

18-YEAR-OLD (AND ANGIOPLASTY!) SAVE DAD'S LIFE



John D'urso credits his 18-year-old son with saving his life. Soon after the holidays, on January 5 of this year, John, 48, was working out at home, just as he'd done four days a week for about the last four years. On this day, though, John experienced chest pains after exercising, and asked his son to drive him to a local urgent care center. The center quickly called an ambulance to bring John to Good Samaritan Hospital, where he was taken to the Emergency Room.

The next several hours were frightening for John's family. "They didn't know if I was going to live or die," he says. "I flat lined two or three times in the ambulance, and again several times in the Emergency Room." Despite this, John is able to joke a bit about his experience. When asked about the skill of the doctors and nurses in the Emergency Room, John laughs, "I don't really remember anything in the ER."

Dr. David Brogno, an interventional cardiologist, performed an emergency angioplasty on John that day. "Dr. Brogno was just dynamite, and the nurses were fantastic," says John. "I feel great now." He spent a total of seven days in the hospital, and is still working on a treadmill with a physical therapist until he can resume his home workout regimen. John was fortunate that his son was there to take him to the doctor when he had a heart attack. He'd never had an indication that he had a heart problem, there was no family history of heart disease, and he exercised regularly, so his heart attack was quite unexpected. John's wife and three children have been great. "Without a doubt this has changed my life". John said. ■

GSH RECEIVES GRANT FOR MENTORING PROGRAM

The Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation has awarded a \$10,000 grant to Good Samaritan Hospital in Suffern, N.Y. to establish a mentoring program designed to expand the reach and services of the hospital's renowned Perinatal Bereavement Support Program. The \$10,000 grant represents the first installment of a three-year commitment by the Foundation.

The grant, initially funded at \$10,000 for the first year, is directed toward establishing a Mentoring Program within the Perinatal Bereavement Support Program. This new program will expand Good Samaritan Hospital's services and reach within this area, by training parents who have experienced the loss of a baby and previously participated in the support program as support group leaders and mentors to parents who are currently dealing with a loss. Based on the results and accomplishments during the first year, two additional years of funding for this program may be available.

"The loss of a baby is overwhelming," notes Pam Magi, RN, Director of the Perinatal Bereavement Support

Program at Good Samaritan Hospital. "Nothing, certainly not any words, can console parents who have suffered such a tremendous loss. But as the healing journey begins, it is often a small source of comfort for parents to be with people who have experienced a similar loss. We are gratified to be recognized by the Alfred E. Smith Foundation with this grant, which will enable us to expand our services and to reach more families during their time of sorrow," said Magi.

Michael Schnieders, Executive Vice President and Administrator of Good Samaritan Hospital, voiced his gratification that Good Samaritan was singled out for this grant. "This grant affirms the tremendous value that our Perinatal Bereavement Support Program extends to families who experience a terrible loss," said Schnieders. "We're very proud of the groundbreaking work that Pam Magi and Eileen Fioramonti are doing in this difficult area. They are truly helping Good Samaritan Hospital to make a positive difference in the lives of the people of Rockland and surrounding counties." ■

Good Samaritan Hosts County Nurse Recognition

White tents, special exhibits, special recognitions and many new faces will be on the Good Samaritan Campus Thursday, May 13th as we host the Rockland County Nurse Recognition Day program. More than 25 area health care organizations participate in this special event each year to honor nurses in many fields of service.

This year there are 50 nominees for the Rockland County "Excellence in Practice Awards" for RN's and 4 nominees for the LPN "Continuing Education Award". Congratulations to all the nominees and a special "hooray" for the many nominees from Good Sam that demonstrate daily their commitment to excellence.

GSH Nominees

- Catherine Caston, RN – Pain Management
- Kathleen Chin, RN – Cardiac Cath
- Amy Cunningham, RN - SDS
- Susan Curry, RN – Case Mangement
- Kimberly Daly, RN - ED
- Eileen Engelbracht , RN – Infection Control
- Heidi Grecco, RN – Staff Development
- Joan Goldberg, RN – Neonatal - ICU
- Yvonne Heaven, RN – Case Management
- Migdalia Hernandez, RN – L & D
- Dione Hudson-Douglas, RN - CCU
- Oksoo Lee, RN – Renal Dialysis In Patient
- Kathleen Lynam, RN – Nursing Admin
- Lyssa Maher, RN – Regional Kidney Center
- Gladys McLeod, RN – 4 North
- Kathryn O'Brien, RN – OR Scheduling
- Pamela Pease, RN – 4 Loria
- Ellen Phares, RN - Post Partum /GYNEC
- Denise Schultz, RN - ED
- Ellen Smith, RN – 3 North
- Margaret Tesseyman, RN – Day Surgery
- Judith Vacca, RN – Post Partum/GYN
- Katherine Zubiaurre, RN - Frawley
- Lucy Maulik, LPN – 3 Loria

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GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL
Bon Secours Charity Health System

A Word from our Administrator

May is a month of honors. This year, Good Samaritan Hospital is the host facility for the Rockland County Nurse Recognition Program. It seems appropriate that during a year of great achievements and challenges that we should host this prestigious award ceremony on Thursday, May 13th.

The following day we will honor all of our employees with several activities including a breakfast from 7am to 10am. These events are celebratory by nature and intended to recognize everyone for their special role at Good Samaritan. I would like to reiterate my thanks to all our employees for the outstanding way they represented us during our Joint Commission survey and the way that they continue to represent us every day.

On May 20th we will honor our EMS Corps with a special BBQ. When it comes to emergency situations in a pre-hospital setting, we at Good Samaritan Hospital know that effective medical care begins with the EMS team. That's why we go to exceptional lengths to maintain and build strong relationships with EMS in order to provide the community with the best medical care possible. This is just one way we say thanks to them each year.

In the next several weeks you will be receiving an announcement about our upcoming Open Forums. I hope you will take the time to participate in them. Details are mentioned in a special article in this edition of The VOICE.

Finally, this month GSH will participate in a National program to "Cover the Uninsured". Did you know that 44 million people in our country are uninsured and this does not include the undocumented? That 80% of the uninsured are from working families? That 8.5 million are children? Studies indicate that there are grave consequences for those that are uninsured. Women are twice as likely to die of breast cancer; men are twice as likely to be diagnosed with late stage colon cancer and children are nearly twice as likely to miss vital immunizations. But you can help. Participate in our on campus programs to reach the uninsured and write your U.S. Senator or Congressman to advocate for those without insurance.

~Michael Schnieders

Executive Vice President/Administrator

Joint Commission Surveyors Laud Good Samaritan Hospital "There's Something Special About This Place!"

So were the words of one of the Joint Commission (JCAHO) Surveyors. Their words were a great encouragement but not surprising to most, as they exited the facility after announcing that Good Samaritan Hospital had retained its accredited standing following their extensive on-site review of the hospital's systems and procedures.

Another comment, "You've got great people doing great things!" was wholeheartedly agreed to by Senior Leadership and the Management Team. This month, during hospital appreciation week, Administration is expressing their thanks for all the hard work that went into the accreditation survey, and for all that our employees do every day to make this the hospital of choice in the Lower Hudson Valley region.

JCAHO accreditation means Good Samaritan has met the highest quality national standards for acute care hospitals. Formed in 1951, JCAHO is dedicated to improving the quality of the nation's health care through voluntary accreditation of hospitals, and other health care organizations. JCAHO is the nation's oldest and largest health care accrediting body. For more than 50 years, JCAHO has developed state of the art standards and evaluated the compliance of health care organizations to the standards.

This year for the first time, Good Samaritan Hospital and Good Samaritan Home Care were reviewed by JCAHO in an integrated survey. Additionally, this survey was conducted as part of a new process that JCAHO has implemented, where institutions are evaluated based on continuous learning by the staff and ongoing improvements in systems and procedures. In fact, the JCAHO surveyors spent roughly 80% of their time with staff, honing in on the staff's continuing commitment to increasing its knowledge base while improving patient care. The JCAHO survey team was very complimentary of the entire Good Samaritan Hospital and Good Samaritan Home Care staff, which is reflected in the fact that only minor recommendations were offered.

JCAHO accreditation is recognized nationwide as a symbol of quality that reflects an organization's commitment to meeting certain performance standards. Although this was an "announced" survey, the next one will be a "surprise" survey and can happen at any time. Each edition of the Good Samaritan Voice will include timely information about topics that may be covered in the next survey. ■

Good Sam Employees ARE APPRECIATED!

Good Samaritan Hospital employees and contracted services staff will be recognized on Friday, May 14th with a special breakfast served by Members of the Administrative team. Breakfast will be served in the big white tent in the parking lot. Overflow parking will be available at the Tagaste Monastery across the street from the hospital. And the fun will continue through lunch as Food Service moves a grill outdoors (weather permitting) and will offer Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Corn on the Cob, Watermelon and other goodies for a reduced price. They will also be treated to free popcorn and cotton candy.

"This is a special day for our employees. We want to recognize them for all they do, day in and day out," said Michael Schnieders, EVP/Administrator. "We have much to be thankful for and our employees are an asset that we do not take for granted."

Good Samaritan Hospital is one of the area's largest employers with over 1600 employees. ■

Renal Dialysis Center Gives Patients Back Their Lives

For patients living with the prospect of kidney dialysis three times each week in order to survive, it can sometimes be difficult to keep an optimistic outlook. However, patients at The Frank and Fannie Weiss Renal Dialysis Center at Good Samaritan Hospital, experience care for the entire person – mind, body and spirit – that can often lead to happier, more optimistic outlooks.

The Frank and Fannie Weiss Renal Dialysis Center is an outpatient facility of Good Samaritan Hospital, providing ongoing hemodialysis and continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD) services to patients who need kidney dialysis. The Weiss Renal Center is the only hospital-based Dialysis Unit in Rockland County providing a full range of kidney dialysis services to patients and their families.

Patients know that the advanced kidney failure that requires them to undergo dialysis is a necessary, if uncomfortable part of their lives. However, many choose to look on the bright side of things.

"There are worse things," said a smiling Arthur Naprava as he sat in his recliner watching the Yankees game and eating miniature chocolate bars. The 75-year old Naprava was about an hour into his 3-hour dialysis treatment at Good Samaritan Hospital's Weiss Renal Dialysis Center.

Dialysis clears the normal toxins and excess fluids from the body once a patient's kidney is no longer capable. Three days out of every week, people like Naprava suffering from kidney failure undergo dialysis treatments – treatments that last between three and five hours per session.

Dialysis is a part of life for these patients – a big part. That's why the team at Good Samaritan Hospital's Weiss Renal Center is so committed to maintaining the most comfortable, safe and effective treatment environment possible, while providing a level of support that helps patients live long, healthy, and relatively normal lives.

"Our patients spend a lot of time here," notes Karen Marcus, Renal Director. "It is easy for patients to feel like dialysis has control over their lives, we try to help patients gain control over their treatment and to feel better about things."

"There's no mistake, do it or die," said Naprava. "It's time consuming. You do miss out on some things. But the people here often help you make arrangements so you don't miss much."

"The social worker here pre-arranges dialysis treatments for me at a hospital near where I vacation," said Naprava who tries to spend a few weeks at the beach in each year. "And, when I had heart surgery, they took care of all the arrangements for dialysis treatments while I was in the hospital."

Good Samaritan's Weiss Renal Unit is fully staffed by a multi-disciplinary team, dedicated to providing all aspects of patient care. The team includes doctors, nurses, technicians, educators, social workers, and dietitians. The patients themselves are also an important part of the team and they are encouraged to participate fully in their care.

Good Samaritan dietitian, Angalie Gupte gives Naprava a report card – a chart showing excesses and deficiencies apparent in Naprava's blood samples from a previous week. Based on the chart, Gupte and Naprava discuss diet and corrective measures. "They often take care of you in spite of yourself," said Naprava. "I'll probably live to be 500!"

The Weiss Renal Center opened on the Good Samaritan campus in 1982 and new dialysis machines were installed last year. The center currently treats over 125 patients a week, and a brand new state-of-the-art satellite facility was opened in Harriman, N.Y. in the year 2000.

"Our mission is to allow our patients to live happy, healthy and productive lives despite the need for dialysis," concludes Marcus. ■

NEWS FROM THE Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth

The ideal of boundless charity is at the heart of the charism and tradition of the Community. This ideal of charity is richly nourished and vividly portrayed in the lives of our founders: Mother Mary Xavier Mehegan, Bishop James Roosevelt Bayley, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Saint Louise de Marillac, Saint Vincent de Paul, and in the lives of all those who have preceded us. Their lives proclaim commitment, especially to the poor, to one another in community and to a life of prayer anchored in the Word of God and in the sharing of the Eucharist.

The Sisters of Charity in the United States were founded in 1809 in Emmitsburg, Maryland by Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, in the spirit of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac. In 1859 Mother Mary Xavier Mehegan founded the New Jersey community known as the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth in Newark, New Jersey.

Saint Vincent de Paul said, "It is essential to continue well, for to begin is nothing." Since 1859, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth have built a tradition of service to all who needed our help.

Today the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth are engaged in over 100 education, health care, pastoral and social service ministries in 14 New Jersey counties and 18 states, and in the U. S. Virgin Islands and El Salvador, Central America.

Traditionally, from the beginning, we have been engaged in works of education, health care and social service. We presently sponsor College of Saint Elizabeth (1899) first college for women in NJ; 5 Academies for young women and Hospitals located in Paterson, Passaic, Elizabeth, NJ; New Haven, CT and Suffern, NY.

Ministries also include: parish ministry, counseling and spiritual direction, homes for the aged community centers and social services.

In the spirit of our founder and foundresses, we look forward with hope and expectation, just as we look back with pride. Our rich history is the springboard to a future of boundless charity. ■

"BUG NOTES" from Infection Control

Beginning May 1, Good Samaritan Hospital instituted a new proactive approach to patient wellness by rolling out a new standing order policy for vaccinations.

All adult inpatients who are at risk for pneumonia will be administered the pneumococcal vaccine, and beginning in September (when next year's influenza vaccine becomes available), until March, all at-risk patients will receive this vaccine as well. This new policy states that "Good Samaritan hospital recognizes the major impact and mortality of both influenza and pneumonia on patients and the effectiveness of vaccines in preventing illness, hospitalization and death."

Perhaps the most significant component of this policy change is that a physician's written order will no longer be needed to administer these vaccinations. Medicare recognizes that wellness and prevention are important to patients, and at the end of 2002, the CMS decided to eliminate the physician's signature requirement. According to Eileen Englebracht, Director of Infection Control for Good Samaritan, this makes the process less complicated. "Essentially, we can take the physician out of the picture by giving the authority to a licensed independent practitioner like an RN or LPN." Nurses will be provided with three-step assessment and order forms to guide them through the process of determining who should be vaccinated.

The Department of Infection Control has been working on this initiative for some time, and it has been approved by the Medical Executive Committee and hospital administration. "Vaccination rates across the country are fairly dismal," says Eileen Englebracht. "This is a wellness initiative for our patients. We would like to make sure we take this proactive approach to protect our patient population." ■

NEWS FROM THE Bon Secours National Office

After almost a year of evaluation and assessments, the boards of Altoona Hospital and Bon Secours-Holy Family Hospital announced that they have taken a significant and important step toward a merger of the hospitals into one system intending to serve better the health care needs of the community. This step was the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding and Term Sheet.

The Term Sheet provides for the operation of the hospitals under one corporate entity, with two operating campuses — an Altoona Hospital campus and a Bon Secours-Holy Family campus. The current health care affiliates of each hospital would become affiliates of the combined system. The Term Sheet also provides that a new board of 18 directors (nine selected by Altoona Hospital and nine selected by Bon Secours) would govern the combined system.

Under the proposal, James W. Barner, President and Chief Executive Officer of Altoona Hospital, would become President and Chief Executive Officer of the two-campus hospital system. Daniel S. Duggan, Chief Executive Officer of Bon Secours-Holy Family Hospital, would become Executive Vice

President. One unified medical staff would serve both campuses. Subject to normal credentialing, physicians now practicing at either hospital would be granted medical privileges at both hospital campuses.

Studies commissioned by a joint Collaboration Steering Committee, drawn from the boards and medical staffs of both hospitals, identified numerous benefits from a merger, including the opportunity to improve the quality of clinical services, the opportunity to consider new or expanded services in many clinical areas and the opportunity to achieve significant cost savings.

PriceWaterhouseCoopers proposed a clinical distribution plan to be used as a roadmap for providing services on the two campuses. The proposal would put behavioral medicine, an orthopedics center of excellence (inpatient and outpatient), medical-surgical, inpatient rehabilitation and transitional care at the Bon Secours-Holy Family campus. The Altoona Hospital campus would offer cardiac services, neurosciences, OB-GYN, oncology, trauma, pediatrics, medical-surgical, long-term acute care and wound care.

This proposal offers a new and exciting direction for both hospitals. Because both will be working in the same direction, it will greatly enhance the potential for local health care services to expand and improve.

The proposed merger will be reviewed by the appropriate regulatory agencies, a process that could take several months. During this time, the hospitals will continue to operate separately and independently. ■

3rd Annual "Ladies Links" Golf Event Scheduled

For the third year in a row, the Good Samaritan Hospital Foundation is hosting "Ladies Links," a half-day golf event taking place Thursday, June 17th, to raise funds to help battle the two leading causes of death for women — heart disease and cancer. Held at the New York Country Club in New Hempstead, N.Y., "Ladies Links" will be a fun filled day, beginning with an 8:30am continental breakfast. Attendees will then be invited to learn to play golf in the Golf Clinic or try their swings in a 9-hole Scramble. A buffet lunch will conclude the festivities and will feature prizes, gifts, an exciting raffle and entertainment from New Jersey's "Queen of Comedy," Joanne Archer.

Various sponsorship opportunities are available, beginning at only \$125 for a Tee Sponsor. All funds will support Women's Health Services at Good Samaritan Hospital of Suffern, N.Y. Individual golfers are invited to attend at a cost of \$125, for either the scramble or the clinic. The cost to attend the fun-filled lunch only is \$40. For more information or to sign up, please contact the Foundation Office at 845-368-5151 or email psillery@tshs.org ■

CEU Contact Hours for Nurses

Here's some good news for nurses at Good Samaritan Hospital who require Continuing Education Units -- Staff Development has been approved by the New York State Nurses Association as a provider of contact hours.

For the past year, Sue-Ann Doebler, Director of Staff Development, and Lori Perlstein, an Educator in Staff Development, have been working toward this goal. "It has been an extensive process," says Doebler. "The application required a great deal of work, and a lot of supporting documents." The approval, which goes into effect immediately, will be good for three years.

In New York State, continuing education contact hours are not required for the renewal of a nurse's license. But for any nurse who has a certification in specialties like critical care nursing, psychology, or oncology, these hours are necessary to maintain certification. The number of hours needed can vary; a nurse might need to take 75 hours of courses specific to the field over five years to maintain her certification. One full-day course would give a nurse about seven of those hours.

Good Samaritan has offered programs in the past, in areas like Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Palliative Care for Nurses, and Diabetes Updates. Courses are initiated either by Staff Development, or by other departments, like Radiology or the Cardiac Cath Lab. In order to offer contact hours for the nurses who took these courses in the past, Staff Development would need to be approved by the state for each individual course. Sue-Ann Doebler says, "We are now the ones who are permitted to award the contact hours, and any programs we give can now be offered for credit — even ongoing courses." It will also take half the time for nurses to be awarded their contact hours as it had in the past.

Doebler also believes that this approval will allow the hospital to provide more of these courses for nurses. "Because it's streamlining the process, I think we'll see more courses offering the contact hours. In the past, even though we might have offered courses, they might not have had the contact hours associated with them."

All this should make it easier for nurses at Good Samaritan to maintain their certifications, and helps us all provide the best care possible for our patients. ■

2004 Good Samandatories

All employees are required to attend the Good Samandatories. All sessions will be held in the GSH Auditorium.

May 2004 dates are as follows:

Friday, May 21:

7:30am to 9am

11am to 12:30pm

2pm to 3:30pm

Tuesday, May 25:

11am to 12:30pm

3pm to 4:30pm

6pm to 7:30pm

Open Forums

Michael Schnieders, Administrator of Good Samaritan Hospital, is once again hosting "Open Forums" for our employees, contracted labor staff and physicians. These sessions provide employees an opportunity to meet Mike, get an update from him about the health of the hospital, the initiatives we are embarking on for the near future and ask him questions.

The hospital will provide refreshments and a few raffles at each session. Open Forums have been scheduled for June. Watch for postings of the schedule. ■

Mall Walkers Program at Crystal Run Galleria

The Galleria at Crystal Run, together with the Bon Secours Charity Health System and the American Heart Association of Orange County is sponsoring a "mall walkers" program at the mall.

"All across the country, people are finding 'mall walking' to be a terrific way to begin or to enhance a regular cardiac fitness regimen," notes Barbara Demundo, R.N. Director of Cardiac Outreach for Bon Secours. "The beauty of the program is that virtually anyone can do it – you just have to show up, and we'll get you started at a comfortable pace and distance."

To entice participation and to make the experience worthwhile and fun for all participants, members of the Bon Secours Charity Health System Cardiac Outreach team will meet with the Galleria Mall Walkers once a month, and provide free information, speakers and health screenings, in addition to awarding prizes based on mileage covered. For the kick-off, Bon Secours provided a free heart-friendly breakfast, and conducted free glucose, cholesterol and blood pressure screenings. Information on cardiac and overall fitness as well as other educational materials was also provided.

"Mall Walking is fun and healthy, and it's a great way to socialize or meet new people," said Demundo. "We are proud to be working with the Galleria in conjunction with the Heart Association to bring this program to Orange County. So grab your sneakers and come on out to join the fun!" ■

4 Man Softball Team

Good Samaritan Hospital is thrilled to welcome back the unbelievable King and His Court, a four-man softball team who will once again put on a show with their remarkable skill and speed at the Suffern Little League Field on Sunday, June 13th at 2pm. The King and His Court will take the field in their royal red, white and blue softball jerseys as they "batter up" to benefit the Good Samaritan Hospital Behavioral Health Department. The King, also known as Eddie Feigner, has been in "the game" for over 50 years and has a remarkable history of going beyond his incredible bullet-like pitches.

"After serving as a Marine in World War II, I started my softball career all on a dare. After beating one team over and over again with a full roster, the team eventually confronted me and declared that my team couldn't do it again. Not only did I say that we could, I told them that I'd do it again, but this time, I'd do it with only three others – a catcher, a shortstop and a first baseman," said Feigner. He succeeded and The King and His Court were born. The humor and slapstick fun of the family event has remained pretty much the same since the beginning. What Feigner could do with a softball was remarkable. Batters tried to match their swings against Feigner's pitches that would curve and dip and dance at speeds of 100 mph or more, and most of the time swung at nothing but air! Children and adults love to watch the magic and antics of a softball team with only 4 players.

Feigner still loads up and travels all over the world to benefit others. He still holds the record for more than 10,000 games pitched and 132,000 plus strikeouts and 250 perfect games. At age 79, Feigner coaches from the sidelines in his wheelchair, however, the fun remains the same as does Feigner's mission to help others. "Our desire is to help people that need it," noted Feigner. "Working with Good Samaritan Hospital's team to raise money for their Behavioral Health Program is a natural fit!"

Tickets are \$10/adults and \$8/students in advance or \$12/adults and \$10/students at the gate. Corporations and individuals are also encouraged to purchase tickets for underprivileged youth groups. For more info, contact Wes Anderson at 845-368-5214 or Cathy Finley at 845-368-5249. ■

Perinatal Bereavement Support Program

Good Samaritan Hospital's Perinatal Bereavement Support Program, a program that offers support and comfort to couples who have experienced the loss of a baby either during or immediately following pregnancy, is for the first time extending its reach to offer its caring guidance and support to families who have experienced the loss of a child through a special Pediatric Bereavement Support Group. The group will meet in the Hospital's 1 Campbell Ave. building on the first Monday of every month at 7:30 PM.

The group will be led by Pam Magi, RN, Director of the Perinatal Bereavement Support Program at Good Samaritan. Magi has been working for a number of years with families who have experienced the loss of a baby or infant. In 1988, Magi began working with the Perinatal Bereavement Program, and now coordinates the program, offering support and comfort to couples who have lost a baby either during or immediately following pregnancy. This new group is the first time that the program has extended its reach to families who have experienced the loss of a young child.

"Last December, I posted the date for our annual memorial candlelight service on the 'Compassionate Friends' Website, and received a note from a woman who had lost her young son, asking if she could attend," stated Magi. "That note set in motion a series of events that have now led six families to participate in setting up this support group."

"We are gratified that, for the first time, Good Samaritan's Perinatal Bereavement Support Program will be offering its caring guidance and support to families who have experienced the loss of a child," commented Liz Ponte, Director of Nursing for Women's and Children's Services at Good Samaritan.

Anyone who has experienced the loss of a child is encouraged to join this group. Admission is free, but advance reservations are requested. For more information please call the Perinatal Bereavement Office at (845) 368- 5297." ■

\$330,000 RAISED at Spring Ball

The 19th Annual Good Samaritan Hospital Spring Ball, held on Sunday, March 28, 2004 at the Hilton Woodcliff Lake, in Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey, raised in excess of \$330,000 to support the hospital's programs.

Long known as the community's premier black tie event, this year's ball featured a "Polynesian Paradise" theme, and recognized the fine work of the Rockland Paramedic Services/Regional EMS with the Good Samaritan Hospital Medal of Honor, while Dr. James B. Israel, M.D. was this year's recipient of the Sister Joseph Rita Award for Medical Excellence.

"We are thrilled with the tremendous outpouring of support for this event, and for Good Samaritan Hospital in general," noted Event Chairperson Janetlee Pillitteri. "In the past, we've been able to raise significant sums of money to support the mission of the hospital. The proceeds from this year's Spring Ball are earmarked for the purchase of new IV infusion pumps for the entire hospital. The generosity and support of the community have made this Spring Ball another milestone for Good Samaritan." ■

Good Sam Shows Heart- RAISES OVER \$10,000

Employees from Good Samaritan Hospital joined together and raised over \$10,000 for this year's American Heart Association Heart Walk. Compared to last year, this was a triple increase. "Working to raise funds for the American Heart Association is a natural fit for Good Samaritan Hospital", said Sandi Jeanette, Director of the Rockland County American Heart Association.

Not only does the money go to fund a great organization with a great cause, but the day was fun, too. Team members were heard in the hallway with plans already in place to exceed this year's tally! Way to Go Heart Walkers and those that contributed. ■

GSH RECOGNIZES Alcohol Awareness Month

In recognition of National Alcohol Awareness Month in May, and in keeping its commitment to the health of people in surrounding communities, Good Samaritan Hospital has developed a series of programs and seminars focused on education and treatment. Many of the programs will focus on the special needs of people over the age of 60.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, more than one-half of American adults have a close family member who has or has had alcohol-related problems. Disturbingly, recent statistics have indicated that approximately three million people over the age of 60 have a problem with alcohol and do not give the disease the attention it needs. It has been shown that alcohol is responsible for more than 70 percent of hospital admissions and hospitalizes more people in this age group than heart attacks.

Throughout the month, Good Samaritan will be offering informal screenings for alcohol abuse and dependency, as well as information and education about the disease of alcoholism. These services will be offered by a team of professionals who have over 40 years of combined experience in the chemical dependency field.

"The number of people over the age of 60 suffering from alcohol-related problems is alarming, and we at Good Samaritan Hospital want to give this issue our attention," said Richard Santiago, Behavioral Health Director at Good Samaritan Hospital. "The community benefits greatly from programs and services like this and we are proud to be able to provide them."

Alcohol awareness workshops will be available onsite at the hospital, and can also be scheduled for offsite locations. Please call 845-368-5242 for more information. ■