



**Flu vaccine
is available
at health dept.**
page 14B

**Winn closing in
on baby-friendly
designation**
page 15B



livingwell

Sheriff accepts award for blood-drive victory

Sikes cites group effort as key to success
in third round of ‘Battle of the Badges’

By JEREMY MCABEE
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Liberty County Sheriff Steve Sikes accepted an award Thursday for his office’s victory in the third round of the Battle of the Badges blood drive, which took place in August at the district attorney’s office in Hinesville.

“This award really needs to go to all of us in (the sheriff’s office),” Sikes said. “Every time we have a blood drive, everybody wants to try to do their part, and I really appreciate that.”

Daniel Hines, a donor recruiter for the American Red Cross’ coastal district, presented the award to Sikes.

Liberty County human-resources specialist Laura Troutman said she was very pleased with the 43 pints of blood collected at the drive, which was well above the 32-pint goal. Hines said that those 43 units were enough to potentially help 130 patients in need of blood.

Hines stressed the need for blood donations year-round.

“It’s always just as important to donate all the time,” he said. “The Red Cross is more of a proac-

tive blood bank, so we like to have a supply on hand, because we’re a national blood-banking system. If they need blood in another region, we can ship it from our region to their region. So, it’s good to always have a standing inventory.”

Hines also explained that the 45-day shelf life of red blood cells necessitates a constant need for donations. He said that donors can make a whole-blood donation every 56 days.

Hines also expressed the need for minorities to donate blood as often as possible.

“There are certain antibodies that are specific to certain ethnic groups that could help an infant, could help a toddler,” he said. “We always encourage people, especially minorities, to give.”

Troutman asked Hines for tips for people who may have been turned away because of low iron levels.

“Lay off the caffeine,” Hines replied, explaining that even if a person is getting adequate iron in his or her diet, too much caffeine may inhibit the body from absorbing the iron. He also said that the Red Cross’ website, redcrossblood.org, contained more information regarding nutrition facts and methods for increasing iron intake.

The fourth and final round of the Battle of the Badges is scheduled for Dec. 19 at the Hinesville City Hall. The county’s combined fire services are ahead in the overall standings, with 45 votes. The sheriff’s office is in a close second, however, with 43 votes. Emergency medical services and the police force are vying for third place, with 25 and 24 votes, respectively.



Top: American Red Cross donor recruiter Daniel Hines presents Liberty County Sheriff Steve Sikes with an award for his office’s victory in the third round of the Battle of the Badges blood drive. Middle: Liberty County residents wait to give blood outside the Red Cross’ mobile blood bank during the second round of the Battle of the Badges blood drive, held in May. Above: Liberty County Sheriff’s Deputy Vernecia Mells stands outside the mobile blood bank during one of the drives. The fourth and final round of the Battle of the Badges is scheduled for Dec. 19 at Hinesville City Hall.

Photos provided



Photos provided

CRI Life Enhancement Program graduates and their family members, along with core-team members, spend time together at reunions. They laugh and play and discuss what they can do when they experience challenges to their goals to be healthy and happy every day.

Friends are good medicine

By JENNIFER CABE
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At Canyon Ranch Institute, a short quote on the wall of the offices serves as a call to action. One of the CRI team members heard it at a reunion many years ago, and it stuck with us: “Friends are medicine.”

The 55-year-old woman who said these words — we’ll call her Maria — went on to explain that because of her experiences with the Canyon Ranch Institute Life Enhancement Program with Urban Health Plan in the South Bronx, she had changed her life for the better. One of the best parts of her life was that she now regarded friendships as key to her well-being.

This approach was new to Maria, who previously had thought of medicine — as you may think of it right now — as something you put inside your body to help you manage a short-term health problem such as a headache or a chronic illness such as diabetes or high blood pressure.

Maria shared her happy philosophy at a 2009 reunion of the participants in the South Bronx’s CRI Life Enhancement Program.

The program has a long track record for successfully helping people in low-income areas become healthier.

Canyon Ranch Institute is led by top scientists — including two U.S. surgeons general — and emphasizes measuring health changes. Those measures include markers that can help indicate whether a person is at a high risk for diseases and problems like a heart attack or diabetes.

Markers include blood pressure, lipid profiles, body weight and ability to exercise for certain periods of time.

The improvements that I hear about the most from program participants, however, aren’t measured in numbers on a chart or on a bathroom scale.

Graduates talk about



At the CRI Life Enhancement Program reunion, Savannah civic leader Charles H. Morris encourages graduates to stick with their new, healthier lifestyles and talks about the friendships that help motivate him to be healthy.

feeling connected to a community or finding a focus outside themselves. That feeling of being someone who matters happens when people experience — sometimes for the first time in their lives — what it is like to have friends.

True friendship often is described as what it feels like to be able to balance helping and being helped by another person or people.

Help and support from friends come in many forms: a hug when we’re feeling lonely, a celebratory moment when we’ve succeeded at a goal or a smile of recognition when a friend finally is able to do something that wasn’t easy and also was worth succeeding at — whether it’s a two-mile walk or being able to pay the rent on time for a whole year.

The program in Savannah is offered to patients of Curtis V. Cooper Primary Health Care Inc. through the CRISP partnership between Canyon Ranch Institute and Connect Savannah and Charles H. and Rosalie Morris. Recently, the first group of Savannah’s CRI Life Enhancement Program graduates gathered at the Charles H. Morris Center for a reunion.

Graduates have been through a life-changing experience together, which

included learning how to exercise, losing weight, changing how they eat (a little less fat, a little more vegetables), discovering yoga and other relaxation techniques and so much more.

Across all of the places where people have graduated from the program, reunions like this one in Savannah are happening — and for good reason.

The reunions are an important part of helping graduates maintain their healthy choices and changes forever.

Cabe is the executive director and a board member of Canyon Ranch Institute.

Liberty County Health Department now offering flu vaccine

Vaccinations are recommended for people 6 months and older

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER
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The Liberty County Health Department now has flu vaccines available through injection and nasal spray for \$28.

A high-dose flu vaccine also is being offered for people 65 and older, and it is designed to provide the best protection for that age group. The high-dose vaccine will be \$45 per dose. The cost of the flu vaccine is covered under both Medicare and Medicaid.

Getting vaccinated against the flu is recommended for everyone 6 months and older. Neither the flu shot nor the nasal spray can cause the flu, officials say.

The shot is approved for use in healthy people 6 months and older, people with chronic medical conditions and pregnant



Stock image

women.

The nasal spray is approved for use in healthy people 2 to 49 years old who are not pregnant.

The flu virus is easily spread through coughs and sneezes as well as by touching something with the virus on it and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

That’s why good health habits also are important, including staying home when you’re sick; avoiding

close contact with people who are sick; coughing or sneezing into your elbow and not your hand; washing your hands often with soap and water; and avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

For more information, call the health department at 876-2173 or go to www.gachd.org/liberty and click on the “Flu Information” link under Liberty County Health Department Information.



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NUTRITIONAL ANALYSIS

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Health system is pretty in pink

Several events planned in region to observe Breast Cancer Awareness Month

SPECIAL TO THE COURIER
editor@coastalcourier.com

Pink ribbons, pink flags, Pink Out Friday. The Southeast Georgia Health System is pretty in pink this October in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. In addition, a variety of community activities and fundraisers are planned.

Throughout October, the health system will be decorated with large pink ribbons in the lobbies of the Brunswick and Camden campuses and the senior-care centers. Pink flags will hang from lampposts, and the front-entrance fountains will bubble pink. Nursing teams will wear pink gloves, surgical teams will wear pink surgical caps and the cafeterias will serve pink desserts.

ARTrageous Bras exhibit and fundraising event

The ARTrageous Bras exhibit will be on display at the Horton Gallery on the Brunswick campus and the Camden campus art gallery through Oct. 31.

This fundraising event includes an opportunity for the community to cast \$1 votes for their favorite uniquely decorated bras.

The silent and live auctions will be from 6-7:30 p.m. Nov. 7 at the historic Ritz Theatre in downtown Brunswick, where light hors d'oeuvres will be served. Proceeds from the event benefit the health system's cancer care programs.

Ribbons of Hope

Another health system fundraiser open to the com-

munity is the pink paper Ribbons of Hope. People can purchase pink ribbons in honor or memory of loved ones affected by breast cancer for \$1.

The goal is to decorate hallways throughout the Brunswick and Camden hospitals. Similar to the ARTrageous Bras, proceeds from the sales benefit the cancer care programs.

Julie Grimm quilt

The fanciful Julie Grimm quilt created from Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure and American Cancer Society Relay For Life official T-shirts will be displayed in the Camden campus lobby today and then transferred for display on the Brunswick campus Oct. 16-31.

Pink Friday Games

Pink Friday Games will take place at football games in October at Brunswick High School, Camden County High School, Frederica Academy and Glynn Academy and the volleyball game at the College of Coastal Georgia.

The health system will provide a pink-ribbon image on the field, wristbands for players and pink poms for cheerleaders. Health system team members will distribute breast cancer awareness materials, and athletic trainers will wear pink polo shirts.

Community lectures

Medical oncologist Abraham Cheong, M.D., will present "Breast Cancer Awareness" from noon-1 p.m. Thursday at Velocity

Health and Fitness, 1520 W. Orange St. in Jesup.

Meanwhile, radiation oncologist Bruce Tripp, M.D., will present "Genetic Testing and Links to Breast Cancer" from noon-1 p.m. Tuesday in the cafeteria conference room of the health system's Camden campus, 2000 Dan Proctor Drive in St. Marys.

Additionally, Lesli G. McQuigg, WHNP-BC, ANP-BC, will present "Screening Recommendations and Genetic Testing" from noon-1 p.m. Oct. 29 at the Golden Isles YMCA in Brunswick.

Make breast care a routine for life

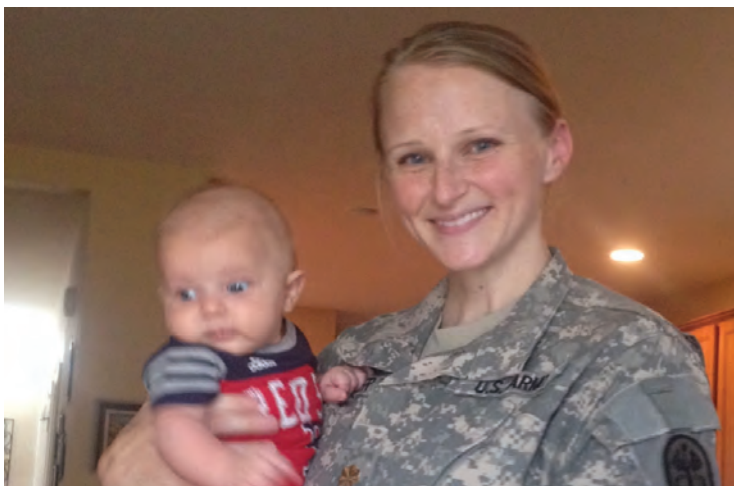
Patients receiving mammograms in October will receive a breast cancer awareness gift that includes a cup, calendar, nail file and breast self-exam card. Those who complete the health system's breast-health quiz will be entered in a drawing to win a gift bag at the end of the month.

YMCA goes pink

The Golden Isles YMCA will be decorated in pink this month. The Southeast Georgia Health System will provide breast-care educational materials for the YMCA, and the Wellness on Wheels mobile-health vehicle will be present Oct. 27 for mammograms. Call 912-466-5234 to schedule a mammogram appointment.

More information

To reserve a seat for lectures or for more information about the health system's breast cancer awareness activities, call 912-466-5770.



Dr. Maj. Amber McCusker, shown here with her 2-month-old son, Thomas, is one of many physicians helping Winn Army Community Hospital work toward a baby-friendly designation.

Photo provided

Winn hospital working toward baby-friendly designation

By DR. MAJ. AMBER MCCUSKER

Winn Army Community Hospital

Fort Stewart's Winn Army Community Hospital is on its way to achieving a coveted baby-friendly designation. The Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative, a global program launched in 1991, encourages hospitals to offer the best care for new families and encourage breast-feeding. To achieve the program's baby-friendly designation, hospitals must successfully implement the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding and comply with the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.

In short, the process involves policy changes, extensive training and skill building among all levels of staff in every area of the hospital, not just in the labor and delivery area and the mother-baby unit. WACH's Baby Friendly Task Force has been working toward achieving this goal since March 2013.

What this means for the young families at Fort Stewart:

- Families will be receiving dedicated, professional and exceptional care designed to enhance and promote breast-feeding and mother/baby bonding from day one.
- The hospital will promote the first hour of uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact.
- Breast-feeding immediately after delivery will be a priority.
- The one hour of skin-to-skin contact and immediate breast-feeding only will be interrupted if there is a medical concern with the mother or baby.

- Newborn babies will not be taken out of the mother's room unless absolutely necessary as all of their care will be provided at the mother's bedside.

- Breast-feeding also will be encouraged and supported in other areas of the hospital, including the adult and pediatric wards in addition to all satellite clinics.


- All staff within the hospital and its clinics, from the nutritionist to the nursing staff and the hospital providers, will be trained in educating patients and encouraging bonding and breast-feeding.

While all pregnant women will receive education about the benefits that breast-feeding provides for mothers and babies, they will be encouraged to make informed decisions about infant feeding. They will be given support and education about the feeding method they choose, whether it is breast-feeding or formula feeding.

The Baby Friendly Task Force is headed by lactation consultant Kris Nilson. WACH has completed the first three of four stages of this designation and is prepared to enter the final stage, with the final designation expected in mid-2015.

WACH will be among the first hospitals in Georgia and among the first Army medical facilities to achieve the baby-friendly designation, and so far it is the only hospital in the Savannah area to do so.

The baby-friendly designation comes with on-site evaluations and rigorous inspections by an internationally recognized committee, Baby Friendly U.S.A., to ensure compliance.



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