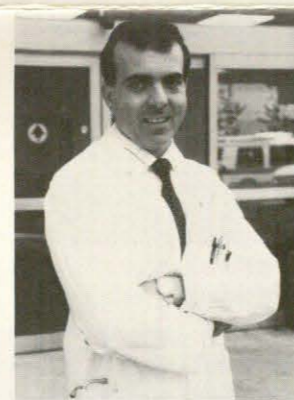
"I went back to see what was written about risk factors in minorities, and found out that, indeed, black people, especially women, are at an unusually high risk for developing coronary artery disease," Balady says. Black women tend to have more cases of hypertension (high blood pressure), and they also tend to smoke more, be less active and more overweight than other populations. "We decided this is something we should be working on," Balady says. "Though heart disease is the number one killer in America, it is highly preventable.

"At the most basic level, we would like to provide Roxbury and South Dorchester with informational pamphlets and brochures that are relevant to the black community," he says. "The AHA is just now starting to represent more ethnic groups in its literature, and to print the information in different

languages." Up to this point, white middle-class Americans have been the only group represented, and other groups have ignored the literature, feeling it doesn't pertain to them, Balady says.

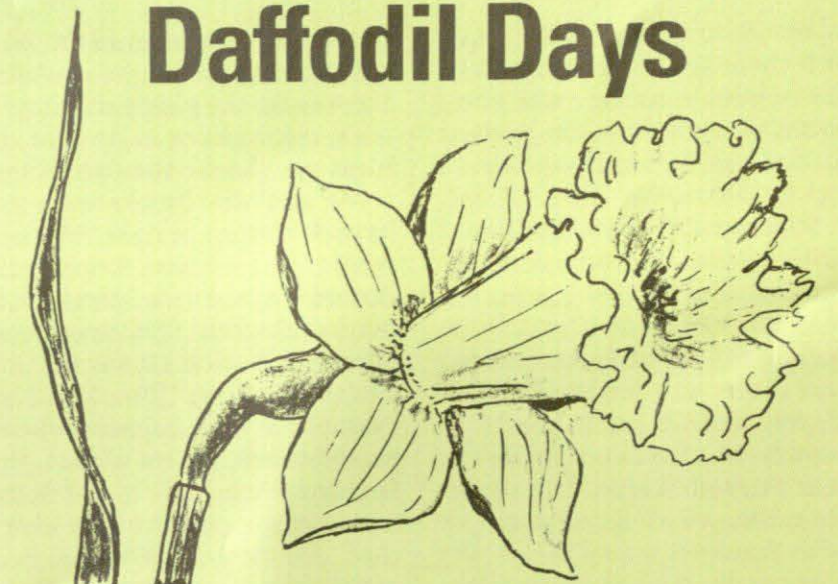
Other tactics being considered by the task force include developing a heart-healthy cookbook relative to the black American diet, and teaching proper exercise techniques. Balady says the task force welcomes other suggestions. Those with ideas are welcome to contact Balady through interdepartmental mail (Department of Cardiology, C-7), or by calling x8-8968 (638-8968).

"We want people to know that we are here," Balady says, "and that the AHA does care about the cardiovascular health of all communities." ■



Gary Balady

## BUMCH to celebrate Daffodil Days



**E**mployees, patients and visitors will be seeing yellow on Thursday, March 24, as the Hospital celebrates the American Cancer Society's Daffodil Days and ushers in the beginning of spring, which begins officially on March 21.

The tradition of participating in this annual event was started last year when the Department of Marketing/Public Affairs and Sodexo USA (formerly Seiler's) partnered to underwrite a contribution to the American Cancer Society. The same contribution was

made this year, and the Hospital will receive enough daffodils on March 24 to offer a flower to all members of the Hospital community—staff, patients and guests. Attached to each flower will be a yellow card that reads: "This daffodil, a symbol of hope, represents a donation by the Boston University Medical Center Hospital, in your name, to the American Cancer Society and its cancer control programs of research, education, and patient services." ■

## BUMC researchers launch trial of colon cancer vaccine

**I**n what one researcher calls "one of the most exciting approaches in cancer therapy in the last 20 years," a group of Boston University Medical Center investigators has launched a Phase I clinical trial of a vaccine to treat colon cancer.

The vaccine, which was developed and is now being tested at BUMC and the National Cancer Institute, is designed to call the immune system into action against existing tumors, or to prevent recurrence of cancer after surgery. It was produced with the aid of genetic engineering and is one of a handful of new biological approaches to cancer therapy that have resulted from the marriage of immunology and molecular biology.

The new vaccine was developed in part by Howard Kaufman, MD, a BUMC surgical resident, by inserting the gene that codes for a protein called carcino-embryonic

antigen (CEA), which is expressed in 90 percent of all colorectal cancer cells, into the vaccinia virus. Vaccinia is known to cause a strong immune response and was long used to inoculate people against smallpox. In this trial, the vaccine is scratched into the patient's arm—the way the vaccinia virus was for many years until smallpox was eradicated—where scientists hope it will enter cells and replicate, teaching the immune system to hunt down cells bearing CEA and destroy them. In the Phase I study, each patient will be given three doses of the vaccine and then monitored for several months. ■

## NFL star

continued from page 1

talked about retiring. But I told him there are other things in life besides winning. And it doesn't matter how the game turned out, he's still my boy and he did a great job."

Superbowl XXVIII signified various firsts for both father and son. For Brooks Jr., this year was his first with the Buffalo Bills, and, in his seven-year career as a pro football player, his first trip to the Superbowl. For Brooks, this year marked his first trip to the big game, which he attended with Brooks Jr.'s mother, Burnestine. The couple sat on the 50-yard line and cheered on their son, who caught seven passes for 63 yards.

Much of Brooks' cheering was silent, he concedes. "I'm not a very noisy person. I might clap now and then, but I'm not one for screaming. There was enough noise going on anyhow." Nonetheless, Brooks says he felt as much nervous excitement in the stands as one would expect his son to have had on the field.

By contrast, his wife is an ebullient fan, both in and out of

the stands. "As soon as the Bills beat the Raiders [in the playoffs], she was on the phone making hotel reservations in Atlanta. It turns out she did the right thing."

Mr. and Mrs. Brooks seem to have done a lot of right things where their son was concerned. Boston University's Sports Information Director Ed Carpenter was quoted in *Boston University Today* as saying, "[Brooks Jr.] is an example of what happens when a person is brought up with strong family values. ... He is one of the most sincere people I have ever met. If only the world were full of people like Billy Brooks."

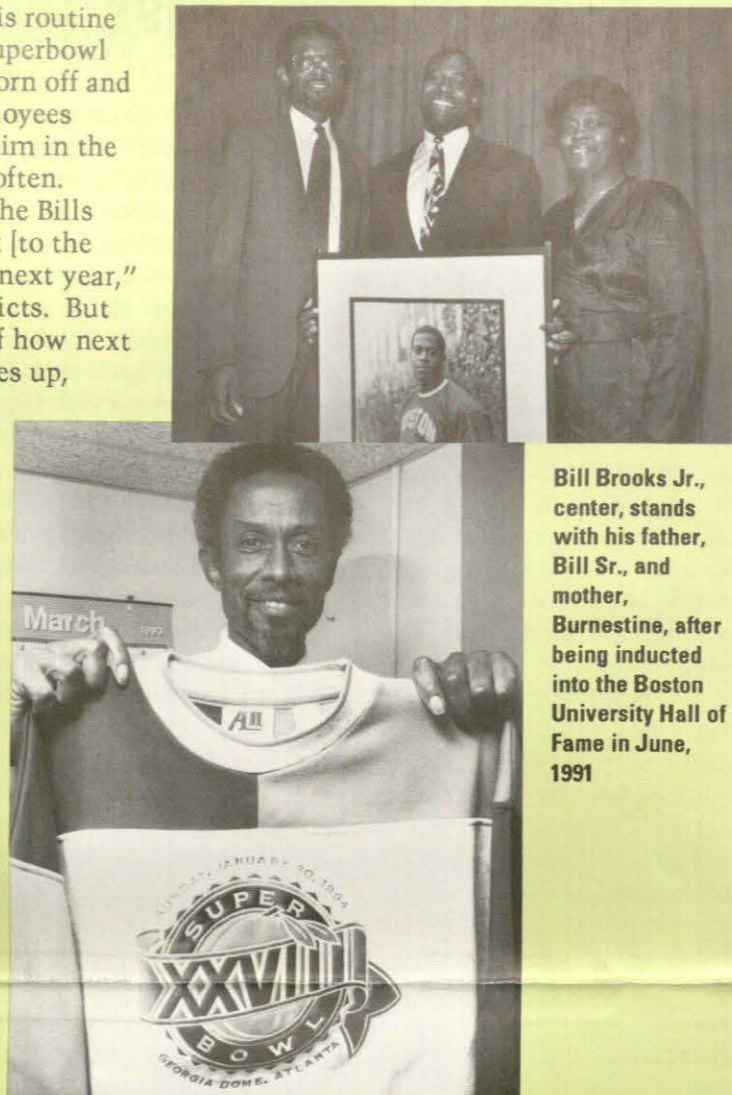
"We raised our son to be the best at whatever he did," says Brooks. "But no matter how good he got, to remember that he is no better than anyone else." Brooks says that before the Superbowl his son was anxious just to do well.

Now, until, perhaps, next January, normal life has resumed for both father and son. Brooks Jr., who lives in Indianapolis, Ind., is a graduate student at Butler University, working toward his master's in business administration (MBA). Brooks is busy here at the Hospital, and is getting

back into his routine now that Superbowl fever has worn off and fellow employees don't stop him in the hallway as often.

"I think the Bills will go back [to the Superbowl] next year," Brooks predicts. But regardless of how next season shapes up, Brooks will be a fan who remains loyal. ■

Bill Brooks, operations manager of housekeeping, displays a souvenir from Superbowl XXVIII, signed by his favorite Buffalo Bill, his son, Bill Brooks Jr.



Bill Brooks Jr., center, stands with his father, Bill Sr., and mother, Burnestine, after being inducted into the Boston University Hall of Fame in June, 1991

## Hospital program helps elders live at home

It's only a meager studio apartment on the ninth floor.

A twin-size, steel-frame bed, an inexpensive desk, a small dining table, a couple of wooden chairs, a throw rug—nothing fancy. Certainly not what Carlos Valentine had in mind when he left Puerto Rico 40 years ago, but today, he is happy to call this place home.

The "American dream" lured Valentine, a 71-year-old bachelor, to this country in the 1950s. An American recession left him jobless and then homeless in the late 1980s. Recently, the Americans that work at the Elders Living at Home Program (ELAHP) provided him with transitional housing on West Dedham Street, and Valentine is now on the waiting list for an apartment of his own in the same building.

"I'm old now," says Valentine through his translator, social worker, and friend Juan Tetzgauc, who works for ELAHP. "I only live day to day. But I like it here, I'm very happy in my apartment.

"I worked for many years, and

lived in other states," Valentine recalls. "I moved to Boston [in 1985] and was washing dishes at a restaurant. I lost my job, and I couldn't pay rent." He says he was evicted, and found nowhere else to go except the shelters.

"Carlos had been spending a lot of time at Fort Point [a branch of the Pine Street Inn], which had been rumored to close last April," says Eileen O'Brien, an ELAHP administrator. "One of the counselors there was very concerned about what would happen to Carlos, and referred him to us."

ELAHP is run by a group of collaborating city and non-profit agencies to provide Boston's homeless or potentially homeless elders, age 60 and older, with access to safe, affordable housing, and to services that enable these elders to live independently at home. This non-profit program is based at Boston University Medical Center Hospital. Many clients are referred to the program from shelters.

With help from ELAHP, Valentine now cooks his own meals, watches his own television, shaves in his own bathroom,

and sleeps in his own bed. Tetzgauc sees him almost every day, reminding him to take his medication, helping him to do his laundry, and keeping him company.

"When he was staying in shelters, Carlos was often ignored," says Tetzgauc. "He doesn't look his age, for one, and people left him alone because they thought he was able to take care of himself. For the most part, he can, but there are some things he needs help with. Now that he's living here, he can call me, or some of the other friends he has made here, when he needs help with anything."

A larger problem is that many Spanish-speaking minorities, like Valentine, have trouble applying for financial aid: It is difficult when English is a person's second language.

"Much of the Hispanic population doesn't know there is help for them," says Tetzgauc.

"There are many able-bodied elders who are wasting away in shelters, when they could be in their own homes leading decent lives, or receiving needed medical



Carlos Valentine sits in his new home.

care."

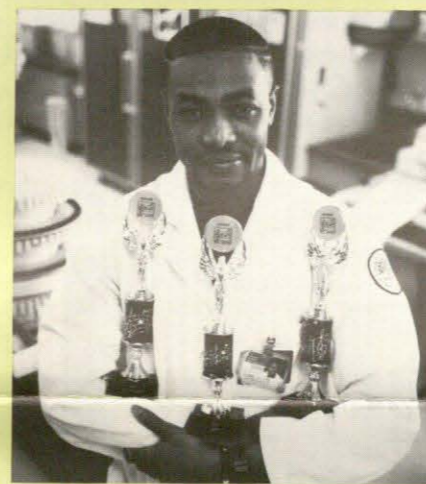
After spending seven years in one shelter after another, Valentine is glad ELAHP has been able to help him, and is appreciative of the staff. He is especially grateful for Tetzgauc. In their three months together, the two have become good friends.

"Juan, he's a good guy," Valentine says, in perfect English.

Since its inception in 1986, ELAHP has successfully served more than 1,000 Boston-area elders referred to the program from hospitals, shelters, social workers, and other public and private agencies. The program is funded by gifts from corporations, foundations and individuals. For further information about the organization, call O'Brien at x8-6139 (638-6139). ■

## PEOPLE

Hospital ophthalmologist S. Arthur Boruchoff, MD, recently received the R. Townley Paton, MD, Award from the Eye Bank Association of America. This award was bestowed upon Boruchoff for his "outstanding" contribution to the development of the Eye Bank Association of America and his dedication to the eye bank community. The award was also given to Boruchoff for "furthering the precepts of the prevention and cure of blindness" as did Paton, the father of modern eye banking.



Kelvin Rowe and his band, Tropical Fire, collected an armful of awards at the Boston Caribbean Music Awards.

Kelvin Rowe, a laboratory support technician in the Hospital chemistry lab, and his band, Tropical Fire, recently won three awards at the first annual Boston Caribbean Music Awards. The awards were for Best Calypso Band of 1993, Best Calypso Record of 1993, and Best Calypso Singer of 1993. Rowe, lead singer and guitarist, has been a Hospital employee for five years. Tropical Fire is a five-piece band that has been playing reggae, calypso, rap and soft rock music together for two years.

Hazel Dreyer, PT, CSS, and Helen Weston, BPTy (the Australian equivalent of PT), CSS, both of the BUMCH Department of Rehabilitation Therapies, recently completed the necessary requirements to be named as cardiopulmonary clinical specialists by the American Physical Therapy Board of Specialties. They were awarded their credentials at a special ceremony at the National Physical Therapy Conference in New Orleans on Feb. 2. Dreyer is a senior therapist working primarily in the surgical intensive care unit, and Weston is a therapy supervisor responsible for the physical, occupational and speech therapists who work with patients with acute needs.



Howard Leibowitz, MD, reads the inscription on the Polaroid Museum Replica painting of Boston Harbor presented to him by the Polaroid Corporation.

Howard Leibowitz, MD, chief of the Department of Ophthalmology, was recently honored with a Polaroid Museum Replica of a painting of the Boston Harbor done by Fitz Hugh Lane in the early 1850s. The Polaroid Corporation presented Leibowitz with the 26 1/4-inch by 42-inch replica in appreciation of his care of Polaroid employees over the past 10 years. According to Polaroid medical director Warren Kantrowitz, MD, who presented Leibowitz with the

replica, hundreds of Polaroid employees who work with lasers, and require baseline eye exams to do so, have received excellent care from Leibowitz and the staff of the Gundersen Eye Center. "Dr. Leibowitz has set up a center for excellence," Kantrowitz said. The Polaroid replica will hang in the Gundersen Eye Center conference room.

Wenja Kondi, wife of Hospital surgeon Edward Kondi, MD, and a member of the Friends of the Hospital, was selected by her hometown of Moss, Norway, to participate in the torch ceremonies for the 1994 Winter Olympics. On Feb. 3, Mrs. Kondi, who competed for Norway in the 1964 Summer Olympics as a gymnast, carried the torch toward its final destination of Lillehammer, where the opening ceremonies were held on Feb. 12.

Twenty-two Hospital physicians have been selected through a nationwide poll of their colleagues as being among the "best" in their respective fields. The physicians and their medical specialties

will be listed in the second edition of *The Best Doctors in America*, a book indexing 7,200 physicians in every medical specialty.

Those cited from BUMCH are Drs. Richard Babayan, endourology; Patricia Barry, geriatrics; Thomas Reed Browne III, epilepsy; Bartolome Celli, general pulmonary and critical care medicine; Jay Coffman, vasospastic diseases; Gary Epler, general pulmonary and critical

care; Donald Gair, child and adolescent psychiatry; Barbara Gilchrest, aging skin; Irwin Goldstein, impotence; Carlos Kase, stroke; Janice Knoefel, geriatric neurology; Joseph Korn, scleroderma; Robert Krane, impotence; Jonathan Lief, geriatric psychiatry; James Menzoian, general vascular surgery; Flaviu Romanul, neuropathology; Thomas Ryan, general cardiovascular disease; Thomas Daniel Sabin, general adult neurology; David Salant, general nephrology, glomerular diseases; Gordon Snider, asthma, general pulmonary and critical care medicine, lung infections; Donald Weiner, clinical exercise testing, and Philip Wolf, stroke.

Babayan, Browne, Coffman, Gilchrest, Goldstein, Kase, Krane, Lief, Sabin, Salant, Snider, and Weiner are listed for a second consecutive year. *The Best Doctors in America*, is published by Woodward/White, Inc., of Aiken, SC, and will be available in bookstores, including the Charlesbank Health Sciences Bookshop, located at 700 Albany St., this month.

Do you know an employee, physician or department that deserves recognition for something special and/or unique done within, or outside of, the Hospital? Would you like to say thanks to a deserving staff member(s)? Let *Connections* know, and your suggestions will be added to the PEOPLE section. See page 8 for phone number and mailing address.

## 'This Year We're Shooting for a Cure'

The 16th annual Hoopathon for Huntington's Disease will be held on Thursday, April 28, from 6 a.m. until midnight in the Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center gym, located at 85 East Newton St. The theme of this year's

hoopathon is, "This Year We're Shooting for a Cure."

Since 1978, teams and individuals from BUMCH, the Medical Campus and the local area, as well as local television sportscasters, have competed in this basketball free-throw contest to benefit Huntington's disease

research and family service programs. Participants receive pledges for their participation.

The Huntington's Disease Society of America's Massachusetts chapter, based here at the Hospital, urges all those who are interested in raising money for Huntington's disease research,

and want to have a good time doing so, to participate in the hoopathon. To sign up for the event or learn more about it, contact the society's executive director, May Long, at x8-8333 (638-8333). ■

## Life lessons from our patients: The diversity of divinity



by Rev. William Alberts, PhD, Hospital chaplain

**O**ur patients represent the various world religions, races, nationalities, cultures, political ideologies and sexual orientations that make up the human community. They reveal that life unfolds in various colors; that the rainbow itself is the pot of gold; that the Creator of life levels in diversity. And here at the Hospital, not only is our diversity revealed, but our commonality as well. Illness confronts us with our vulnerability, our mortality, our humanness, our oneness, our connection to each other. Here, differences fade and the common humanity we share comes to the fore—life and death, pain and fear, hope and sadness. We discover in one another a part of ourselves.

One patient, at Thanksgiving time, expressed a powerful meaning of thanksgiving itself. Hospitalized for several weeks with a life-threatening illness, he said, "I don't know what isn't important anymore." He speaks for and to all of us. When we are confronted with our mortality, we stop taking like for granted and become deeply thankful for the life we are granted.

Another patient shared these insights: "People have been brought up on negative feelings, trained to fight and hit back. For every action there is a reaction—a cause and effect. If I hurt you, it comes back. It's in the Scripture: what you sow, you reap. It's better to be nice in the first place—it's common sense. If you have a group of positive people in a room, one positive experience will bring out another positive experience. ... I'm for all religions: Catholic, Muslim, Jew, Protestant. If you go back to their roots, all of them teach 'Love your neighbor.' Help your neighbor. Positive en-

ergy—it comes back to you." This patient had put in his own words a profound teaching of Jesus: "Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put in your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back" [Luke 6]. As this patient said, "Positive energy—it comes back to you."

A third patient expressed a similar universal spirit when I noted he was Hindu: "I'm everything," he replied. "Why limit me to a definition? The East and the West are confinements. The eagle soars throughout the heavens—not just in one direction or another." This patient knows that we often define people to confine them. It is better to label poison than people, illness than ideas, drugs rather than dreams. Too often, right and wrong get lost in "left" and "right." We also honor people by respecting their differences—by experiencing their reality, not interpreting it. We honor people in calling them by their own names.

A final patient's life-threatening illness led her to discover herself, and she likes what she found. She said, "I used to look for myself in the approval and expectations of others. I looked to others to find out who I was. My illness led me to go deeper and discover that I'm okay with myself." She said of her illness, "You either accept it or you go crazy. There are things you can't change, you have to accept it. It's hard, but you have to. I accepted it, and the Lord helps me to live one day at a time. I'm thankful for each new day, and now I seek the fullest meaning in each day in the beauty of the persons and places I see."

When patients speak to us, we learn much about ourselves. In our Hospital, diversity and oneness come together and reveal the power of the spiritual self. ■

## Concierge exchange discussed with the Ritz

**A**s part of the Hospital's ongoing effort to improve customer service, the Division of Hospitality Services has been gathering ideas and input from the medical concierge of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel of Boston. The medical concierge caters to the particular needs of Boston hospital patients and families staying at the hotel. The Ritz, in return, is seeking to be added to the list of preferred hotels for Hospital patients and families.

In outlining this interchange, still in its beginning stage, Tucson Dunn, director of BUMCH's

hospitality services, says he hopes the Hospital will be able to gain insight into the elements that qualified the Ritz for winning the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in 1992.

"The program will involve the Hospital concierge, Neva Coakley, and the Ritz's medical concierge, Saraines Farina von Buchwald, exchanging ideas and aspects of service relation to concierges," says Dunn. "If the concierge interchange program works, it may expand to include chefs, to explore quality and taste issues." ■



Tucson Dunn, Neva Coakley and Saraines Farina von Buchwald discuss the possibility of an interchange program at the Ritz-Carlton of Boston.

## Need something fixed?

**F**or many employees, calling the Control Center is the only way they know of to have repairs done here at the Hospital. Actually, there are three ways to handle repairs. For emergency and urgent repairs, the Control Center should be contacted by phone; for routine and minor repairs, a work order should be filled out and returned to the facilities management department (C-120). Inpatient nursing units have a third option: for non-urgent repairs, nursing personnel can make an entry into the zone maintenance log, located at each nursing station. These logs are checked regularly by facilities management team members.

All departments should have a supply of work orders, which can be obtained from the Materials Distribution Center in the Atrium basement. It is important to fill the work order out thoroughly, including the name and phone

extension of the person making the request, and the appropriate account number/cost center to be billed, if applicable.

Some repair guidelines to remember are:

- For an emergency (such as a fire, chemical spill, etc.), call the Control Center x8-5555.
- For an urgent repair (such as anything that jeopardizes customer service or patient care), call the Control Center at x8-4144. These requests are immediately relayed to plant operations and maintenance personnel.
- For non-urgent repairs (such as routine repairs in non-public areas), fill out a work order and send it to facilities management.

Those who work in the Doctors Office Building can call the building managers office at x8-7140, or the Control Center, for all requests. ■

## Nurse specialist joins staff to help patients with diabetes

**I**n a move intended to augment the care and educational resources available to its patients with diabetes, the Evans Bone Health, Diabetes and Endocrine Group has added a nurse practitioner to its staff.

Carrie Stewart, MS, RNC, CDE, says she considers herself an "extension" of the physicians who treat patients with diabetes, a chronic disease that requires continuous management in order to be treated successfully. Her responsibility is to educate patients about their condition and to help provide follow-up care to them on a regular basis.

Stewart, a diabetes specialist, came to the Hospital after being involved in the National Institutes of Health's Diabetes Control and Complications Trial (DCCT), which ended last June. The 10-year trial proved that intensive therapy can lower blood glucose levels, and prevent diabetes complications. Consequently, the trial recommends intensive therapy and a team approach to diabetes management as a means of preventing long-term complications. Her experience with the trial makes her one of the few nurses in the country

with extensive experience implementing intensive therapy to patients with diabetes.

Part of Stewart's role at BUMCH is to help implement the concepts of intensive therapy and team care for diabetes patients. The goal of intensive therapy is to bring the blood glucose level of patients to as near a normal level as possible, Stewart says. In order for this to be achieved, physicians, dietitians, and nurses, must work together with each patient to help manage and monitor diabetes treatment. Intensive therapy is not an easy process for patients, however, and the health care team must work closely with each individual in order for it to be successful, says Stewart.

The goal with all patients is to help them achieve the best blood glucose control as possible. As a nurse practitioner, Stewart assesses the patients to find out what their individual needs are, educates them so they can maximize their ability to take care of their diabetes, and provides medical management of both their blood glucose control and diabetes related complications.

"I encourage my patients to know all they can about their diabetes," says Stewart. Her

overall goal, she says, is to work closely with patients and their physicians to deliver the best care possible.

Stewart has a unique role here at the Hospital, as nurse practitioners generally work in walk-in clinics and other ambulatory care facilities. She says she considers the focus of her work to be practicing preventative medicine, a strategy that helps cut costs by providing comprehensive care that reduces long-term costs and complications.

"My focus is preventative medicine," says Stewart. "As I provide one-on-one care and education to diabetes patients, the goal is to decrease the likelihood of them having costly, chronic problems in the near future," she says, adding that she can take the time with the patients she knows are not doing well. "I enjoy getting to know each patient individually," Stewart says.

Stewart is treating patients that



Nurse practitioner Carrie Stewart, RNC, tests the blood-sugar level of one of her diabetes patients.

come through the Evans Bone Health, Diabetes, and Endocrine Group, but she is also available to assist other BUMCH physicians in the treatment of any patients at BUMCH who have diabetes. Stewart can be reached at x8-7470 (638-7470). ■

## Hospital interests represented on Menino public safety task force

**T**he appointment of Joannie Jaxtmer, the Hospital's director of marketing, communications, and public relations, to Mayor Thomas Menino's Transitional Committee task force on public safety ensures that the Hospital and the South End will have a voice in the effort to make the community safer.

Jaxtmer was named to the public safety task force of the Mayor's Transitional Committee last November. The committee was established to review and evaluate the work of city departments and agencies—in essence, according to Menino, to "shake the cobwebs out of City Hall."

The specific responsibility of the task force is to recommend improvements to the internal

management of the city's two arms of public safety—the police and fire departments, says Karen Gray, task force manager and city employee. "Our responsibility has been to flag areas of concern within the operation and management structures of each department," Gray says.

The job of the public safety task force is crucial to the success of the mayor's overall plan for action against crime, violence, drug abuse and domestic strife, Gray says.

"I take this appointment very seriously, and I am representing the interests of the Hospital and the community at large to the best of my ability," Jaxtmer says. "It's exciting to be a member of a task force that is really going to affect change in the city."

A large component of the task force's work involves assessing the effectiveness of the communication lines between the several branches of the city's public safety division. For example, in the police force alone, the Boston Police Department, housing authority police, municipal police and school police are all independent policing entities within the city. The task force is examining ways these branches can be better integrated to provide the most efficient and effective police services to Boston's residents and visitors.

The task force has discovered some underutilized police officer positions, Gray says, that are doing administrative work when they could possibly be better used on the streets. In the case of the

fire department, Gray says a more comprehensive examination may be needed, because an extensive management and organizational audit has not been performed for over 25 years. Equity in the deployment of resources throughout the city is also being examined in both departments, Jaxtmer says.

Gray says the final report of the task force is due soon. Though the report will contain some suggestions for improvement, Gray stresses the fact that the job of the task force is to identify problems. "We are not police and fire experts," she says.

Menino will most likely appoint an outside auditor to recommend resolutions to identified problems, Gray says. ■

**Coming up...**

March marks the celebration of National Nutrition Month, National Social Work Month and Doctors' Day on March 30. The holidays observed this month are St. Patrick's Day and Evacuation Day, both on March 17. The first day of spring is March 21.

**Events to look forward to this month are:**

March 15 - The Public Health Forum topic for this week is "The Epidemiology of AIDS in Selected African Countries," which will be discussed by Sergut Wolde Yohannes, MPH. The forum will be held from 4 to 5 p.m. in the School of Medicine (L-112.) The public is welcome to attend.

March 20 - Watch for Thomas DeLaney, MD, chief of radiation oncology, speaking at 2:30 p.m. on WBZ-TV channel 4. DeLaney will be an expert guest on "Health Matters," a health and medical news series airing on various Sundays. The theme of the show DeLaney is participating in is "Cancer: Easing the Pain."

March 20 - Jaime Rich, MD, director of the BUMCH Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease) Clinic, will be speaking at an ALS Research Update Seminar, from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Massachusetts General Hospital East Neuroscience Center in Charlestown.

Admission is free. For more information, call Barbara Mahoney at 245-2133.

March 25 - The Cancer Prevention and Control Grand Rounds topic is "Hormones and Cancer: Implications for Cancer Prevention," and is being presented by Theodore Colton, MD, professor and chairperson of epidemiology and biostatistics at the School of Public Health, and Lynn Rosenger, MD, an SPH professor. The presentation will take place between noon and 1 p.m. in the Atrium C/D Conference Room. Lunch will be provided.

March 29 - The Social Work Grand Rounds topic for this month is "Shame as a Dynamic in Group Psychotherapy," and is being discussed by J. Scott Rutan, PhD, director of the Center for Group Therapy at Massachusetts General Hospital. The lecture will be held from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. in the Atrium C/D Conference Room. Refreshments will be served.

**Looking ahead...**

April 22 - The Cancer Prevention and Control Grand Rounds topic for April is "Agent Orange and Human Cancer," and is being discussed by Richard Clapp, MD, an associate professor at the School of Public Health, and John Constable, MD, a visiting surgeon from Massachusetts General Hospital. The presentation will take place between noon and 1 p.m. in the Atrium C/D Conference Room.

April 26 - The Social Work Grand Rounds topic for this month is "Effective Treatment of Dissociative Disorders," and is being discussed by Daniel Brown, PhD, an associate clinical instructor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. The lecture will be held from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. in the Atrium C/D Conference Room.

April 28 - The 16th annual Hoopathon for Huntington's Disease will be held from 6 a.m. until midnight in the gym of the Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center. See page 5 for details.

**Town meetings**

*continued from page 1*

alliance would give the Hospital access to a much needed primary care base that would serve as a major source of patient referrals. The affiliation would also align the Hospital with one of the strongest and most successful health centers in the state, Abercrombie pointed out.

The partnership with East Boston demonstrates the growing alliance between BUMCH and Boston City Hospital, which already have a 20-year history of academic and clinical collaboration, Abercrombie said. The two sites are currently pursuing joint affiliations with 10 neighborhood health centers, including the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center. It is expected that the East Boston center could divert as many as 2,000 admissions a year to BUMCH and BCH as a result of the Winthrop Hospital acquisition.

The Winthrop Hospital acquisition plan is a risky one, Abercrombie said, "but it's the best risky venture we have explored during the past three years, primarily because it has enormous potential." The Hospital has put in its bid for Winthrop, and stands to spend between \$2.75 and \$3.5 million in investment monies for the facility, he said. This capital outlay would have no effect on the operating budget of the Hospital, Abercrombie stressed. Under the acquisition BUMCH and East Boston would manage Winthrop Hospital, Abercrombie said at the town meeting. The number of medical/surgical beds at the facility would most likely be reduced, and departments such as psychiatry would be operated on a smaller scale. The bulk of the site would function as an ambulatory care center, thereby enabling East Boston to expand, Abercrombie said.

The question of BCH's future, and how BUMCH may be involved in it, has been a point of speculation lately in the local newspapers and in the minds of many Hospital employees. During last month's town meeting sessions, Abercrombie said that the Mayor's Health Care Commission (actually established by former Mayor Raymond Flynn) is expected to recommend to Mayor Thomas Menino that BCH become a private, non-profit institution, and that BCH and BUMCH develop some type of partnership "as quickly as possible," he explained. This suggestion was also put forth in a recent *Boston Herald* editorial.

"My prediction is that if the two of us [BUMCH and BCH] do come together, we have a good chance of doing so by July," Abercrombie said. "In government, for something to happen in less than six months is unbelievably fast. This kind of thing would usually take 10 to 20 years." ■

**Head and neck cancer screening**

The Hospital's Department of Otolaryngology will sponsor a head and neck cancer screening on Wednesday, March 23, from 1 to 4 p.m. Registration will take place in the lobby of the Atrium Pavilion. For more information call the BUMC Cancer HelpLink at 1-800/524-8541.

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The deadline for *Connections* is at noon on the first Friday of each month. Story and photo suggestions should be addressed to Kathryn Jones, in care of the Office of Publication Services, Robinson 7, or call x8-8494 (638-8494). The Office of Publication Services is part of the Department of Marketing/Public Affairs, Boston University Medical Center, Joannie Jaxtimer, director. Copyright © Boston University Medical Center/The University Hospital, Inc. 1994 all rights reserved. Volume 7, Number 3.

**CLASSIFIED**

**For sale:** Five-day, adult ski lift ticket to Okemo ski resort in Vermont. Good all Mondays through Fridays until April (except for holiday periods). Valued at \$150, but will take best offer. Call Susan at 965-0346.

**For rent:** A four-bedroom ski condominium in Sugarbush, Vermont. On the mountain, with a deck and great views.

Weekend or weekly rental. Call 738-8296.

**Need a volunteer?** The Hospital's volunteer department is currently updating and expanding its volunteer base. Julie Arel, the volunteer coordinator, will be contacting all departments to explore a number of volunteer opportunities. If you know a volunteer or if your department would

like the services of one, contact Arel at x8-6855 (638-6855).

**Decided to try contact lenses?** Looking for somewhere close to school or work to get them? Call the Contact Lens Service at the Gundersen Eye Center, x8-8341 (638-8341). Medical Center students and staff get 20 percent off lenses on a new fit.