HEALTHY LIVING FOR THE GWINNETT COMMUNITY

PICURE PERFECT
A LOOK INTO THE GRAND OPENING OF GMC – DULUTH
PAGE 4

CHRONIC PAIN
WHAT YOUR DOCTOR SHOULD DO IF YOU SUFFER
PAGE 54

GMC HELPS LOCAL TEEN DANCE AGAIN
PAGE 52

Live for Today
HOW MEREDITH VIEIRA STRIKES A BALANCE BETWEEN CAREGIVING AND CARING FOR HERSELF
Does Cancer Run in Your Family?

A cancer diagnosis in the family can have a ripple effect, from worry about your loved one’s future to concerns about your own health down the road. For patients worried that they’re at higher risk of developing cancer because of heredity, Gwinnett Medical Center offers risk assessment counseling and genetic testing.

Cindy Snyder, R.N., MSN, FNP-C, Gwinnett Medical Center’s cancer risk counselor, says there are red flags that warn family members that they should seek genetic counseling for cancer risk.

“Anytime there is breast or colon cancer before age 50 in your family, it’s a good idea to have your risk factors examined by a cancer specialist,” Snyder says. Other warning signs include ovarian cancer at any age, male breast cancer, multiple primary cancers, Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry, and a family history of a known cancer gene mutation, she adds.

If you’re interested in a cancer risk assessment, ask your primary care physician about a referral for counseling and possible genetic testing using a simple blood test.

More information on cancer risk assessments is available by calling Snyder at (678) 442-3335.

GMC’s cancer program lands top scores in a rigorous national performance review
Ending one era to start anew

If you were driving in the vicinity of Pleasant Hill and Howell Ferry roads on the morning of Oct. 18, 2006, you may have seen a curious and wondrous sight: a steady wave of ambulances plying through traffic toward our brand new hospital, Gwinnett Medical Center—Duluth.

The only thing comparable to this rare event was when Button Gwinnett Hospital closed and Gwinnett Medical Center opened in Lawrenceville—just over 22 years ago.

That October day last year marked the end of an era and the beginning of a new one—the closing of Joan Glancy Memorial Hospital and the official opening of GMC – Duluth. This bittersweet time was filled with nostalgia and flooded with memories of the community action that made Joan Glancy Memorial Hospital a reality more than 60 years ago, and the years of loving care Glancy’s staff gave in return.

“We’ve been here a long time,” says Cathie Dowd, who’d been a nurse at Joan Glancy since 1975. “It’s like leaving the home you were born in.” But those memories would have to be put on pause—we had patients to move.

Months of planning became a flurry of action packed into one day. It all started at 6:30 a.m., when the chaplain and a crowd said prayers as part of the opening of Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth. Thirty-nine patients were started at 6:30 a.m., when the chaplain and a crowd said prayers as part of the opening of Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth. Thirty-nine patients were at Joan Glancy at 7 a.m. that morning, and by 2 p.m. they all were resting comfortably in the first all-digital hospital in north Atlanta.

From the smiles on the faces of patients, visitors and staff, I’d say it was all worth it. The legacy of Joan Glancy is alive and well at Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth, and the years of serving our community with top-notch care just got a major technology upgrade.

It’s not every day that you open a new hospital. And as exciting and satisfying as it was, most of us are quite content to return to a more normal hum of activity at our beautiful new hospital.

Now we turn our attention to the new patient tower at GMC in Lawrenceville ...

Sincerely,

Philip R. Wolfe
President and CEO
Gwinnett Health System
In This Issue

2 Phil’s Feature
9 Seniority
10 Appetite for Health
12 A Healthy Dose

Features

1 Making the Grade  GMC’s cancer program has landed a three-year stamp of approval from the Commission on Cancer. Find out what the commendation means for you.

4 Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth
One hospital closes its doors and another begins its service to the community: Check out a pictorial timeline that captures the celebration, emotion and hard work that made the grand opening a success.

8 The Way to a Patient’s Heart  Meet Gwinnett Medical Center’s queen of customer satisfaction, and discover how she developed her plan to benefit you.

18 Head to Toe  Exploratory surgery used to be standard when doctors wanted to peek inside you to make a diagnosis. But today, imaging technology lets doctors see everything from head to toe without even touching a scalpel.

22 Catch It Early  Because of improved cancer screening technology, colorectal cancer is more preventable than ever. Find out how doctors can catch the disease before it even begins.

34 For Women Only  Some women may find certain health conditions unmentionable—even with their doctors. Read about three conditions that women should never hush up about.

38 Get ’Em While They’re Young  Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S. and often starts with obesity and diabetes in childhood. Here are five real-world ways to make your home a heart-healthy one for you and your kids.

46 It’s Good to Give  When you donate to Gwinnett Medical Center, you’ll be giving the gift of better health to others. Learn more about the emotional and financial benefits that come from making a contribution.

50 People Who Make a Difference  The Foundation’s Keystone Leadership welcomes three new members for their significant gifts to the Legacy Campaign for Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth. Read their stories.

52 Back on Her Toes Again  After a well-known dancer broke her neck in a serious auto accident, she feared she may never perform again. Thanks to GMC, her future stayed bright.

54 Pain, Pain, Go Away  Chronic pain strikes millions of Americans. Are you one of them? Seek help from the experts at the GHS Pain Management Center.

56 New Landscape  Take a look at the enhancements to GMC’s campus in the past six months, and see how the hospital can serve all of your healthcare needs.

Cover Feature
Sticking with it. Meredith Vieira delivers more than just the morning news. As a successful journalist, mother of three and caregiver for her husband, she is an inspiration to all. Page 26.
In pictures:
The making of a new hospital

In a whirlwind lasting two weeks in October 2006, Joan Glancy Memorial Hospital closed its doors and Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth opened. In these pages you’ll see some of the celebration, some of the emotion and a lot of the hard work that made it happen.

Thursday, Oct. 5, 2006

The grand opening celebration kicks off in black-tie style, as community leaders and donors gather to celebrate and tour GMC – Duluth.

Gwinnett County Commission chair Charles Bannister toasts the new hospital: “To the reality of knowing the very best of healthcare is available right here in our own community, and the comfort of knowing our families and friends will benefit from it for years to come.”

Clarence Whitfield, CEC, CFE, GMC, corporate chef, shows off an ice sculpture and a sample of dishes available through GMC – Duluth’s room service for patients.

Richard and Peggy Tucker, Legacy Campaign donors, arrive at the grand opening celebration. The Legacy Campaign has raised more than $2 million to support building and equipping the new hospital.
Center – Duluth

Sunday, Oct. 8, 2006

Gwinnett County gets a sneak peek at Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth during the Community Open House.

Jim and Billie Ellis of Duluth, for whom the chapel and serenity garden are named, have a seat while Jim has his picture drawn. Caricature artists were on hand to portray children and adults alike as doctors or nurses at the new hospital.

From left, Wayne Sikes, chair, GHS board; Phil Wolfe, GHS president and CEO; Kathryn Willis, GHS board member; Lea Bay, GMC – Duluth administrator; and Scott Schorr, M.D., vice president of medical staff, cut the ribbon.

The crowd gathers to see the opening festivities and get a tour of their new hospital.

The ribbon is cut, the balloons are released, and Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth is a reality!

continued on page 6
Monday, Oct. 16, 2006

Getting ready ...

The grand opening events are over, patients are coming, and GMC – Duluth’s Howard Atrium Lobby is empty for probably the very last time.

GMC – Duluth’s new, fully integrated operating rooms are ready to go.

Wednesday, Oct. 18, 2006

Moving Day is here.

Thursday, Oct. 19, 2006

6:45 a.m. General surgeon Miles H. Mason III, M.D., president of the Gwinnett Hospital System medical staff, sits with Doris Owens of Bethlehem, Ga., before going to scrub for the first elective surgical procedure performed at GMC – Duluth.
6:30 a.m. After a prayer of dedication, Lynne Mouchet, chaplain (from left), joins Lea Bay, GMC – Duluth administrator, and Miles H. Mason III, M.D., president of the GHS medical staff, to officially walk through the doors and open for business.

7 a.m. The EMERGENCY letters are added to the new sign at GMC – Duluth as the ER opens ...

... and the ER closes at Joan Glancy Memorial Hospital as the letters are taken from the old hospital.

7:30 a.m. While the lobby at Joan Glancy has emptied (left), Lea Bay leads a warp-speed meeting at the GMC – Duluth Command Center to get the patient move started.

8 a.m. There were 39 patients waiting to be transferred that morning, and Rojeanne Gray was ready to move. Here, she chats with chaplain Bob Duvall while patiently waiting for her escort from Priority EMS.

9 a.m. At the same time patients were moving, the opposite end of Joan Glancy was being used as a loading dock. Equipment was transferred for weeks after the patient move, filling up many trucks just like this one.

11:10 a.m. Melissa Whitt, patient access manager (right), sits with Dixon Marlow, president and CEO of Priority EMS, who beams a map on the wall to track the progress of his four ambulances en route to and from GMC – Duluth. The company utilized GPS technology to keep tabs on the position of every patient at all times.

11:15 a.m. Rojeanne Gray has her ride. She is escorted out of Joan Glancy ...

11:30 a.m. ... takes a ride on the Priority EMS ambulance ...
The Way to a Patient's HEART
Meet the mastermind behind GMC’s customer satisfaction

Alfreda Allen is a modern-day explorer. This corporate trailblazer trudges through unfamiliar territory until she finds her unmarked destination, where she can make things better. It’s her forte. Corporate trailblazing might daunt some, but not Allen. For five months, she has served as Gwinnett Medical Center’s director of customer satisfaction, a new position designed to help staff members sharpen their focus on customer service. She knows from experience that happy, satisfied staff members are linked to happy, satisfied patients and customers.

Background
Allen came to GMC from South Bend, Ind., where she was a regional service manager for Press Ganey, a highly respected vendor of satisfaction measurement and improvement services. While there, she managed a nine-member team of consultants for five states, including Georgia. She also mastered skills that prepared her for her current work to improve the experiences of GMC patients.

“I’m really enjoying the hands-on side of quality improvement,” she says. “In my previous job, I dealt with the theoretical side. Now I can be a true resource for improvement and put action behind theory.”

Allen got a hefty dose of healthcare experience early in her career at Memorial Health University Medical Center and Georgia Gastroenterology Group, both in Savannah. She earned her Master of Health Services Administration degree at Armstrong Atlantic State University in Savannah.

“Alfreda is proficient in attaining patient and customer excellence,” says John Zedick, GMC’s vice president of quality resources.

Plans in Place
Here’s a secret to her success: Allen studied the GMC landscape before she developed priorities and a plan. Her first wise step was to turn to her co-workers for input on how to make customer satisfaction and quality improvement a way of life.

“I got great feedback from everyone,” Allen says. “My knowledge and experience with both public and private healthcare environments have been beneficial in focusing on where to put our initial efforts. My first targets were theme areas that are general across all our facilities.”

Allen says she likes providing staff members with clear goals and incentives, and she tries to maintain a physical presence. “I don’t want to be in the office,” she says. “I want to be out and about, where people can see me and come to me with questions.”

She reaps a great sense of personal satisfaction from her new position. “I used to talk about quality and customer service,” she says. “Now I can take what I know and make a difference!”

The Alfreda File
• born in Gulfport, Miss., but grew up in Tallahassee, Fla.
• married to a graphic artist specializing in animation and compositing
• has a 3-year-old son and a 7-year-old daughter
• is an avid reader and owns 70 Stephen King books
• takes children to cultural events
• has a Master of Health Services Administration degree
• favorite quote: “It’s the soft stuff that gets the hard results.” —Quint Studer
Gwinnett Medical Center Foundation cordially invites you to

THE 15th ANNUAL BALL & SILENT AUCTION

Havana Nights

Saturday, May 5, 2007
6 p.m.
Atlanta Marriott Gwinnett Place
BLACK TIE

Patron Levels
Principal Underwriter .......... $20,000
Underwriter .................. $15,000
Benefactor ................... $10,000
Platinum Patron ............ $5,000
Gold Patron ................. $2,500
Silver Patron ............... $1,000

Individual Reservations
Tickets ....................... $200 each

For ticket and sponsorship information or to donate an item to the silent auction, please contact the Foundation office at (678) 442-4634.
Kathryn's strong ties with the hospital system were formed when she was a young girl growing up in Duluth. At that time Gwinnett’s first hospital, Joan Glancy Memorial Hospital, was funded and built by local residents. Her parents, Calvin and Kate Parsons, were key players in the creation of this hospital for the citizens of Duluth, and continued to be strong advocates for healthcare throughout their lives. In fact, Kathryn’s mother served as Joan Glancy Memorial Hospital’s first board chair.

Kathryn continues her family’s wonderful legacy by giving her time and resources to ensure that Gwinnett Medical Center remains a top-quality healthcare facility. She has served on the hospital system board since 1990 and has served on the Foundation’s Board of Trustees since 1993. As one of the organizers of the Foundation’s Annual Ball & Auction that began in 1992, she has helped raise several million dollars to enhance healthcare throughout the Gwinnett community. Because of her extraordinary service, she was recognized with the Foundation’s first Distinguished Service Award in 2000.

Most recently, Kathryn made a significant donation to Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth. She named the Physician & Staff Education Center and a guest retreat in memory of her parents, who inspired her philanthropic spirit.

“The staff and physicians exemplify a loyalty to the system and a love of their patients that you don’t find in most hospitals today,” Kathryn says. “I really believe that the spirit and love that permeated Joan Glancy for 65 years will carry through to Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth. I have always dreamed of a new hospital in Duluth, but never dreamed it would be the state-of-the-art facility that it has turned out to be.”

5. See your doctor regularly.
To keep an eye on your own health, make sure to get an annual physical. “The last place you want to spend time is another doctor’s office,” Mintz admits, “but taking the time for a checkup once a year could save you countless hours in doctors’ offices later. Small problems that go undetected and untreated can turn into big problems that threaten your life.”

6. Inject humor. A good dose of laughter can help, too, according to Vieira. She told WebMD, “Humor has also gotten us through some tough times.”

“Humor and levity are definitely important,” Mintz agrees. “So much of the caregiving experience is affected by your attitude. You need to step back and see the humor even in difficult situations. It’s good, if possible, to laugh with your care recipient.”
Golfers Tee It Up for the 9th Annual Dr. Miles H. Mason Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament

Presenting Sponsor: Stanford Private Wealth Management

On Nov. 21, 2006, more than 250 golfers participated in the 9th annual Dr. Miles H. Mason Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament, raising more than $75,000 to purchase equipment for Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth.

The 2006 tournament was dedicated to Elizabeth Deal Mason, who passed away Sept. 17, 2006. She was the spouse of the tournament’s namesake, Dr. Miles H. Mason Jr. Her love, support and encouragement directly contributed to the success of her husband’s extensive medical practice.

Thanks to all sponsors and volunteers who helped make the tournament such a success.

Jim and Jeanine Gullett

Jim and Jeanine Gullett have a long history of being active in business, community, and recreational projects and affairs. From running the family’s full-service car wash to winning seven world championship titles in horse shows, they have shared a life full of success.

The Gulletts have been supportive of Gwinnett Medical Center for many years. Jeanine served on the hospital board from 1981 to 1990, serving as chair her final term. She went on to serve as the first president of the Gwinnett Medical Center Foundation’s Board of Trustees.

The Gulletts recently donated more than $80,000 to the new Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth. They named the fourth-floor family lounge in memory of their late son, Michael Gullett, and the fourth-floor guest retreat in honor of their other two children, Patricia Gullett Tisma and Ronnie Gullett. With this recent gift, their cumulative giving makes them the newest members of the Foundation’s Keystone Leadership.

“Providing quality services requires quality facilities and the latest equipment,” Jeanine says. “We are pleased to play a part in doing this. By honoring our children with our gift, we hope to encourage them, as well as others, to be active personally, emotionally and financially in providing the best possible healthcare for our community.

Quality healthcare provides the inspiration for the creation of a desirable environment for community development. Its accessibility is critical to the future of our children and the citizens of Gwinnett.”
Back on her toes again.

This photograph of Whitney Sue Jones was taken in July 2006, just seven months after an accident left her with several broken ribs, a punctured lung, broken bones in her foot, six fractures in her hip and a broken neck.

The staff and physicians at GMC knew they had done their job well when they received an autographed photo of Jones (above), with the message, “Thanks for getting me back on my toes.”
On Dec. 18, 2005, Whitney Sue Jones’ life took a drastic turn. When the well-known dancer for the Gwinnett Ballet Theatre was on the way home from school, the car she and a friend were riding in hydroplaned, and the passenger side, where Jones was seated, was struck by oncoming traffic. The vehicle was so severely damaged that Jones had to be cut out of the car before she was rushed to Gwinnett Medical Center’s Trauma Center.

“I woke up from a state of shock, in a room full of family and friends, but they had some difficult news for me,” Jones recalls.

The impact of the crash was so great that it crushed the left side of her body against the center console. The result was several broken ribs, a punctured lung, broken bones in her foot, six fractures in her hip and—the most serious of all—a broken bone in the vertebra called C2. While relieved to have survived, Jones was scared that she would never dance again. Before the accident, several Atlanta-area and national ballet companies were anticipating her upcoming auditions.

Treatment Begins
The broken C2 bone in her neck presented a difficult decision between surgery and a halo, a metal frame that screws into the head to provide support for the core of the neck and body to encourage bones to fuse back together.

With a recommendation from neurosurgeon Charles Wood, M.D., and feedback from her family, Jones opted for the halo and hoped for the best. The statistics were on her side: Ninety percent of vertebrae patients Jones’ age have had success with the halo. That’s why her family, friends and treatment team were optimistic about her chances.

During her two-week stay in the hospital she underwent several surgeries performed by trauma surgeon Barry Renz, M.D., and orthopedic surgeon Darrell Scales, M.D. All the while, her dance instructor at the Gwinnett Ballet Theatre, Lisa Shepherd, was with her every step of the way through treatment and recovery.

“The level of care was amazing—doctors jumped through hoops, even coming in on their days off to check on her,” Shepherd says.

The following months with the halo were challenging, but “Whitney Sue never let her situation dampen her spirit,” Shepherd says. “Her positive nature kept her motivated, and she focused on looking forward to the day she could dance again.”

Overcoming Challenges
Four months after the accident, Jones returned to Gwinnett Medical Center and received some unfortunate news. Her bones had not fused back together with the halo, so on March 28 she underwent successful neck surgery. Jones was placed in a neck brace, and in a few weeks she returned to the studio to begin with the basics of dance. Since then, her progress has been nothing short of amazing.

“The accident produced a level of maturity in her dance that was not present before,” Shepherd says. Less than two months after her surgery, Jones danced in a recital, an emotional performance that brought many audience members to tears.

Today, Whitney Sue Jones is a busy college student who takes classes at her studio and teaches young ballet dancers. But her dream of dancing professionally is still within reach, and she intends to audition for companies in spring 2008. She’ll also be featured in the Gwinnett Ballet Theatre’s spring performance of *Daphne and Chloe*, in the role of Chloe, from March 9 to 11 at the Gwinnett Performing Arts Center.

“I want to use this year for recovery, for transition and for an opportunity to come back a stronger dancer than I ever was before,” Jones says. “I am grateful to my treatment team at Gwinnett Medical Center for the level of care I received over the past year.”
With millions of nerve endings in the human body, it’s no surprise that we feel pain in millions of ways. Acute pain often comes from injuries that heal and are forgotten. But other pains are not so forgiving.

Chronic pain ranges from back pain, headaches, arthritis, pain from nerve injury, cancer pain, fibromyalgia and ear infections to psychogenic pain—pain that is not due to past injury or any visible sign of damage inside or outside the nervous system.

If you have chronic pain, you have plenty of company. Between 15 percent and 33 percent of the U.S. population—about 70 million people—suffer from persistent pain. Chronic pain costs about $100 billion a year in medical costs, lost workdays and workers’ compensation. It also disables more people than heart disease or cancer.

At the Source
The first step in treating chronic pain is finding its cause. This often is difficult.

“We can help many chronic pain patients if they understand the causes of pain and the things we can do to untangle what the pain has done,” says Richard Reisman, M.D., medical director of the Gwinnett Hospital System Pain Management Center. “Any treatment a pain management physician proposes could result in improvement and complication. Treatments may be adjusted over time as we monitor how patients respond to different approaches. Patients should expect to invest time in their treatment processes.”

If pain is your constant companion, the Pain Management Center can help you manage it. You need help learning how to keep pain at tolerable levels, even if you may always have some pain. Physicians who specialize in pain management can be your best resource and support. Your physician should:

◆ understand your overall condition
◆ communicate effectively
◆ be knowledgeable about chronic pain
◆ put you at ease
◆ be a good listener and encourage your questions
◆ be open with you when you disagree
◆ have a positive approach to life and to your condition
◆ be available to talk to your family

A Range of Treatments
A hospital-based pain management program is an excellent option for comprehensive treatment provided by clinicians and physicians who specialize in pain management. Programs should offer a range of treatments, including:

* steroid injections
* nerve blocks
* radio-frequency procedures
* assessment of surgical options
* biofeedback training
* group therapy
* counseling for patients and their families
* occupational therapy
* regional anesthesia
* physical therapy
* relaxation training and stress management
* education on pain management techniques and medications
A Staff of Experts

Pain experts at the GHS Pain Management Center include:

Richard Reisman, M.D., medical director
Stephanie Smith, M.D.
Jorge Alvear, M.D.
Steven R. Lee, M.D.
Guru Setty, M.D.
Christopher Hosfeld, M.D.

No Pain, Your Gain

The Pain Management Center is located at 575 Professional Drive in Lawrenceville. For more information, call (678) 442-5200.
New Landscape

Your healthcare options in Duluth have been enhanced in the past six months. Use this guide to make the most of them!

Hudgens Professional Building
3855 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth, GA 30096
- physician offices
- Gwinnett Physicians Group
  OB/GYN, 770-622-0282
- Gwinnett SportsRehab
  678-312-7440
- Diabetes & Nutrition Education Center, 678-312-7660

Glancy Rehabilitation Center
Located on campus of old Joan Glancy Memorial Hospital
3215 McClure Bridge Road, Duluth, GA 30096
678-584-6789
- CARF-accredited
- intensive inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation
- specializes in treatment of neurologic and orthopedic impairments
- only fully accredited continuum of acute stroke care in Georgia

Glancy Rehabilitation Center
Located on campus of former Joan Glancy Memorial Hospital
3855 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth, GA 30096
678-312-6800
- state-of-the-art all-digital facility
- hotel-like amenities
- expanded critical care and surgical services
- specialty care, including the Center for Orthopedics
- enhanced imaging technology

Outpatient Center at Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth
3805 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth, GA 30096
678-312-7000
- Center for Gastrointestinal & Pulmonary Endoscopy
- diagnostic services, including MRI, CT, mammography, ultrasound and laboratory
- surgical services, utilizing cutting-edge technology
Same coat. Same stethoscope.
But they’re totally different.
So which doctor is best for you?

The one that practices at Gwinnett Medical Center.

Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth. Now Open.

When it comes to finding the doctor that’s right for you, look to Gwinnett Medical Center. Our new Duluth location is the first hospital in north Atlanta to combine all-digital, leading-edge technology with the doctors you already know and trust, in a wide range of specialties. And it’s all delivered with exceptional care, in utmost comfort. The kind you’d expect from hospitals that ranked among the top 5% in the nation for clinical excellence in 2006. So when it comes to choosing the best doctors for your family, choose the ones that practice here. Gwinnett Medical Center.