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PHOTOS: CLIFFORD DOKR

Framing Our Hospital's Future

STEEL is flying up at the construction site of the new Martha's Vineyard Hospital after a productive season which saw critical work on the foundation completed. Connie Bulman, clerk of the works for the project, is pleased with the summer's work and the way the construction teams have come together. "I've overseen many hospital construction projects, and I'm very impressed by the general contractors, Columbia Construction," he says, "and with the subcontractors."

An important milestone for the new 90,000 square-foot Hospital this past summer was the completion of a part of the building that most people will never see: the concrete basement slab, water-tight and two feet thick.

The basement slab, weighing in at 2.5 million pounds, represented perhaps the biggest engineering challenge of the entire Hospital project. "More than 600 yards of concrete went into that job," says Mr. Bulman. "All of it came from Goodale Construction Co., Inc. – and they kept right up with us."

The basement will house the Hospital's mechanical equipment, and its slab is also a structural component supporting the two floors above. "This was worth all the time and effort," Mr. Bulman says, "because now the basement is completely water-proof." With the foundation finished in August, the contractors were able to advance to the next highly visible step: erecting the new Hospital's steel frame. A six-man crew is assembling girders fabricated in New Hampshire, transported by ferry, and delivered to the site by Cape Cod Express, piece by numbered piece, as they're requested. "By late November," says Mr. Bulman, "we should have the frame up, which will allow us to wrap the building and winterize it so we can work inside."

As pleased as he is with all the progress on the building project, Mr. Bulman says there's something that satisfies him even more: the quality of care and service the Hospital staff has continued to provide

during this time of disruption. "Behind the scenes," he says, "a lot of people are making this whole project easier. Our employees are parking off-site to make room for patient parking, which really makes a difference. During the peak summer season we were able to accommodate all of our patients, even though our major parking areas are temporarily closed." He gives particular credit to the Hospital's parking attendants, Cherrie Nunes and Denise Brouillette.



Cherrie Nunes, Patient Information & Parking Aide

abutters. "We're really trying to be a better neighbor and I believe we've resolved a number of long-standing issues. I think our neighbors feel more like there's someone on this side who's looking out for them."

He concludes, "Sure, it's great to see the building finally going up, but when I look back at this year and ask myself, what did we really accomplish? – I'd say keeping this place accessible for patients and building a positive relationship with our neighbors. That's what gives me the most satisfaction." ♦

For the latest information about access to MVH, and an updated map of the parking areas, please visit: mvhospital.com/map

View our construction progress through the webcam at www.mvhospital.com

Capturing the Best Image for the Best Diagnosis



Peggy Ekholm B.A.

PEGGY EKHOLM, the director of diagnostic imaging at Martha's Vineyard Hospital, remembers when "seeing" inside the human body was limited to what could be viewed on an x-ray. Although the sign in the Hospital hallway still says Radiology, inside the doors is an array of gear unimaginable just a generation ago.

"As technology advances," says Ms. Ekholm, "there's more information. That's why, particularly for the CT scans and MRI exams that are complicated, it's extremely important to have specialists read them." Ms. Ekholm says the partnership of Martha's Vineyard Hospital with Massachusetts

General Hospital couldn't have happened at a better time. Every day, images scanned on the Island are read by some of the nation's leading specialists, who then consult with Island doctors on the best strategies for patient care.

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New Service Targets Arterial Disease

MICHAEL R. JAFF, DO, medical director of the Massachusetts General Hospital Vascular Center, has recently joined the MV Hospital medical staff as part of the Hospital's initiative to promote awareness and treatment of Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD).

PAD is a serious circulatory condition involving blood vessels in the legs. PAD results in narrowing the arteries that carry blood to the legs and can cause discomfort while walking or standing. In some cases, blood clots also can form and attach themselves to artery walls. The presence of PAD may indicate a blockage of arteries leading to the heart and brain, thus increasing the risk of heart attack and/or stroke.

A Parks Flo-Lab Vascular Doppler System has been added to the imaging department. This equipment measures blood pressure at multiple points in the body to assess the severity of arterial disease. A treadmill has also recently been installed in the department to help identify the early stages of PAD. Evaluating blood flow before, during and after exercise, and assessing the patient's level of leg pain will aid Dr. Jaff and the staff to diagnose and treat patients here at our Hospital. ♦



Dr. Michael R. Jaff

"Our exams from here are read by MGH specialists," she explains, "so if it's a scan of the head, it's read by a neuro-radiologist; if it's a knee, it's going to a radiologist specializing in orthopedics."

Images from the emergency department at Martha's Vineyard Hospital can be reviewed at Mass General in real time, which is critical in cases of trauma or suspected stroke. Responding to a possible stroke, Ms. Ekholm says, "Our ER staff pages a neurologist at Mass General Hospital, and the CT scan is transmitted to their radiology department where a neuro-radiologist reviews the film. Our physicians can then consult with MGH neurologists and using MV Hospital's telemedicine equipment, together interview and evaluate the patient."

Images from the Hospital's CT scanner can instantly reveal everything from a bleed in the brain to a spleen that's been lacerated in an accident. Ms. Ekholm explains, "The scan has terrific contrast, distinguishing between tissues that differ in density."

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Lynn Mercer,
CLS (NCA)
MV Hospital
Laboratory
Manager



PHOTO BY BETSY CORSIGLIA

Hospital Lab Takes Pride in Its Work

THE WORK of Martha's Vineyard Hospital's laboratory is conducted quietly and fastidiously, away from the hustle and bustle of the rest of the Hospital. But Lynn Mercer, manager of the lab since 1997, says her team feels deeply connected to the Hospital's work.

The laboratory processes and analyzes close to 50,000 specimens every year – 60 percent of them from outpatients, and 40 percent from patients in the emergency department and on the inpatient care unit.

The rhythms of an ordinary day in the lab reflect the range of responsibilities which fall to this department. The day begins at 7 a.m. with a wave of people coming in to give blood specimens after fasting overnight for a cholesterol test.

In the afternoon, the work tends to be less routine. "That's often when we start

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Give Blood: Save Lives



RECENTLY, while preparing a report to share with colleagues, MVH lab manager, Lynn

Mercer was surprised to discover that in 2007 the Hospital transfused 375 units of blood, while the Red Cross Blood Mobile programs that year drew only 278 Island donors. "That means we didn't even offset the needs of our own community," says Ms. Mercer. "Knowing that, I hope people will realize that as a community, we really need to step up."

2009 Red Cross Blood Drives
Tuesday, January 27 & Tuesday, April 28
12 Noon to 5:30 p.m.
Portuguese American Club
Vineyard Avenue, Oak Bluffs

Life at Windemere: A Perfect Synergy

WINDEMERE Nursing & Rehabilitation Center has all the advantages of being located on a hospital campus. But Windemere is also very much its own place with a home-like atmosphere in which residents can make real choices about their daily activities. The range of those choices and activities might surprise you.

This summer, for example, Lucinda Chandler of Trike Panther Travel Adventures brought her high-tech recumbent tricycles to Windemere and introduced some of the residents to riding. "People were lining up to ride the trikes," recalls Ken Chisholm, director of Windemere. "This program was a real hit."



In other popular programs this year, Clarissa Allen of Allen Sheep Farm in Chilmark visited Windemere's new outdoor mobility park with an armful of spring lambs and Barbara Ronchetti of Island Alpaca visited with baby alpacas. This past summer, Windemere residents also went on several outings – including a classical music concert at the Tabernacle, an afternoon of drumming on the

beach with Rick Bausman, a trip to the Agricultural Fair in West Tisbury and to Illumination Night in Oak Bluffs.

It's all about making connections, Mr. Chisholm says – among residents, between residents and staff, and between Windemere and the Island community. "We often see people blossom when they move to Windemere from a life alone at home," Mr. Chisholm says. "There's so much going on here, a social aspect to life that is more interesting. We try to get our residents out to as many community events and activities as we can."

And inside the walls of Windemere, there are more and more new activities. This spring Nancy and Peter Shemeth of Edgartown donated a Wii game set to the center, and now residents are at the wide screen almost every day, enjoying some of their favorite activities – bowling, golf and tennis among them.

Playing the Wii games fits well with Windemere's emphasis on keeping folks as active as they can be. "We're really working to keep people independent," Mr. Chisholm says. "In our walking program, ten or twelve people go walking with someone from rehab, even if it's just through the corridors of the Hospital. We've also launched a new cognitive therapy program to improve residents' mental functioning and help them reach a higher level of independence."

There are challenges to running a nursing home here – the costs of labor and staff housing are especially problematic – but there are great rewards. "It's not just Windemere," says Mr. Chisholm, "it's the way this whole community comes together for our residents." He points, for example, to the generous way Islanders volunteered in helping landscape the outdoor mobility center overlooking Brush Pond. "Windemere, the Hospital and the Island community work very well together. It's a beautiful synergy." ♦

For information about volunteer opportunities at Windemere, please contact the MVH Volunteer Office: 508 693-0410 ext. 218



Windemere resident Betty Carlson clearly enjoys her ride on the recumbent tricycle.

PHOTOS: TODD LYONNAIS



PHOTO BY BETSY CORSIGLIA

The staff of the Martha's Vineyard Hospital Center for Women's Health from left to right: Dr. Linda Stewart; certified nurse midwife Cathy Chase with Julia Cardoso da Silva; Dr. S. Patrick Donegan; and certified nurse midwife Nancy Leport

Welcome Dr. Stewart New Physician joins the MV Hospital Center for Women's Health

MARTHA'S Vineyard Hospital is pleased to announce the arrival of Dr. Linda S. Stewart, who joins the practice of Dr. S. Patrick Donegan at MVH Center for Women's Health.

Dr. Stewart has been a practicing OB/GYN for 18 years – in San Diego, and more recently in North Conway, N.H., where she co-founded the Northern Women's Healthcare Center. When Dr. Stewart heard about the opening at Martha's Vineyard Hospital, she paid a visit. "I was tremendously impressed," she says. "There's a very solid staff here – competent and talented. I felt comfortable immediately. This just felt right, from the first time I walked into the Hospital. It felt like a natural move for me."

Dr. Stewart, a native of California, first trained as a nurse. She put herself through pre-med and then was accepted to medical school at the University of California, Davis. There, she recalls, she experienced a rotation in OB/GYN, and almost immediately knew this would be her career. She recalls thinking, "It was such a nice mix – the opportunity to do surgery as well as provide primary care, and I really enjoyed working with women."

"There's a very solid staff here – competent and talented. I felt comfortable immediately. This just felt right, from the first time I walked into the Hospital."

Looking forward to her Vineyard practice, Dr. Stewart says, "I don't expect there will be much of a steep learning curve for me here. This is a rural practice, in a highly seasonal setting, with two doctors and two midwives – exactly like my practice of the past dozen years in New Hampshire."

Her years in New Hampshire, Dr. Stewart says, have given her a set of clinical skills that's both broad and deep. She speaks with a quiet confidence when she says, "A big part of being a seasoned doctor is knowing what you can do and what you can't do." She added that she is thrilled about the affiliation with Massachusetts General Hospital.

Dr. Stewart says her approach to her practice here will be straightforward. "I'm a big believer in health maintenance and preventive medicine. I enjoy what I do, and I treat my patients the way I'd like to be treated. Part of my goal is to help women find the answers to their health issues and offer current treatment options as well as to reassure and support them." ♦

Martha's Vineyard Hospital Center for Women's Health:
508 696-7294

Imaging *continued from page 2*

Each year the imaging department performs about 20,000 exams – many of them involving hundreds of images – and the x-ray and CT gear are only two tools among many. If you pay a visit to diagnostic imaging, you'll need a scorecard to keep track of all the cutting-edge gear. Here's the short list:

- The Hospital's MRI unit is the Siemens Symphony, a 1.5-tesla machine that represents the standard of care in the industry. Says Ms. Ekholm, "The company that provides the service for us, Alliance Imaging, also has MRI units at Massachusetts General Hospital, and we use MGH protocols for all of our exams."

- The Hospital's bone densitometer can assess bone health, diagnose osteoporosis and measure

the mass and distribution of fat, tissue and bone.

- The Vivid 7 echo/vascular sonography machine, just updated in December, is GE's latest unit. Says Ms. Ekholm, "We're able to do many kinds of assessments with that. You can see how well the heart muscle squeezes, so if somebody had an infarct – a death of heart tissue – you're able to see what the ventricular function is." It's such an advanced piece of equipment, it was a challenge to recruit a technician skilled in its use.

- The GE Logic 9 Ultrasound is another tool the Hospital upgraded to the latest version in December. "You can see so much more detail now," Ms. Ekholm says. "With this ultrasound, we can look for deep vein thrombosis in people with leg pain to rule out a clot – that's

a common exam requested by the emergency department."

- The Hospital's mammography equipment will be upgraded to digital in the new building. "What we do have today," says Ms. Ekholm, "is a radiologist, Dr. Deb Hall, who comes here from Massachusetts General Hospital on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, providing a comprehensive mammography clinic here on the Island. Dr. Hall can do both screenings and diagnostics, including biopsies, right here at MVH."

Says Ms. Ekholm, "Providing all this advanced diagnostic equipment, helped along by our affiliation with MGH, is part of Martha's Vineyard Hospital's continuing mission to bring state-of-the-art health care to the Vineyard community." ♦

Laboratory *continued from page 2*

to see sicker patients," says Ms. Mercer. "They are people who have gone to their doctor because they're monitoring a problem, or they aren't well." And of course, urgent work for inpatients and ER patients can come into the lab at any time.

"The work we do for inpatients and the ER is usually done on a more expedited basis," says Ms. Mercer. "But even in our outpatient lab work, most of it is completed on the same day it arrives."

Martha's Vineyard Hospital's lab may be small, but it provides sophisticated services.

"We have to be able to offer tests that are critical," explains Ms. Mercer, "even though we may only be asked to do them a few times a year. For example, we don't get many victims of house fires, but we have to be ready to do a carboxy-hemoglobin test, to evaluate how much carbon monoxide a person has breathed in. That's something so critical, we just can't say, 'we'll get those results for you tomorrow'. We have to have the instruments and skills for that

every day, even if it's only needed a few times a year."

The Hospital lab handles 90 percent of all specimen testing in-house, referring only 10 percent to specialized laboratories off-Island. The one battery of tests that consumes fully half the lab's budget for outside work, not surprisingly, is for the widespread Island problem of tick-borne diseases.

Ms. Mercer, who first came to the Hospital to work as a bench technician and has been on the staff full-time since 1984, takes great satisfaction from her work. "I love my job," she says, "and I take great pride in my staff's ability to take a difficult situation and make it seem easy."

"Although we're behind closed doors, dealing with specimens in the lab all day, everyone here understands completely that there's a human being at the other end of that specimen. We're helping people, and we take pride in the contributions we make every day to health care on the Vineyard." ♦

Celebrate the 25th Annual Tree of Lights

THIS YEAR the MV Hospital Auxiliary's Tree of Lights fund raiser – a revered Island holiday tradition – celebrates its 25th anniversary. Every December the 30-foot fir tree in front of the Hospital has been lit with hundreds of red and white lights, each donated by an individual in honor or in memory of a loved one.

Last year construction of the new hospital began, and the grand old fir tree was moved off-site. Determined to continue the tradition, the Auxiliary prepared a temporary Tree of Lights on the Hospital

campus that will be lit during this and every holiday season until construction is done.

- For a \$15 contribution, place a light on the tree for the 2008 season.
- For a \$150 contribution, your light will shine in perpetuity.

Download a Contribution Form from our website by going to mvhospital.com/tol, or call the MV Hospital Auxiliary Volunteer Office: 508 693-0410 ext 218. Contribution Forms will also be in the local newspapers.

**Please Join Us in a Celebration of the 25th Anniversary
at Our Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony
Wednesday, December 10th • 4:00 p.m. • Hospital Main Lobby**

Go Green, Save Paper – If you would prefer to receive our newsletter via email, please contact csylva@mvhospital.org at the Development Office or call us at 508-693-4645.



**MARTHA'S
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HOSPITAL**

*An Affiliate of
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