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Connections: April 1994

CONNECTIONS™

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

Inside

BOSTON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER HOSPITAL

88 East Newton Street
Boston, Massachusetts

Elaine Ullian chosen to lead Boston University Medical Center Hospital

Appointment marks beginning of change

Elaine Ullian's appointment as president and chief executive officer of Boston University Medical Center Hospital, announced at a press conference here last month, marks a momentous turning point in the history of the Medical Center. As was also reported at the event by Boston Mayor Thomas Menino, the Hospital and Boston City Hospital will be merged, and Ullian will play a key role in carrying out this integration.

Hospital President Elaine Ullian speaks during the March 10 press conference.

"This is a great day for the city of Boston," said Menino. "[Ullian] is a woman who understands health care and understands how much change is necessary today in the delivery of services," he said. "She will help me implement the changes that are so necessary for [BUMCH and BCH]. ... I see this merger really strengthening both institutions ... I will implement this change in the very near future."

The former president and chief executive office of Faulkner Hospital, Ullian is the first woman to be named the president of a major teaching hospital in New England, and one of the first in the country. She succeeds J. Scott Abercrombie Jr., MD, who retired from the position he held for 14 years on Friday, March 18 (see related story, this page). She assumed her full-time duties on April 1.

The press conference was held on Thursday, March 10, in a

continued on page 4

Abercrombie's retirement marks end of an era

For 25 years, J. Scott Abercrombie Jr., MD, was a member of the Boston University Medical Center community. And even though he lives minutes away in Brookline, his March 18 retirement as the 14-year president of BUMCH was a bit like moving away from his home, his friends, and what had become his family, he said.

"I care a lot about this Hospital," said Abercrombie. "Deciding to leave it was not easy."

Known for his trademark laboratory coat and bow tie, Abercrombie was a quiet but strong presence at the Hospital.

"People always tried to get me to stop wearing my lab coat when I became president," Abercrombie said. "I don't regret never taking it off—it reminded me of what we were all about." As for the bow tie, Abercrombie admits to trying in vain to "get with it" by wearing long ties as a rule. "It never quite worked," he said.

No matter what was said, Abercrombie was proof that clothes do not make the man. Under his guidance, the Hospital has undergone extensive growth, both in its physical facilities and clinical programs. Through

continued on page 4

Members of the senior management/directors group paid tribute to former Hospital President J. Scott Abercrombie Jr., MD, by wearing lab coats and bow ties to his last leadership meeting in March. Pictured from left are, back row, Richard Morse, Jeff Jenkinson, Bill Kenyon, David Fraser, Terry Kahlert, RN, MS, CNA, Tom Hamelin, RN, MSN, Tony Voislow, Joannie Jaxtimer, Rosemarie Ferri and Miriam Pollack; front row: Donna Vignona, Linda Viano, Debbie Heath-Maki, Abercrombie, Kathleen Murphy, PhD, and Paul Jeffrey, PharmD. Ironically, Abercrombie wore a long tie that day.

Using your telephone to its fullest potential

This is the third article in an ongoing series that provides tips on how to use the Medical Center's telephone and voice mail systems, installed last September, more effectively. The Department of Telecommunications encourages employees to clip and save these articles for future reference.

Helpful hints for voice mail users

☎ How to create a distribution list in your voice mailbox: (A distribution list allows you to send the same message to a selected group of voice mailbox users throughout the Medical Center.)

- From the Main Menu in your mailbox profile, press 4 for Personal Options. Then press 2 for Administrative Options, then press 2 again for Group Lists. Then, press 1 to create a group list.

- You must assign a two-digit number (from 11 to 25) to each group list you want to create. (You can create 10 separate distribution lists with up to 25 mailbox numbers per list.)

- Once your two-digit number is selected, you must record a name for the list. For example, you could name the list "executive committee," or "support staff."

- Now, enter the mailbox number, or spell the last name if you do not have the number, of each person you want on the list.

- You now have the option of reviewing all the names on your list by pressing 1.

- To exit and save your completed list, press *.

- When you want to send a message to a distribution list, press 2 in the Main Menu of your personal mailbox and record your message. Then, send the message to the two-digit list number of your choice. Press # to confirm that the message has been sent.

☎ How to obtain envelope (who sent the message) information while listening to a message or immediately after it ends:

- Press 5 while listening to a message or immediately after the message. You will hear the sender's name if the message is from a Medical Center mailbox user (outside caller will not be identified by name), the date and time the message was sent, how long the message is, and whether it is urgent and/or private. For an archived message, the time given refers to when the message was archived, not when it was sent.

- After playing the envelope information, the voice mail system automatically resumes playing the message where you left off.

Helpful hints for telephone users

☎ How to use the CALL PARK feature in the telephone system: (CALL PARK allows the user to put a call on hold and then retrieve that call from another phone in the system.)

1. Parking a call if you have a model 7410, 7406 or 7444 telephone:

- Press the TRANSFER button. You will then hear a dial tone.

- Press the CALL PARK button, or dial the CALL PARK code, *4. When you hear the confirmation tone, press TRANSFER again, and hang up. The call is now parked at your extension.

2. Parking a call if you have an 8102, 8110 or 2500 single-line desk or wall telephone:

- Press the FLASH button or press the switch hook (the device that hangs up your phone). You will then hear a dial tone.

- Dial the CALL PARK code, *4. You will then hear a confirmation tone.

- Hang up; the call is now parked at your extension.

3. Retrieving a parked call from any telephone:

- Dial the answer back code, 49. You will then hear a dial tone.

- Dial the extension where the call is parked. If you are returning to a call that is parked at your own phone, dial 49 plus your own extension.

- You will hear a short tone, and then you will be connected to the parked call.

If you have questions about any of the information provided above, or if you do not have a user guide for your telephone or voice mail system and would like one, call the Department of Telecommunications at x8-6890.

New Medical Center paging system due next month

The Department of Operator Services is busy installing a new computerized paging system for the entire Medical Center that should be fully operational by early next month. This new paging system offers an enhanced and more complete paging structure, according to Joe DelPonte, the operator services supervisor.

Anyone who uses an in-house short- or long-range beeper will be affected by the changes being made to the paging system, DelPonte said.

With the new system in place, callers outside the Hospital who want to page anybody within the Medical Center will no longer need to go through the Hospital operator. The pager number and the name of the person being paged will be identified by an animated voice when the paging system is activated.

Because the new system is computerized, the Department of Operator Services will make a directory of all Medical Center employees and departments on the paging system. All employees will be receiving this directory next month, DelPonte said. The computerized system also allows for all pages to be documented.

"This new system is going to make paging someone at the Medical Center much more convenient," DelPonte said. Other features such as status messages (telling users whether or not the person they are trying to page is on vacation or whether a physician is in surgery, for example) will also make the system easier for those carrying beepers, he said.

Be watching *Connections* for further details about this new system.

Are your beeper batteries low?

The Department of Operator Services reminds Hospital staff that replacement batteries for all beepers can be obtained at the operator services desk on Atrium 2. The security operations desk on Atrium 1 no longer supplies beeper batteries.

BUMCH celebrates occupational therapy month

April is National Occupational Therapy Month, and the Hospital is planning to take advantage of this celebration to recognize its occupational therapists. Plans are to set up educational displays and to have an occupational therapy open house during the month.

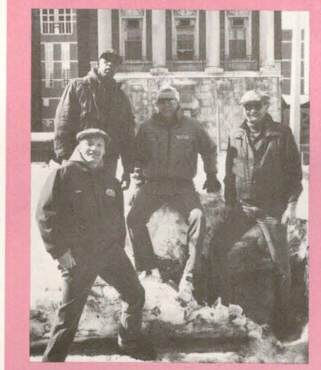
The Hospital's occupational therapy department, which is part of the division of rehabilitation therapies, serves a diverse population of patients within the Hospital. Evaluation and treatment is focused on returning the patients to the highest possible level of functioning and self-sufficiency. To meet this goal, occupational therapists assist patients in daily living skills and equipment management activities.

The department consists of five members: Gwen Berkowsky, the senior occupational therapist in the Department of Psychiatry (Atrium 6 north); Cheryl Finkel, the senior therapist on the spinal cord injury unit (F-5); Nina Robins, the senior therapist on Atrium 8 east (rehabilitation and acute care) and staff occupational therapists Elizabeth Kiernan and Karyn Folwell, who work on acute care, rehabilitation and outpatient units.

For more information about the occupational therapy program, call x8-7869 (638-7869). ■

CONNECTIONS
BOSTON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER HOSPITAL
APRIL 1994

Men for all seasons—especially this winter



Some of this winter's heros are, from left, John Pender, Tyrone Crumble, Frank Tibbetts and Dick McHue.

The snowstorms of winter may be ceding to April rains and the gentle winds of spring, but the winter of 1994 will long be remembered. And while the stormy elements affected many an employee's weekday mornings and evenings, they were, for the eight members of the Medical Campus' buildings and grounds crew, the central focus of many a day from January through March.

Lead by seasoned veteran Dick McHugh, the team took a resolute stance against the elements, keeping clear all of the sidewalks and small parking lots in the Medical Center area, up and down Harrison Avenue and Albany Street from the Boston City Hospital steam station to the Flower Market, up and down East Concord Street and East Newton Street, day in and day out, at 3 a.m., 6 a.m. 10 p.m., weekday or weekend, shoveling, plowing, sanding and salting.

"We do the job until it's done," said McHugh. "That can mean coming in at 2 a.m. to clear the place and then coming back in later in the day. We make sure this place is accessible all the time."

The crew, also responsible for driving the Medical Center shuttle buses, battled the elements on the road, as well, safely transporting members of the BUMC community to the Broadway T station and Lot C under often treacherous conditions.

Whatever the job is, McHugh said, "We have one thing in mind: Get the job done," and that means "getting the people into the Medical Center and out safely. If a storm occurs during the daytime, it's a nightmare. If it's the weekend, it's beautiful."

The crew is made up of a blend of veterans and some new recruits. Anthony Campbell and Neil Baldner have been on board for 21 years, Tyrone Crumble and John Pender for 15 years, Don Moody for 11 years. Two recent additions, from the Charles River Campus, are Frank Tibbetts, who's been at the Medical Campus for two years, and Wayne Wring, who's been here for a year and a half.

"As far as I'm concerned, my guys are a fantastic group," said McHugh. "We know each other's moves. We're together. Everybody helps. No one can beat 'em."

To date, the crew has used 350 yards of a sand/salt mixture, "at a minimum," McHugh said. "We were fortunate," he added. "We got shallow on the salt, but were able to get it."

Now, the crew's thoughts have turned to spring upkeep. With 500 tulip and daffodil bulbs planted by the men last fall, it's getting to be time to "fertilize, cut, line and seed," said McHugh.

When you see the tulips in front of BUSM, on the Evans walkway and in the BUMCH Atrium planters, think of the hands that planted them, and think of the men who helped us all get through the winter to enjoy this spring. ■

It's almost time to Walk for Hunger

It's time to put your best foot forward to help stomp out hunger in Massachusetts. The 25th annual Walk for Hunger is coming up on May 1, and, as has become a tradition, the Hospital will be taking an active stand.

Last year, over 200 employees and their family members joined the walk. "Two hundred was a good number," said Joannie Jaxtimer, director of marketing, communications, and public relations, "but I know we can do better." This year, the Hospital is aiming for 100-percent participation in some way from everyone. Employees can participate through volunteering time before or during the walk, sponsoring a walker, or doing the walk itself.

The problem of hunger in Massachusetts is not going away, said Shoshana Pakciarz, executive director of Project Bread, the non-profit organization that sponsors the Walk for Hunger. This year, one in four children in Massachusetts will experience hunger, she said. Though it seems unlikely that the effort of one individual could make any difference, Pakciarz reports that the efforts of 46,000 individuals walking last year raised a record $3.2 million. The funds, distributed to 464 shelters and soup kitchens statewide, provided 14 million emergency meals for hungry Massachusetts men, women and children.

The Walk for Hunger is the largest annual walkathon in the world, according to Pakciarz. Since its inception in 1969, she said, walkers have trekked a total of miles that would equal 271 trips around the world, raising over $25 million dollars.

"Walking papers" will be available at various points throughout the Hospital. For those who can't wait until May 1 to get involved, plenty of help is needed to facilitate a large Hospital turnout. Call Carol Smith at x8-8914 (638-8914) for more information. ■

While you've got your sneakers on...

Don't forget the 15th annual free-throw Hoopathon for Huntington's Disease, coming up on April 28, and the ninth annual AIDS pledge walk, From All Walks of Life, coming up on June 5.

The Hoopathon is taking place on Thursday, April 28, from 6 a.m. to midnight at the Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Center gymnasium. For information on how to sign on as a shooter or to volunteer to help the day of the event, call x8-8333 (638-8333).

From All Walks of Life, taking place on Sunday, June 5, is a 6.2-mile walk that starts on the Boston Common and ends at the Hatch Shell on the Esplanade. Be watching *Connections* for further details.

PEOPLE

Hospital Chief of Geriatrics **Patricia Barry, MD,** has been appointed as the chief of geriatrics and home care at Boston City Hospital. Her immediate focus as joint chief is to design an integrated geriatrics rotation for all residents in internal medicine. Also of primary interest to Barry in her new role is the implementation of joint BUMCH/BCH studies aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of home care, and the forging of more cooperative clinical programs.

Neva Coakley, the Hospital's concierge, will be competing in the nationally televised USA Petite Model Pageant, to be held from April 20 to 26 at Universal Studios, Calif. She was chosen as a finalist to compete from a field of 15,000 entrants nationwide. Coakley will be featured on the Petite Model poster that will be a part of the 1994 nationwide promotions. In preparation for her trip, Coakley is busy soliciting local sponsors to contribute to her expenses and the contest entry fee.

New CEO

continued from page 1

packed Atrium Pavilion lobby, filled with members of the press and invited guests, with throngs of Medical Center employees ringing the sides of the second floor Atrium balcony.

"[This is a] most important day for the Hospital's future," said Richard Egdahl, MD, PhD, director of the Medical Center.

It was also, said Hospital Board of Trustees chairperson John Valentine, "an exciting and a sad kind of thing. It really marks the changing of the guard. The march of time and circumstances always demand change. We are here today to witness that change."

Ullian, speaking to the crowd with a radiant smile, said, "We have a new vision ahead of us, a much bolder vision, as we start to chart our future.

"The collaboration we are talking about is not new," she said. "What today marks is the beginning of a much broader and more aggressive continuum of what we started. And if you believe geography is destiny, all you have to do is look outside our window and know where our destiny lies.

"I am confident that as we go forward, [we will] make sure our links with the community are so strong that we actually see and help people live healthier lives—that is what it's really all about. ... We are committed to providing excellent health care services to all people in this city and beyond. They expect the very best care, and they deserve it, and we will give it," she said.

Ullian is returning to the Hospital after serving here as the director of planning from 1976 to 1982. In 1980, she worked with Abercrombie on the analysis that led eventually to the plans for the Atrium Pavilion.

She was chosen by the Hospital's Board of Trustees search committee from a list of 35 pre-screened candidates. "One of the definitions of an expert is somebody from out of town," said Valentine. "And what we found is an expert right in our backyard." In an emotional speech, Abercrombie welcomed Ullian to her new post, calling her a "superb" choice to succeed him. "Mrs. Ullian's political savvy, her well-honed networking skills, and her experience as a manager, consultant and hospital executive in our marketplace are sure to benefit this campus," he said. "It is a pleasure to welcome back one of our own and I hope that you will join me in lending Mrs. Ullian our utmost support and confidence."

Ullian was the mayor's representative on the Mayor's Health Care Commission, and served on the Menino Transition Team as the chairperson of the Health, Family and Youth Services Committee. Menino influenced Ullian's decision to accept the BUMCH leadership position, she said.

The Atrium lobby and first floor balcony were full of spectators (left) as Hospital President Elaine Ullian and Boston Mayor Thomas Menino applaud former President J. Scott Abercrombie Jr., MD, for his many years of service to BUMCH (above).

Menino's declaration that BUMCH and BCH will merge came on the heals of the announcement of the Mayor's Health Care Commission recommendations for BCH on Monday, March 7. The commission, established by former Mayor Raymond Flynn, recommended that BUMCH and BCH move forward with their plans to integrate the Boston University Medical Campus.

Ullian holds a master's of public health degree from the University of Michigan's School of Public Health and a bachelor's degree from Tufts University's Jackson College in Boston. She presently resides in Brookline with her husband and two sons. ■

Abercrombie retires

continued from page 1

his leadership, the Hospital opened its doors to its new core patient-care complex–the eight-story Atrium Pavilion.

Most recently, Abercrombie initiated a partnership between BUMCH and Boston University to create BioSquare, the city's second largest construction undertaking in the past two years. BioSquare is expected to serve as a primary focal point for Boston's emerging biomedical/biotechnology industry.

And though he has seen this Hospital through good times and bad, Abercrombie knew his time to step down had come last year when health care reform threatened to change health care as he knows it.

"This is a time for new leadership, a new way of looking at things," Abercrombie said last August when he announced his intentions to retire.

Perhaps Board of Trustees Chairperson John Valentine put it best when he referred to the appointment of the new Hospital president as both exciting and sad during the press conference announcing Elaine Ullian's arrival.

And perhaps many employees didn't realize what this significant shift really means to Abercrombie until he bid farewell with an emotional speech during that same press conference on Thursday, March 10.

Members of the Medical Center community bid their farewell to Abercrombie during a breakfast on Friday, March 18 (see related photos, page 5). School of Medicine Dean Aram Chobanian, Hospital escorter Jenny Thomas and Chief of Anesthesiology Marcelle Willock, MD, were among those to present Abercrombie with gifts and share parting words.

Though it may be hard, Abercrombie says he intends to make a "clean break" from the Hospital industry. His plans for the future include doing volunteer work for charitable institutions.

Abercrombie joined the Hospital staff in 1970 as director of the Department of Laboratory Medicine. A pathologist, he received his medical degree from the University of Arkansas School of Medicine in 1951. ■

CONNECTIONS
BOSTON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER HOSPITAL
APRIL 1994

Medical Center bids farewell to Abercrombie

Scores of Medical Center employees visited the Atrium Dining Pavilion on Friday, March 18, between 7:30 and 9:30 a.m. to say goodbye to former Hospital President J. Scott Abercrombie Jr., MD.

During the breakfast, Chief of Anesthesiology Marcelle Willock, MD, read a sonnet that she wrote on behalf of the Medical/Dental staff for Abercrombie. It is reprinted below.

The guest of honor.

A Sonnet for
J. Scott Abercrombie Jr., MD

How do we extol thee? Let
me count the ways ...
We treasure the depth of your
concern for fellow man
We value the breadth of your service
to the organization ...
We laud your toil all these many
days
We admire your modesty as you
turn from praise ...
We esteem the quiet passion and
steadfast trust ...
For although your labor did
not bestow
A balanced budget and our
income grow,
To University Hospital, you gave
your all as need you saw
and for that
We give great thanks to this man
from Arkansas.

By Marcelle Willock, MD, on behalf of the Medical/Dental Staff

Anna Bissonnette, RN, says her goodbye to Abercrombie.

Nutrition services cafe worker Shirley Texeira offers Abercrombie some parting words.

Abercrombie and School of Medicine Dean Aram Chobanian shake hands.

Abercrombie holds aloft his gift from the Medical/Dental Staff.

Vice President of Nursing Maura Mitchell, RN, MEd, presents Abercrombie with a folding plaque from the nursing department.

Hospital escorter Jenny Thomas gives Abercrombie a hug.

Mayor's Health Care Commission recommends merger, Menino agrees

Boston Mayor Thomas Menino has declared his intention to merge Boston University Medical Center Hospital and Boston City Hospital, a move recommended by a report issued by the Mayor's Health Care Commission last month and supported by the Hospital leadership.

Menino disclosed this plan during the BUMCH press conference held on Thursday, March 10, to announce the appointment of new BUMCH President and Chief Executive Officer Elaine Ullian.

The 50-page commission report was released on Monday, March 7, three days before Menino revealed the intended merger. The report said that BUMCH and BCH need to merge into a single administrative and legal entity if both are to prosper in Boston's increasingly competitive health care market.

The plan for a merger, which has been speculated upon for months within both institutions and in the press, is something that former Hospital President J. Scott Abercrombie Jr., MD, had envisioned and hoped for during his 14-year tenure. "It can't happen too soon," he said the day the report was released.

"We view the commission's recommendations as an endorsement of the policy and direction that the leaders of the Medical Center have established over the years," said John Valentine, chairperson of the Hospital Board of Trustees. "Such an endorsement by the leaders of the city's other health care institutions is particularly important in this highly competitive era."

For more than 20 years, the School of Medicine has been the sole academic partner of BCH. In the past several years, the institutions have unified clinical departments and have been jointly recruiting leaders to serve BUMCH, BCH and the School of Medicine both clinically and academically.

"Our cooperative efforts during the past two decades were important factors leading to the commission's recommendations," said BUSM Dean Aram Chobanian, who was a member of the commission. "A more integrated system will optimize the talents and strengths of each institution so that they can compete in a changing health care environment and continue to serve the needs of the community. Such integration and cooperation is the future of health care and the hallmark of health care reform," he said.

The commission, brought together by former Boston Mayor Raymond Flynn, issued its comprehensive report on Monday, March 7. Among its other recommendations for changing Boston's public health care delivery system were that the city should consolidate its 25 community health centers into fewer, larger community care networks and that BCH should double the number of primary care doctors in its referral network. The commission recommended that these changes begin within the coming year.

Menino has called the report an "excellent" one, and that he and his administration will implement as many of the recommended changes as possible. ■

A dozen years of swapping ties

It was a tight fit, but 21 employees managed to squeeze into the systems and programs area on Vose 1 to participate in the 12th annual Pete Gouger Tie Swap on Friday, Feb. 18, hosted yearly by the Department of Management Informational Services. A record number of 115 ties were brought in for the exchange. Event founder and former Hospital employee Gouger, pictured in top left photo in the front row wearing a striped jacket and floral tie, was among those who participated. Pictured at bottom left and below, Ken Zweig, a programmer analyst, and Paul Ross, a senior programmer analyst, make their selections respectively.

National Volunteer Week celebration planned

According to the most recent Gallup poll, 94.2 million adults volunteered a total of 20.5 billion hours in 1991, at an estimated value of $176 billion. Since Jan. 1, BUMCH's volunteers have donated a total of 1,152 hours of their time to patients by volunteering in at least 15 departments.

In observation of National Volunteer Week (April 17 to April 23) the Volunteer Services Department will hold its annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on Tuesday, April 19. This event is just one opportunity that the Hospital takes to honor and thank its volunteers for their generosity and commitment to BUMCH, said Julie Arel, volunteer coordinator.

"Although National Volunteer Week provides a good opportunity to formally recognize the contributions made by volunteers," said Arel, "the men and women who donate their time should be commended every day they volunteer."

CONNECTIONS
BOSTON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER HOSPITAL
APRIL 1994

Laser Center removes tattoos and age spots

After a year of testing various laser treatments for the removal of tattoos, age spots and other pigmented skin leisions, the Laser Center staff has chosen what it considers to be the safest and most effective laser.

"We've tried six different lasers over the last 12 months," said Cathy Formosi, RN, of the Laser Center, located in the Doctors Office Building (DOB 915). "It took a while to weed through all of the often misleading claims made by some companies as to what their lasers could do."

The center has purchased the Spectrum Q-switched Ruby Laser, which offers state-of-the-art removal of such skin lesions as age spots, freckles, flat brown birth marks and tattoos. The laser procedure is a safe, non-invasive technique that produces permanent results.

"Pigmented lesions usually require only one to two treatments," said Formosi. "Tattoos usually require four to six." The average procedure takes only 10 to 15 minutes, and does not require anesthesia.

Patients have been very happy with the results, says Formosi.

The Laser Center is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information and/or to make an appointment, call Formosi at x8-5277 (638-LASR). ■

Hospital laser safety officer Shawn Trainor uses the Laser Center's new laser to remove a patient's tattoo. The tattoo will disappear after about four to six such treatments.

Higgins does her part for Bosnia

The battle that Bosnian medical personnel are fighting to heal their sick and wounded countrymen is a war in and of itself. And BUMCH Emergency Department nurse Kathy Higgins, RN, is doing her part to keep her colleagues there well-armed.

Here at the Hospital, Higgins has been collecting surplus and reusable surgical materials, packing them up, and sending them to her colleagues in the Balkans. She has been doing so since last fall under the auspices of the World Medical Mission, a non-profit agency based in North Carolina that sends needed medical supplies to troubled countries abroad. She learned about the program through an advertisement in the *Journal of Emergency Nursing*.

"[The advertisement] said that, in Bosnia, doctors and nurses were making dressings from torn sheets, and using anything they could find for splints," Higgins said. "But when I read that they have to use fishing line for suture, it just blew my mind. We were going through some rough times [with layoffs] here last summer, but I thought it was nothing compared to what these people are going through." With that in mind, Higgins clipped the three-page advertisement from the magazine, and brought it to work with her.

Now, in the right-hand corner of the Emergency Department (ED) kitchen, there is a large cardboard box used to collect medical supplies for Bosnia. Taped to the wall above it is a copy of the advertisement, which includes a list of what stock is needed there. Higgins, and other ED staff members have filled three such boxes since late last year, and Higgins has taped them up and mailed them to the World Medical Mission, in North Carolina, which then sends them on to Bosnia.

"I had to do something," said Higgins. "My grandmother, who is 86, taught me charity when I was young." Higgins said her grandmother still collects things for the poor.

"There are a lot of things we usually throw away that can be recycled and used in Bosnia," Higgins said. For example, unfinished packs of gauze that have been used here are no longer sterile and must not be used again, but in Bosnia, anything clean is valuable, she said. The same is true with suture and other dressing materials. Slings, neck collars and splints that must be thrown away after use on a patient here can be shipped to Bosnia if they are clean.

Other Hospital departments may be throwing away materials that could be used for medical purposes in Bosnia also, Higgins said, and she urges Hospital employees to contact her for more information about the World Medical Mission program. (Higgins can be reached by calling x8-6240.) By sending surplus and reusable materials abroad, employees can help those in need and save the Hospital time and money, Higgins said. Here, medical waste has to be specially packaged before it is thrown away, and getting rid of it is expensive, she said. In addition, Higgins said she knows efforts to help are appreciated: She has received letters from the World Medial Mission thanking her for sending materials. ■

Emergency Department nurse Kathy Higgins, RN, left, with help from Eric Courcy, assistant orthopedic technician, Mattie Austin, chief orthopedic technician, and ED nurse Jack Twomey, RN, packs boxes of reusable Hospital materials to send to Bosnia.

Hospital teleservice phone lines a ringing success

In the Department of Physician and Affiliate Services, the phones hardly ever stop ringing, but staff members, and the Hospital, certainly don't mind.

Nine months ago Boston University Medical Center launched three teleservice lines—the "BUMC Physician Consult Center," the BUMC "Health Connection," and "BUMC Cancer HelpLink." Today, all three are now fully operational and are generating patient referrals to the Hospital.

The physician consult center teleservice number was displayed recently on the first two WBZ-TV channel 4 "Health Matters" programs that aired in January, and generated over 200 calls to the BUMC Physician Consult Center, according to Joannie Jaxtimer, director of marketing, communications and public relations. The shows featured Joseph Loscalzo, MD, chief of cardiology, who discussed heart attacks, and Helen Hollingsworth, MD, director of asthma and allergy services, who discussed new treatment options for asthma. "Health Matters" is a series of 30-minute, consumer-oriented shows sponsored by the Hospital. Nine other BUMCH physicians will participate in upcoming programs.

Health Connection and BUMC Cancer HelpLink are also producing. Both lines have yielded total gross charges billed for Hospital medical service of over $350,000 during their first eight months of operation, says Rosemarie Ferri, director of the Department of Physician and Affiliate Services.

The BUMC Physician Consult Center (1-800/682-2862) provides referring physicians with assistance in arranging patient referrals to BUMC staff, including outpatient appointments. BUMC Cancer HelpLink (1-800/524-8541) is a free and confidential teleservice line designed for anyone curious about cancer, and the BUMC Health Connection (617/638-6767) provides the consumer with general health care information. ■

CONNECTIONS

BOSTON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER HOSPITAL
APRIL 1994

Coming up...

April marks the celebration of Cancer Control Month, National Occupational Therapy Month, National Medical Laboratory Week (April 11 to 17) and National Volunteer Week (April 17 to 23). Patriots Day is observed on April 18.

Events to look forward to this month are:

April 22 - The Cancer Prevention and Control Grand Rounds topic for April is **"Agent Orange and Human Cancer,"** and it 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 23 - Watch for Alice Jacobs, MD, director of cardiac catheterization, at 2:30 p.m. on WBZ-TV channel 4. Jacobs will be an expert guest on **"Health Matters,"** a health and medical news series sponsored by BUMCH. She will be discussing "Women and Healthy Hearts."

April 26 + 27 - The Department of Urology is offering **free prostate cancer screenings** on April 26 from 1 to 4 p.m. and April 27 from 9 a.m. to noon. Walk-in registration will take place in the Atrium Pavilion. For more information, call BUMC Cancer HelpLink at 1-800/524-8541.

April 27 - In honor of Support Staff Appreciation Day, there will be a **Support Staff Appreciation Breakfast** from 8 to 10 a.m. in Function Rooms A and B of the SkyLight Dining Pavilion. All Hospital support staff members are invited to attend the the buffet style breakfast, and all will receive a free gift

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. For more information, call May Long at x8-3333 (638-8333).

April 29 - The Friends of Boston University Medical Center Hospital, in conjunction with ValuSource, Ltd. of Boston, will be hosting a one-day **fine jewelry extravaganza** to benefit the Hospital from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Function Rooms A and B of the SkyLight Dining Pavilion. This special $1 million jewelry show will feature karat gold and sterling silver jewelry, earrings, rings, bracelets and watches for men and women at reduced prices. All merchandise is supported by a full-year warranty.

Looking ahead...

May 1-The 25th annual **Walk For Hunger** to benefit the hungry in Massachusetts starts from between 7 and 9 a.m. on the Boston Common, rain or shine. Walking papers will soon be available at various locations around the Hospital.

May 5 - To celebrate **National Nurses Week** (May 6 to 12), the Department of Nursing will be recognizing staff for professional growth accomplishments during morning and afternoon nursing recognition ceremonies.

May 13 - **World Class Commuting Day** will be celebrated with a flurry of activities on the H-2 bridge. Be sure to stop by for free popcorn and information about commuting to work.

May 18 - The Department of Training and Development is sponsoring a course entitled **"Managing Excellent Customer Service,"** a workshop that will explore such topics as defining customers and setting standards for performance. The course will be taught from 1 to 4 p.m. in Training Room 2 (C-214). For further information, call Trip Folland at x8-8897 (638-8897).

May 19 - **Charter Day**, the commemoration of the Hospital's 139th "birthday," marks the day in 1855 when the Hospital received its charter from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

May 20 - The Cancer Prevention and Control Grand Rounds topic for this month is **"Pap Smears and Cervical Cancer Screening in Inner-City Populations,"** and will be discussed by Linda Clayton, MD, director of gynecologic oncology at Meharry Medical School. The presentation will take place between noon and 1 p.m. in the Atrium C/D Conference Room.

Denotes a BUMCH "Charity Begins at Home" fundraising event.

Prize-winning commutes for ten #10 riders

ITMA co-directors Susan Hancox, left, and Bill Gasper, along with BUMC Transportation Coordinator Maureen Flaherty, back, gathered with three of the ten #10 bus promotion winners Laura Savage, of the Gundersen Eye Center (third from left), Goldman School of orthodontics student and grand prize winner Astrid Ruebenstahl, and Roland Meadows, of Boston City Hospital's Department of Managed Care.

Riding the #10 MBTA bus on one of a number of days during December and January proved to be a good commuting decision for 10 members of the South End Medical Area community. Under a promotion sponsored by the medical area's Interinstitutional Transportation Management Association (ITMA), these 10 riders were randomly bestowed prizes, ranging from a combined reward of a dozen Mrs. Fields cookies and two movie passes, to a grand prize of a getaway weekend at the Westin Hotel, at Copley Place.

ITMA sponsored the #10 bus promotion to make members of the medical area community aware that the bus's service has increased in frequency to every 15 minutes during peak hours. The bus runs between Copley Station Green Line and Andrew Square Red Line, making stops at Back Bay Station (with its connections to the Commuter Rail and Orange Line) and the Medical Center.

"Getting this increased service was a very satisfying accomplishment for us," said BUMC transportation coordinator Maureen Flaherty. "We negotiated with the MBTA throughout the summer. The snowstorms certainly challenged the buses, but the added frequency helped even in winter conditions."

The ITMA consortium, made up of representatives from the Medical Center and Boston City Hospital, is working to improve public transportation services to, and decrease the use of automobiles in, the medical area. The need to decrease the use of automobiles has been prompted by the grim statistics on automobile emissions in the Boston area and the traffic congestion projected as work proceeds on the Central Artery/Third Harbor Tunnel project.

The #10 bus promotion was strongly supported by local businesses, who sponsored the prizes. The awards included gift certificates to two local restaurants, The Claddagh and Claremont Cafe, a chocolate mousse cake from Rebecca's, on Harrison Avenue, a gift certificate for Tokyo Blues, a Victorian gift shop in the South End, and a gift certificate to the new Charlesbank Health Sciences Bookshop on Albany Street. The grand prize weekend at the Westin Hotel included two nights lodging, use of the swimming pool and health club, and complimentary discount shopping at Copley Place shops.

The prizes were awarded randomly, mostly during commuting hours, by "mystery riders" (members of the ITMA board and assistants). The recipients represented many constituencies of the medical area, including a School of Public Health staff member, medical and dental students and employees of BUMC Hospital and Boston City Hospital. ■

Connections, the monthly newspaper of Boston University Medical Center Hospital, is published by the BUMC Office of Publication Services. Writer/editor, Kathryn Jones; staff designer, Sergio Peruyera; photographer, Lucy Milne of the Boston University School of Medicine Educational Media Center. Additional photos for this issue by Tracey Russo and David Keough, both of the BUSM Educational Media Center, and David Herwaldt.

Departmental correspondents: Mary Chin, social services; Edward Christiansen Jr., legal counsel; Deborah Heath-Maki, development; Doug Baker, food and nutrition services; Daniel Wilson, human resources; Jeff Jenkinson, financial planning; Anita King, nursing; Neva Coakley, facilities and hospitality services; Kathleen Murphy, laboratory services, and Margaret Polito, home medical service.

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.

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CLASSIFIED

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).

Want to lose weight? BUMC employees can watch their weight at work with the Weight Loss Workshop. Small group workshops meet every Thursday from 12 to 1 p.m. in the Evans Nutrition Group clinic (DOB-607). The cost of the workshop is $15 per meeting, or $50 a month. For more information, contact Terry Ford, RN, at x8-5980 (638-5980).