Celebrating two 200s
The circus comes to MGHfC for a joint bicentennial birthday party

COLORFUL JUGGLING CLUBS soared through the air with the greatest of ease during the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus’s Oct. 12 visit to MassGeneral Hospital for Children (MGHfC). The circus, which also celebrates its 200th year in 2011, came to the hospital for a joint birthday party and to kick off its five-day run at the TD Garden.

Along with excited young patients, families and staff, the Judith A. Newell Playroom on Ellison 18 was filled with clowns, acrobats and other circus stars and a festive birthday cake. Ringmaster Johnathan Lee Iverson towered over Howard Weinstein, MD, chief of the Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Unit, as they led the crowd in a rendition of “Happy Birthday.” Iverson also provided MGHfC patients and staff with a special birthday present: 200 free tickets to the week’s performances. Several of the children’s tickets include an opportunity to meet the performers before the show.

Two clowns presented both birthday and get well cards painted by circus elephants. Clowns then chose children from the crowd to assist in performing tricks, including juggling and spinning a ball on their fingertips. A performance by Ulaanbaatar Ballerina, a three-person hand-balancing act, left young patients in awe as the female ballerina performed splits and handstands while balancing on top of her male companions. The trio, which hails from Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, mixes contemporary ballet moves with circus and acrobatic skills.

Care redesign teams begin implementing quality recommendations

As part of the Partnerswide Strategic Initiative, teams of experts from the MGH and other Partners affiliates are focusing on ways to improve the quality and efficiency of care. The effort began with five multidisciplinary case redesign teams developing recommendations for specific diseases and procedures. This first round of teams began implementing the recommendations Oct. 1 and will be measuring their effectiveness. Teams will report these findings to Partners leadership and use them to further refine the recommendations. MGH Hotline is publishing a series highlighting the efforts of several of these teams.

CORONARY ARTERY BYPASS GRAFT (CABG) surgery, the most common open-heart procedure in the United States, is used to treat patients with coronary artery disease, which can lead to serious complications such as heart attacks. During a CABG procedure, a healthy artery or vein is grafted to a blocked coronary artery in order to bypass the block and maintain normal blood flow to the heart.

In addition to being a high-volume operation, CABG surgery represents a substantial use of hospital resources, and as such, is quite costly.

Over the last year, a team of caregivers, administrators, data analysts and other experts led by cardiac surgeon Arvind Agnihotri, MD – director of Cardiac Surgery Quality Improvement and of Less Invasive and Robotic Heart Surgery – has collaborated to identify opportunities to make CABG more efficient, creating the best possible outcomes for patients and potentially reducing overall costs. Their recommendations build upon CABG quality improvement and measurement efforts that have taken place across Partners hospitals for more than a decade and are based on the latest research and data from national organizations. The team’s initial recommendations, which were reviewed and approved by MGH and Partners leadership, are:

(Continued on page 2)
West End residents thank the MGH

POSITIVE IMPACT: From left, Connor, Moscowitz and Hicks

The team already implemented same-day admission for most patients, and a subgroup currently is addressing opportunities for reducing blood product utilization before, during and after CABG surgeries.

“Reducing blood product utilization is one of the recommendations we are most excited to implement,” says Agnihotri. “Reducing blood product utilization benefits everyone involved. It’s better for the patient to avoid transfusions because of the associated complications, and reducing transfusions significantly reduces costs because blood products are very expensive.”

Adds Mike Andrawes, MD, of the Department of Anesthesia, Critical Care and Pain Medicine, “By ensuring that we use blood products as efficiently as possible—that we don’t give unnecessary transfusions or order blood products preemptively and end up having them go to waste—we can improve the quality of care and make it more affordable.”

Andrawes and his colleague Greg Koski, MD, are leading the effort for Cardiac Anesthesia in this multidisciplinary subgroup, which also involves members of the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit (ICU), including William Hoffman, MD; the Blood Transfusion Service, including Sunny Dzik, MD; Cardiac Perfusion; ICU Nursing; and Cardiac Surgery physician assistants.

For more information about the Strategic Initiative and the efforts of all the care redesign teams, access http://priorities.massgeneral.org.

Judy Newell, RN, MSN

JUDY NEWELL, RN, MSN, nursing director of the MGH Vincent Gynecology Oncology Units and the Pediatric Units of MassGeneral Hospital for Children (MGH/C), died Oct. 7 at the age of 66.

“Judy was an extraordinary nurse leader who was an incredible role model for all of us,” says Isaac Schiff, MD, chief of the MGH Vincent Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology. “She made certain that all patients were treated with dignity and compassion. I will miss her most as a dear friend.”

Newell was a graduate of Lowell General Hospital School of Nursing and Northeastern University. She was highly respected and well-known throughout the MGH as a top-notch educator and role model for all of us,” says Isaac Schiff, MD, chief of the MGH

JUDY NEWELL RESIDENTS filled the Community Room of the Amy Lowell building Sept. 30 to honor the MGH’s bicentennial and the Senior HealthWISE Program for its dedication to providing high quality services for nearly a decade.

During the luncheon ceremony, residents shared their favorite examples of how Senior HealthWISE has positively affected their lives, from keeping their minds and bodies active to filling their social calendars with events. Following a round of applause honoring MGHers Barbara Moscowitz, MSW, LICSW, for her enthusiastic and compassionate support of senior programs, the Senior HealthWISE program director was momentarily at a loss for words.

“I’m rarely speechless,” Moscowitz said. “Being here today and receiving your love and support is beyond what I know how to describe. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for your warmth and generosity.”

The ceremony also honored Cathy Smyth, LICSW, geriatric social worker; Diane Connor, RN, wellness nurse; Jennalin Gabriele, administrative assistant; and Karen Hicks, community resource specialist.

Peter L. Slavin, MD, MGH president, credited the residents with being the kind of neighbors he considers to be the heart of the MGH for the past 200 years. “There is no neighborhood we are more committed to serving than this one,” he said.
Blood donors honored at annual breakfast

FOR IRENE RESKE, applications systems analyst in the Information Systems department, the decision to be a blood donor is an easy one. “I’m very involved in my church and I see a lot of women who are going through cancer therapies,” Reske says. “When I see somebody going through that and then realize I’m able and healthy – and that a unit of blood can help up to three patients – it’s just so easy.”

Reske was honored Oct. 5 during the 2011 Employee Blood Donor Recognition celebration for donating whole blood six times in the past year. She shared the spotlight as a top donor with Catherine Schiavo-White, billing representative in the Department of Orthopaedics, and Constance Miller, researcher at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. Renee Ethier, aquatics facility manager in the Craniofacial Developmental Biology Laboratory, was recognized as MGH’s top platelet donor. They each received a signed, hardcover copy of the book Something in the Ether: A Bicentennial History of Massachusetts General Hospital, 1811-2011.

The annual event also paid tribute to staff who have donated blood four or more times during the past year. Honorees were presented with a certificate and MGH Blood Donor Center logo water bottle and treated to a buffet breakfast. “It helps MGH and it’s a great thing for MGH employees to do,” says honoree Debra Thiboutot, finance director, Proton Beam Federal Share.

For more information about the Blood Donor Center, call 617-726-8177.

Leading the endovascular revolution

FOR THE Division of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery, these are exciting times. Experts in the field currently describe the fact that many open vascular surgeries have been replaced with minimally invasive endovascular surgeries or combined with traditional open surgeries as an “endovascular revolution.” This revolution has helped decrease surgical morbidity and speed recovery from vascular procedures.

The first endovascular aortic aneurysm repair in New England was performed at the MGH in 1994 by David Charles Brewster, MD. Today, the division is leading in aneurysm surgeries in the Northeast both in terms of overall volume of aortic aneurysms completed and as a referral center for complex abdominal and thoraco-abdominal aortic aneurysms.

Approximately six years after Brewster’s pioneering surgery, the division became the first group in the region to have a component of vascular surgeons fully trained in endovascular procedures. In 2003, MGH vascular surgeons opened the first endovascular operating room in the region. Now, the endovascular program is further strengthened with the opening of the Lunder Building.

“The opening of the endovascular operating rooms in the Lunder Building marks a gratifying final step in the major change that has occurred in the practice of vascular surgery over the past two decades,” says Richard Cambria, MD, chief of the Division of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery. “The facility represents the completion of that evolution now with the state-of-the-art imaging equipment, a full staff of X-ray technicians to facilitate the work and round-the-clock availability of a total endovascular team.”
postdoctoral training, junior faculty and research and clinical fellows. Registration is required. To register, call 800-843-6356 or visit www.massmed.org/fed2011.

Blood Donor Center promotions
During October, all blood donors at the MGH Blood Donor Center will receive a free Halloween-themed T-shirt. Donors also will be eligible to win two round-trip airline tickets to Toronto on Porter Airlines. For more information, call 617-726-8177 or email mmaclippe@partners.org.

Pastoral Care Week
The MGH Chaplaincy will celebrate Pastoral Care Week from Oct. 24 to Oct. 28. Information tables will be in the Main Lobby Oct. 25 from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm. All employees, patients, families and visitors also are welcome to attend the Blessing of the Hands Oct. 27 from 6:30 to 8 am, 11:30 am to 1 pm, and 3 to 5 pm in the MGH Chapel, Ellison 1. The open labyrinth walk will be held Oct. 27 from 8:30 am to 1 pm in the Chapel.

Intensive care anniversary
Employees are invited to join the Respiratory Intensive Care Unit and Surgical Intensive Care Unit in celebrating the 50th anniversary of intensive care at the MGH on Oct. 28 at 1 pm in the Ether Dome. A brief presentation will review highlights from the first 50 years, followed by a light reception in the SICU Pontoppidan Conference Room, Ellison 4. For more information, contact Judith Romano at 617-724-3292 or jromano@partners.org.

Katharine Treadway, MD, a physician in the MGH Department of Medicine, has been appointed as the Dr. Mark and Karen Lawrence Director of Professionalism at HMS. As part of this new initiative, Treadway will integrate holistic and humanistic curriculum elements across the four-year MD curriculum.

Flu shots available
THE CENTERS for Disease Control and Prevention recommends all people ages 6 months and older get a flu shot. To help prevent the spread of the flu this year, the MGH is offering a centralized flu shot clinic in the Wang Ambulatory Care Center Main Lobby for adult patients and all employees.

Information for patients
The Medical Walk-In Unit is offering flu shots to patients over 18 years old at the centralized clinic Monday through Friday from 8 am to 6 pm until Nov. 11. Registration is required. New patients may register by calling 1-866-211-6588. For more information, visit www.massgeneral.org/flu.

Information for employees
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES (OHS) is collaborating with the Medical Walk-In Unit so that employees may be immunized at this convenient location as well. Employees unable to stop by the central clinic may get their shots at OHS, 165 Charles River Plaza, Suite 404 or call 617-726-2217 to schedule an appointment. As in years past, employees who decline the flu vaccine will be required to wear a surgical mask in patient care areas. For more information, access http://sharepoint.partners.org/mghinfluenza.

In addition to the weekday hours listed above, the central clinic will be open for both employees and patients on two Saturdays, Oct. 15 and 22, from 9 am to 3 pm.

Jain’s seminar, “Delivery of Molecular and Nano-Medicine in Tumors,” will illuminate the role of chemical engineering in understanding blood vessel function and cancer growth. The lecture series provides a forum for distinguished researchers to showcase cutting-edge scientific research that addresses critical issues.