



Dr. Kious named Huron CAO

A. Gus Kious, MD, is the new chief administrative officer (CAO) at Huron Hospital. He replaces Beverly Lozar who recently accepted the position as CAO at South Pointe Hospital. Prior to his new appointment, Dr. Kious



had served as senior vice president of medical management for the Cleveland Clinic Health System (CCHS) –East since 1996.

“Dr. Kious was selected to lead

Huron Hospital because of his proven leadership skills and his track record of success,” says Thomas A. Selden, CHE, president and chief executive officer, CCHS–East. “His support from the medical staff at Huron, coupled with Dr. Kious’ tremendous motivation to see Huron excel, are keys to its future.”

Prior to joining the organization, Dr. Kious was medical director for Prudential Northern Ohio. He holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of California at Berkeley, and a medical degree from Case Western Reserve University.

He is a board member of the Heights Art Collaborative, the Friends of Cedar Fairmount and the Ashtabula County Medical Center. He was co-chairman of the City of Cleveland Heights Visioning Committee and was an Ohio Award for Excellence Examiner. Dr. Kious is a graduate of the 2000 Leadership Cleveland class. He and his wife, Jan, reside in Cleveland Heights. ■

Three local fire-fighters complete executive program

A. After completing a two-and-a-half-year program, three local fire service executives graduated from the Ohio Fire Executive program. They include Chief Albert Benjamin of the Village of Woodmere Fire Department, Platoon Chief David Skrajner of the Euclid Fire Department and Lieutenant Douglas Stefko of the South Euclid Fire Department.

A total of 21 fire executives from throughout Ohio graduated during a ceremony held at Ohio State University. Over the course of the program, the executives attended 172 classroom hours, wrote eight papers, read seven books and seven articles, presented three 25-minute PowerPoint presentations, gave three impromptu speeches, completed a research project and a paper based on the findings, and prepared organizational evaluations of their home departments.

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Hillcrest Hospital expands to meet community needs Four-story addition to streamline patient flow, help reduce diversions

Hillcrest Hospital’s services just went through the roof – quite literally. With a four-story expansion that officially opened August 23, the hospital now offers expanded care areas and enhanced services to the community. The project adds 80,000 square feet of new space to the hospital.

“I think this is another instance that shows how Hillcrest is proactive in addressing issues,” says Chief Michael Forte of the Mayfield Heights Fire Department. “In this case, they’re trying to ease the diversion issue, which is a county-wide problem. The expansion should definitely facilitate the flow of patients from the emergency department to the hospital proper.”

The new facility includes:

- 103 new patient beds
- 12 additional chemotherapy treatment rooms
- expanded radiation oncology area
- a new entrance and lobby near the parking garage at the hospital’s southwest side
- two new operating rooms
- a state-of-the-art endovascular suite
- stylish, comfortable décor

The additional space in the radiation oncology area accommodates a third linear accelerator that physicians use to precisely target tumors for radiation therapy. Turner Construction built the addition, which was designed by the Cleveland architectural firm of Westlake Reed Leskosky.

“With the addition, we’ll be able to move patients in a more timely manner from the emergency department to hospital beds,” says Peggy McDonald, RN, emergency department director. “This is just one of the successful initiatives we’ve taken to ease diversions, which is a widespread issue.”

According to McDonald, other initiatives taken by the hospital to reduce diversions include:

- reduced laboratory turnaround times
- bedside registration
- a changed approach to diversions, which now encompasses the operations of the entire hospital

“While the addition is not a magic fix that will completely resolve the diversion issue, the expansion project will certainly help,” says Kitty Gabram, RN, EMT-P, EMS manager at Hillcrest. “We’ll continue to strive to improve our efficiency and speed in moving patients



Stylish, comfortable decor welcomes visitors to the renovated waiting area at Hillcrest Hospital’s emergency department.

Proudly showing off Hillcrest Hospital’s newly renovated emergency department (ED) waiting area are (from left) Peggy McDonald, RN, ED director; Sandy Larsen, RN, CEN, EMS/trauma program manager; and Kitty Gabram, RN, EMT-P, EMS manager.

through the ED. We applaud our local EMS squads for doing such a great job of working with us during our construction period.

“Peggy McDonald has been diligent in bringing awareness of the diversion issue to the entire hospital,” she adds. “She has made it a hospital-wide issue, versus just an ED issue. Since 2001, when diversions reached a high,

- a new registration area, which is used when ED beds are full (otherwise, bedside registration is used)

“Since we are remodeling one wing of the hospital at a time, we will not initially have access to all hospital beds at once,” explains McDonald. “There will be a gradual increase in available beds.”

Hillcrest Hospital’s ED is one of the busiest in Northeastern Ohio. Each

year, approximately 45,000 patients take advantage of its adult and pediatric services. Of these patients, about 30% are admitted to hospital beds. Roughly 45% of the patients transported by EMS are admitted.

“Hillcrest has absolutely one of the best, state-of-the-art facilities, and we’re privileged and fortunate to have this hospital in our community,” says Forte. “I’m a big supporter of all they do, and I look forward to continuing our excellent relationship with them. The hospital administration is very receptive to the needs of the community and strives to address those needs for the present as well as for the future.” ■

“This is just one of the successful initiatives we’ve taken to ease diversions, which is a widespread issue.”

– Kitty Gabram, RN, EMT-P, EMS manager

Hillcrest has almost cut its diversion hours in half. We’re proud of the progress we’ve made and are continuing to work at reducing those hours.”

Renovations in the emergency department include:

- a new, redecorated waiting area
- improved triage procedures (the triage nurse, rather than a non-medical employee, is the first person seen by patients)

While going through the program, participants continued to work full time. For more information about the program, including tuition and applications, visit the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association website at www.ohiofirechiefs.com. ■

School of EMS names Cole as manager

E. James Cole, MA, REMT-P, WEMTI, EMSI/T, has assumed leadership of the School of Emergency Medical Services—Cleveland Clinic Health System. He replaces Jim Brookshire, who is now serving as a flight medic in North Carolina. Prior to



assuming this new position, Cole was the school's lead EMS instructor, a position he held since April 2003.

"I'm looking forward to expanding the scope and

services available at the school," Cole says. "If anyone is interested in precepting or instructing, please contact me at 216-692-7851 or at jcole@cchseast.org."

Local paramedic/lawyer writes book on EMS and law

"Since the early '90s, there's been a dramatic increase in the number of lawsuits against EMS personnel," says Victoria Fedor, NREMT-P, Esq. "We wrote a book on the subject in order to serve our peers and inform them on how to prepare for possible involvement in a lawsuit without being intimidated by the system."

Fedor's book, titled *EMS and the Law*, was published under the auspices of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons by Jones and Bartlett Publishers of Boston, Mass. It is coauthored by Jacob Hafter, NREMT-P, MS, Esq., Fedor's colleague.

In describing the book, the publisher writes, "No matter how well-trained or experienced an EMS provider is, legal issues are an ever present concern. *EMS and the Law* is a primer about the American legal system as it applies to EMS providers, offering a basic overview of laws and rights with a detailed description of how they affect EMS."

"Topics covered in the text include duty to partners and patients, ethical responsibilities, patient and provider rights, negligence, processes and procedures, and what to do if you are named in a lawsuit," concludes the description by Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

Fedor began her EMS career in 1986 when she joined a private ambulance company. In 1988, she became a

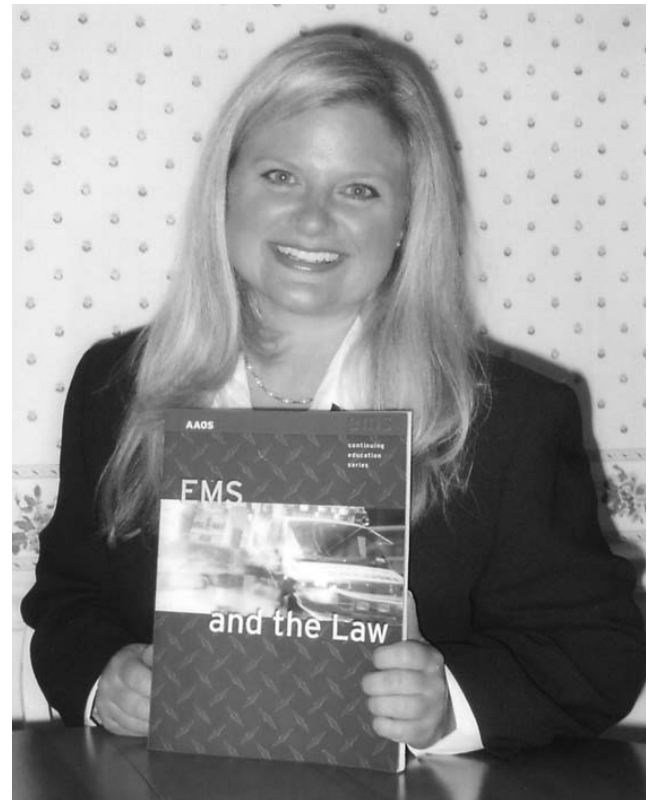
member of the Hiram Fire Department. Her experience also includes 10 years with St. Luke's Solon Emergency Department and a stint with the SeaWorld Health Services Department.

In 1992, Fedor graduated with a law degree from Cleveland Marshall College of Law. She was admitted to the Supreme Court of Ohio in 1992, and the United States District Court, Northern District of Ohio in 1993. She has been able to combine her interests in both law and EMS by past service on the boards of the Cuyahoga County Critical Incident Stress Debriefing team and Geauga EMS.

An EMS instructor for the State of Ohio, Fedor is an ACLS, BCLS and PALS instructor and teaches classes pertaining to legal issues that affect EMS providers. She is a resident of Hudson, and has performed missionary work in Guatemala,

Honduras, Jamaica, Benin, India and Swaziland.

First published in December of 2003, *EMS and the Law* has now been published internationally. Fedor will be the keynote speaker at the Northeast Ohio Instructors Conference in October in Independence. ■



Victoria Fedor, NREMT-P, Esq., displays her book, titled *EMS and the Law*.

EMS get their dibs on ribs at annual burn-off



Taking a breather from eating ribs at the annual EMS Rib Burn-off is Ellita Vedder, a firefighter/paramedic who serves full-time with the Warrensville Heights Fire Department and part-time with Chagrin Falls. She is posing with the dog she trained. Hosted by Euclid, Hillcrest, Huron and South Pointe hospitals, the Rib Burn-off was held at the Metroparks "Rivergrove" and included sports, games, music and delicious rib dinners cooked to perfection on the premises by Geppetto's.



Darryl Lyons, a South Euclid firefighter/paramedic, enjoys the rib burn-off festivities with his fiancée Fanny Wilson.



Alvin L. Evans, a Cleveland EMS paramedic, gets ready to dig into a plate full of ribs with his "significant other," Emily Jones.

South Pointe is first in area to offer new technologies

With the acquisition of two new technologies, South Pointe Hospital is the first community hospital in the area to offer the most advanced techniques for digestive testing and diagnosis.

The first of these technologies, capsule endoscopy, involves a tiny capsule camera, which is swallowed by patients so that physicians can view areas of the body they've never before seen. This painless procedure replaces a difficult, lengthy and often painful procedure that physicians performed in the past. With this tool, experts can easily detect such problems as inflammatory bowel disease, Crohn's disease and bowel tumors.

The second new technology is the Bravo pH Monitoring System, which offers a more patient-friendly, accurate way of evaluating esophageal reflux (heartburn) and gastric esophageal reflux disease (GERD). The system involves a miniature radiotelemetry pH capsule (about the size of a gelcap) that attaches to the wall of the patient's esophagus. The capsule transmits data to a pager-sized receiver attached to a patient's belt.

While wearing the belt, patients can conduct their regular activities and eat a normal diet, while they maintain a diary of their symptoms. When the test is complete, the data is downloaded from the receiver to a computer for interpretation. Several days after the test, the capsule naturally falls away and passes through the digestive tract.

In traditional esophageal pH monitoring, physicians pass a catheter through a patient's nostril down into the esophagus. This test takes approximately 24 hours to complete, during which time the probe hangs out of the patient's nose and wires from the probe attach to a data logger.

For more information, visit the hospital's website at www.southpointehospital.org. ■



This tiny camera is swallowed by patients so that physicians can view areas of the body never before seen. The painless procedure is called capsule endoscopy.

Meet Christi LaPrairie Paramedic/ED nurse captures statewide award

Combining EMS work with nursing has proved to be a magic combination for Christi LaPrairie, RN, who recently received the 2004 Albert E. Dyckes Health Care Worker of the Year award from the Ohio Hospital Association. She was selected from a record 71 hospital nominees from across the State of Ohio.

This prestigious award was created in 1996 to honor a hospital employee who demonstrates leadership, reflects the values and ideals of Ohio's health care facilities, goes above and beyond the call of duty, gives back to the community, and has overcome odds to succeed.

In addition to serving as a staff nurse in South Pointe Hospital's emergency department (ED), LaPrairie is currently a paramedic with the Troy Volunteer Fire Department. For six years, she had been a paramedic with the Burton Volunteer Fire Department, which honored her with the Chief's Award in 1998.

She is an ACLS and BLS instructor, is certified in PALS and PEPP (Pediatric Education for Pre-hospital Providers) and serves as a preceptor for paramedic students, nursing students and new nursing employees at the hospital. She also became certified in the first CCEMTP (Critical Care Emergency Transport Program) offered by Cuyahoga Community College's eastern campus.

"My work as a paramedic has really helped me be a better nurse," says LaPrairie. "Serving in the field gives you added knowledge. I love being out on the road in the community. You're the first help that people see, and they appreciate you. In fact, I think patients' families appreciate medics more because they actually see their efforts.

"Working in the field and working in the hospital are quite different, even though you're providing emergency medical services in both environments," she adds. "As a paramedic, you must function as an efficient technician, without the luxury of backup help or extra equipment at your fingertips. As an ED nurse, you need to have a much more in-depth medical knowledge."

LaPrairie graduated in 1980 from Grand Valley High School, where she was named Female Student Athlete of the Year and was president of National Honor Society. In 1985, she was named Paramedic Student of the Year at Brentwood Hospital.

She became a registered nurse and received an associate degree in allied health, along with her nursing degree, when she graduated cum laude from Lakeland Community College in 1985. Shortly thereafter, she went to work in the ED, while still maintaining her roots in pre-hospital care.

Despite her sometimes challenging childhood, which included growing up with six siblings and four step-brothers and sisters, LaPrairie had the desire to



Christi LaPrairie, RN, at work in South Pointe Hospital's emergency department.

learn and the drive to excel in a career. When she was in ninth grade, she took a CPR class and became interested in emergency care. She was the first in her family to attend college, which she paid for with scholarships and her work as a nurse's aide.

"Christi cares not only for patients at the hospital, but for employees as well," says Andrea Kimball, clinical manager of South Pointe's ED. "Along with another employee, she initiated the Sunshine Fund, which presents flowers to employees experiencing a death in the family, illness or hospitalization. Many

"My work as a paramedic has really helped me be a better nurse. Serving in the field gives you added knowledge. I love being out on the road in the community."

— Christi LaPrairie

happy moments have been created through this innovative program.

"Christi's devotion to quality patient care goes beyond the bedside," she adds. "When Christi encountered a distraught, deaf man who needed special assistance with communication, she helped him by signing simple letters. Through this experience, she recognized a need for a hospital employee who understands sign language. So she learned the language at a local college and is now available to perform that service."

LaPrairie is one of three South Pointe ED nurses trained as a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE). SANE nurses are registered nurses who have advanced education and clinical preparation in forensic examination of sexual assault victims. With this training, nurs-

es can adeptly identify physical trauma, document physical evidence and determine psychological needs.

As chair of the hospital's preceptor committee, LaPrairie plays an important role in education. She created a preceptor handbook to help students through the educational process at the hospital. With the handbook, students can track educational goals and achievements and keep track of completed assignments.

"Christi is eager to learn and the first to volunteer to teach and be involved in quality improvement projects," says Levente Batizy, DO, co-director of emergency medicine. "She is the chairperson for the Delay Team that focuses on identifying ways to improve performance and turnaround times between the laboratory and the ED."

Besides her efforts in the community as a paramedic, LaPrairie assists others through Meals on Wheels, a program that provides hot meals to the elderly and home-bound.

"In the ED, the big challenge for me is constantly working for eight to 12 hours straight," LaPrairie says. "As a medic, you can go back to the fire department and take a break until your next call. As an ED nurse, you have to understand the pathologies and the side effects that patients may experience. You're always assessing and reassessing while providing ongoing care."

LaPrairie resides in Troy Township with her husband Al, who handles communications for the Geauga Sheriff's Department, and their son, Nathan, a senior at Berkshire High School in Burton. ■

Mayfield Heights EMS deliver breech baby

When a Mayfield Heights EMS squad answered a call recently for a woman who was in active labor, they followed protocol and checked to see if the head was crowning. Instead of a head, they saw feet.

"Since this is a very serious emergency medical situation, we use invasive techniques to make sure the baby is delivered safely," says Chief Michael Forte, who was at the scene and assisted in the ambulance. "Although the squad could have simply provided rapid transport, they decided to deliver the baby. This was the right thing to do, and I credit their confidence and skill."

The squad included firefighter/paramedics Dennis Linksy, Chris Martinitis and Matt Hornyak. The baby boy they delivered was premature and weighed less than three pounds. The medics cut the cord, stimulated the infant to start his breathing and gave him oxygen.

"After successfully delivering the baby, the squad sustained the infant's airway and breathing and continually stimulated him," says Forte. "A second squad was called to take care of the mother. When they reached Hillcrest Hospital, a delivery team was waiting at the emergency department door. Once again, the hospital had all their ducks in a row." ■

EMS briefs

ED helps International Children's Games athlete — An Israeli child who was participating in the International Children's Games visited Hillcrest Hospital's pediatric emergency department (ED) with a gastrointestinal problem. The staff called the child's parents in Israel to discuss the situation. When it was all over, the athlete showed appreciation by presenting a flag to the pediatric ED staff.

Four nurses complete MICN course — Four Hillcrest Hospital emergency department nurses recently completed the Mobile Intensive Care Nursing (MICN) course. They include Erin Kampman, RN; Annette DiLalla, RN; Kristine Bord, RN, and Melissa Myerholtz, RN. ■

Save the date: Annual trauma symposium set for Nov. 6th

Plan to attend Huron Hospital's annual trauma symposium on November 6 at the Intercontinental Hotel and Conference Center on Euclid Avenue in Cleveland. The hospital is partnering with Cleveland EMS to present a special EMS-related continuing educational track that will be moderated by J. Eckart, Jr., commissioner of EMS for the City of Cleveland. Speakers will include:

– Dr. Kenneth Mattox of Houston (keynote speaker)

– Dr. Peter Rhee, director, Navy Trauma Training Center

– Dr. Michael Allswede, a nationally known expert on terrorism, who will discuss "Strategic Medical Intelligence: The Critical Connections between Medicine, Public Health and the FBI"

– E. James Cole, MA, REMT-P, WEMTI, EMSI/T, program manager of the School of EMS—Cleveland Clinic Health System, presenting "X-treme EMS: Beyond the Norm in EMS"

EMS continuing education will be granted for the entire conference. For more information or to request a brochure, call the seminar coordinator, Angela Ketron, at 216-761-7057. ■

Euclid Fire hosts 'Prom Promise'

Thankfully, the car crash at Euclid High School was just a fake. Two smashed up cars, provided by Action Auto, held half a dozen teenagers whose "injuries" ranged from lethal to just plain bloody. Dubbed "Prom Promise," the event was hosted by the City of Euclid Fire Department in an attempt to convince students to promise not to drink and drive.

"A lot of kids had stunned looks on their faces," says Captain Frank Prijatel, the training officer who coordinated the event for the fire department. "By the looks on their faces, you could tell that many of the kids definitely got a message from the event. I think it's something we should do every year."

In addition to the 10 firefighters and EMS personnel who were involved in Prom Promise, four to five police officers came to "investigate" the accident and perform a mock sobriety test at the scene. To add to the realism, fire department members mouled the teens who served as actors. The firefighters also extricated "victims" from the cars and laid out "dead" ones in body bags.

Held a week before prom, the event was intended to prevent car accidents caused by drinking or other risky behavior. All students in 11th and 12th grades (about 600 total) attended. LifeFlight was scheduled to pick up one or two of the "victims," but had to cancel last minute to answer an actual call.

"Since my own kids are aged 14-1/2, 19 and 22, I can really relate to this whole scenario and what we're trying to impress upon teenagers," says Prijatel. "It's a very important message, and we feel that Prom Promise helps make an impression on young people." ■

11 graduate from School of EMS

The School of EMS, part of the Cleveland Clinic Health System, recently graduated 11 students from its evening paramedic program. They include James Bucks, Jim Hilzley, Justin Gvora, Jansen Musselman, Frank Guarino, and Cody Klein and (standing, from left) Pat Federico, Al Kearns, Ryan Slaybaugh, Russ Leonardi, and Joe Wilkes. The highest skills average was achieved by Frank Guarino, and the highest academic average was obtained by Russ Leonardi. Sixteen new paramedic students are now enrolled in the next class. For more information on programs offered by the School of EMS, visit the school's website at <http://www.schoolofems.org/>. ■

EMS Calendar

September 28

7:30 p.m.

"EMS in a Nutshell" presented by Vickie Griffin. Sagamore Hills Medical Center.

October 6

7 p.m.

Program to be announced. South Pointe Hospital.

October 20

7:30 p.m.

"Infection control." Speaker to be announced. CEUs awarded. Euclid Hospital, Waltz Auditorium.

October 26

7:30 p.m.

Program to be announced. Sagamore Hills Medical Center.

November 3

7 p.m.

Program to be announced. South Pointe Hospital.

November 10

7 p.m.

Continuing medical education. Program and topic to be announced. Hillcrest Hospital, Ross Auditorium.

December 1

7 p.m.

Presentation by Arnold Feltoon, M.D. Topic to be announced. South Pointe Hospital.

Got something to say?

We want to hear from you. As an EMS professional, you're this newsletter's best source of information. Story ideas include interesting squad runs, job tips and unusual hobbies or second jobs.

We're also interested in receiving letters to the editor. This is your chance to make suggestions, compliment coworkers or get something off your chest. So... contact your editor, Anne Gallagher, at 330-656-3068. ■

Siren is produced by the marketing department in cooperation with its four EMS departments. If you have a newsworthy story to share or would like to comment on the newsletter, please call Anne Gallagher at 330/656-3068 or the marketing department at 440/684-8751.

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