**Free flu vaccine for children**

Skiff Home Care is now offering free flu vaccines for all children between the age of 6 months and 18 years. If you would like your child to receive a flu shot, call 792-5086 to arrange an appointment.

Children are considered a vulnerable population and are likely to spread the flu through close contact at school and day care.

Approximately 190 doses of free flu vaccine for children are available.

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**Skiff Medical Center’s first baby of the year**

The first baby of 2005 at Skiff Medical Center was Cameron James Bulmer, born at 12:41 a.m. on Tuesday, January 4 to Stacy and Shawn Bulmer of Kellogg. Cameron weighed 8 pounds, 5 ounces, and was 21 inches long. He is pictured with his parents, big brother A.J., and big sister Makayla.

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**‘Resolution Solution’ Fitness Frenzy begins Jan. 17**

Do your New Year’s Resolutions include improving your health, losing weight, increasing activity? “Resolution Solution” will help you keep track of the important things you want to do for your health this New Year. Participants will earn points for aerobic exercise, weight loss and healthy eating (fruits, vegetables and dairy). If you are on a Lighten Up Iowa team this will fit right in! Logs will be available beginning Monday, January 10 in the Nutrition Services Office and on the bulletin board outside the cafeteria. Register by calling or e-mailing Deb Nilles (ext. 4341). All participants must be registered to be eligible for prizes.

- **Exercise** – Earn 1 point for every 15 minutes of aerobic exercise performed.
- **Weight Loss** – Earn 1 point for every 1/4 pound of weight lost (and not found). You must weigh-in at the beginning of the program to receive weight loss points. Points will be awarded at the end of the program when you weigh in again.
- **Healthy Diet** – Earn 1 point for every day you eat a combination of 5 servings of fruits and vegetables. One serving is 1/2 cup cooked or 1 cup raw. One additional point can be earned for every day that you consume 3 servings of low fat dairy foods - 5 grams

(Please turn to page 4)

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**Generator test at 2 p.m. today**

In preparation for a major electrical project this weekend, Skiff Medical Center’s emergency generator will be tested at 2 p.m. today (Thursday, Jan. 6). All employees are asked to monitor equipment, lights and outlets in their work areas and immediately report any problems to Facilities Management.

The test will ensure that all critical circuits and equipment have power when the hospital is using generator power.

At 6 a.m. Saturday, a crew from Meisner Electric will switch the hospital to backup generator power in order to replace an outdated, trouble-prone switchgear. The work is expected to conclude at approximately 6 p.m. Sunday, when regular power should be restored.

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Kathy Wilken reception Jan. 20
A farewell reception for Kathy Wilken, RN, will be held from 2-4 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 20 in the Skiff cafeteria. All employees and friends invited to stop by during the reception and wish Kathy well!

Mangrich receives BSN
Congratulations to Veronica Mangrich, RN, who received her BSN from Grand View College in Des Moines.

Skiff birthdays
Gene Williamson Jan. 6
Dennis Wahlert Jan. 6
Linda Kepler Jan. 14
Jennifer Larsen Jan. 14
Diane Larson Jan. 18
Carol Blackwood Jan. 19
Steve Smith Jan. 19
Bill Patton Jan. 21
Melissa Pearson Jan. 22
Janis Free Jan. 23
Susan Carzoli Jan. 24

Skiff Foundation to match disaster donations
The Skiff Foundation has announced that it will match employee donations toward disaster relief efforts in Southeast Asia following the earthquake and tsunami disaster.
If you would like to make a cash donation, the Skiff Foundation will match it (up to a total match of $1,000). The Foundation will send the money to the United Way Southeast Asia Response Fund.
Checks may be made payable to the Skiff Foundation; please note “Southeast Asia Response Fund” on your check.
If you have questions, please contact Foundation Director Bruce Hoffmeier at ext. 4887.

Educational Offerings
• Advanced Fetal Monitoring will be offered on February 3, 2005 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Skiff Inservice Room A. This training will be for OB staff [also open to Nursing Supervisors if they wish to attend].
• Trauma Nurse Core Course (TNCC) Renewal – February 9 from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Inservice Room. This will be a “Come and Go” class. Participants will need to be prepared to complete post-test and station skills upon arrival to class. Participants will not be scheduled into this class. Nursing staff who have been certified in the past will need to check their TNCC card for renewal dates. Contact Lisa Guldberg, RN, in Education Department for the TNCC book.
• Skiff CPR Renewals will be offered in the Inservice Room on the following dates in 2005:
  • January 24
  • April [date to be announced]
  • July [date to be announced]
  • October [date to be announced]
On each day CPR is offered, three two-hour sessions will be held:
  • 8 to 10 a.m.
  • Noon to 2 p.m.
  • 4-6 p.m.
Staff will not be scheduled for CPR training; it will be your responsibility to attend one of the sessions. Please check your CPR cards for your renewal date. Staff will need to come to the renewal sessions prepared. Review material maybe obtained by contacting the Education Department at ext. 4871.
• The Carelearning.com online education is tentatively set to go live on February 21, 2005. Watch future issues of VITAL SIGNS for details.

New Skiff employees
Susan Simpson Admissions
Suzanne O’Roake, CNA Med/Surg
Tracy Korte, OTR/L Occupational Therapist

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Educational Offerings
• Advanced Fetal Monitoring will be offered on February 3, 2005 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Skiff Inservice Room A. This training will be for OB staff [also open to Nursing Supervisors if they wish to attend].
• Trauma Nurse Core Course (TNCC) Renewal – February 9 from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Inservice Room. This will be a “Come and Go” class. Participants will need to be prepared to complete post-test and station skills upon arrival to class. Participants will not be scheduled into this class. Nursing staff who have been certified in the past will need to check their TNCC card for renewal dates. Contact Lisa Guldberg, RN, in Education Department for the TNCC book.
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**Steps to Winter Storm Survival in a Motor Vehicle**

The Iowa State Patrol would like to remind everyone to winterize your vehicle before bad weather hits. Winterizing involves checking the mechanical condition of your vehicle, including the tires, exhaust system, battery, wipers, and all of the lighting equipment.

In conjunction with preparing your vehicle, it is recommended that you assemble a storm survival kit for each vehicle that may be used during the winter months. The Iowa State Patrol recommends that your kit include the following items:

1. Warm clothing – coat, hat, gloves, footwear
2. Blankets or sleeping bag
3. Flashlight
4. First aid kit
5. Red flag or Send Help Sign
6. Sack of sand or kitty litter
7. Booster cables
8. Cell phone
9. High energy food

These are just a few items that may be included in your vehicle. Depending on your driving habits, you may want to have a more extensive winter storm survival kit.

Wintertime in Iowa presents many challenges to the motoring public. The Iowa State Patrol recommends not only vehicle preparation, but also driver preparation. The vast majority of accidents that occur on slick highways and city streets are due to driver error. By following a few key winter driving tips, you may avoid an accident.

Plan ahead – Be aware of weather/surface conditions by listening to weather reports on your local news or by checking our website (www.iowaroadconditions.org). If you are traveling a long distance, please let friends or relatives know what route you are planning to take and when you plan to arrive. Also, let them know your vehicle information; the kind of vehicle, and license plate of the vehicle.

Maintain a safe speed for the conditions – Remember speed limits are set for ideal conditions.

Maintain a safe following distance – Use the two second rule. In stormy, snowy, and icy conditions, increase your following distance. Remember your stopping distance on adverse highway conditions will be many times greater than that of ideal, dry conditions.

Be a good, safe defensive driver – Always wear your safety belt and make sure that all of the occupants in your vehicle, especially children, wear the protection of the safety belt.

We recommend you check on road conditions before you leave home or work. You can either dial 511 within Iowa or 1-800-288-1047 from Iowa and all other states. You can also access a detailed map by visiting our website at www.iowaroadconditions.org. If you are involved in an accident, this State Patrol can be contacted at 800-525-5655 or on a cellular phone by dialing “55 or 911.

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**CareLearning.com will start on Feb. 21**

Starting on February 21, Skiff employees will be able to complete their annual training using the CareLearning.com system.

The CareLearning.com system will replace Terrific Thursday, the annual required inservice for all staff. Instead of spending 4-6 hours at Terrific Thursday, Skiff employees will individually sit down to a computer screen and log on to a web-based training system at www.carelearning.com.

CareLearning.com may be accessed at any personal computer equipped with web access, a sound card and headphones [or speakers]. Your department director will show you which computers in your work area may be used for the training.

Watch future issues of VITAL SIGNS for more details.

**Best wishes**

Our thoughts and prayers are with Laura Essen, COTA, as her father is hospitalized after a serious fall in Wisconsin.

— The Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation staff

**Amahl and the Night Visitors**

Several Skiff employees will performing in “Amahl and the Night Visitors,” a the heartwarming tale of a young boy’s trek to visit the Christ-child. The one-act opera, composed by Gian-Carlo Menotti, appeals to all ages and musical tastes.

Skiff employees in the cast include orchestra leader Suzanne VonSeggern, Pharmacy, violinist Linda Curtis-Stolper, Home Care, and cast members Ann Cutts of Pharmacy and John Easley of Public Relations.

Performances are scheduled for Jan. 6 and 8 at 7:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, Newton, and at 4 p.m. on Jan. 9 at Second Reformed Church in Pella.

Tickets ($8 for adults and $4 for students) are available at Newton Community Theater Box Office, St. Luke Methodist Church, First Presbyterian Church, Mattingly Music & Book Store. Proceeds will benefit Kid Assist of Newton.
Jeff Lemley on leave from military duty

Radiology’s Jeff Lemley visited Skiff Medical Center this week while on leave from his duties as a Military Police officer at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Since May 2004, Staff Sgt. Lemley has helped to guard detainees at the camp. He hopes to finish his tour in April, and return home to Newton.

Lemley said the cards and e-mails from his friends at Skiff help his spirits tremendously. “It’s pretty important to hear from your friends and family down there,” he said.

Lemley has enjoyed his leave with his wife, Cara, and their daughters Daniela, 17, and Jennifer, 14.

Grandma Beth

Congratulations to Beth Fredrickson, RN, on the birth of her grandson, Jackson, on December 26.

Our sympathy

• To Sandy VanZee, RN, and Dr. Teresa Van Zee, on the death of Clint Nikkel, their nephew and cousin.

Lighten Up Iowa teams forming now!

Join your co-workers in the Lighten Up Iowa Program! Put together a team of 2-10 people for friendly team competition to help develop healthier habits. Teams can choose to participate in divisions of weight loss, exercise, or both.

Skiff Medical Center will pay your $10 entry fee and if your team registers by Friday, January 7. The $6 shipping and handling fee for t-shirts will be waived and this program will be totally free to you!

Registration forms are available on the Intranet or by contacting Deb Nilles (ext. 4341). Choose a team captain and team name, fill out the form and return it to Nilles in Nutrition Services.

Each team captain will receive a handbook with great suggestions to help your team stay motivated.

Captain meetings will be held every month [captain checkpoints] to help captains report their teams activity and weight loss.

Look for teams to be posted on the Fitness Frenzy bulletin board outside the cafeteria. Don’t miss out on the fun!

If you need help finding a team, call Nilles at ext. 4341.

Fitness Frenzy (continued from page 1)

or less of fat per serving. Studies show that consuming dairy foods in combination with a reduced-calorie diet will boost your weight loss efforts.

At the end of the program count up your points and get rewarded with these prizes:

150 points – Pedometer OR $15 café coupons
125 points – Cookbook or $10 café coupons
100 points - $7 café coupons
75 points – $5 café coupons

Encourage everyone on your Lighten Up Iowa team to participate and support each other in developing healthy lifestyle habits!
**PM&R staff has Lighten-Up Iowa team for the second year**

In 2004, 10 members of the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation department formed the “Skiffinators” team and calculated their accumulated activity over the five-month period. They finished in the top 10 statewide with approximately 2,500 miles per month.

Team members included: Laura Williamson, PTA, LAT, Cindy Welch, LMT, Marc Vander Velden, PT, Rachel Van Kley, PT, Molly Thompson, PTA, Matt Scotton, PT, Janece Schmitz, PT, Andrea Reser, PT, Robyn Friedman, PT, and Becky Barclift, PT.

**Comments from satisfied Skiff patients**

*These comments were included on recent inpatient satisfaction surveys at Skiff Medical Center:*

- They were all very nice to me. Received good care from knowledgeable staff. Overall a good experience.
- Our experience at Skiff was wonderful. From the doctors to the nurses to the support staff, they were all very kind, competent and attentive to our needs. I appreciated the entire experience! Thank you!
- I want to thank the nurses for all they did for me and my little family. They gave us the best care!!
- The CNA’s were excellent. The privacy code name was an excellent idea.
- The care of those who accompanied the ambulance to her bed (also in emergency room) was nothing but professional and kind. We were very pleased with the quality of food and the kindness and thoughtfulness of those who served it. I think highly of all those in the kitchen. We are happy to have such caring and qualified personnel and hospital services.
- We are very happy with our hospital, physicians, nurses, room care, food, etc. We have nothing but good to say of our stay in the hospital.
- Every nurse was great! Dr. Nieves was great and Dr. Pak was wonderful.
- I have no complaints. I especially appreciated Kathleen’s backrubs.

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**Skiff Medical Center’s mission and values**

**OUR MISSION**

To meet community needs by providing compassionate and personalized health care services.

**OUR SHARED VALUES**

1) **Compassion and Respect** — We provide care and service with compassion, sensitivity and respect for the patients needs, expectations and individual differences.

2) **Dignity** — We value the dignity and worth of each individual we serve and all who devote time, effort and resources to participate in our mission.

3) **Stewardship** — All the resources at our disposal are entrusted to us by the people we serve. We seek to preserve our long heritage of fiscal responsibility through the effective and efficient use of these resources.

4) **Quality** — Quality is the cornerstone of all we do. We strive always to do the right things and do them well.

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**Last baby of the year**

Skiff Medical Center’s last baby of 2004 was Samantha Jocile Smith, daughter of Jessica Versteegh and Jeremy Smith of Kellogg.

Samantha was born at 3:49 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 31. She weighed 8 pounds, 2 ounces, and was 22-1/2 inches.