

what's happening

Maine Medical Center
Portland, Maine 04102

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GUEST SPEAKER of the February meeting of the MMC Medical Staff, Michael J. Halberstam, MD, center, chats with cardiologist Paul R. Minton, MD, left, and program chairman, psychiatrist Stephen M. Soreff, MD. Dr. Halberstam, an active physician, is author of "The Coronary Event," and other books. Nearly 200 attended. (A/V Photo)

Prevention stressed

Poison Control Center assumes educator role to keep public and professionals informed

More people know about the Maine Poison Control Center than ever. During the past year, their telephone has rung more than 7,000 times, representing a 100 percent increase over 1977.

It hasn't all been by accident. A campaign to promote both public and professional education was launched months ago by the staff of the Poison Control Center. Situated in the Emergency department of Maine Medical Center, it is run by trained technicians with immediate access to information about every conceivable commercial product, most medications and a wide variety of plants. Two of its members, Supervisor Leo Millette, doctor of Pharmacy, and Assistant Supervisor Daniel Hudkins, Emergency Medical Technician instructor,

spend as much time traveling, speaking to various groups, doing television and radio programs, and composing brochures on poison prevention as they do answering the Center's many telephone inquiries.

Public education, says Hudkins, has been aimed at all levels—from children in the elementary grades, to parents of young children, to teenagers who may become involved with drugs. "Our lectures are planned so that they will have a 'ripple effect'," he said. "If we talk to a group of adults, we're probably

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Active MD group continues cost study

All Maine Medical Center physicians who admit patients will be receiving a copy of one of their patient's hospital bills this Spring.

The move is a result of a recommendation made by the hospital's Medical Costs Study Committee, formed in October, 1976, whose main goal is "to enhance cost-consciousness in physicians, using several kinds of education at various levels."

"We probably represent the first committee in the state" said Committee Chairman E. Charles Kunkle, MD, "composed of doctors who meet to see what they and their colleagues can do about the mounting costs of medical care."

Dr. Kunkle said the decision to send copies of patient bills to physicians was prompted by a recent experiment in which a copy of the hospital bill of one of their recently discharged patients, accompanied by a questionnaire, was sent to 50 Maine Medical Center physicians. Responses were received from 42 of them.

Of the 42 responses, 39 found the data on the itemized bill to be clear. One third (14) found the total cost much above their estimate. A dozen physicians found one or more tests or procedures which could have been omitted. Almost all (30) saw no merit in sending a copy of the bill on every patient to his physician, but several doctors favored this as an occasional practice.

On the basis of these results, Dr. Kunkle said, it was proposed that all physicians be sent a copy of one of their patient's bills twice in 1979. This was later approved by the

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Sunday, March 18 began National Poison Prevention Week—a time when efforts to reduce poisonings through public education are highlighted.

Publicity for the Maine Poison Control Center has involved the efforts of three hospital departments—and the cooperation of newspapers and TV and radio stations throughout Maine.

Here are some things that have been done:

A series of public service announcements, directed and produced by MMC's Audio/Visual Resources department, will appear on TV stations this Spring. The soundtrack from three of them will be used for radio.

Posters, brochures on various poisons and a home safety checklist have been produced by the Audio/Visual Resources, Materials Management and Public Relations departments.

The Poison Control Center and the Public Relations department worked with WGAN radio to produce six radio public service spots, now being run throughout Maine.

A five-part series on poisonings, filmed with the Poison Control Center staff and WGAN consumer reporter Joan Amerling, is running now on Channel 13's 6 pm news.

An hour-long talk show, "Perspective," ran Sunday on WCSH radio. Featured were Emergency department Director Frank H. Lawrence, MD, and PCC Supervisor Leo Millette, Pharm. D.

A press release by the PR department was sent to the state's daily and weekly newspapers.

Several 90-second spots were done for WCSH radio on poisonous plants with the PCC staff and Kathy Freund, who owns a Scarborough plant business called "Kathy and the Beanstalk."

Bud Johnston, a horticulturist who has a Saturday morning program on plants on WGAN radio, taped a half-hour show on poisonous plants with PCC Assistant Dan Hudkins, to be aired soon.

embark on a series of road trips throughout Maine. They will be addressing nurses and emergency medical technicians in community hospitals from Lincoln to Fort Kent. Their talks cover how to care for the poisoned patient, as well as what to tell parents of children who've been poisoned. "I also plan to visit every Emergency Room in the state before October 1st," Millette says.

Other items on the professional education agenda include a newsletter on the latest poison therapies, to be circulated to the Maine Medical Association, the Maine Osteopathic Association and hospital emergency rooms. Beginning in April, Millette will begin attending medical rounds at many hospitals to keep physicians abreast of changes in poisoning treatment and plans are in the works for a day-long seminar on poisoning which will be open to all medical personnel.

A recent speaking engagement at the Spring Convention of the Maine Pharmaceutical Association, says Hudkins, has already brought a response. A pharmacist in Oakland has requested telephone decals with the toll-free number and plans to distribute those with syrup of Ipecac to new mothers.

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not going any further than that group. But if we lecture to a group of teachers or a Head Start staff, we're going to reach many more people than just those who heard us."

Besides public lectures, flyers with home safety checklists and telephone stickers have been distributed statewide through the school systems. The Naples, Casco and Bridgton schools even made a videotape on poison prevention with Dan Hudkins, being shown to young students there.

"We find that children in grades K through three make excellent targets—not because they tend to ingest poisons, but because they're likely to have very young brothers or sisters who might," says Millette. "A large percentage of our calls involve kids from nine mos. old to five years. You've got to reach them through someone older, and siblings can be very effective."

Television and radio public service announcements, news programs and newspaper articles also have helped to spread the word about the PCC's existence and

services, with a concentrated effort this week. (See box.)

Educating those in health professions has been part of the Poison Control Center's public awareness effort as well. This Spring, Millette and Hudkins will



Pictures for the new identification cards will be taken by Security department members in the Admitting lobby. The equipment will be operated from 8 am to 4 pm Monday through Friday.

ID pictures may be taken at all other times in the Security Office.

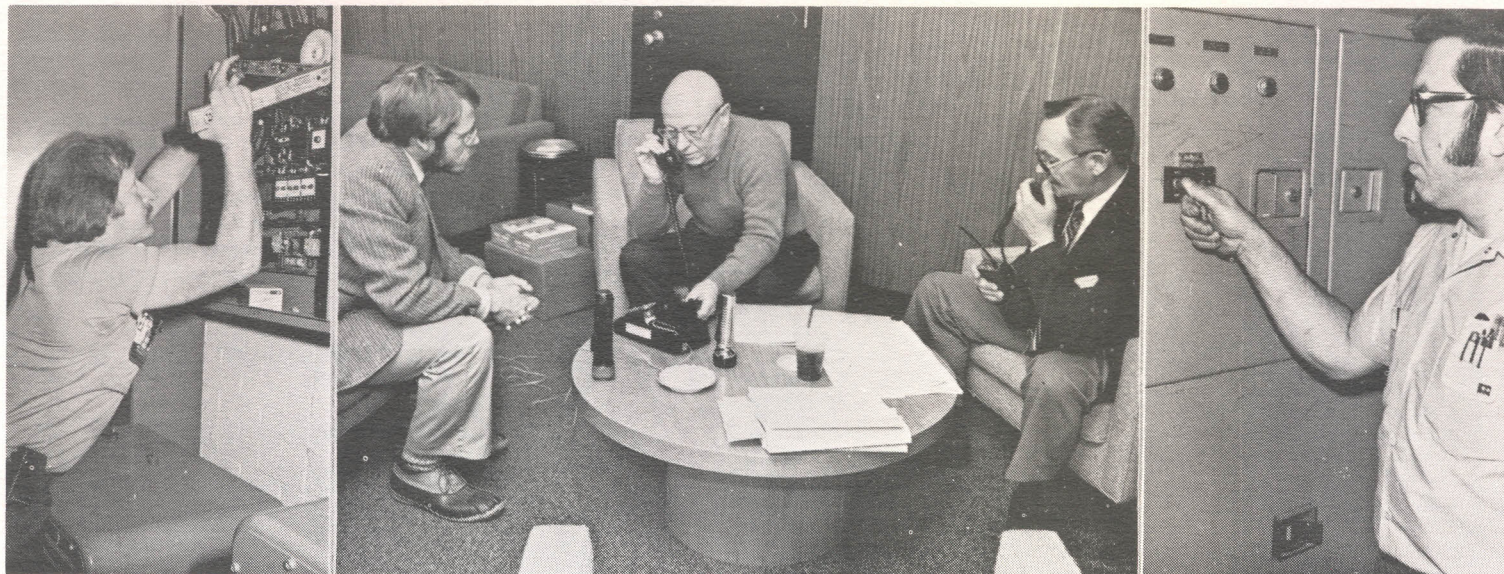
COST STUDY, from page 1

Medical Staff's Executive Committee as a valid means of making physicians more "cost aware."

"One goal is to decrease the amount of tests performed routinely," said Dr. Kunkle. "We suspect that if physicians are informed about their cost, this knowledge may help in better decision making."

Previous efforts of the Medical Costs Study Committee included a series of posters in the Doctors' Lounge and the Emergency Room, which itemized the costs of certain hospital tests and procedures, and panel discussions at two staff meetings.

Committee members are Dr. Emerson H. Drake, thoracic surgeon and former MMC chief of Surgery; Dr. George W. Hallett, chief of Pediatrics; Dr. Joseph F. Stocks, chief of Pathology; Dr. Edmund W. Hardy, Falmouth internist; Dr. Brian M. Dorsk, oncologist; Dr. Harry W. Bennert, obstetrician and gynecologist; Dr. John F. Gibbons, chief of Radiology; Michael J. Kilmartin, MMC vice president for Finance; and Dr. Kunkle, chief of Neurology.



MORE THAN 100 MMC employees extended their work day March 9 to participate in a Disaster Drill staged around the electrical shutdown for planned maintenance in the 12,370-volt electrical vault. Photographed during the drill, at left, Building Services Operator Bill Gokey; center, coordinating the action at Control Central are, left to right, Director of Engineering Services Ted Hollidge, Associate Vice President Edward J. McGeachey and Security Chief Bill Burnham; and at right, Electrical Leadman Ted Morin turns on one of two emergency generators used during the three-hour shutdown. (A/V Photo)

Disaster drill

Contingency plans go 'very smoothly' during planned electrical shutdown

A necessary switch-over to the hospital's emergency generators during planned maintenance of the hospital's 12,370-volt electrical vault just after midnight Friday went "very smoothly" and gave the MMC Disaster Team an opportunity to stage a drill of the emergency-contingency plan.

MMC Vice Presidents Wayne C. Patterson and Turner Bledsoe, MD, together with Associate Vice President Edward J. McGeachey directed the drill. It included an orderly changeover from public utility-supplied power to electricity produced by the hospital's own diesel generators.

During the drill, REMIS, the regional communications system, coordinated the assignment of emergency patients between Mercy and Osteopathic hospitals and kept the three hospitals in constant communication. The Portland Police Department provided extra cruiser protection around the hospital complex during the electrical shutdown and the Portland Fire Department was prepared to handle an outbreak of fire under the special circumstances of the emergency/contingency plan.

Dr. Patterson issued this statement after the drill, "on behalf of the administration and especially the patients at MMC:"

"I want to thank all those who parti-

cipated in the recent electrical shutdown and emergency generator test. We are appreciative of the dedication that caused many of you to work double shifts and a number of individuals to work as much as 22 hours during this period. Your tolerance for the delays caused by patient care demands and mechanical difficulties was most important to the safety of our patients.

"We are pleased to report that there were no serious incidents during this period and that the contingency plans were well executed.

"Thank you again for your individual contributions to this successful operation."

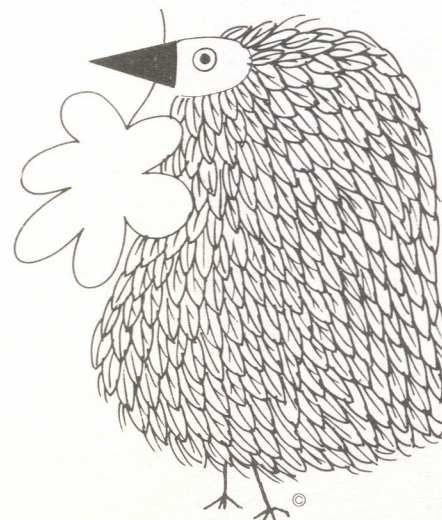
you should know...

THAT an addition has been made to the radio page directory: John Blacker, MD, surgical resident, # 647.

THAT Basic Life Support certificates from last January's course may be picked up in the Public Relations department.

THAT these new programs are available for preview for next month in Audio Visual Resources:

- Adjusting to New Baby
 - Preparing for Parenthood
 - The Handicapped Child: Infancy through Preschool
 - How to Work All Day without Getting Hurt
 - Cultural Diversity and Nursing Practice
 - Care of Patient with Pneumonia
 - Care of Patient in Acute Respiratory Failure
- Call 2203 for information.



SPRING...
has officially sprung



MMC EMPLOYEES GOT A CHANCE to show their "other sides" at the sixth annual Arts and Crafts Show, in the Admitting Lobby Thursday. Their were 27 entries, ranging from animal portraits to God's eyes. (A/V Photo)

Surgical Symposium slated March 30, 31

Robert M. Zollinger, MD, emeritus professor of Surgery and Chairman of the Department of Surgery at Ohio State University, will deliver the Isaac M. Webber, MD, surgical lecture March 30 at the 10th Annual MMC Surgical Symposium.

The event this year will include a special tribute to Dr. Webber, 85, for whom the lecture series is named, and who is retiring from an active surgical practice this month. A Claude Montgomery portrait of Dr. Webber will be unveiled as a highlight of a dinner and reception scheduled for 6:30 pm in the Red Coach Grill, Exit 8, Maine Turnpike.

The symposium, opening at 9:30 am,

Friday, March 30, will include three sessions ending with a buffet lunch Saturday, March 31, in the NDF classrooms. Presiding will be Richard C. Britton, MD, MMC Chief of Surgery; Robert E. McAfee, MD, and Walter B. Goldfarb, MD.

The following MMC medical staff members will present papers or appear as panelists:

Allen Browne, MD, James Georgitis, MD, Richard Flaherty, MD, Robert Waterhouse, MD, Ferris S. Ray, MD, Clement A. Hiebert, MD, Louis A. Asali, MD, John F. Gibbons, MD, George F. Sager, MD, Joel M. Johnson, MD, Winthrop MacLaughlin, MD, Richard C. Dillihunt, MD, James Pringle, MD, Donald A. Leeber, MD, Michael R. Curci, MD, Roland G. Ware, MD, Frederick Radke, MD, Andrew B. Packard, MD, Albert W. Dibbins, MD, Anthony F. Salvo, MD and William Herbert, MD.

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marketplace

FOR RENT: Deering Ave., USM area. 5 rms, bath, lg. kitchen/appl. \$360/mo. heated. Adults, no pets, parking, busline, laundry. 774-1562 eves.

FOR SALE: Harvest gold refrig. Whirlpool Estate. 1½ yrs old, used 3 mos, ex. cond. \$150 or trade for wood stove. 642-4042.

FOR RENT: Near MMC, \$150/mo. or can negotiate. Avail. end of June thru Aug. 775-3042.

FOR SALE: 1971 Buick Skylark. Runs on reg. gas. 48,000 orig. mi., great cond. \$1200. Must see. 865-4326.

FOR SALE: 1978 Olds Delta 88 Wagon. Auto., P.S., P.B., AM/FM stereo radio, power rear window/elec. defrost, tinted glass, remote mirrors, new steel-belted radial tires, "Olds 350" V-8, rust proofed. Carefully maintained. 17,000 mi. (\$8,000 value.) \$5900. 773-8819 eves. or 773-6185.

FREE CAT: Pure white to good home. Spayed. 774-8464 after 4.

FOR SALE: 1975 Chevelle Malibu Classic Station Wagon. P.S., P.B., radio, 48,000 mi., ex. cond. Call 767-2226.

FOR SALE: South Portland. 7 room ranch, 3 bdrms., bath, large kitchen/dining area, large LR. Separate attached 2 rooms & ½ bath, suitable for office or large bedroom & den. High 50's. 767-3815.

FOR SALE: 12' x 60' Hillcrest mobile home. 2 bdrms. Completely furnished, set up in park. 729-8071, Brunswick.

WANTED: Babysitter, part-time days, near MMC. Call Marie at 772-8479.

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