

The BEAT

Hospital Reaches Milestone as Quentin Mease Celebrates 100th Birthday

By John F. Martinez

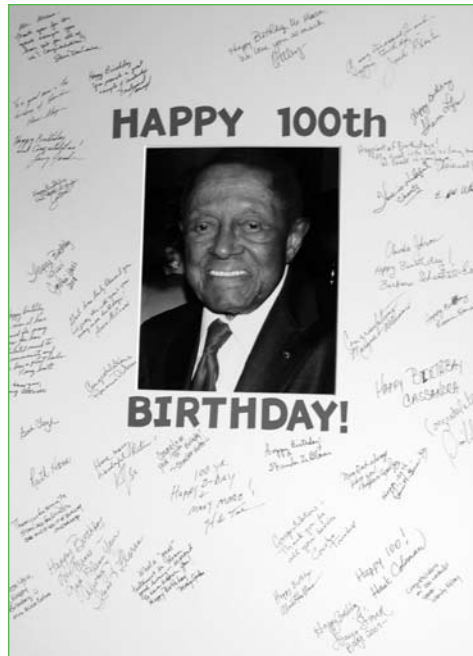
On Nov. 6, the Harris County Hospital District and the HCHD Foundation celebrated the 100th birthday of former HCHD Board Chairman Quentin R. Mease. The occasion also highlighted a milestone for his namesake hospital – its 25th anniversary.

Like the storied history of Mease, Quentin Mease Community Hospital has well served its community and has witnessed many clinical achievements in geriatric care and physical medicine and rehabilitation. Over the years, HCHD's engineering personnel have become its keepers putting out fires and fixing a multitude of issues affecting the old structure.

Built in 1971 as a retirement home, the Christian Home for the Aged opened its five-story building with 95,000 square feet of space and a swimming pool.

In 1983, the district assumed its ownership and reopened it as Quentin Mease Community Hospital. Since then, HCHD

added nearly 30,000 square feet of space in the form of a two-story structure. It houses



49 inpatient beds.

The hospital is located 49 feet above sea level on the border of Braes Bayou. Its solid construction, entirely of concrete, helps it stand out among other neighboring structures.

"It's a good old building," said Jerry Trotnic of engineering, an HCHD employee of 26 years. "It was meant to stay up for a long time and it certainly has."

In 1989, the building was temporarily shut down for a year while undergoing asbestos abatement. It reopened in 1990 in time to serve as a temporary home for Martin Luther King Jr. Health Center. That arrangement continues today. A new MLK facility is expected in 2010.

However, the departure of MLK will gain it more temporary tenants as Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital services are relocated to help it through a number of expansion projects.

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Employee Communications Survey Yields Positive Results

By Heather Sessions

From television to newspaper, e-mail and beyond – communication is everywhere. But getting the right information to employees quickly, accurately and in the desired dosage can be a challenge.

The Corporate Communications Department recently invited employees to participate in a survey aimed at understanding the value of HCHD communications.

The online survey asked 19 multiple choice questions related to the type, amount and frequency of communications messages distributed throughout the district.

The most notable results showed that of the 2,092 employees who completed the survey, 90.3 percent regularly use e-mail at work and 88.4 percent of employees prefer to receive information via e-mail. Nearly 92 percent of employees primarily receive information via e-mail, 52.2 percent through managers/supervisors, 47.7 percent via the HCHD intranet, 42.8 percent through newsletters and 39.2 percent through the HCHD internet.

"We're living in an era where receiving and accessing information is primarily done

online," said Carol Oddo, vice president of patient and public affairs. "However, because so many people prefer face-to-face communications to obtain pertinent information, we plan to communicate in a variety of ways to meet the needs of our employees."

Another key outcome is that 76 percent of staff reported that their manager/supervisor communicated relevant information at staff meetings, followed by e-mail (73.7 percent), one-on-one meetings (30.5 percent), written communication (15.9 percent), telephone messages (13.4 percent) and pager messages (3.6 percent). Only 3.6 percent of employees who completed the survey reported not receiving any communication from their manager/supervisor.

When asked about HCHD publications, overall employees found the information to be helpful, particularly information distributed via e-mail and posted online. Nearly 95 percent of employees felt that Beat Briefs keeps them adequately informed, followed by the Beat Online (93.6 percent), the hardcopy Beat (90.3 percent), Innovation Quotient (81.1 percent), Annual Report

(77.2 percent), Progress (70.6 percent) and Leading Edge (64.8 percent). In addition, more than half of employees always read the Beat Online, while 47.5 percent sometimes read it and 3.2 percent never read it.



Carol Oddo

"These results are encouraging because they show that our employees not only read the publications we produce, but they feel that the type of information distributed is relevant and important to their roles," said Oddo. "It is our goal to continually improve communications throughout the organization, and we look forward to enhancing the process and content of the messages we distribute."

According to the survey, the top five issues that employees want to receive information about include: benefits (63.0 percent), compensation and bonus programs

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Hospital Reaches Milestone

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"This is the district's best kept secret," said Mike Kronwinkler of engineering, an HCHD employee of 21 years. "I bet a lot of people don't know how good this building really is."

Quentin Mease houses a variety of services: lab, diagnostic imaging and pharmacy on the first floor; physical medicine and rehabilitation on the second floor; MLK on the third floor; and inpatient rehab and geriatrics on the fourth floor. Design work is under way to expand outpatient physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech language pathology services on the fifth floor. Construction on that project is expected to begin in 2009.

In 2004, the physical medicine and rehabilitation services received an accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. Surveyors complimented the building's upkeep and compared it favorably to others across the country, Trotnic said.

If the past quarter of the century is any indication, Quentin Mease Community Hospital will continue to play an important part in HCHD's mission. ■

Employee Communications Survey

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(56.4 percent), the organization's strategies for the future (49.3 percent), management updates (39.4 percent) and issues and trends affecting HCHD (38.6 percent).

Regarding the frequency at which employees want to receive information, 47.9 percent report wanting to receive information weekly, followed by monthly (34.6 percent), daily (11.8 percent), quarterly (6.9 percent) and annually (0.9 percent).

When asked what types of communication tools employees would like to see added in the future, employees reported the following as their top three choices: online video (38.2 percent), online audio (28.7 percent) and home e-mail newsletter (29.8 percent).

Communication is especially vital in times of crisis or disaster. In response to Hurricane Ike, the communications department utilized three methods to keep employees informed about building openings and closures, issues related to power and staffing needs. The survey showed that 74 percent found e-Alerts very helpful followed by the Hurricane Ike web site, (63.5 percent) and the HCHD Staff Information Line (60.3 percent).

In terms of employee connectedness to the organization, most respondents reported knowing a fair amount about the organization (60.2 percent) while 25.5 percent said they know the organization well; 13.5 percent say they know little about the organization and 1.6 percent know almost nothing about the organization. In addition, more than 70 percent of those surveyed correctly identified the district's mission statement and 86.3 percent correctly identified the ServiceFIRST values.

"When almost 90 percent of the staff is able to identify the values of ServiceFIRST, it tells me that the communication of those values has been successful and that our employees can identify with the importance of those values," said Lesa McLeod, manager of patient satisfaction and customer service. "I think we are on the right track to achieving



E.A. "Squatty" Lyons Ribbon Cutting

The Harris County Hospital District celebrated the expansion of E.A. "Squatty" Lyons Health Center with a ribbon cutting ceremony on Tuesday, Nov. 11. The health center is triple its previous size – having grown from 4,736 square feet to 15,232 square feet. Joining in the festivities were (L-R), Dr. Jose Bayona, vice-chief of staff of the Community Health Program (CHP); Dr. Srinivasa Murthy, medical director; Dr. Robert Trenchel, senior vice president of the CHP; David S. Lopez, HCHD president and CEO; Dr. Carlos Vallbona, CHP chief of staff; Mary C. Spinks, HCHD board member; John Whitmire, Texas State Senator; Jerry Eversole, Harris County Commissioner; Doris Dorsey, member of advisory council; Regina Williams, nurse manager; Ora Roberts, director; and Elvin Franklin Jr., HCHD board member.

our mission of creating an environment where people want to work, doctors want to practice and patients want to come for care."

The communications survey was designed to help the Corporate Communications Department better understand the type of information employees want to receive. Data from the survey will be used to make recommendations for changes and

improvements regarding communication throughout the district.

"Communication is a priority at HCHD because we understand the importance for all staff to receive relevant information related to their individual jobs," Oddo said. "We are committed to meeting and exceeding the needs of our employees through the communications we produce." ■

HCHD Staff Can Get Technology Discounts

By Nicole M. Benningfield

Shopping for a new computer? Need a new cell phone?

Well, you're in luck.

All Harris County Hospital District staff can receive discounts from Dell, Gateway, Sprint and Verizon Wireless.

Staff who take advantage of the discounts also will be raising money for the hospital

district, which receives a portion of the rebates based on the purchase amounts.

"It's a win-win situation," said Doug Creamer, administrative director for materials management. "Not only will staff get a good price on computers and cellular plans, but the hospital district will benefit, too." ■

DELL

- Staff can purchase computer products at savings not available to general public
- Employee purchase program effective through Sept. 30, 2009
- Discounts are available in conjunction with other promotions, such as free shipping, free upgrades and more
- For more information visit Dell's dedicated online portal at Dell.com/epp/Premier
- To order call Dell at 1-800-695-8133 and use member ID HS75423950

GATEWAY

- Staff can purchase computer products at savings not available to general public
- Employee purchase program effective through Sept. 30, 2009
- Discounts are available in conjunction with other promotions, such as free shipping, free upgrades and more
- For more information visit Gateway's

dedicated online portal

- Orders can be placed by calling 1-800-779-2000. When ordering include the following UDC# - 00CCC10160

SPRINT

- Sprint's agreement allows staff to access monthly calling plans and cellular products at a 14 percent discount
- Employee purchase program is effective through July 31, 2009
- For more information and to ensure proper discounts visit the Premier/Sprint Web site at EmployeeValueProgram.com/Premier, or the Premier/Sprint Tele-sales number at 888-457-6924

VERIZON

Another discount (not related to Premier) that hospital district staff can take advantage of is the 19 percent discount with Verizon.

New Welcome Signs Installed Throughout HCHD

By Heather Sessions

Visiting a hospital can be an intimidating experience for patients and family members, especially when seeking care at an unfamiliar facility. To ease these concerns and to help visitors feel more comfortable, the Harris County Hospital District is implementing an initiative aimed at making visitors feel welcome.

Signs are currently being installed at Ben Taub, LBJ, Quentin Mease and HCHD community health centers in areas that are highly populated by patients such as the hospitality desks, main entrances and the emergency rooms. Panel signs greet visitors in three languages – English, Spanish and Vietnamese – the most common languages spoken by patients who come here.

“We want these welcome signs to be the first thing a patient sees when walking into one of our facilities,” said David Riddle, director of patient and customer relations. “Often times, when people come for treatment, they are not feeling well, and we want them to be greeted by a warm, caring message. We want to inspire confidence in our patients through our messages and behavior.”

The idea for welcoming signage has been one year in the making. HCHD administrators and facility leaders worked alongside marketing professionals to create signage that is colorful, inviting and exhibits friendly people from multiple cultures.

George Masi, executive vice president and chief operating officer, was the first to suggest that friendly, compassionate messages and images be displayed throughout the district.

“We have a very diverse group of patients,” said Masi. “Because we interact daily with people from so many different cultures, it’s important that we address their unique physical and emotional needs.”

In addition to making patients and visitors feel welcome, the signage was developed to communicate a connection between facilities.

“Because the hospital district is comprised



Workers install new signage in the lobby of HCHD’s Dental Center located at 5230 Griggs. The signs, which greet patients in three languages, are part of a district-wide initiative aimed at making visitors feel welcome.

of multiple hospitals and clinics within the community, it’s important that patients traveling between facilities understand that these hospitals and clinics make up a larger public health system,” Masi said. “When this connection is made, they recognize and trust that the standard of care will translate as they navigate through the system.”

Another part of the signage initiative is the display of HCHD’s promise to patients and visitors.

The idea to publicly display our pledge was born a year ago when Carolyn Truesdell, vice chair of HCHD’s Board of Managers, attended a governance conference focusing on quality. Inspired by a prominently displayed pledge at a local business, she suggested that HCHD craft a service pledge and display it as a welcome to those we serve and an inspiration to our dedicated staff.

“Posting these messages throughout our hospitals and clinics lets patients know that we are here to provide them with the

excellent care they deserve,” Truesdell said. “Displaying these words reinforces our commitment to meet and exceed expectations and inspires trust in our patients and their families.”

The final piece to the signage initiative is the installment of employee recognition boards at the Ben Taub and LBJ facilities. These boards will highlight four HCHD programs – Employee of the Quarter, Innovation Network, Patient Satisfaction and ServiceFIRST and will honor the accomplishments of staff.

“These boards were implemented to celebrate and highlight the achievements of our staff,” Riddle said. “Recognizing individuals who go above and beyond the call of duty boosts morale among employees and inspires them to continually provide the highest quality of health care to everyone who walks through our doors.”

All signage is scheduled to be installed by December. ■

HCHD Publishes Graphic Standards Guide

By Bryan McLeod

The HCHD Corporate Communications Department has published and placed online a graphic standards manual for staff to refer to when creating fliers, posters, documents or any other visual communications that use HCHD or its facilities’ logos.

“As we plan for the future, we realize the importance of presenting a unified community-wide identity to residents, prospective patients and staff,” said Carol Oddo, HCHD vice president of Patient and Public Affairs. “We’ve instituted this standard to better align all of HCHD’s communications and help ensure a consistent visual identity.”

HCHD provided a copy to each department or facility director as a reference to share with their staff who work on communications projects.

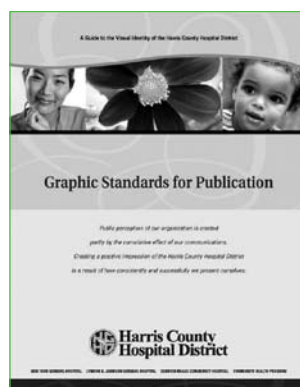
“Everyone at the hospital district has been given access to an online copy, where logos and PowerPoint templates can be downloaded,” Oddo said. “It’s a great reference tool, but we encourage everyone to contact the Corporate Communications

Department to help guide staff to what other resources or help may be available.”

By understanding and following these graphic standards, staff can project a clear, consistent, professional image that promotes the district’s mission to the community and other audiences.

“When we align the appearance of our communications, we make those communications more powerful and effective,” Oddo said. “By adhering to these standards, staff can play a vital role in our mutual success.”

The term “graphic standards” addresses the use of a specific logo and design style that is incorporated into all published material.



The use of consistent colors and graphic elements in communications creates a strong, unified visual identity. HCHD has embraced a new tag line, too: “HCHD – where people come first.” Both strategies are designed to strengthen the community’s awareness of HCHD, and help district staff better tell HCHD’s story.

The new guidelines must be followed for all external communications, including print publications, presentations, online and other visual communications.

If you are preparing to develop a new brochure or other communications piece, or if you have questions about the new graphic standards guidelines, contact staff in the HCHD Corporate Communications Department for assistance at 713-566-6063.

To view a copy of the standards online, visit the HCHD intranet at: <http://home/departments/communication/graphics.htm>. ■



Heroes: Ken Morra, Greg Andrews, Ruby Jackson, Cindy Zofsak, Shaynee Roper

By Nicole M. Benningfield

Five individuals who exemplify the ServiceFIRST standards of Friendliness, Integrity, Responsibility, Satisfaction, and Teamwork are being recognized this month.

This month the ServiceFIRST Heroes highlighted were recognized nationally for their outstanding customer service by Sodexo. They all received the 2009 CARES Award, which is similar to HCHD's ServiceFIRST Heroes.



Ken Morra

Ken Morra, Ben Taub As Ben Taub's retail manager, Ken Morra is in charge of everything that happens in the cafeteria – from making sure cash registers are in working order to having the right people in place.

"Ken shows his service spirit and compassion in a big way to the visitors that come into the Ben Taub café," said Chris Wall, administrative director of nutrition services. "Since he's been at Ben Taub, the sales increased 20 percent, providing variety and many options to our visitors who would otherwise go elsewhere. He is out on the floor daily helping people and promoting a caring environment for those who are worried about their family in the hospital."



Greg Andrews

Greg Andrews, general manager at LBJ As director of nutritional serves at LBJ Hospital, Greg Andrews is always on the go. He ensures the LBJ café, catering and food services program is operated correctly and efficiently.

"Ever since Greg became the general manager of food at LBJ Hospital, all aspects of the food operation have improved – from patient, customer, employee and nursing satisfaction to sales in retail and catering outlets and financial performance," wrote Chris Wall, administrative director of nutrition services. "Thanks to Greg continuing to bring new, fresh and innovative ideas to his operation, he was recognized by HCHD's Innovation Network – receiving an innovation award and innovator of the month award."



Ruby Jackson

Ruby Jackson, area cleaner at Quentin Mease Community Hospital Ruby Jackson, a 12-year Sodexo employee, has been an asset to the hospital district from day one according to Roon Bergen, director of food and environmental

services at Quentin Mease Community Hospital.

"Her demeanor is always pleasant, her work meticulous, and her commitment to excellence is bar none," Bergen wrote. "From the moment she clocks in, she strives to make every day a better day for the patients, our clients and fellow co-workers."



Cindy Zofsak

Cindy Zofsak, district retail/catering manager Need an event catered and don't know where to turn? Call Cindy Zofsak, after all she's the retail and catering manager for the hospital district.

"Cindy's dedication, commitment and

thoroughness not only have led our retail sales growth, but the professionalism, appearance and satisfaction of our catering is at the highest it has ever been," wrote Chris Wall, administrative director of nutrition services.

During National Hospital Week, Zofsak showed her planning and organization skills. She coordinated serving ice cream sundaes for all 7,000 HCHD employees at three hospitals, 12 health centers and the administrative office – all within three days.



Shaynee Roper

Shaynee Roper, clinical nutrition manager As the hospital district's clinical nutrition manager, Shaynee Roper has her plate full. She is in charge of dietitians and diet technicians throughout the hospital district facilities. She also in

involved with dietetic internship programs, where students come to HCHD to work with dietitians. Currently Roper works with seven different internship programs throughout the area.

In addition to her day-to-day responsibilities, Roper helps with nutrition assessments, health fairs and speaking engagements in regards to healthy eating.

"Shaynee continues to bring tremendous value to our clients through her hard work," wrote Chris Wall, administrative director of nutrition services. ■

ACCOLADES

Naylon Bird, assistant nurse manager of unit 5C, **Marquerite Hiller**, staff nurse II of unit 5C, **Virgie Johnson**, nurse manager of unit 5C, and **Rachelle Nurse**, director of Women and Children's Services, all from Ben Taub General Hospital are 2008 Good Samaritan Excellence in Nursing Award Nominees.

Ruby Chapman, nurse coordinator at Thomas Street Health Center, has been selected a Texas representative to a collaborative created by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services HIV/AIDS Bureau to align quality improvements for Ryan White HIV/AIDS programs to meet the needs of clients, maximize resources and reduce administrative burden on individual grantees.

The HCHD **Food and Nutrition Services Department** was nominated for the Spirit of Sodexo Award. The award was created to recognize employees who exemplify the corporate organization's mission and values in their everyday work.

Sheterra Jenkins, administrative coordinator of executive administration, and **Velma Applewhite**, assistant nurse manager of pediatric clinic, both at LBJ Hospital, received professional designations as Certified Administrator of Suggestion Systems during an Employee Involvement Association conference to Orlando, Florida.

Barbara Reece, chief nurse officer at Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital, and **Rachelle Nurse**,

director of women infants pediatric services at Ben Taub General Hospital, have been selected as two of the 20 outstanding nurses in district 9 by the Texas Nurse Association.

Chaplain **Laddie Robinson** was awarded the Status of Board Certified Chaplain, by the American Association of Professional Chaplains (AAPC). Board Certification by the AAPC represents the highest level of earned recognition for professional spiritual care health care providers.

Shaynee Roper, clinical nutrition managers for the Food and Nutrition Services Department, was selected as Outstanding Preceptor for the spring 2008 University of Houston Dietetic Internship Class.

December Service Standard: Responsibility Cell Phone Etiquette

1. Remove earpieces/Bluetooth devices before entering your workplace.
2. Turn off your cell phone ringers or set to vibrate.
3. Let your voicemail answer cell phone calls.
4. Use your cell phone only for important or emergency calls while on duty.
5. Find a private place to make cell phone calls that is not disruptive to the work environment.

The Beat is published by the Harris County Hospital District's Department of Corporate Communications.

For comments or questions, e-mail news@hchd.tmc.edu