THE MASS GENERAL CANCER CENTER hosted the seventh annual the one hundred gala on June 10. Nearly 1,000 guests attended the sold-out event, which honored 100 individuals and organizations that are making a difference in the fight against cancer. These everyday heroes were selected from more than 900 nominations and included caregivers, researchers, advocates, philanthropists and volunteers from across the country and around the world, some traveling from as far as Japan and Botswana to attend the event.

Among the 2014 honorees was actress Valerie Harper who addressed attendees and thanked Daniel A. Haber, MD, PhD, director of the Cancer Center, for his research discoveries that contributed to her successful treatment after a lung cancer diagnosis in 2009. “I can’t tell you how great it is to be one of the one hundred this year, but also it is an opportunity for me to thank face to face ... Dr. Daniel Haber and say ‘thank you for saving my life,’” said Harper.

Other special guests included actor Matt Damon who attended the event with his family, including his father, Kent, who has received treatment for multiple myeloma at the MGH for several years. Singer/songwriter and 2012 "American Idol" winner Phillip Phillips gave a special live performance in tribute to the honorees. Actors Chris Cooper and his wife Marianne Leone Cooper also were in attendance, as longtime supporters and honorary co-chairs of the one hundred.

Co-chaired by Patti and Jonathan Kraft – and sponsored by The Kraft Group – the event raised more than $1.5 million for research, patient care, education and community outreach programs at the Cancer Center.

Visit theonehundred.org to meet the 2014 honorees and nominate someone who is making a difference in the fight against cancer for the 2015 event. The site also includes videos shown at the event and remarks by Harper, Damon, Haber and other attendees.

Partners eCare: Available resources for patients and staff

IN LESS THAN ONE MONTH, the Partners eCare Revenue Cycle will go live at the MGH. The new administrative system launches on July 12 and will provide improved registration, scheduling and billing processes and unify registration and scheduling across all hospitals in the Partners system. In the future, this also will mean patients will receive one bill from Partners, rather than from each institution.

“We have made every effort to ensure that there is minimal impact to our patients during this transition,” says Sally Mason Boemer, senior vice president of MGH Finance. “Our staff has spent the past 10 weeks training on the new system, which continues to be thoroughly tested. However, there may be a slight delay for patients during the scheduling and registration process. We are working very hard to provide our patients and employees with a positive experience at the MGH and have created several helpful handouts for distribution during the go-live process to address any potential questions or concerns.”

These educational materials – including a frequently asked question flyer in both English and Spanish as well as posters at front desks and within waiting areas – will be distributed to waiting rooms and off-site departments during the week of July 7. In addition, a script for staff to respond to potential (Continued on page 2)
Responding with relaxation

“CLOSE YOUR EYES AND TAKE A DEEP BREATH,” instructs Herbert Benson, MD, director emeritus of the Benson-Henry Institute, as he leads managers through a relaxation response exercise during the annual MGH Leadership Academy Spring Lecture.

Benson says the regular practice of using a relaxation technique once or twice daily for 10 to 20 minutes has been scientifically proven to improve stress-related conditions including anxiety, depression, high blood pressure, pain and excessive anger. “There are two components of evoking the relaxation response,” says Benson. “First, there is repetition of a word, sound, phrase or movement. Second, is to ignore any other thoughts and simply return to the repetitions, mentally responding ‘oh well.’ Doing this breaks the train of everyday thinking.”

As a pioneer in mind body medicine and one of the first Western physicians to bring spirituality and healing into medicine, Benson has published more than 190 scientific publications and 12 books on the topic. He says there are many techniques that can be used, including meditation, prayer, yoga and tai chi.

“Our current medical system addresses issues mainly with drugs and surgery; but drugs and surgery are not very effective in addressing stress,” says Benson.

Carlyene Prince-Erickson, director of Employee Education and Leadership Development, says, “I feel so refreshed and centered. I challenge everyone in this room to incorporate this into your life and in the workplace around you.”

Wright appointed to Mathisen Family Professorship in Surgery

CAMERON WRIGHT, MD, associate chief of the MGH Division of Thoracic Surgery, was honored as the first incumbent of the Mathisen Family Professorship in Surgery in the Field of Thoracic Surgery during a May 9 ceremony at Harvard Medical School (HMS). The professorship is named in honor of Douglas Mathisen, MD, chief of the MGH Division of Thoracic Surgery and program director of Cardiothoracic Surgery, who has worked at the MGH for more than three decades.

“The Mathisen Family Professorship is a wonderful tribute to Dr. Wright,” said MGH President Peter L. Slavin, MD, who welcomed guests. “It will provide a close link between him and Dr. Mathisen – both outstanding thoracic surgeons.”

Mathisen has been chief of Thoracic Surgery since 1994. He previously served as chief of Cardiac Surgery from 2007 to 2011, and as the Cardiothoracic Surgery program director since 1995. Mathisen’s leadership extends well beyond the MGH including as past director of the American Board of Thoracic Surgery; past president of the Thoracic Surgery Directors Association; past president of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons and current councilor of the European Association of Cardio-thoracic Surgery. Most recently, Mathisen was a recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from the Society of Thoracic Surgeons.

“As you near the end of your MGH career, you have a distinct impression of how fortunate you have been to work at the MGH and work with so many outstanding colleagues and residents,” said Mathisen.

Wright completed his internship and residency at the MGH. His clinical and research interests include pulmonary hypertension, airway surgery, thymic tumor surgery and minimally invasive lung cancer surgery. He has contributed to the MGH as a clinician, teacher and as director of Quality and Safety for the Department of Surgery. Wright also serves as a colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve and has previously been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

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Wright’s retirement, the professorship will be renamed the Douglas Mathisen Professorship in Surgery in the Field of Thoracic Surgery.

Questions from patients will be provided at departmental staff meetings.

Patients also will be notified of a new co-payment policy change with a message in Patient Gateway and iHealthSpace. “In addition, as part of new Partners eCare at the MGH, we have eliminated cash as a co-payment option in favor of debit, credit or check selections,” says Mason Boemer. “This change is intended to make the check-out process quicker and will help improve security for our staff and patients. The educational materials also address this change to be sure both staff and patients are well educated about the new processes.”

For more information, visit the MGH page on the partnersecare.partners.org site.
Claflin awards support five MGH researchers

THE CLAFLIN DISTINGUISHED SCHOLAR AWARD is presented each year to outstanding women researchers who have a dual responsibility of caring for children. On June 12, the MGH Center for Faculty Development honored five MGH researchers at the annual Claflin Luncheon in the Thier Conference Room.

“The Claflin Awards have continued to support our most talented women scientists at the MGH during the time when raising children and starting an independent career come together,” said Anne Klibanski, MD, director of Center for Faculty Development and chief of the Neuroendocrine Unit. “Our winners this year reflect the incredible breadth of science throughout the institution ranging from neuroscience to global health.”

Awards were presented to Sharon Dekel, PhD, research fellow in the Department of Psychiatry; Sarina Elmariah, MD, PhD, Dermatology; Daphne Holt, MD, PhD, chief resident in the Department of Psychiatry; Elaine Yu, MD, Endocrine Unit; and Lynn Matthews, MD, MPH, of the Infectious Disease Unit.

“It’s a wonderful honor,” said Matthews, who has a 7-month-old daughter. “Past recipients are really amazing women doing wonderful work. It is great to join that group and have the support of the award and the community of people behind it.”

Established in 1997 by the MGH Executive Committee on Research, the award is named in honor of Jane Claflin, an extraordinary hospital benefactor and dedicated volunteer leader who helped create the Women in Academic Medicine Committee in 1993. Recipients receive funding to maintain and further their research throughout the child-rearing years.

‘Leadership for Meaningful Change’

GARY KAPLAN, MD, chairman and CEO of the Seattle-based Virginia Mason Health System, addressed the Department of Medicine Grand Rounds on May 22 in the O’Keeffe Auditorium. Kaplan came to the MGH to deliver the Allan Sandler Visiting Scholar Lecture. The annual event was established in memory of Sandler, who practiced internal medicine at the MGH for more than 40 years.

Kaplan presented “Leadership for Meaningful Change,” sharing his experiences at Virginia Mason over the past decade. The success of his work led to the creation of the Virginia Mason Production System (VMPS), modeled after the philosophy of the Toyota Production System of “eliminating waste, valuing employees and continually improving.” Many MGH and Partners staff who are involved in practice transformation have been students in VMPS courses.

“The MGH has a tremendous culture of excellence, a passion for teaching and training, and a huge opportunity to deliver the perfect patient experience,” said Kaplan.

Kaplan said he is optimistic about the MGH’s potential for implementing change. He sees primary care as the driver for ideas, innovation and creativity. “It is time for primary care leaders to tear down barriers and silos.”

Kaplan encouraged practices to scale pilot programs, to implement proven tools, and to institute a “compact” among physicians and hospital leaders to ensure a shared vision and commitment to change.

During his visit, Kaplan also visited two practices – Internal Medicine Associates and the Chelsea HealthCare Center – and presented at the monthly Stoeckle Center Seminar where he left the audience with these words: “Leaders are dealers in hope.”

SMILES FROM THE HEART: Keith Lordan and his wife Linda Lordan reunite with Thoralf M. Sundt, MD, chief of the Division of Cardiac Surgery and director of the Corrigan Minehan Heart Center, on June 5. Keith Lordan was one of 12 cardiac patients who came together with MGH Cardiac Surgery clinicians from the extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) program for a reunion at the Paul S. Russell, MD Museum of Medical History and Innovation. The patients were given a second chance at life thanks in part to the ECMO technique, in which a heart and lung device is implanted outside of a patient’s body to oxygenate and remove carbon dioxide from the blood, allowing the patient’s damaged organs time to recover. The ECMO program at the MGH is the first adult program in New England and the only adult program in Massachusetts.

DOUBLE DUTY: Claflin, center, with award recipients, from left; Yu, Dekel, Holt, Elmariah, Matthews.

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A tree grows in Danvers

LOCATED ON THE GROUNDS of the Mass General/North Shore Center for Outpatient Care in Danvers, the Endecott pear tree — North America’s oldest living fruit tree — is more than a bearer of fruit; it also is a living link between the past and the present.

On June 12, the center presented its annual lecture, “Pioneering Moments in Orthopaedic Medicine,” celebrating health care and history. The program featured two physician leaders — Doug Peterson, DO, an orthopedic surgeon at Mass General/North Shore Center for Outpatient Care, who shared his experiences as battlefield surgeon in Afghanistan, and David F. Torchiana, MD, MGPO chairman and chief executive officer, who presented the story of EA Codman, a classic tale of a tragic hero and his influence on the practice of medicine.

The evening celebration was the third collaborative program in a partnership series with Danvers Historical Society and Essex heritage.

“Nearly five years ago when we celebrated the opening of this center, we vowed to be stewards of this land,” said Elena Sierra, RN, executive administrative director of Mass General/North Shore Center for Outpatient Care. “The same environment that contributed to the history and longevity of the Endecott Pear Tree provides a nurturing and healing environment for our patients.”

The event also featured a walking tour of the tree site and pear-themed refreshments.

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY: For the first time in the MGH’s history, community health is now part of the internal hospital governance structure. As a result of the hospital’s strategic plan, the General Executive Committee created an Executive Committee on Community Health (ECOH) to promote community health improvement by leveraging the MGH mission — patient care, teaching, research and community health. Under the new plan, the Executive Committee on Research (ECOR) and the Executive Committee on Teaching and Education (ECOTE) also were reconfigured.

Katrina Armstrong, MD, MSCE, physician-in-chief, is chair of the 30-person committee comprised of hospital and community leaders. Joan Quinlan, vice president for Community Health in the Center for Community Health Improvement, is the committee’s administrative lead.