Spring has sprung in the MGH Mail Center

VISITORS TO THE MGH MAIL CENTER in the Gray/Bigelow Basement are greeted by more than just the welcoming smile of Enid Cruz, of Materials Management. They also are met by a fun, festive, ever-changing handcrafted bulletin board wall.

“As soon as I took the job, I thought having something festive up on the wall would be fun,” says Cruz. “Then the idea just came – I’ll have something different for each season.”

Not only does the display change with the seasons, but also for different holidays. Cruz has created a FedEx box Christmas tree, a leprechaun diving into a pot of gold for St. Patrick’s Day and flying love letters in MGH envelopes for Valentine’s Day.

“The spring display is my favorite so far,” she says of the current Easter egg-bunny- and chick-adorned wall – complete with a 3D tree made of tissue paper.

“Enid is very talented with her original, seasonally-themed displays in our MGH Mail Center customer service area,” says Gary Mulrey, senior manager, Materials Management, Receiving and Distribution. “She gets many compliments on her creations, which only brighten our customer visits.”

Cruz has always loved arts and crafts and is full of ideas for future creations. And, she says, the display will never be the same twice. “I like to make a welcoming environment,” says Cruz. “It’s those simple little things that people enjoy. It brings happiness. How can you beat that?”

U.S. Navy lieutenant going the distance in support of veterans, military families

LT. MAX MAGUIRE has served in the U.S. Navy for the last six years, but now he is gearing up for a different kind of mission: the Boston Marathon. On April 15, Maguire will run in support of Home Base, a Red Sox Foundation and MGH Program – an organization close to his heart.

“In 2011, when I was a senior in college, my brother Connor was deployed to Helmand Province, Afghanistan, as a rifle infantryman with 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines,” says Maguire. “He was involved in two separate improvised explosive device attacks during his time overseas – only four weeks apart.” The second attack left his brother with a traumatic brain injury and earned him a Purple Heart medal.

“Connor made it home in one piece, but at times it’s been a real struggle for him and those close to him,” Maguire says. “There have been some incredibly difficult challenges, but thanks to support from friends, family and outstanding medical care – including from Home Base – my brother continues to recover from his injuries.”

Although Connor’s story has been one of triumph, both brothers are keenly aware that others are not as fortunate. “Too many people close to Connor have taken their own lives as a result of the invisible wounds of... (Continued on page 4)
Chronic health problems common after addiction recovery

Investigators from MGH’s Recovery Research Institute found that a third of individuals in recovery from substance use disorder continue to suffer from chronic physical diseases that have been exacerbated by their substance use.

In a study of 2,000 individuals in recovery from drug or alcohol use disorders, researchers found 37 percent had been diagnosed with one or more of nine alcohol- and drug-exacerbated diseases and health conditions: liver disease, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted infections, cancer, hepatitis C, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart disease and diabetes.

The presence of these diseases was shown to be associated with significant reductions in participants’ quality of life, and all are known to reduce life expectancy.

“Earlier and more assertive intervention is needed for individuals with alcohol and other drug problems to help prevent these other diseases,” says David Eddie, PhD, the lead author of the study. “In addition, addiction treatment needs to be more seamlessly integrated with primary health care, and more research is needed to explore the complex relationships between alcohol and other drug use and physical disease.”

Oxytocin weakens the brain’s reward signals for food

Previous research studies have shown that oxytocin – a naturally occurring hormone that is known to promote bonding – acts on brain pathways related to eating behavior and may be a promising treatment for obesity. But how exactly does it work?

Researchers from MGH’s Department of Endocrinology found that oxytocin reduces the communication between brain areas involved in the cognitive, sensory and emotional processing of food cues that people with obesity demonstrate when they look at high-calorie foods.

“Knowing how the drug exerts its effects is a critical step toward establishing oxytocin as a drug treatment for overeating and obesity,” says the study’s lead investigator, Liya Kerem, MD, MSc, who presented study results at a recent Endocrine Society meeting.

Older women benefit significantly when screened with 3D mammography

Breast cancer is the most common cancer and the second most common cause of death from cancer among women in the United States.

In a new study, MGH researchers sought to learn more about the performance of 2D and 3D mammography in older women (mean age of 72 years).

They compared screening mammograms from more than 15,000 women who underwent 2D mammography with those of more than 20,000 women who underwent 3D screening.

Both approaches were highly effective at detecting cancer, but 3D mammography had some advantages over the 2D approach, including a reduction in false-positive examinations. 3D screenings also had a higher positive predictive value – the probability that women with a positive screening result will have breast cancer – and higher specificity – the ability to distinguish cancer from benign findings.

“We’ve shown that screening mammography performs well in older women, with high cancer detection rates and low false positives, and that tomosynthesis (3D screening) leads to even better performance than conventional 2D mammography,” said study lead author Manisha Bahl, MD, MPH.
Be aware! Nationwide purchase order scams on the rise

The FBI and law enforcement agencies across the country continue to investigate a growing number of reports related to cybercrime involving fraudulent purchase orders posing as a legitimate business.

"Over the past several months we have seen that Partners and MGH are among many well-known companies being used by criminals as part of this nationwide scam," says Daniel Coleman, senior investigator, MGH Police, Security and Outside Services. "We have investigated these incidents, and there is no known financial loss to either Partners or the MGH."

According to the FBI, this is how the scam works:

- Criminals create fraudulent websites, email address and “spoof” telephone numbers to appear legitimate.
- Often the email address will be close to a real URL – but will be misspelled or include a different ending, such as “Parnters.net” versus “Partners.org.”
- Communications may feature official logos and names that may be associated with the business.
- Using sophisticated techniques, criminals will engage in “phishing” to conduct social engineering to contact vendors or suppliers to gather information about a company's purchasing accounts. They then contact the company and request a quote for products.
- They use forged documents, complete with letterhead and sometimes even the name of the organization's product manager, posing as an institution like Partners, MGH or other well-known businesses.
- They request shipments be made on a 30-day credit and since the real institution often has good credit basis, vendors usually agree.
- They provide a U.S. shipping address that might be a warehouse, self-storage facility or the residence of another online scam victim.
- Not knowing they are being scammed, these other victims are provided with shipping labels and directed to send the merchandise to a foreign location, under the belief that they will be paid for their assistance.
- The vendor eventually bills the real institution – for example, Partners or MGH – at which time the fraud is discovered. By then, the items have been re-shipped overseas, and the supplier must absorb the financial loss.

What can you do?

- Be vigilant in your review of purchase orders and requests for payments or services.
- If a request is received by email, pay close attention to the address. Hover over it without clicking and confirm that it is a valid Partners email. Check every letter for accuracy.
- Validate all orders that may appear suspicious or contain unusually large volume or dollar values, or request delivery to a non-affiliated location.
- Recognize that Partners or MGH logos, employee names, etc. may be used as part of the effort to fraudulently obtain goods and services from a third party.

If you have received a fraudulent purchase order:

Immediately report it to MGH Police and Security and Partners Information Security. Email MGHpolice@partners.org and CISPO@partners.org or call 617-726-2121.

LVC: Ladies Visiting with Chocolates

(V)INVESTED SUPPORT: While marking a historical milestone, the MGH Ladies Visiting Committee (LVC) continued to make history this week. As the group was gearing up to distribute chocolates to departments throughout the main campus as a way to recognize its 150th anniversary, MGH President Peter L. Slavin, MD, surprised them with the announcement that Mayor Martin J. Walsh had issued a proclamation recognizing April 2, 2019 as “LVC Day in the City of Boston.”
war,” says Maguire. “My strongest hope is that his success can be the reality for everyone living with these wounds – and that they know care is available for them at Home Base.”

Twenty veterans die by suicide every day, and one in three return home with an invisible wound such as traumatic brain injury or post-traumatic stress disorder.

“The invisible wounds of war are complex injuries that require innovative solutions, and that’s what we are trying to do at Home Base and Mass General,” says retired Brig. Gen. Jack Hammond, executive director of Home Base. “We are grateful to have a team of dedicated runners this year who are committed to our mission and dedicated to giving back to those who have served our country.”

In addition to the Home Base, Pediatric Hematology & Oncology, and Emergency Response teams – sponsored by John Hancock – runners also will support the Run for MGH team, which raises funds for hospital programs close to their hearts, including Caring for a Care, cystic fibrosis, Down syndrome, the Lurie Center for Autism, and the Mootha Lab.

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Marathon motivation:

“In September 1970, my aunt, Mary Elizabeth Brennan, passed away as a result of a medulloblastoma at 10 years old. Her death had a lasting impact on my family, and the scars of her loss still exist today. As someone who has always wanted to run a marathon, I wanted to run on behalf of an organization that I had some kind of connection with. I couldn’t be more honored that my first marathon will be here in Boston, a city that I’ve called home for the past five years, and on behalf of an organization as amazing as Mass General.”

ASHLINN BRENNAN, PEDIATRIC HEMATOLOGY & ONCOLOGY TEAM, FIRST MARATHON

“Every mile I run is a challenge. But this challenge pales in comparison to what other veterans and service members with invisible wounds of war have to deal with on a daily basis. I have very much enjoyed the structure, camaraderie, team spirit and the pride of serving others; and I’m running this race so my fellow service members, veterans and their family members can receive the care and support they need at Home Base.”

ARMY MAJ. VANESSA STOLZOFF, HOME BASE TEAM, FIRST MARATHON

“The primary reason I chose to run for MGH is because of my mother, Nancy Cameron. Nancy is a breast cancer survivor with her first battle occurring over 20 years ago. She finalized her treatments in May 2017 and continues to enjoy good health, all thanks to MGH. I could think of no better marathon team to join than the hospital that kept my mother alive and gave her the ability to fight another day.”

PATRICK CAMERON, PEDIATRIC HEMATOLOGY & ONCOLOGY TEAM, FIRST MARATHON

“I am a lifelong runner, and a scientist developing novel therapeutics for rare diseases to help patients. I am thrilled for this opportunity to be running in support of a greater cause, the MGH Emergency Response Team. To me, representing this team is a combination of my runner and scientist nature. Every second matters in saving lives, much like every step matters in running a marathon. The distance is long, and there is no shortcut. You just have to face it and run it step by step until passing the finish line.”

WEI-CHIANG CHEN, EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM, FIFTH MARATHON