ECHN honors cancer survivors with fun, food and inspirational stories

By Judith D. Botvin

The marketing team at Eastern Connecticut Health Network (ECHN), Manchester, Conn., made special efforts to create last year’s successful celebration of Cancer Survivors Day, June 6. More than 700 facilities across the country observed the occasion, sponsored by the national Cancer Survivors Day (CSD) organization.

Carol Arnold, communications manager, and the rest of the Cancer Survivors Day committee enlisted the support of a varied group of co-sponsors. Because the majority of cancer patients are more than 50 years old, the marketing team emphasized “nostalgia” as the local theme accompanying “Celebration,” the national CSD theme.

The target audience was a broad one: adult cancer survivors of both genders, their supportive families and friends, and the caregivers in the community and in medical settings. Arnold hoped the nostalgia theme and a show of classic cars parked at the restaurant would attract more men, many of whom, she said, “tend to deny or to soft-pedal illnesses of all kinds.”

The primary objective was to celebrate the courage and joy of surviving cancer. The committee also saw the event as a good chance to sell the comprehensive treatment facilities and experienced staff of Manchester Memorial Hospital’s Cancer Program and The John A. DeQuattro Community Cancer Center, located adjacent to the hospital. Manchester Memorial is an affiliate of ECHN.

To honor cancer survivors and entertain them and their guests, the Cancer Survivors Day committee developed a no-cost, no-strings-attached event. It featured a high-quality brunch at a popular restaurant, for which ECHN paid $17 per person. Attendees enjoyed inspirational and witty talks by cancer survivors, award-winning barbershop quartets (both all-male and all-female) and a display of eight vintage cars. Popcorn (cooked on the spot in an old-fashioned popcorn cart) and freshly made cotton candy supported the nostalgic mood.

To advertise the event, Arnold mailed four-color flyers to local businesses and religious organizations in ECHN’s 19-town service area. Posters in a similar design were displayed in the lobbies of ECHN’s seven affiliates.

Adding to the nostalgic atmosphere were four posters created by Arnold and Curtis Design, Somers, Conn. Tracing milestones and developments over the years required a massive research effort by Arnold and Curtis. The posters, each displaying a unique timeline, received considerable attention in the lobby and banquet room of the host ECHN.

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Editor’s Notes

Publicist’s advice: Hire a PR firm before you need one

By Tom Rees

There are many factors to weigh when considering whether you need to hire outside help to obtain public relations, media relations, marketing boost, promotional or advertising assistance needed to take your company to the next level, says publicist Scott Lorenz, president of Westwind Communications, Plymouth, Mich.

Having survived the PR period of my professional life, I agree with him. That’s why I found some of his recent observations interesting, and some which may be worth passing on.

Lorenz says that if you’re not completely certain about the value of outside help, ask these questions:

• Are we getting all the PR we deserve?
• Is the competition getting more than its fair share of media coverage?
• Would media coverage bring in more business?
• Do we have a PR strategy for continuous year-round media coverage?
• Is our in-house PR person overburdened with in-house work like the company newsletter?

Lorenz notes in his article that Joe Nicassio, author of “Guerrilla PR Brand Manager” suggests that whether a company should conduct its public relations, marketing or advertising campaigns internally or externally should be determined by a couple of factors.

• Do you need solid, consistent media exposure week after week, or are you satisfied with “occasional” exposure?
• Do you have the internal staff and expertise to commit the internal resources to your public relations, marketing, advertising efforts?

Lorenz offers some reasons why it makes good business sense to hire a public relations firm to market a product or service.

PR firms can get you television and radio coverage. They have regular contact with local, regional and national media outlets.

PR firms have multiple resources that enable them to present you as an authority worth interviewing, thus increasing your credibility with the public. They can provide media training to prep their clients to help capitalize on every interview and maximize each opportunity to the fullest.

Public relations professionals can get your press release on the top of the heap. They build up contacts in the media who trust them for story ideas, and will know where to pitch a certain type of story.

To be truly effective, “a PR campaign must be conducted with passionate consistency,” according to Nicassio.
A nostalgia theme was fully explored by Eastern Connecticut Health Network (ECHN), Manchester, Conn., in its celebration of Cancer Survivors Day, June 6. The observance is sponsored by the national Cancer Survivors Day organization. This year more than 700 facilities across the country observed the occasion.

2 Editor’s Notes

Tom Rees, self-confessed former PR representative for the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, addresses the value healthcare organizations can find in public relations consultation.

9 Magazines

Two quarterly publications are featured here for your consideration. One is Informed, the newly re-designed magazine by Parma Community General Hospital, Parma, Ohio. Also, we present Healthy Perspective magazine, published quarterly Prince William Health System, Manassas, Va.

18 Web Site Review

OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center, Rockford, Ill., has found its web site, www.osfhealth.com, to be a highly valuable tool for recruiting employees. The 254-bed acute care center maintains its own web site in cooperation with its parent organization, OSF Healthcare System, Peoria, Ill.

27 Wound Care

Wound care centers add to the hospital’s profits as well as serving as a marketing vehicle for other services. Learn how the program is promoted by Shawnee Mission Medical Center, Shawnee Mission, Kan., Stamford Hospital, Stamford, Conn., and Good Samaritan Hospital, Suffern, N.Y.

29 Annual Report

The 2003-2004 annual report by Meridian Health, Neptune, N.J., is titled brand new. The high-end publication was produced especially for the healthcare system’s employees, board members, shareholders and volunteers.

36 Community Relations

Henry Ford Health System, Detroit, is named winner of the prestigious Foster G. McGaw Prize for excellence in community service. The organization received $100,000 from the sponsors, the American Hospital Association, The Baxter International Foundation and the Cardinal Health Foundation.
Also in the baskets were ECHN’s physicians’ directory, its annual report, and brochures describing ECHN’s and the community’s cancer-related services and facilities.

The news release announcing the June 6 event was sent May 20 to the major local daily newspaper and also to more than 15 weekly and monthly papers, as well as Chamber of Commerce newsletters.

In addition, Arnold provided considerable information to the local daily, the Journal Inquirer (JI), Vernon, Conn., about the cancer survivors who were to speak. As a result, the JI published heartwarming survivor stories both before and after the event.

About ten days before the event, a minor hitch developed in the marketing plan. “The local newspaper printed our Cancer Survivors Day ad on the same page as a larger ad from a competing cancer center,” Arnold said. “We countered by enlarging the ads still left on the advertising schedule.”

At the same time, Arnold pulled out the committee’s “ace in the hole,” the classic car show. The Journal Inquirer responded by printing the photo of the rare ‘57 Pink Pearl Thunderbird that was to be displayed in the restaurant’s parking area with other classic automobiles.

“The object was to convince the public that ECHN’s Cancer Survivors Day was going to be a lot more fun than our competitors’ events,” said Arnold.

Weekly and monthly news media received follow-up email the week before the event. The reminders included references to a bountiful brunch buffet, the Pink Pearl Thunderbird, and the fifties-style poodle skirts to be worn by the women accompanying the classic cars.

The Hartford Courant, the state’s largest daily, sent a reporter and photographer and published a review of the event the following day. Arnold and the planners were well pleased with the press coverage, since their secondary purpose was to educate and inform members of the public.

The master of ceremonies for the program was the witty meteorologist of a Hartford television station, whose advance mention of the

This poster celebrates the two barbershop choruses that performed free of charge at the event. Also, it tracks notable highlights in barbering history, including a Saturday Evening Post advertisement for Shick Electric (1941).
The media coverage included stories of the cancer survivors who spoke at the event. Their inspirational histories helped to focus attention on ECHN’s cancer services and facilities.

Attendees fully enjoyed the antique cars and their 50s-costumed drivers. They were also delighted with the two barbershop choruses, both of whom performed at no cost. Arnold said that one of the 280 participants issued a challenge at the close of the event: “You’re never going to be able to top this!”

Maybe not, but Arnold said the next event is already partly funded. “Members of our cancer committee solicited donations from pharmaceutical companies, other businesses, and individuals. They were able to raise substantial funds, giving the committee the seed money for creating an even better event in 2005.”

Bright red programs were distributed on the day of the event, along with gift baskets for all participants.
The posters promoted the nostalgia theme and were an integral part of the entertainment on the day of the event. The “warm puppies” poster, right, captured cultural and technological changes from the first jet airplane (1939) to Silly Putty (1949) and Alvin Toffler’s best-seller, *Future Shock* (1970).
The poster above traced the history of food and drink, back to the late 1800s. Attendees enjoyed such popular subject matter as Chiquita Bananas (1944), the introduction of Reddi-wip (1947) and California's ban on genetically modified organisms as food (2004).
Press coverage aided the program's secondary objectives, providing cancer education and raising awareness of ECHN's cancer center.
Parma and Prince William Hospitals deliver magazines with purpose

By Judith D. Botvin

The strategic use of the monthly or quarterly newsletter is unique in each organization. Featured here, two community hospitals reveal how they successfully resolve the issues of topic selection, production and distribution.

At Parma Community General Hospital, Parma, Ohio, everything about the quarterly magazine has been redesigned, including the method of distribution. Aimee Weber, marketing manager, said the former newsletter-style has evolved into a feature magazine which is more competitive with other hospital publications. And, despite numerous improvements, the overall cost to produce and distribute Informed has remained level.

In part, the change was pushed by Parma’s Health Education Center, whose courses previously were announced in a separate section, stapled into the center of the publication. “The health education center wanted us to add a calendar, and to use a nicer paper,” said Weber.

In the redesigned magazine, the health education schedule begins in the middle, and is visually integrated with the whole book. The three-page class listing is punctuated with three full-page monthly calendars. Weber said from the very first issue, these changes caused a significant increase in class registration.

To meet the needs of the educational program, Informed is published on a school-type schedule, jumping off in September. Each issue will be organized around a different service center, with orthopedics and cardiology as the first two themes.

Previously, the publication was a time-consuming effort, produced entirely by Parma’s marketing staff. “Now, we do our own writing and photographs, then turn the project over to Great Lakes Publishing for production,” said Weber. Notably, this turned out to be not only a time-saver but also a cost-saving improvement.

Parma also has changed its distribution process. To reach as many nearby homes as possible, Informed was previously distributed in issues of the Plain Dealer newspaper. A separate mailing was made for non-newspaper-subscribers, but Weber acknowledged, “there was a large gap. There were many households we could not reach.”

Seeking a more comprehensive distribution, she worked out an arrangement with a weekly marketing piece, “Shopwise.” Under the new plan, 14,000 more copies are distributed each quarter, with no additional cost. More important, Weber said, “Now, we know the magazine will be opened.”

The first re-designed issue of Informed was well-received, Weber said. In fact, the 10,000 extra copies made for in-house distribution “flew off the racks.” At the time of this interview, Weber was jealously guarding the remaining 20 copies.

Located in northern Virginia about 35 miles from Washington, D.C., Prince William Health System serves a rapidly growing market. This necessitates a publication that will appeal to newcomers. Healthy Perspective was created about four years ago to reach this changing market and reinforce the health system’s identity.

Franklin Street Marketing, Richmond, Va., created a template flexible enough to accommodate a broad range of topics, yet be recognized when it arrives in the mailboxes of 100,000 households.
One of the primary objectives of the redesign was to integrate the health education schedule and include a calendar feature. Three full-page calendars appear in each quarterly publication.
Orthopedics is the focus of the Spring edition of *Informed*. This four-page spread includes patient success stories, a physician profile, description of the new Athlete Enhancement Program, and a sidebar about Parma's many high ratings in this field.
In Parma’s new design, the president's message takes its place alongside a magazine-style table of contents. The additional pages now provide space for Foundation information.
Donna Ballou, director of public relations, describes the magazine’s editorial focus: “People in the community have a hard time measuring how good a hospital is, so we try to show them the quality of our physicians.” Each issue focuses on a specific service line, determined by the hospital’s strategic plan.

“After we pick a service line, we look at the doctors to identify the unique things that they’re doing,” Ballou explained. By writing about these areas, the magazine demonstrates the high degree of innovation and technology at Prince William.

Many of the magazine articles relate to seminars that promote specific procedures, such as cryotherapy for prostate cancer. The feature article is tied to an upcoming seminar, and is reinforced by a targeted mailing.

Ballou said this strategy has shown great results, bringing in more seminar attendees than expected. As another reinforcement, each seminar attendee receives a survey to present to the doctor at the first visit. Physicians report a noteworthy response to this marketing method.

Prince William’s wide variety of orthopedic services provides the focus for another quarterly issue. The service is considered especially productive for this market area, the average age of which is 37.

Like Parma, Prince William uses its magazine to promote wellness classes and support groups. Ballou said most class enrollments fill up within days of the distribution of Healthy Perspective.

Fund-raising activities are advanced when community members realize the importance of their local hospitals. Healthy Perspective often includes an envelope to encourage donations. Ballou added that, because of the hospital’s not-for-profit status, the newsletter benefits from bulk mailing rates.

The Healthy Perspective mailing has been maintained at about 100,000 copies, despite the rapidly increasing population. Marketers occasionally eliminate a Zip code to control the quantity, while continuing to reach the most desirable addresses.

According to all forms of measurement, the publication has been successful. Since Healthy Perspective appeared, call volume to the physician referral and information line has increased more than 100%, and web site hits have increased threefold.

VITAL STATS

Institution: Prince William Health System
8609 Sudley Rd.
Manassas, VA 20110

Contact: Donna Ballou, director of public relations 703-369-8322

Agency: Franklin Street Marketing
(Richmond, Va.)
Agency contact: Robb Stallworth, 804-320-2000

Facility size: 170 beds

Facility type: Not-for-profit hospital

Objectives: To cover health system news as well as health and wellness topics, with a consistent, sophisticated magazine that would appeal to residents, including the area’s many newcomers.

Web site: www.pwhs.org
The PWHS strategic plan is a major factor in determining topics to be featured in *Healthy Perspectives*. In the Fall, 2004 issue, shown here, an eye-catching cover photo introduces a story about foot and ankle surgery by an orthopedic specialist. Other stories in this issue: Freedom from Back Pain, Stop Snoring, and Senior Expo Week.
Above, two more pages from the Fall, 2004 issue carry additional foot information along with a construction update and a development article. Right, cover for the Winter 2003 issue indicates a variety of subject matter, including: Treatment for Painful Legs, A Second Look at Mammograms, New Cancer Center, and Advances in Back Surgery.
Many topics are selected to appeal to the young population in the Prince William Health System service area: average age, 37. The hospital mails this 12-page publication to 100,000 households.
Prince William’s publication is made personal and appealing with cover photos of actual patients and physicians. Physicians are interviewed about their unique, high-tech procedures. The varied material in the quarterly publication also includes health and wellness topics and system news.
OSF Saint Anthony finds web site important as a recruitment tool

Consistent monitoring of site reveals reader interest

By Judith D. Botvin

OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center, Rockford, Ill., a member of the OSF Healthcare System, Peoria, Ill., maintains its own web site but receives some important support from the “home office.”

Gregory Alford is communications manager for OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center. Although other responsibilities compete for his time, he is highly invested in the maintenance of the web site, www.osfhealth.com. He avidly consults the weekly information provided by WebTrends.

“When we noticed the Careers page was creeping up into the top five pages being used, we realized we had to develop it to meet the level of interest,” he said. He added 15 different pages to the Careers section, including career-related links to various hospital services. He enlisted the help of the corporate office to develop an online application form, which now is used system-wide. As a result of these efforts, the Careers introductory page is now among the top three on the site.

Alford also handles the print advertising for employee recruitment. “Every ad we place in print leads readers to the web site,” he said. He says he is often surprised at how “underused” the internet is for recruiting, because to him it an extremely effective recruitment tool.

The web site describes residency and internship opportunities and offers pdf versions of brochures for the student nursing and graduate nursing programs. It lists upcoming career fairs and includes an up-to-date list of awards and recognition received by the hospital.

On the hospital’s home page, the reader finds a pull-down menu listing many telephone numbers within the hospital. This, plus the street address, distinguishes Saint Anthony’s web site from others, where such information is unavailable or buried.

Alford has noticed this, too. He explains, “We’re a level one trauma center, and because of that, we have lots of patients who come here from out of the area. The web site is the best way for their families to make contact with the hospital.”

Something else that distinguishes this web site is the usefulness of its “Getting here” page. While many hospitals offer maps and driving directions, the information here is exceptionally thorough and user-friendly, making the emergency room very easy for visitors to find.

The body of the home page resembles a newspaper, offering news items about the hospital. Alford believes hospital-specific information is more important to his

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**Institution:**
OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center
5666 East State Street
Rockford, IL 61108

**Contact:**
Gregory Alford, communications manager

**Phone:**
815-395-5446

**Facility size:**
254 beds

**Facility type:**
Acute care hospital, part of OSF Healthcare System, Peoria, Ill.

**Agency for web design:**
Ginestra Watson (Rockford, Ill.)
Jay Ginestra 815-968-9502

**Web site:**
OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center
www.osfhealth.com
OSF Healthcare System
www.osfhealthcare.org

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**VITAL STATS**

Top: At the top of its home page, OSF Saint Francis offers a quick route to the careers section and an employment application form. Readers can go right to the introductory Careers page in one click. Shown at right, this section of Saint Anthony's web site has been expanded by many pages. Among its offerings is a free mini CD-ROM that encourages applicants with video testimonials by employees.
readers than general health information. “We’re not Mayo,” he acknowledges. “There are a lot of web sites where people can get good health-related information. Instead, I work almost like a newscaster in a local market. I think local, local, local.”

For a broader view, the OSF HealthCare site, www.osfhealthcare.org, is just a few clicks away. Here, one can read a financial overview of the previous fiscal year and a complete listing of all facilities and their locations.

Dr. Webb’s Waiting Room, a children’s page prepared by the corporate office, is modified for each hospital. For example, it has a jigsaw puzzle showing a local doctor.

Saint Anthony’s site includes several sites-within-a-site, including that for the Women’s Center and the Regional Heart Institute. Gerry Gustafson, director of marketing, said the cardiac section of the web site has received increasing interest. The internet advertising ties in with other Saint Anthony campaigns in print and radio.

Another unique feature of the web site is the availability of Saint Anthony’s TV commercials. Alford said this is easily accomplished as all commercials are digitized for the archives.

TV advertising is helpful in the wider market, Alford said. “There are people in Illinois who think if you’re not in Chicago, you’re in a log cabin with a bathroom out in back.” But when 300 to 400 web surfers a month look at Saint Anthony’s commercials online, they gain a new respect for the Rockford institution.
Online employment application was developed by OSF HealthCare for use by all its entities. Readers of Saint Anthony's career section can read a thoughtful piece listing the amenities of the community. Also, there are many pages about the major service lines. These include descriptions of the center's physical facilities, the services it provides, accreditation credentials and a statement of commitment to excellence.
The parent company web site, www.osfhealthcare.org, includes a specially-designed section for kids. The colorful, interactive section is called Doctor Webb's Waiting Room.
Saint Anthony’s “parent company,” OSF HealthCare, has a site which offers an impressive listing of facts and figures. This includes a financial overview, a list of facilities, number of employees and more. Also, below, a history of the institution, which dates back to 1876.
The Quality Improvement section includes a patient satisfaction page, shown above. OSF Saint Anthony reveals the results of patient satisfaction surveys by Press Ganey Associates. It explains that all OSF Saint Anthony’s hospital and emergency patients receive surveys after discharge. These are compiled and compared quarterly to national averages. Each department’s standing is shown as “top 16%,” etc.

Other web site screens provide a practical map, (top right) and a listing of insurance companies with which the hospital has agreements (right).
One of the sites-within-a-site is OSF’s recently-opened Regional Heart Institute. Shown here, some of the many screens which are loaded with information, not only general but also hospital-specific. In addition to listing its cardiac services, the “What we do” screen, above right, includes a chronology of past achievements in cardiology.
OSF Saint Francis makes its tv commercials available via QuickTime. Web site visitors may click on the home page to see any or all of the latest spots, which reinforce the high quality care message. This page is viewed by about 300 to 400 visitors a month, many of whom are potential employees.
Hospitals target-marketing wound centers to build profit statements

By Tom Rees

A growing number of hospital administrators are learning that operating wound care programs is a profitable way to close the holes in their profit and loss statements.

They’re also learning that such programs can attract patients with a minimal marketing investment. Wound care centers themselves in many instances become marketing vehicles for additional services offered by the hospitals that sponsor them.

Word-of-mouth between healthcare professionals seems to be a highly effective generator of referrals to wound care centers.

For example, Bill Heist, wound care program director for the Stamford Hospital, Stamford, Conn., said his marketing strategy focuses on personal visits with physicians most likely to refer patients to the wound center. He also uses occasional mass mailings to physicians and participates in diabetes awareness health fairs.

One explanation for the success of wound care programs in driving increased patient loads for hospitals is today’s lack of full-time attention to treating wounds in private doctors’ offices.

“The outside doctors like the wound care center because it’s difficult for them to treat wounds in their offices; it takes away too much time and then they have to stock all the dressings,” Heist said. “Whereas we do all of that; it makes life easier for them to just send their patients over here.”

Marketing the wound care program at the Shawnee Mission, Kan., Medical Center targets physicians in the surrounding Kansas City metro and rural areas, said Nancy Vaughan, RN, MSN, the program’s director.

According to Vaughan, 70%-75% of referrals come from the surrounding professional medical community, boasting a referral base of more than 350 physicians.

Physicians receive direct mail educational pieces and invitations to symposiums. People who require a lot of care are referred to the hospital. Physicians, impressed by the care their chronic patients receive, refer them to the hospital for other care, Vaughan said.

Deborah Marshall, director of public relations and community services for Good Samaritan Hospital, Suffern, N.Y., said the hospital’s new Comprehensive Wound Center is an interdisciplinary outpatient clinic that brings together specialists in vascular surgery, general surgery, podiatry, plastic surgery, diabetes and infectious diseases. They promote the wound center through collegial relationships.

Wound, continued on page 28

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These relationships, along with consultations by a certified wound care nurse with wound and ostomy patients throughout Rockland and Orange counties builds relationships for the wound center and Good Samaritan Hospital.

Stamford Hospital, a 350-bed community teaching hospital, and Shawnee Mission Medical Center, a 383-bed, Solucient “100 Top Hospital,” are among more than 90 wound care programs out-sourced through the Curative Health Services Network, Hauppauge, N.Y.

Good Samaritan Hospital is a 370-bed not-for-profit hospital that is part of the Bon Secours Charity Health System. The Comprehensive Wound Care Center opened mid-December, 2004, as part of its newly designated vascular center.

In the first five years of operating its wound care program, Shawnee Mission’s annual billed income increased from $1.6 million to $5.3 million. Of 9,820 out-patient visits and 911 admissions in 2003, 38% were totally new.

Visits to the wound clinic increased from 4,822 in 1999 to 9,820 in 2003, while outpatient admissions jumped from 548 to 911 over the same period. More importantly, for the nine-month period ending in September 2003, 200 new patients were registered to the clinic resulting in 56 inpatient admissions.

“Almost 40% of patients visiting the center come from outside of Johnson County, where Shawnee Mission is located, so people are obviously willing to travel to get to us,” Vaughan said. “We continue to draw considerable new business to the hospital.”

“We weren’t necessarily in the search for a wound care program in early 1998 when a group of physicians approached us about opening a wound center,” recalled Robin Harrold, Shawnee Mission’s COO.

The hospital’s decision to outsource its wound care program was backed up by historical data that shows that a hospital can spend up to 16%-24% more by attempting to build an internal wound management program versus relying on a program offered by a company specializing in the field.

“It was nice that Curative offered a turnkey approach, and in fact I would never had the time to create my own,” Harrold said. “The other appeal was the improvement to the bottom line. This program had the potential to pay for itself and positively impact future hospital reimbursements.”

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Meridian Health annual report focuses on what is ‘brand new’

By Judith D. Botwin

Meridian Health, Neptune, N.J., named its 2003-2004 annual report brand new. On its cover, Oliver Wendell Holmes is quoted: “I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we’re moving.” The theme emerged quite naturally from the fact of the system’s new names, new logos, new signs, new buildings, new services and new strategic plan.

Chrisie Scott, director corporate communications and marketing, said, “We talked about how much an organization invests when they do a brand initiative, and we wanted to showcase the people behind that effort.”

In this oversized, 36-page report, full-page photos and strong, vibrant colors make the most of glossy paper. On the pages with smaller photos, a grid design and the repetition of strong colors tie the report together.

While many of the report’s pages are copy-heavy, they are easy to read, thanks to the use of a sans serif type with generous leading and margins. Scott has high praise for the consultant who executed the design, Judi Mumford-Guerry.

John K. Lloyd, Meridian’s president, participates throughout the entire process of producing the annual report. “He has always been a consistent, committed president,” Scott said, “It’s a testament to the type of organization he leads.”

Ten thousand copies of the impressive report were printed at a cost per unit of about $8.40. The report initially was distributed at Meridian’s annual meeting. In addition to board members and shareholders, the primary audiences were Meridian employees, medical staff, community advisors and supporters.

Appropriately, four full pages are devoted to covering the Meridian Affiliated Foundations, which provide funding for Meridian Health. One two-page spread tells the stories of individuals who have been passionate in their work and financial support.

Scott said that working with these people was especially gratifying for Meridian’s in-house photographers.

Meridian’s listing of “partner companies” was given a special liveliness by bordering each member in a dotted-line box. For each, bulleted items cite new achievements of the year and figures denote the growth of services.

VITAL STATS

Institution: Meridian Health
1302 Campus Parkway
Neptune, NJ 07753

Contact: Chrisie Scott, director corporate communications and marketing
Phone: 732-751-7530
Facility size: 1,219 beds
Facility type: Healthcare system
Agency: Judi Mumford-Guerry (Red Bank, N.J.) 732-741-0030
Quantity/Budget: 36 pages, 10,000 copies, average cost per unit of $8.40
Web site: www.meridianhealth.com

Scott felt it was important to mail copies of the report to the employees. “You have to let your employees know as much about your organization as the public knows,” she asserted.

Mailing the annual report directly to the homes of the system’s 7,500 employees gave them a sense of pride. “The senior vp of human resources really wanted to do this ... it was one of those decisions you don’t base on dollars,” Scott said. Rather than being critical of Meridian for spending money on postage, “The employees felt honored.

Meridian, continued on page 30
Meridian, from page 29

to be getting the same report as the one that was given to the board members.”

For Meridian’s 2004-2005 report, one suggestion is the theme of partnership, perhaps borrowing the advertising kicker, “partners in advancing medicine.

Scott said this theme has been extremely powerful. “People don’t always know what a healthcare system is, but they understand the idea of partnership.”

What’s your vision for your organization’s annual report?

For all healthcare organizations, the annual report offers a variety of opportunities. Some, like Meridian, focus on the accomplishments of the employees and medical staff. Others use the opportunity to focus community attention on their progress. And most annual reports, including Meridian’s, use this unique venue to highlight the institution’s vision for the future.

Profiles’ Annual Report of the Year Competition invites entries in seven categories, including healthcare systems. The November/December issue covers all the winners, giving readers a chance to appreciate and learn from the outstanding entries. The entry deadline for this year’s competition is July 1, 2005.

Meridian’s focus on donors and Foundation leaders is enhanced by well-written profiles, bright, informative pie charts and attractive photographs.
Above: Meridian Health undertook a new branding campaign last year. The program is described in the annual report, which took its theme, *brand new*, from the intensive experience.

Below: Many things can make employees unhappy: longer hours, layoffs, benefit changes and more. The creators of this report focused on helping employees feel like a part of “something bigger.”
Along with several periodicals, Meridian’s annual report is available in pdf form on its home site, above. The annual report also is a click away from the home page on each of the individual Meridian Health web sites.
Excellent photographs throughout the annual report were taken by Meridian’s in-house photographic staff.
Meridian’s cover photo was carefully selected to express the idea of “brand new.” The joyful child indicates newness, as do the sunrise and the untouched beach. The ocean also is a much-enjoyed feature of Meridian’s coverage area. Below, a two-page spread on orthopedic care depicts the stories of a policeman injured in a car chase, a patient with multiple sclerosis, and an arthritis sufferer who received a hip replacement. Patients generally say they feel honored to be photographed for the annual report.
Above, an attractive two-page spread in Meridian’s annual report identifies the system’s partner companies, citing what is “brand new” and offering facts about size and services.

Below, double pages for each of Meridian’s three hospitals include friendly photographs of hospital leaders, photos of the physical structure, and a listing of the facility’s medical achievements and new programs. Riverview Medical Center is shown here.
Detroit’s Henry Ford Health System awarded Foster G. McGaw Prize

By Tom Rees

Detroit’s Henry Ford Health System’s outreach to southeast Michigan’s minorities and disadvantaged residents has earned it the prestigious Foster G. McGaw Prize for excellence in community service.

Henry Ford is the first health system in Michigan to win the award.

The $100,000 award is given to an organization committed to providing programs and services that promote the health and well-being of the community.

“What an honor for our entire community,” said Nancy Schlichting, president and CEO of Henry Ford Health System. “We work tirelessly to provide health-enhancing program that might not be possible otherwise. At Henry Ford our commitment to health is also our commitment to the community.”

The award is sponsored by the American Hospital Association, The Baxter International Foundation and the Cardinal Health Foundation.

Recognized as finalists were St. Joseph’s/Candler, Savannah, Ga.; Harlem Hospital Center, New York; and Saint Francis Medical Center, Grand Island, Neb. Each received $10,000.

Hospitals’ profiles boosted

Programs and activities conducted by the prize winner and finalists greatly increase their profiles in the communities they serve.

“The 2004 Foster G. McGaw Prize winner and the finalists are truly inspirational organizations. Their outstanding community programs are significantly improving the health and quality of life of the people they serve,” said Susan Manilow, chair of the Foster G. McGaw Prize Committee.

Auto pioneer Henry Ford in 1915 founded a hospital to improve the health of metro Detroit. It grew into a not-for-profit health care organization that is characterized by patient safety, clinical excellence and superior service.

Henry Ford Health partners with dozens of local agencies and organizations to serve more than one million residents in southeast Michigan.

Henry Ford ‘outstanding’

“Henry Ford Health System is an outstanding example of a healthcare delivery organization that continues to reach out to its community during very difficult economic times to bridge the gap in healthcare and address the needs of its broad and diverse population,” Manilow said.

“Henry Ford demonstrates exceptional leadership in developing creative solutions to extend beyond its walls and make a real difference in Detroit and southeast Michigan,” she added.

Henry Ford was recognized for five programs that showcase the breadth and depth of its commitment and the many ways in which it defines good health:

• The School-Based Health Initiative, which takes primary and preventive care to Detroit classrooms where it may be the only healthcare a child receives.

• AIM-HI, the African American Initiative for Male Health Improvement, which provides mobile health screenings and on site health education for diabetes, hypertension, eye disease and stroke risk assessment.

Nearly 8,000 participants have been screened since February 1999.

The Henry Ford sites handle nearly 20,000 student visits each year.
• The Detroit Wayne County
  Health Authority, whose goal is
  to provide safety net services,
  facilitate care coordination, maxi-
  mize revenues, enhance efficien-
  cies, and eventually serve as a
  model for other communities in
  crisis around the country.
• SandCastles, a division of the
  Hospices of Henry Ford Health
  System, which offers open-ended
  grief support for children and
  families who have suffered the
  tragic loss of a loved one.
• City Year Detroit, a competitive
  program which is financially sup-
  ported and housed by Henry
  Ford Health, wherein outstanding
  young adults make a 10-month,
  full-time volunteer commitment.
Henry Ford's School-Based Health
Initiative (SBHI) has three primary
components:
• Health centers and/or health
  promotion sites in designated
  Detroit schools.
• Community and school health
  education programs and
  services.
• Community networking, advoca-
  cy, partnership, and technical
  assistance.
SBHI has successfully developed
and now manages a network of
school-based health centers in nine
Detroit public schools and one
Warren high school. All but two
operate full-time.

Wide ranging services
The range of service runs from
diagnosis and treatment of minor
injuries and illnesses to manage-
ment of chronic illnesses, such as
asthma or diabetes. Henry Ford pro-
vides sport physicals, dental, vision
and hearing screening, health edu-
cation, pregnancy testing, and test-
ing, diagnosis and treatment for sex-
ually transmitted diseases. It also
offers individual mental health and
physical/sexual abuse counseling
and referral and group and family
education and counseling.

AIM-HI raises health awareness in
the community by taking the pro-
gram into neighborhoods by way of
health vans and the use of commu-
ity-based sites.
Persons found to have more seri-
ous conditions see on-site supervi-
sory medical personnel who coun-
sele them regarding their situation.
Insured individuals are advised to
see their primary care physicians or
are referred to Henry Ford to estab-
lash such a relationship.
Uninsured and underinsured re-
ceive referrals only to pre-approved
clinics that provide health services
free of cost or commensurate with
their income levels. They also are
given information on medical care
programs for which they might be
eligible.

Improving healthcare access
The population in Detroit and
Wayne County is declining; concur-
rently the number of people without
health insurance is climbing. In Aug-
ust 2004, in response to the Gover-
nor’s Stabilization Task Force rec-
ommendation, a development com-
mittee to establish the Henry Ford
Detroit Wayne County Health
Authority was created. The DWCHA
is charged with improving access to
quality healthcare among the re-
gion’s uninsured and Medicaid pop-
ulations—700,000 in Detroit and
Wayne County alone.

SandCastles is a community-based
grief support program serving chil-
dren and teens ages three through
18 and their parents/guardians who
have experienced the death of
someone loved.

SandCastles is offered at no cost
to families from all socioeconomic
and ethnic backgrounds from south-
east Michigan. Families share their
experiences of grief, learn coping
skills, and support each other on
their grief journeys. Programs run
continuously. Professional staff and
trained volunteers run the bi-weekly
support groups.
In 2003, volunteers donated more
than 2,000 hours to help Sand-
Castles function.

City Year Detroit’s (CYD) goal is
not only to meet the needs of youth
in Detroit’s lowest income neighbor-
hoods, but also to inspire corps
members, the children they serve,
and community residents to be-
come life-long volunteers, thus
building the next generation of
civic leaders.
In a typical year CYDs 70 full-time
young adult corps members divide
into eight teams, each assigned to a
school.
During the past four years, CYD
members provided in-school tutor-
ning support, after school opportuni-
ties, and served as positive role
models to more than 14,410 chil-
dren: 5,426 students have been tu-
tored, 5,581 participated in corps
member-led curricula and 215 in the
Saturday program, 2,368 students
were in after-school programs and
820 attended Camp City Year during
spring break, a free day program for
elementary students.
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