

MCGHealth completes first kidney paired donation



Pictured are (left to right) the paired donation participants: Lee and Gretchen Kingery of Pulaski, Ga., Jay Weenig of Colorado and his stepdaughter Lessa Ennis of Texas.

When Gretchen Kingery of Pulaski, Ga., found out she was not a match to donate a kidney to her husband Lee, she was disappointed, but she didn't give up.

Thousands of miles across the country in Texas, Lessa

Ennis faced a similar situation. She wanted to give a kidney to her stepfather Jay Weenig, who lives in Colorado, but the two were incompatible.

So the families took a bold new step to save their loved ones – they traded donors. Lessa Ennis flew to Augusta and donated a kidney to Lee Kingery at MCGHealth Medical Center, while at the same time in an operating room at University of Colorado Hospital, Gretchen Kingery donated her kidney to Jay Weenig.

The late August surgeries marked the first paired organ

transplant at MCGHealth. The families were connected through the Alliance for Paired Donation.

“With more than 80,000 people listed on the national kidney transplant waiting list and only about 10,000 anticipated donor kidneys a year, there is always a need for more living donors. This new strategy of connecting donors and recipients motivates more people to sign up as donors, thus saving more lives,” said Dr. James Wynn, Medical Director of the MCGHealth Kidney and Pancreas Transplant Program. ♦

Ninth Annual Radiothon just around the corner



Hearing the word “cancer” in the same sentence with her child’s name was devastating for Amy Johnson. And worse, the diagnosis of Pre B Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia came just 10

days after Molly – her baby – turned 2.

“First I was in denial, and then scared to death,” said Johnson. “I automatically thought about chemo, how sick it was going to make Molly and if she’d survive. I wondered how I was going to be in the hospital with her and take care of my other two girls. I pictured long hospital stays, Molly being

deathly ill from chemo, and life, as our family knew it, coming to a sudden stop.”

Nearly one year later, you can find out how Molly is doing when her amazing story airs during the 2009 Cares for Kids Radiothon. Radio stations 104.3 WBBQ and 102.3 the Bull will broadcast live from the lobby of the MCGHealth

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CEO Corner

A lot to be thankful for

I've always found Thanksgiving to be a wonderful time of year. 'Tis the season when I take stock of and give heartfelt thanks for my many blessings. But, as Edward Sandford Martin suggested, thanks should be given year round. What the co-founder and first editor of the original *Life* magazine, actually said was: "Thanksgiving Day comes, by statute, once a year; to the honest man it comes as frequently as the heart of gratitude will allow."

So while I keep a heart full of gratitude for the many blessings you bestow on me day in and day out, I'd like

to take this opportunity to express them as we approach the season for new beginnings.

I am very grateful for the privilege of working with what has to be the most kindly, humane and tender group of doctors and nurses on the planet. In my eyes, you are among the most capable and accomplished bunch I've ever had the pleasure of working with.

The same can be said for those of you working in front desk operations, the pharmacy and the various labs and any of the myriad of other non-nursing, clinical support roles. A more purposeful, enthusiastic and devoted group could not possibly exist in health care today.

Our administrative staff is beyond words, but I'll dig deep to find a few. You are discerning when it comes to meeting the business needs of the organization; judicious in managing the use of our precious resources; and unselfish

when it comes to support for our clinical staff.

This year I am particularly blessed to have the opportunity to work more closely with our colleagues at the Medical College of Georgia and the Physicians Practice Group to forge stronger alliances and form more mutually beneficial alliances.

And, finally, as I've said before, I am blessed to be your interim leader during this time of transition. We have before us an unprecedented opportunity to harness the strengths of all three organizations and capitalize on them for our collective advantage and success.

Please accept my heartfelt gratitude for all that you do throughout the year. I wish you and yours a happy, healthy and bountiful holiday season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra I. McVicker".

Sandra I. McVicker

Interim President and CEO ♦

Editor's Note: Sandra I. McVicker was named Interim President and CEO at the end of October. She has served in progressively responsible positions at MCG Health, Inc. since joining the organization in 1997. She became Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer in 2004. Previous leadership positions included roles at Kennedy Memorial Hospital and University Medical Center, Stratford, New Jersey; Jeannes Hospital, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Adena Regional Medical Center, Chillicothe, Ohio. ♦

HealthWise: fat or fit?

Can you be fat and still be fit? The answer is not a simple yes or no.

Experts have long believed that to be healthy, you have to achieve an “ideal” body weight or body mass index (BMI), which is an estimate of body fat. But BMI only compares height against weight, without distinguishing between fat and muscle mass. Muscle mass weighs more because of its density.

As a group, overweight people suffer more than their share of health problems. Compared with people of a healthy weight, they are more likely to have heart trouble, diabetes, stroke and certain kinds of cancer. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that obesity-related ailments kill about 112,000 Americans each year.

But is fat really such a big-time killer? “Maybe not,” said Dr. Steven Greer, Director of Primary Care Sports Medicine at the MCGHealth Sports Medicine Center. “Focusing on an ideal weight is like saying that people should all be a certain height or build. Even with optimal diet and physical conditioning, there is a vast varia-

tion in weight. We are genetically engineered, so we are all very different,” said Dr. Greer. “That’s why there is a growing emphasis on fitness rather than thinness.”

Physical fitness is generally defined as a combination of cardiovascular (or aerobic) fitness, strength and flexibility. Cardiovascular fitness is the ability to carry on a vigorous activity such as running or brisk walking for an extended period. Strength is a measure of power and endurance. Flexibility describes the amount of movement in a joint. Just like weight varies, physical fitness varies from person to person and by age. Fitness may mean different things to a dancer, teacher, football player or a mailman. But fitness matters.

So even if your scale hardly budges, “regular workouts can strengthen your heart, bolster your immune system, lower your cholesterol and blood pressure and reduce your risk of diabetes,” Dr. Greer said. In addition, exercise can boost your mood, reduce stress, boost your energy and improve your sleep.

While statistics will show that it’s better to be fat and fit

than thin and idle, the perfect combination is to be both lean and active, according to Dr. Greer. But if a lean body eludes you, a fit body is within your reach, he said.

If all of this confuses you, you’re not alone. New information about the relationship between diet, exercise, weight management and overall health is continually emerging.

“The thing to remember is that healthy eating and regular exercise are great for your health even if they don’t lead to weight loss,” said Dr. Greer. ♦

Active at any size

The National Institutes of Health has published a valuable guide called “Active at Any Size,” which lists exercises specifically for larger individuals, including walking, dancing, swimming and bicycling. Regardless of which activity is best for you, everyone is encouraged to set fitness goals, start slowly and have fun. To download the guide, go to <http://win.niddk.nih.gov/Publications/active.htm>. ♦

High achieving employees saluted at luncheon

Vice President of Human Resources Derek Carissimi (left) and Sandra McVicker, Interim President and CEO, (second from left) recently met with a group of employees as part of the Employee Apprecia-



tion Luncheon (formerly Dining with Don). Joining McVicker and Carissimi are (left to right): Ben Crickenberger (Emergency Communications Center), Mark Downs (Ambulatory Patient Access Services), Kay Simon (Kidney Pre-Transplant), Wanda Lowe (Organization

Effectiveness), Regina Dees (ISD), Frankie Hubbard (Ambulatory Patient Access Services), Mirza Dominicci (HIMS) and Jack "Ted" Hanson (Sports Medicine). Brent Anderson (Facilities Services), James Bradshaw (Environmental Services), Macilla McCord (MS Center) and

Diane Sheffield (Cardiology/EP Lab) were unable to attend.

Those who received "Highly Effective" or above on their annual performance evaluations are randomly

invited to participate in an open, conversational exchange about improving the health system. Participants are then asked to serve as members of the Ambassador Corp, a group that is periodically called on to engage in special projects or assignments on behalf of the health system. ♦

Ninth Annual Radiothon

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Children's Medical Center on Thursday, December 10, and Friday, December 11, from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., and on Saturday, December 12, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Dozens of stories like Molly's will be the focus during this special weekend fundraiser.

Since 2000, the Radiothon has been one of the hospital's largest fundraisers that help the MCGHealth Children's Medical Center provide the best and most loving care to

children and families across the Southeast. During the Radiothon, supporters are invited to make a pledge, as well as to call in or visit the hospital lobby to share their stories of how the MCGHealth Children's Medical Center has helped them.

Donations and pledges in 2008 totaled more than \$175,000. Money raised this year will go toward specialized equipment, programs and projects such as the renovation of the Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Clinic.

Pledges can be made by calling 706-922-KIDS or by going online at mcghealth.org/kids.

"I hope Molly's story will help raise awareness of the outstanding care and the wonderful staff we have at the MCGHealth Children's Medical Center," Johnson said. "I truly believe our children receive the most cutting-edge treatment, delivered by the most knowledgeable and compassionate people. We are lucky to have such a facility in our backyard." ♦

The tradition continues



The tradition of MCGHealth Children's Medical Center patients going trick-or-treating in and around the health system began in 1994 with the Medical Records Department (now known as HIMS, Health Information Manage-



ment Services) throwing open its doors and welcoming the boys and girls. This year, seasonal and H1N1 flu forced a curtailment of Halloween festivities, but the 15-year tradition of trick-or-treaters visiting HIMS continued. "Even

though Child Life had to scale back its celebration this year, we're glad that they still consider HIMS to be part of their Halloween plans," said Melissa Jarriel, Director of HIMS.

One-year-old Logan Willis, dressed as a clown fish, was among the 50-plus children enjoying edible and nonedible treats. Seven-year-old Edwin Nunez hit most of the stops within HIMS, the Ambulatory Care Center and the Childrens Medical Center with dad, Daniel. ♦

New merchandise helps pediatric care

Kohl's has four storybooks, four plush characters, a holiday cookbook and a holiday CD featuring your favorite country superstars, all of which make perfect gifts this holiday season. What's more, the sale of these items helps fill the coffers of the MCGChildren's Medical Center. Each item is \$5 each, with 83 percent of the net profits benefiting the MCGHealth Children's Medical Center.

The four book titles are "If You Take a Mouse to the

Movies," "If You Give a Pig a Party," "If You Give a Cat a Cupcake," and "If You Give a Moose a Muffin." The corresponding plush characters are (you guessed it!) a mouse, pig, cat and moose.

The "Christmas in the Country" CD features holiday songs by Martina McBride, Brooks & Dunn, Kellie Pickler, Lone Star, Kenny Chesney, Carrie Underwood and others.

The Good Housekeeping "Home for the Holidays" cookbook features classic

family recipes. The 176-page hardcover book is an abridged version of Good Housekeeping's "Great Home Cooking" and features over 200 recipes. Seven chapters provide recipes for hors d'oeuvres, poultry, meat, side dishes, breads, desserts, cookies and candies. Full color photos let you see what the end results look like.

In addition to the store at 4227 Washington Road, Evans, the merchandise is also available online at kohls.com. ♦

Frosty key tags are back!

Hurry down to your local Wendy's restaurant to get your \$1 key tag that entitles you to a free Junior Frosty™ during your subsequent visits through May 2010. The limited time offer starts November 23 and the proceeds benefit the MCGHealth Children's Medical Center.

This marks the second time Wendy's has made this special offer. The fundraiser was so successful that stores sold out of the key tags within three weeks, enabling Wendy's to donate \$12,000 to the MCG-Health Children's Medical Center.

Local participating stores are located at:

Augusta

3012 Peach Orchard Road
3342 Wrightsboro Road
1730 Walton Way
449 Walton Way

2738 Washington Road
Martinez

3859 Washington Road
430 South Belair Road

North Augusta

517 East Martintown Road
Aiken

1901 Whiskey Road
1104 Richland Ave. ♦

Subway® winners are healthy and wealthy

Elizabeth McKinney (right), a fifth grader at Blakeney Elementary School in Waynesboro, was awarded a \$1,000 Subway gift card and a \$1,000 fitness grant for her school as the grand prize winner of the Subway Fresh Fit® Video and Poster Competition. Participants in the contest were challenged to show how their families stay healthy and fit through original artwork or videos. Lane Corum (left), a fourth grader at Blakeney, was a runner up in



the contest, winning a \$100 Subway card. The Blakeney student body was treated to a surprise visit from Subway's national spokesman Jared Fogle. Fogle was accompanied by MCGHealth Clinical Nutrition Manager Jessica Baye, one of the five area judges of the contest. ♦

Welcome new team members

Brian Brooks, *Supply Distribution*

Natasha Brown, *Pharmacy*

Bridget Davis, *Emergency Medicine*

Minnie Derefaka, *9 North Child Psychiatry*

Charlie Desamito, *3 South Adult Psychiatry*

Barbara Elam, *Pediatric ICU*

Ronald Gaye, *Patient Transport Services*

Lance Halford, *Facilities Operations*

Arlene Hobbs, *3 South Adult Psych*

Susan James, *Legal*

Valerie Johnson, *Operating Room*

Vanetta Key, *7 West Obstetrics*

Mandy Lee, *Child Life Program*

Karen Miller, *Pediatric ICU*

Jason Moody, *Environmental Services*

Janicel Rice, *Environmental Services*

Terrence Ryans, *Respiratory Care*

DeMarcus Stone, *Environmental Services*

Lynette Walton, *HIMS*

Seleria Williams, *Speech Pathology/Audiology*

Shawnda Williams, *7 West Obstetrics*

Bethany Yost, *ACC Float Pool* ♦