

## Meet Myrick.

Myrick Johnson is just a kid. He's on the honor roll at school and loves to play the saxophone. Last year he won the 4th grade band award, and last April he received a 1st rating in the Arkansas School Band and Orchestra Association Regional Competition. Remarkable? Maybe not – unless you know that Myrick Johnson is also a kid with asthma. Just two years ago, he often had difficulty simply breathing.

That's where Project A.I.R. (Asthma Is Resolvable) came in. Through this program, supported by St. Joseph's Mercy Health Foundation, Myrick's asthma is now managed through premedication. He breathes easier and can play sports at school. More importantly, he can play his beloved sax. In fact, last May this accomplished young soloist proudly accepted the 5th grade da Vinci Instrumental Award.

Project A.I.R. is just one of many programs supported by St. Joseph's Mercy Health Foundation to carry on St. Joseph's enduring tradition of exceptional health care. Foundation projects include: the heart fund, the cancer fund, funds for women and children, scholarships, services to seniors, health education, and equipment purchases for patient care.

Call (501) 622-1123 to find out more about giving to the Foundation, and you won't just be investing in your community - you'll be helping to make sure kids like Myrick are starting their future on a promising note.



In this publication of Health Matters, you'll learn more about the recent award for clinical excellence bestowed upon St. Joseph's Mercy Health Center for outstanding patient clinical outcomes. Our staff, including physicians, nurses, and other health professionals are responsible for the great care given to our patients and we celebrate their work.



Randy Fale  
President/CEO

Caring for people who entrust their lives to us is an awesome responsibility. Quality care has been a hallmark of St. Joseph's for the 115 years we've been in the community. This recent award is coincidental to other initiatives St. Joseph's is taking to be more publicly accountable for the care we give. We currently submit our data voluntarily to CMS (the federal government's program for Medicare and Medicaid) so you, the patient and customer, can compare our outcomes to others.

As a Sisters of Mercy Health System hospital, we are investing millions of dollars in systems that help to prevent medication errors; developing electronic medical records to avoid human error; and working with our physicians to emulate "best practices" identified through our information systems.

You can be proud of the outcomes patients experience at St. Joseph's. We work hard to make sure you get the very best care and service - everyday.

## Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence™ HealthGrades Five Star Ratings

★★★★★

Ranked #1 in Arkansas for Overall Cardiac Services

★★★★★

Ranked #1 in Arkansas for Cardiology Services

★★★★★

Five-Star Rated for Coronary Bypass Surgery

★★★★★

Five-Star Rated for Treatment of Heart Attack

★★★★★

Ranked #1 in Arkansas for Overall Orthopaedic Services

★★★★★

Ranked #1 in Arkansas for the Treatment of Stroke

## St. Joseph's Plays Key Role in Helping ASU Solve CRNA Shortage

Together everyone achieves more. That's the approach Arkansas State University and St. Joseph's Mercy Health Center are taking to deal with the severe shortage of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs).

Presently, the practice of nurse anesthesia is among the top 10 most heavily recruited healthcare specialties. It is projected that the United States will need over 35,000 nurse anesthetists by 2010.

With that in mind, officials of the Arkansas State nursing program applied for a nurse anesthesia program to the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs.

The initial class of 11 is now absorbed in anesthesia teaching and clinical courses at St. Joseph's and five other clinical sites. Following a preliminary meeting between Arkansas State's Susan Campbell, MEd, MS, CRNA, CRNA Program Administrator, and St. Joseph's William G. Wagnon, M.D., Director of Anesthesiology, and Brenda Lea, RN, MA, Vice President of Patient Care Services, a clinical site invitation was extended.

"We are excited and consider it an honor, but more importantly it is an opportunity for us to promote healthcare education which will ultimately help us provide better care and service to our patients," Lea said. "Dr. Wagnon signed on to it and was very open to the idea. That's what made the difference."

Campbell agreed, but indicated the decision to extend St. Joseph's a clinical invitation was multifaceted.

"We, for a number of reasons, are excited and feel we are very fortunate to be affiliated with St. Joseph's," Campbell said. "We feel that the anesthesiologists on staff there will be great teachers for our students. Plus, we feel the students will see the type of cases they need to see to become well-rounded."

"Lastly, Dr. Wagnon is very interested in the teaching aspect and we believe he can teach our students all they need to know to become great CRNAs."

Registered nurses Lisa Longinotti (Little Rock) and John Braughton (Hot Springs) are presently at St. Joseph's doing the clinical portion of the work needed for Arkansas State's 28-month, 71-credit hour master of science degree in nurse anesthesia. By the time they graduate on May 6 of 2005, Longinotti, Braughton and their nine classmates, enduring 60-hour weeks split between classrooms and clinical sites, will have administered over 1,000 anesthetics to patients utilizing all methods of anesthesia.

After completing the program and passing the national certification examination given by the Council on Certification of Nurse Anesthetists, they will be eligible for an Arkansas State Board of Nursing CRNA license and can practice in every setting where anesthesia is delivered.

Nurse anesthetists practice in traditional hospital surgical suites, obstetrical delivery areas, ambulatory surgical centers, the offices of dentists, podiatrists, ophthalmologists and plastic surgeons and U.S. military, public health service and Veteran's Administration healthcare facilities.

"The setting here at St. Joseph's is awesome and everyone I've been working with is very professional," Longinotti said. "They are just taking very good care of us and I'm learning a lot. It's just turned out to be a great clinical experience for me. So far, I think this site here at St. Joseph's is going to prove to be the very best clinical site that we have."

Braughton agrees with his classmate.

"I am tremendously excited about being able to do my clinical work here in my hometown and at St. Joseph's," Braughton said. "St. Joseph's put me through nursing school and now I truly appreciate the opportunity it has afforded me as a nurse anesthesia student."

"They have always been very pro education here and now they've opened their doors to us and the school to allow us to fulfill the dreams we've always had. And, with the people who are here, we know we are going to get the best education that we can," Braughton concluded.

# YOUR HEALTH MATTERS

ST. JOSEPH'S MERCY HEALTH CENTER FALL 2003

## St. Joseph's Wins HealthGrades 2003 Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence™

In elite company. That's where St. Joseph's Mercy Health Center finds itself following a recent announcement that it has been named a winner of the Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence by HealthGrades, the leading provider of healthcare quality information for both consumers and the healthcare industry.

The 163 winners of the 2003 award, based on analysis of the HealthGrades annual study of 4,864 hospitals, represent the top 3.3 percent of full-service hospitals in the nation.

"First of all, it needs to be made clear that we didn't ask for this review," said Randy Fortner, St. Joseph's Chief Operating Officer. "It's done by a third party and they came to us and informed us that we are in the country's top three and one-half percent when it comes to overall clinical outcomes. Being in the top three to four percent of all hospitals in the country, in terms of total outcomes for patients, is pretty significant."

"We have co-workers who are committed to a vision of constantly improving our performance," Fortner said.

The study to determine HealthGrades 2003 Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence winners is based on a three-year, risk-adjusted analysis of 20 procedures and diagnoses in six clinical specialties - cardiac surgery, cardiology, orthopaedic surgery, neuroscience, and pulmonary and vascular surgery.

"The fact that the measurement for the award is over a three-year period is key," Fortner said. "It says to me that the systems and processes we have in place to care for patients are solid because we maintained them over a period of time. It also indicates that we have a culture that calls us to be consistent and focused on being in line with those processes."

"When you receive an award like this as a hospital overall, it says your performance is more than just a flash in the pan. It says things are sustainable," Fortner added.

HealthGrades statistically collects the individual procedure and diagnosis ratings to create a hospital-wide evaluation of overall clinical quality. Only full-service hospitals that score among the top 20 percent nationwide - less than five percent of the nation's approximate total of 5,000 hospitals - are eligible for the award.

"People will argue about data sources, but the reality is the only common data source across the country that can be utilized to compare outcomes is the MEDPAR/Medicare (information) data base," Fortner said. "That's what was used for the 2003 HealthGrades Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence. The analysis that's done at the MEDPAR/Medicare data base is its foundation."

"It's expected outcomes versus actual outcomes. We have sound processes and skilled, caring co-workers to carry them out, which leads to good outcomes for the patients," Fortner concluded.

  
**ST. JOSEPH'S MERCY HEALTH CENTER**  
300 Werner Street • Hot Springs, Arkansas • saintjosephs.com

### IN THIS ISSUE:

Mercy Center for Natural Health  
Peripheral Vascular Disease  
Project A.I.R. - Helping Those with Asthma

## Mercy Health Foundation to Honor Rosenzweigs

To recognize and acquaint. Those are the two main objectives of the St. Joseph's Mercy Health Foundation's tribute dinner, according to Foundation Board Chairperson Clay Farrar.

"Number one, we want to recognize those who have made significant contributions to health care in our area," Farrar said. "Number two, we want to acquaint people with the Foundation and its purposes."

With that in mind, the Mercy Health Foundation board members are looking forward to honoring the late Joe Rosenzweig, M.D., and his wife, Susi, at the second tribute dinner on November 20. The Mercy Health Foundation honored W. Martin Eisele, M.D., at the first tribute dinner.

"Our foundation is pleased to have the opportunity to honor Susi and, posthumously, Joe," said Lynda Jackson, Foundation Secretary. "We were all deeply saddened by Joe's death in September (2003) and believe this can be an opportunity to both fondly remember Joe and honor Susi. Joe and Susi have always been the ultimate husband and wife team in everything they did. They were always a model of integrity and high ethics. Often Joe and Susi were asked to participate on various community boards and projects, because their participation communicated that the project was a good one."

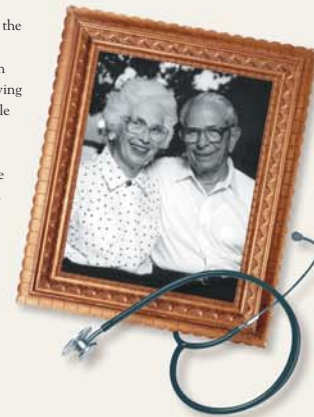
Dr. Rosenzweig was the first board certified pediatrician to practice in Hot Springs. From 1949 until his retirement in 1976, Dr. Rosenzweig served as a pediatrician for thousands of Hot Springs children. For over 10 years, he also traveled to Little Rock weekly to teach as an adjunct Professor of Pediatric Medicine at the University of Arkansas Medical School.

The Rosenzweigs also spent over 45 years actively involved in civic and community affairs aimed at bettering Hot Springs. Most recently, the Rosenzweigs were honored by the creation of the "Dr. Joe and Susi Rosenzweig Fund". The purpose of the fund is to foster inter-faith understanding and the promotion of inter-faith activities in the community. The fund has also sponsored a speaker's program in the community.

Stuart Fleischner, DDS, and his wife, Kay, will serve as chairpersons for the tribute dinner. There will be a 6:30 p.m. reception, followed by a 7:30 p.m. dinner at the Arlington Resort Hotel and Spa.

For information on the Mercy Health Foundation or reservations to the Rosenzweig tribute dinner, please call (501) 622-1123.

The Foundation supports the mission and services of St. Joseph's Mercy Health Center by seeking, receiving and distributing charitable gifts. Such gifts are used to help sustain quality healthcare services to the communities St. Joseph's serves.



## Often Subtle Onset of PVD Can Have Lethal Consequences

The onset of Peripheral Vascular Disease (PVD) is most times subtle. Consequently, those afflicted by the condition have a tendency to dismiss its symptoms.

Those symptoms, however, can lead to potentially lethal consequences.

PVD is a condition in which the arteries that carry the blood to the arms or legs become narrowed or clogged, thus interfering with normal blood flow. The condition sometimes causes pain, but often creates no symptoms at all. "PVD affects about one in 20 people over the age of 50 (10 million in the

United States)," said Vicky Sanders, R.N., Mercy Heart Center Product Line Manager. "If you have been diagnosed with PVD, you are at a much higher risk for heart disease and stroke, yet public awareness regarding diagnosis, treatment and prevention is very low."

"More than half of those diagnosed with PVD experience leg pain, numbness or other symptoms, but many of them dismiss the signs as a normal part of aging and don't seek medical help in the early stages," Sanders added.

Atherosclerosis - often called hardening of the arteries - is a condition in which fatty plaques form on the inside walls of blood vessels and is the most common cause of PVD. Other conditions, such as blood clots, can further restrict blood flow and both veins and arteries may be affected.

"The most common symptom of PVD is painful cramping in the leg or hip, particularly when walking," Sanders said. "This symptom, also known as claudication, occurs when there is not enough blood flowing to the leg muscles during exercise. Often the pain is relieved when the muscles are given a rest."

"Other symptoms may include numbness, tingling or weakness in the extremities, a cooling or color change in the skin of the legs or feet and loss of hair on the legs. Unfortunately, only about half of the people who experience these symptoms have actually been diagnosed with PVD and are seeing a doctor for treatment," Sanders said.

The ankle-brachial index (ABI), a painless exam in which a special stethoscope is used to compare the blood pressure in your feet and arms, is the most common test for PVD. Screenings for PVD include ABI exams and risk-factor assessments.

For more information on PVD, contact the Mercy Heart Center at (501) 622-4000.

### PVD self-test

Are you at risk for PVD? Each "yes" answer to the following list of questions increases your risk level.

- Do you have cardiovascular (heart) problems - heart attack, stroke or high blood pressure?
- Do you have diabetes?
- Do you have a history of diabetes or cardiovascular problems in your immediate (parent, brother or sister) family?
- Do you have aching, cramping or pain in your legs when you walk or exercise, but then the pain goes away when you rest?
- Do you have pain in your toes at night?
- Do you have ulcers or sores on your feet or are your legs slow in healing?
- Do you smoke?
- Have you ever smoked?
- Are you more than 25 pounds overweight?
- Do you eat fried or fatty foods three times a week or more?
- Do you have an inactive lifestyle?

## Heart Center Offers New Drug-Eluting Stent

St. Joseph's Mercy Health Center is always at the forefront when it comes to employing medical advancements.

That trend continued recently when St. Joseph's, rated No. 1 in Arkansas for cardiac services, was one of the state's first hospitals to implant the new Cypher stent, a drug-emitting metal mesh tube approved for the treatment of blocked coronary arteries.

Just days after the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the major healthcare advancement, Mercy Heart Center cardiologists were taking advantage of it with Jeffrey Tauth, M.D., Mercy Heart Center Medical Director, implanting the first of many.

"Dr. Tauth was one of the first in the state to perform the procedure and now we have done approximately 100," said Vicky Sanders, R.N., Mercy Heart Center Product Line Manager. "This new stent can provide new hope for patients and we are pleased to be able to provide this advanced therapy in our community."

Cardiologists have employed bare metal stents for years, inserting them into coronary arteries during angioplasty procedures. They hold the vessels open, but the body recognizes the metal tube as a foreign object and scar tissue eventually forms in and around the metal stent to clog the artery again for 15 to 30 percent of patients. Moreover, the blockage sometimes re-occurs within a year, meaning more angioplasty or bypass surgery.

The Cypher stent, which was developed to prevent that re-blockage problem, is coated with the drug sirolimus. It is slowly released into the vessel lining to prevent scar tissue growth through the openings in the stent mesh.

Results of large-scale studies involving nearly 1,400 patients worldwide show the Cypher stent, manufactured by Johnson & Johnson's Cordis Corporation, reduces the incidence of restenosis (re-blockage) by more than 90 percent over a bare metal stent. Even so, they are not for everyone.

"It's all based on their individual coronary anatomy - lesion length, severity and vessel site," said Tauth. "The cardiologist will determine the best stent for each patient at the time of the angiogram."

For additional information on the Cypher stent, contact the Mercy Heart Center at (501) 622-4000.

## Mercy Center for Natural Health Set to Open in Hot Springs Village

The Sisters of Mercy have acquired quite a reputation. Time and again, they have led the charge in directing St. Joseph's to meet the healthcare needs of Hot Springs. Now, with the opening of the Hot Springs Village-based Mercy Center for Natural Health quickly approaching, it looks as if that reputation will be further enhanced.

"St. Joseph's is always trying to meet the diverse healthcare needs of the community it serves and this is just one more example of that," said Jeanette Herr, Mercy Center for Natural Health office manager. "The opening of this facility is in response to the sincere interest of Hot Springs Village residents in integrative medicine."

"A study revealed that one out of three residents was already involved in receiving alternative medicine services, so the decision was made to go with a medically supervised facility, therefore ensuring optimal treatment," Herr said.

The Mercy Center for Natural Health staff will offer five services - medical diagnosis, chiropractic care, massage therapy, acupuncture and mental health counseling. The initial staff will be comprised of two chiropractors, massage therapists and one acupuncturist.

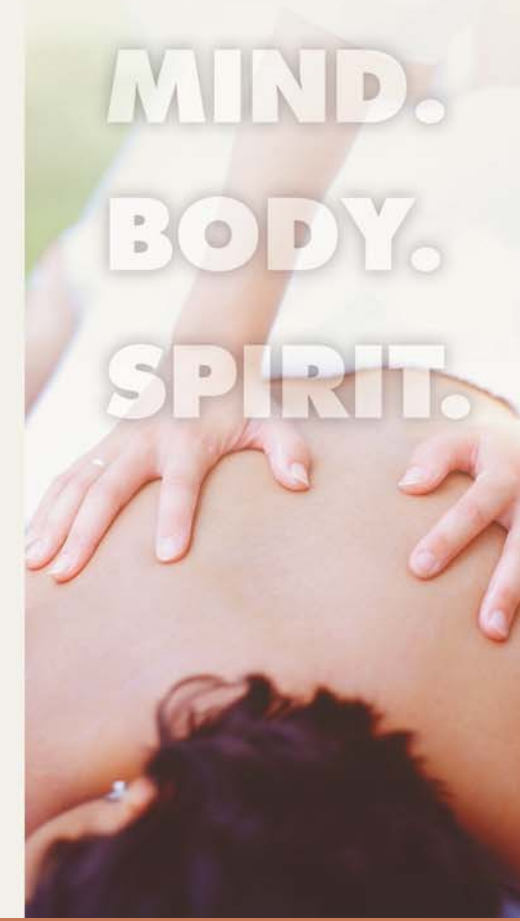
"I am impressed by the exceptional credentials of the professionals who will be on our staff," Herr said. "They are highly trained and already recognized in the area in their respective fields."

The facility will also feature a pair of classrooms where physician seminars on diverse health topics, relaxation methods, yoga and tai chi may be offered.

"The progressive field of integrative medicine is a truly exciting area in medicine," Herr said. "The benefits have been experienced for centuries in countries outside of our own. Institutions such as Harvard Medical School, Sloan Kettering, and M.D. Anderson hospitals have employed these therapies with tremendous success and now St. Joseph's is pleased to be leading the way into this field of medicine in Arkansas."



Mercy Center for Natural Health  
A place for the mind, body and spirit



## Important Numbers From Your Friends at St. Joseph's

Hospital Main Line	501-622-1000
Hot Springs Village Residents	501-922-5451
Patient Rooms	501-622-1(room #)
Linea Hispana	501-622-1054
Business Health	501-525-9675
Class & Event Scheduling	501-622-2330
HSV Health Services Liaison	501-922-5136
Lifeline	501-622-1121
Lifemobile EMS	501-624-5433 or 911
Mercy Breast Center	501-622-4565
Mercy Cancer Center	501-622-2100



Mercy Child Advocacy Center	501-622-2531
Mercy Continence Care	501-622-4505
Mercy Diabetes Center	501-622-4665
Mercy Diagnostic Center (HSV)	501-922-2680
Mercy Extended Care Clinic	501-922-6266
Mercy Health Foundation	501-622-1123
Mercy Heart Center	501-622-4000
Home Health & Hospice	501-318-6800
Mercy Home Medical Equipment	501-622-1143
Mercy Medical Clinic - HSV	501-922-6266
Mercy Pregnancy Care Clinic	501-622-1801
Mercy Senior Care	
Hot Springs Center	501-624-0838
McAuley Center	501-984-5594
Mercy Women's Center	501-622-4500
Mercy Wound Clinic	501-622-2391
Senior Horizons	501-622-1291

