

## Where Healing Happens Every Day

“Where Healing Happens Every Day” is this year’s theme for National Hospital Week, which was observed at Shamokin Area Community Hospital (SACH) from May 11 – 17. This recognition is a reminder of the crucial role hospitals play and the confidence they inspire in their communities.

This week also recognizes health care workers, volunteers and other health professionals dedicated to making hospitals and health systems open to their communities 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

SACH welcomes the opportunity each year to recognize its nearly 400 employees, including clinical and non-clinical personnel during this special week.

“National Hospital Week, first and foremost, is a celebration of people,” said Thomas R. Harlow,

FACHE, president and CEO. “We’re extremely proud of each member of our staff and we acknowledge the important role they play in caring for all the patients who seek care here at SACH.”

The nation’s largest health care event, National Hospital Week, dates back to 1921, when it was suggested by a magazine editor who hoped a community-wide celebration would alleviate public fears about hospitals. The celebration, launched in Chicago, succeeded in promoting trust and goodwill among members of the public and eventually spread to facilities across the country.

During National Hospital Week, members of SACH’s hospital staff were presented with a token of appreciation and honored at a celebration luncheon served by the hospital’s administration team.

## Nurses: Making a Difference Every Day

The work of America’s nearly three million registered nurses in saving lives and maintaining the health of millions of people was the focus of this year’s National Nurses Week.

This special week of recognition began on May 6 and ended on May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, the founder of nursing as a modern profession.

This year, the American Nurses Association selected “Nurses: Making a Difference Every Day” as the theme for 2008.

This theme certainly applies to the staff of nursing professionals at Shamokin Area Community Hospital (SACH), who day in and day out, work hard to provide optimum care for all who pass through the doors of the facility.



Corinne L. Klose, RN, vice president of patient services (*far right*), made rounds at Shamokin Area Community Hospital to present nurses with a gift to honor the staff during National Nurses Week. Receiving their gifts were members of the same day surgery staff (*from left to right*) Diane Lentini, RN, Fran Ruzicka, RN, Stephanie Gembic, RN, and Sherri Buggy, RN.

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# SACH Partners with University of Maryland

Shamokin Area Community Hospital (SACH) is partnering with the University of Maryland School of Nursing for participation in the Rural Hospital Collaborative to Improve Care for Heart Failure Patients.

The University of Maryland School of Nursing is leading a study investigating the nurses' role in improving care for patients with heart failure. Hospitals, such as SACH, who are participating in the Rural Hospital Collaborative, will implement a toolkit designed to improve patient outcomes that includes fact sheets and relevant scientific articles, nurse education modules, heart failure admission ordersets, standardized patient education booklets, heart failure patient education videos, heart failure discharge worksheets and smoking cessation counseling.

Recent estimates indicate that people with chronic conditions receive 55 percent of the recommended care with only 68 percent of patients with heart disease receiving the appropriate treatment.

Cathie Kenenitz, RN, BSN, SACH cardiac rehab nurse and site coordinator for this study, is taking part in the congestive heart failure (CHF) study being conducted by Dr. Robin Newhouse, Assistant Dean of Nursing Practice at the University of Maryland School of Nursing.

SACH is one of 30 rural hospitals participating in the study entitled "Rural Hospital Quality Collaborative on Evidenced Based Nursing". The purpose of the study is to develop a collaborative approach to improving heart failure care for patients in a rural area. Patient education is a key part of this study.

The study is part of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Interdisciplinary Nursing Quality Research Initiative (INQRI), a \$10 million, five-year program that will generate and disseminate research showing a link between what the nurses do and the contributions they make to advance better and safer care for patients.

"Nurses have a central role in promoting evidence-based quality care," said Dr. Newhouse. "To date, much of these nursing efforts have not been measured or realized.

"The participating hospitals in this collaborative have confidence that nursing has a leadership role in delivering quality care," stated Dr. Newhouse.

Nurses account for more than half of all health care providers in the United States. But little research exists to demonstrate the link between what nurses do and the effect of those interventions on patient care and safety. INQRI will fill the gap by applying rigorous science to expose that link.

"It takes a nurse to make a difference in the quality of care we get in hospitals, but if that nurse is overworked, under-motivated or lacks adequate support to keep patients healthy and safe, we all suffer," said INQRI co-director, Mary Naylor, Ph.D., R.N., F.A.A.N., Marian S. Ware Professor in Gerontology at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. "Without evidence linking nurses to better patient care, their contributions often go unrecognized. This project will help supply that evidence."

Kenenitz is the nurse for SACH's Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) program, which has served as a valuable resource to area residents since March 2007. The free program held each Tuesday on the hospital's third floor, runs for eight weeks and includes an assessment performed by a registered nurse as well as an educational topic each week.

To register for the SACH CHF program, or if you have any questions regarding the program, please call Kenenitz at the Cardiac Rehabilitation Center at (570) 644-4348. The program will run throughout the year and people can enter into the program at any time.

## Physician Profile...Meet Dr. Henry G. Yavorek



Good-natured, focused and proficient are all terms that could be used to describe area physician, Henry G. Yavorek, M.D.

Since he was a child growing up in Dickson City, he seemed destined to seek out a career in medicine.

The son of a respected dentist, Dr. Yavorek was joined by four other brothers and sisters in the medical field. In fact, Dr. Yavorek and his siblings garnered some publicity for being the only FIVE members of the same family to graduate from the esteemed Jefferson Medical College (now known as Thomas Jefferson University) in Philadelphia.

Prior to receiving his medical degree, Dr. Yavorek attended high school at Scranton Preparatory School before continuing his studies and graduating from the University of Scranton.

He went on to complete a pair of residencies at Hamot Medical Center in Erie, Pennsylvania (from 1986-1989) and St. Elizabeth Medical Center (from 1989-1991) in Boston, Massachusetts. It was during these residencies where Yavorek honed his considerable skills as a surgeon.

In 1991, Dr. Yavorek relocated to Pennsylvania. He began practicing

medicine at Shamokin Area Community Hospital (SACH) in April of 1992, a time when the hospital divested from the Commonwealth to become a community hospital.

“The growth of this facility since 1992 has been just phenomenal,” noted Dr. Yavorek. “It is a testament to the hard work and determination of all of SACH’s employees and the continued support from the community.”

Board certified in general, vascular and laparoscopic surgery, Dr. Yavorek is a valued and respected member of SACH’s medical staff.

Dr. Yavorek noted that his favorite part about being a physician is getting a job done and seeing the positive effect it has on the patient and moving onward to help someone else.

He stated that if he could give one health tip to the general public, he’d advise people to “drink more water”. “People should drink a half-gallon of water each day to help replenish their bodies,” said Yavorek. “Water intake is very important to healthier living.”

In his spare time, Dr. Yavorek has numerous hobbies, but particularly enjoys hunting, fishing, and rebuilding cars and motorcycles.

Dr. Yavorek resides in Selinsgrove (the location of his private practice) with his wife Debra. They are the proud parents of three children, Katheryn, Abby and Jillian.



**Thomas R. Harlow, FACHE**  
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*Vice President, Finance,  
Chief Financial Officer*

**Corinne L. Klose, RN**  
*Vice President, Patient Services*

**Rick Flynn**  
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**Robert D. Greco**  
*Director, Special Projects  
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**Jessica A. Trelle**  
*Director, Development  
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**Helen C. Limbert**  
*Executive Assistant*

**Suzanne Mace**  
*Medical Staff Coordinator*



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# SACH Stresses Importance of Faith in Healing

Shamokin Area Community Hospital (SACH) recently hosted a special breakfast for the Shamokin Area Ministerium.

Ordained ministers, deacons and trained lay leaders joined with members of SACH to enjoy each other's company and discuss the importance peace and mental well being play along with the physical wellness and betterment that SACH medical services provide.

Prior to the breakfast, Reverend Navin Satyavrata of St. John's United Methodist Church led the group in prayer.

After the breakfast, Thomas R. Harlow, FACHE, president and CEO, extended a welcome to the group and spoke a bit about the importance of faith in healing.

"While our skilled employees provide the best care possible for patients, one must also recognize the spiritual side of the healing process as an important component as well," said Harlow.

Harlow thanked Robert D. Greco, special projects director, for his work in coordinating the breakfast, as well as those in the ministerium for providing comfort and prayer to all those receiving care at SACH. He went on to say how proud he is of the hospital's staff, who have been

resilient during busy and stressful times.

Members of the ministerium lauded the efforts of the staff and their kind and caring nature. "We have always been more than welcomed here at SACH," said Ministerium President, Beverly Petrovick. "The staff is always very courteous and helpful."

Harlow also announced that due to a charitable contribution, a non-denominational meditation room will be built on the first floor of the hospital over the course of the next few months. It will be handicap accessible and will also be located in close proximity to the emergency services department.

SACH's vice president of human

resources, Rick Flynn, encouraged those in attendance to spread the word of SACH's Intercessory Prayer Services. "Even if parishioners cannot be at SACH each day at noon, people of all religious faiths can spend a few moments each day praying for all patients being treated at SACH," said Flynn.

Dr. Llewelyn A. Williams, who serves as the director of anesthesiology and pain management services, then provided some very moving insight on how all denominations should continue working together to provide each other spiritual healing and share the same goal of getting to heaven noting: "We are all trying to go to the same place."



Members of Shamokin Area Ministerium were recently treated to a breakfast at Shamokin Area Community Hospital. Pictured are: (back row, left to right) Richard Hazzard, Susan Rose, Thomas R. Harlow, FACHE, president and CEO of SACH, Harry Deitz, Rev. Alfie Bashore, Karl Polm-Faudre, Martha Sue Moll, Rev. Joan Brown, (front row, left to right) Sam Bellavia, John Silliman, Pastor David Hauck, Rev. Beverly Petrovick, Ministerium President, and Rev. Navin Satyavrata.

# OT: Skills for the Job of Living

Occupational therapy (OT) is a profession that focuses on life skills, or everyday activities that people take for granted.

Imagine waking up one day without the ability to dress yourself or eat breakfast or even perform your daily tasks at work.

Occupational therapy helps people regain the skills and strength they may have lost by challenging the individual to push themselves to surmount their disabilities or medical conditions.

Each April hospitals and health systems take time to observe Occupational Therapy Month. Occupational therapists across the country are honored for their dedication to helping people of all ages with physical, mental, and psychosocial disabilities to meet the demands of daily living.

At Shamokin Area Community Hospital (SACH) occupational therapy services are available in the intensive care unit, medical/surgical care unit, the Center for Joint Replacement, the Outpatient Rehab Center, and the Skilled Nursing Facility.

SACH's occupational therapists have an ultimate goal, which is to help their patients return to their prior level of functioning. Occupational therapy treatment addresses simple homemaking tasks, endurance and strength training, transfers in and out of places like bed/tub, tasks relating to self-care, utilizing adaptive equipment and more.

Currently comprising the occupational therapy staff are Melanie Kofskie, OTR/L, Jamie Badman and COTA/L, Renee Popalis, COTA/L. All are full time employees.

Kofskie further explained the vital role of occupational therapists at SACH.

“The OT staff collaborates on patients’ needs before discharge as we see each and every patient at different times during their stay in the hospital, and on the skilled nursing unit,” noted Kofskie.

For occupational therapists, communication is KEY. The distinct nature of the therapy is dependent on the specific individual and their environment as occupational therapists correspond with physi-

cians and other healthcare professionals to ensure the best and most comprehensive approach.

“We must communicate with each other so that each patient’s needs are met regarding adaptive equipment needed for completing bathing and dressing or daily tasks, modifications needed at home for safety, and family and caregiver needs and training before discharge home,” said Ms. Kofskie. “We must communicate with the physical therapy staff regarding observations noted with a patient’s balance and safety with a wheeled walker, cane or other device. We also communicate with nurses regarding the patient’s progress and need for equipment upon return home.”

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Shamokin Area Community Hospital's Rehab Services staff recently participated in activities to promote National Occupational Therapy Month. Promoting "Skills for the Job of Living" are: (front row, left to right) Jennifer Koppenhaver, COTA, Melanie Kofskie, OTR/L, Allison Hauer, MSPT, Robert Veach, PT, director of rehab services, Jamie Badman, COTA, Renee Popalis, COTA, Barbara Snyder, PTA, (back row left to right) Ann Renn, PTA, Brenda Papp, secretary, and Tara Wise, MSPT. Missing from the photo is Lynn Mozdy, PTA.

# Deliver Today's Results for a Healthier Tomorrow

Everyone has or will have a medical test in the future. Which is why laboratory professionals are so important since they are trained professionals spending countless hours making important diagnoses and delivering results that can literally save lives. They provide numerous tests utilizing state-of-the-art instrumentation and critical decisions are made concerning accurate test results.

National Medical Laboratory Week was celebrated April 20-26. Shamokin Area Community Hospital's (SACH) medical laboratory staff are dedicated professionals that "Deliver Today's Results for a Healthier Tomorrow", which was this year's slogan.

National Medical Laboratory Week is dedicated to honoring these professionals that play a vital role in delivering results for a limitless range of diseases.

IN the last eight years, the amount of results delivered by the SACH laboratory department has risen exponentially. Since the year 2000, the number of tests conducted has increased by 74 percent. In fact, there were a whopping 832,196 tests processed from 2006-2007, nearly doubling the amount from seven years back.

SACH's laboratory staff diligently works to handle a large amount of lab work, including inpatient, outpatient and contracted accounts.

Carol Pachutski, MT, director of clinical laboratory services, noted that the staff's hard work and numerous other measures have contributed to the growth. "Our laboratory staff works diligently to serve our patients," said Pachutski. "We know that we play a vital role in the delivery of care chain here at SACH, and we take our responsibilities very seriously."

Major contributing factors that led to the boost in utilization was a concerted effort to keep the instrumentation up-to-date with the latest technology; providing on-site testing rather than sending assays to a reference laboratory (allowing for a quicker turn around time on testing), marketing SACH's lab services to local physician offices, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, clinics, etc.; working closely

with the Medical Staff; and consistently keeping the lab updated and accredited with the stringent regulations from numerous regulatory agencies governing laboratories.

SACH's laboratory services break down into seven sub-departments that include chemistry, hematology, coagulation, microbiology, urinalysis, serology and blood bank. Each of these seven sub departments provides specific tests or screenings.

Members of the lab staff rotate through each department to gain insight to the type of tests conducted to stay current with testing procedures. The staff complies with the College of American Pathologists and Department of Health regulations, as well as the Clinical Improvement Amendments.

Along with Pachutski, the laboratory staff is comprised of: Donna Costello – lab co-Coordinator/MLT; Valerie Koveleski – chief tech MLT; Debbie Kulenguskey, Kay Lazarz, Jennifer Mitchell, Joan Reed, Joan Reiner and Stacy Zanoline – MLT's; Renee Hartman (MLT/PRN); Kathy Golden, Cecilie Johnson, Amy Ney, and Regina Rudiman – MT's; Jeffrey Watkins and Mark Pasquinelli – MT/PRN's; Nicole Chidovich, Claudine Gratti, Tina Hertzog, Jessica Kahler, Dana Korbich, Gary Latshaw and Donna McSurdy – phlebotomists; Kerri Lindermuth – CLT; George Fiamoncini and Gerard Tetkoskie – couriers; Michelle Hasuga – lab assistant and Dawnmarie Buriak, Sheri Madden and Nicole Papp - lab registration.

National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week is a time of recognition for the approximately 270,000 medical laboratory professionals and 15,000 board-certified pathologists who play a vital role in every aspect of health care.

SACH appreciates the professional dedication of our practitioners of clinical/medical laboratory science to the healthcare consumer.

SACH's laboratory facilities and professionals have proven to be a valuable resource throughout the year.

*continued from cover..... Nurses: Making a Difference Every Day*

“I have had the opportunity to observe the nursing care delivered in other facilities,” noted Corinne Klose, RN, vice president of patient services. “It was through those observations that I realized the skill and dedication of our nursing staff here at SACH.”

“The nursing care delivered at SACH exceeds the nursing care at other facilities,” Klose added. “We truly have a lot to be proud of.”

SACH employs over 140 nurses who provide care in 24 nursing specialties throughout the facility.

The value of SACH’s nursing staff goes beyond the walls of the hospital, as nurses take part in various community events such as health screenings, blood drives, educational and immunization programs and much more.

Across the nation, there is always concern about nursing shortages. Among the solutions SACH is using to address shortage issues include fostering relationships through contacts with local nursing resources and the implementation of a tuition reimbursement and tuition deferral programs.

SACH continues to make every effort to work with and establish contacts with local resources. This allows SACH to obtain new nursing employees, serve as a site for stu-

dents to get their clinical experience, and partner with schools locally providing externships in an effort to establish relationships with potential future employees.

Another solution often utilized at SACH are the tuition reimbursement/deferral programs. This has been a successful tool for SACH in filling positions where shortages exist. These programs are specifically targeted at employees who may want to continue their education.

“We always encourage our nurses to continue their respective educations,” said Klose. “Nursing is a profession where one can never stop learning.”

SACH hosted a Nursing Expo in late April in anticipation of National Nurses Week. It was a unique opportunity to show area residents and prospective future nursing employees what this very special profession is all about.

Numerous departments were represented at the open house, fielding comments and providing information to those in attendance. Marty McGurrin, MSW, MBA, spoke at the well-attended event. McGurrin, a thought-provoking and humorous speaker, was well received by the audience.

“It takes a special kind of person to care for others,” added Klose. “During National Nurses Week it is only fitting to show appreciation for these special caregivers who truly make a difference every day in all of our lives.”



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The need for equipment is communicated to the physician via nursing, but the OT staff have many opportunities to speak directly with the doctor regarding the patient’s progress, Activities of Daily Living (ADL) (washing, dressing, transfers, bed mobility) status, safety and equipment they will need, and concerns of the family. Furthermore, the OT staff aid the physician in determining whether a patient can manage at home through observations and, most times, through a home safety evaluation.

During the home safety evaluation, the occupational therapist follows the patient and family to their place of residence and observes how the patient performs getting in/out of the home, transfers on/off surfaces with use of adaptive device as necessary, safety with home appliances, and generally, how safe they are while recommending modifications to the setting to meet the needs of the patient.

The occupational therapist then communicates the find-

ings from the home safety evaluation with the physician and the social worker. From this finding, the appropriate equipment is prescribed and ordered and the appropriate services (home health, outpatient therapy, etc.) are contacted and initiated upon the patient’s return home.

People of all ages can be candidates for OT. According to Kofskie, at SACH many of the clients are older adults that are seen in the ICU or on the medical/surgical floor. A majority of these clients are usually transferred to the SACH skilled nursing unit for further rehabilitation. The joint center clients seen by the OT staff during scheduled joint replacement weeks usually vary in age from middle aged to older adults.

Nagging injuries and the effects of aging can often take a punishing toll on a person. Thanks to occupational therapy professionals, there can be a solution to many people’s physical woes since OT can put you on the right track to return to a more comfortable and productive life.

# Be Critical Care Aware

At some point in their lives, nearly 80% of all Americans will suffer, or know someone who is suffering from a life threatening illness or injury. From heart attack and stroke, to burns and gunshot wounds, every day thousands of people suffer from critical conditions that place their lives in jeopardy.

That is why Intensive Care Medicine/Critical Care Medicine is so important. This branch of medicine is concerned with the provision of life support or organ support in patients who are critically ill and who usually require intensive monitoring.

Critical Care Awareness and Recognition Month is celebrated in May to show appreciation for the efforts of nurses, doctors and other vital members of the healthcare team who provide intensive care each and every day.

The critical care department at Shamokin Area Community Hospital (SACH) is a seven-bed unit that includes intensive and coronary care. The role of the intensive care unit (ICU) is to provide specialized care to acutely ill patients. SACH employs 18 very valuable employees (including PRN staff) in its critical care unit, who work together and use their skill and experience to provide this highly specialized care. Those in SACH's critical care department are required to take critical care courses and earn additional certifications constantly to keep themselves abreast of the latest changes in this aspect of healthcare.

Corinne Klose, RN, vice president of patient services, noted the vital importance of nurses working in SACH's critical care environment.

"Critical care nurses in a community hospital environment function very differently from critical care nurses in a teaching facility," said Klose. "The critical care nurse in a community hospital

is the eyes and ears of the physician and can make the difference in the life and death of a patient."

Sherry Green, RN, nurse manager of the critical care department, talked about the value of teamwork and communication among those in the ICU.

"Communication is very important since there are only two registered nurses per shift," said Green. "It is vital that they work together, which ultimately, makes for a much smoother shift."

SACH's critical care unit is also fortunate to be equipped with state-of-the-art medical equipment that enables the staff to monitor a patient's heart rhythm, blood pressure, respiratory function, oxygen level and provide immediate life-saving measures.

"One example would be our Hill-Rom hospital beds, which can read patient weights and come with special mattresses which prevent skin breakdown," said Green.

The admission criteria for the ICU includes: patients who have survived a cardiac arrest; patients requiring continuous EKG monitoring and/or specialized nursing observation and interventions; multiple trauma or severe single system injury; post-operative patients with co-existing medical conditions requiring close monitoring; drug overdose; shock of any case and several other medical conditions. Also, when the recovery room is closed, patients may be monitored in the ICU during their recovery.

Any stay in the ICU can be very stressful and alarming, but area residents can take solace in the fact that SACH's ICU is designed to provide an environment that is private, supportive and conducive to the patient regaining optimum health.

# High Blood Pressure Focus of Month Long Observance

Fifty Million.

That number is the answer to the question – How many American's have high blood pressure or hypertension (another name for high blood pressure)? Fifty Million, which is one out of every three adults in the United States.

High blood pressure having no warning signs is the primary reason for the statistics listed above. Since there are no symptoms to recognize, it makes having your blood pressure checked regularly even more important. Nearly one third of those with high blood pressure do not even realize they have it.

High blood pressure is known as the “silent killer” since uncontrolled high blood pressure can lead to stroke, heart attack, heart failure or kidney failure.

The month of May is National High Blood Pressure Month. The focus of this observance is to increase awareness about the prevention and treatment of this life threatening condition.

High blood pressure is when the pressure in the arteries is elevated. Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the blood vessel walls. The top number, systolic, is the pressure when the heart beats. The bottom number, diastolic, is the pressure when the heart rests between beats.

Below are some blood pressure classifications:

- Normal: less than 120/80.
- Pre-hypertension: 120 to 139 and 80 to 89.
- Stage 1 Hypertension: 140 to 159 and 90 to 99.

- Stage 2 Hypertension 160 or higher and 100 and higher

With the lack of symptoms of high blood pressure, it is very important to educate yourself about risk factors that can contribute to developing high blood pressure such as: family history, if you are African American, being over the age of 35, being overweight/obese, physical inactivity, using too much salt or eating salty foods, drinking too much alcohol, diabetes, gout, kidney disease, women taking birth control pills and pregnancy associated with high blood pressure can lead to hypertension after delivery.

It is not exactly known what causes high blood pressure, but what is known is that though it cannot be cured, it can be controlled.

Here is a list of things you can do to help yourself and fend off high blood pressure:

1. Have your blood pressure checked regularly and have it treated if indicated.
2. Lose weight.
3. Eat a healthy diet, low in saturated/trans fats, cholesterol and salt.
4. Be more physically active.
5. Limit alcohol consumption.

Know your numbers and be proactive about your health with your health care provider.

Take time during the month of May to learn more about the dangers of high blood pressure and be sure to share this information with friends and family.

# American Stroke Month

One of the most deadly health issues in this country is stroke. Over 700,000 people suffer from stroke each year.

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in the United States and causes more serious long-term disabilities than any other disease. Approximately three quarters of all strokes occur in people over the age of 65 and the risk of suffering a stroke more than doubles each decade after the age of 55.

Learning more about stroke and having an understanding of how to handle the situation involving a stroke when it happens can help a person act in time to save a friend, co-worker or loved one.

Stroke is a type of cardiovascular disease that affects the arteries leading to and within the brain.

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel carrying oxygen and nutrients to the brain is blocked by a clot or bursts. When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood (and oxygen) it needs, so it starts to die.

There are two kinds of stroke. The first and most common, is called an ischemic stroke, which is caused by a blood clot that blocks or plugs a blood vessel in the brain. The other kind of stroke, called a hemorrhagic stroke, is caused by a blood vessel that breaks and bleeds into the brain.

Some common symptoms of stroke include:

- Sudden weakness or numbness in the face, arms or legs, especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion or difficulty speaking or understanding speech.
- Sudden vision problems, dizziness, trouble walking or loss of balance.
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.
- Brief loss of consciousness.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.

Shamokin Area Community Hospital (SACH) nurse

education coordinator, Susan Kurtek, RN, explained that it is extremely important that the public recognize the symptoms of a stroke.

“If you experience signs and symptoms of a stroke, the best action is to call 911 and get to the nearest hospital immediately,” said Kurtek. “Every second counts in dealing with the treatment of a potential stroke.”

Making the decision to call for medical help can make the difference in avoiding a lifelong disability. New treatments are available that can greatly reduce the damage caused by a stroke. But one needs to arrive at the hospital within 60 minutes after symptoms start to prevent disability. Knowing stroke symptoms, calling 911 immediately and getting to a hospital are critical.

When someone has shown symptoms of a stroke, a doctor will gather information and make a diagnosis. A doctor may use many different tests. The ones listed here are just some of the more common options.

The good news is that making changes in one’s lifestyle can help a person fend off the risk of stroke.

While it is true that family history plays a role in the risk of stroke, there are still many other risk factors that a person can control.

Those with high blood pressure can work with their physician to get it under control. There are many people who do not realize that they have high blood pressure, which usually doesn’t produce symptoms, but identifying high blood pressure and managing it can play a very important role in avoiding stroke.

Smoking is another lifestyle change that can be controlled and ultimately decrease the risk of stroke, according to Kurtek.

“While quitting smoking can be a difficult proposition, there is always help out there to kick the habit and a very strong motivating factor to quit should be that the risk of stroke will decrease when one stops smoking,” said Kurtek.

# Healthcare Administrative Professionals Week

In her role as Executive Assistant for the past 16 years, Helen Limbert has seen a great deal of change at Shamokin Area Community Hospital (SACH).

She's seen the hospital grow and progress in every way possible. Limbert was here when the hospital divested itself from the state. She's seen numerous large-scale construction projects, such as the addition of the West Wing. And she's had the opportunity to work closely with four SACH Chief Executive Officer's during her time here.

Limbert is well liked and appreciated by those in the administration office for her hard work and upbeat personality. With her many years as an executive assistant, Limbert handles stress extremely well and has become accustomed to the fast-paced atmosphere that any healthcare administrative office experiences.

Thomas R. Harlow, FACHE, president and CEO, noted Limbert's experience at SACH has been very beneficial to him.

"Helen has a great ability to anticipate things in advance," noted Harlow. "Her attention to detail and organization is a great asset and helps to keep me on track."

As Executive Assistant, Limbert has numerous responsibilities besides the usual word processing, record-keeping and answering phone calls. Among those responsibilities are: providing administrative support to the CEO and Board of Directors; coordinating and attending administrative, board-related and hospital committee

meetings; taking the minutes of meetings and preparing reports; directing administrative PI projects; researching, drafting and preparing reports; records management and much more.

Administrative assistants face numerous challenges each and every day. According to Limbert, some of the biggest challenges she faces would be time management and maintaining accuracy, as well as keeping her knowledge updated regarding the numerous important and ever-changing information technology procedures.

Limbert noted that professionalism, confidentiality, being able to multi-task and having good interpersonal and organizational skills are all characteristics that any good administrative assistant should have.

Also, recognized during Healthcare Administrative Professionals Week was Mary Puza, Executive Assistant for the nursing administration office.



Helen Limbert has been executive assistant for the past 16 years at Shamokin Area Community Hospital, and has also served in this position through four administrations.

## Auxiliary Casino Night Huge Success



Approximately 150 people attended the first annual Casino Night hosted by the Shamokin Area Community Hospital Auxiliary. Attendees enjoyed playing black jack, craps, slot machines, roulette and the money wheel to raise funds to support the hospital. Here Daryl Lewis (*far right*) of Datman Productions provides instructions for the game of craps for (*from left to right*) Steve Crawford, Michelle Crawford, Kathy Flynn and Rick Flynn.

## Joint Replacement Graduates



Shamokin Area Community Hospital recently held a luncheon for the graduates of the Center for Joint Replacement in an effort to catch up with the patients and obtain feedback. Pictured are: (*back row from left to right*) Melanie Kofskie, OTR/L; Jamie Badman, COTA; Martha Weikel, Doris Miles, Darlene Reinoehl, Joseph Bevivino, William Korbich and Robert Veach, PT, director of rehab services, (*front row from left to right*) Charlene Kalinoskie, joint team care coordinator; Gloria Schicatano, Judith Marose, Karleen Eberly and Dr. Charles L. Cole Jr., co-medical director of the Center for Joint Replacement.

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