

## A LIFE Changing Experience

*One member learns firsthand why LIFE Fitness and Rehabilitation offers a range of medical services like no other fitness center in the area.*

**A**ugust 15, 2002, started out as any other day for 76-year-old Bobby Georgiou of Brick, until a series of events changed his life forever.

On this particular day, Bobby and his companion, Magdalini, went to work out at LIFE Fitness and Rehabilitation at Medical Center of

Ocean County, where they are both members. Bobby's physician, James Marlys, M.D., referred him to LIFE after his allergies prevented him from exercising outside. "Joining LIFE gave me the option to get the exercise I need without letting the weather or any other outside factors stop me," says Bobby.

As part of his routine, Bobby had his blood pressure taken before he began his workout. This service is available to all members. "I was on the step machine about eight minutes into my workout, and I started sweating profusely," recalls Bobby. "I moved over to the bicycle and within minutes I felt a terrible pain in the upper part of my stomach that then traveled up to my chest." Magdalini immediately called out to the fitness aide who, in turn, alerted the cardiac rehab nurse, Judy Cavanaugh, LPN.

### FREE TWO WEEK PASS!

Bring this page to any LIFE Fitness and Rehabilitation Center and receive a **FREE two-week guest pass.**

*Offer limited to one pass per person, new members only. Good through April 30, 2003. Medical clearance may be required.*

### Help in a Matter of Minutes

While Judy took Bobby's blood pressure and checked his vitals, Ellen Witham, R.N., hooked him up to a cardiac heart monitor. They immediately transported him to Medical Center of Ocean County's Emergency Department to be evaluated by a physician. "One of the advantages of being a member of our fitness center is that we have registered nurses, registered respiratory therapists, LPNs, and exercise physiologists on staff," says Cindy Feeney, RRT, supervisor of Cardio-Pulmonary Rehab.

In the Emergency Room, Cardiologist Ahmad Salloum, M.D., evaluated Bobby. "I treated him promptly with thrombolytic medications, and admitted him to the Intensive Care Unit." *Continued on page 14*

Photo: Tom Van Dyke

**Bobby Georgiou of Brick (shown here with his companion, Magdalini, Judy Cavanaugh, LPN, Cindy Feeney, RRT, and Ellen Witham, R.N.) is grateful for the life-saving response of the LIFE Fitness and Rehabilitation staff.**



This free community bi-monthly magazine is prepared by the Communications Team of Meridian Health System. Please call 1-800-560-9990 with any questions or comments. Inquiries or ideas can also be addressed in writing to:

**Chrisie Scott** Editor  
Meridian Health System  
1350 Campus Parkway  
Neptune, NJ 07753

**Gordon N. Litwin, Esq.** Chairman

**John K. Lloyd, FACHE** President

**Guy J. Miller** Vice President, Corporate  
Communications and Marketing

**Chrisie Scott** Director of Communications

**Christine Burke** Director of Public Affairs

**Felice Mikelberg** Publications Coordinator

*Meridian HealthViews™ and Health Lineup™ are designed by Creative Strategy Group, Inc., prepress by Innovation Printing & Lithography, PA and printed by Martin Printing Inc., CT*  
© 2003 Meridian Health System.

*The material provided in this newsletter is intended to be used as general information only and should not replace the advice of your physician. Always consult your physician for individual care.*

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Meridian  
Health System

Visit us on the Web at [www.meridianhealth.com](http://www.meridianhealth.com)

# Meridian HealthViews™

March/April 2003 • Vol. 7, No. 2

JERSEY SHORE  
MEDICAL CENTER  
1945 State Route 33, Neptune

MEDICAL CENTER  
OF OCEAN COUNTY  
425 Jack Martin Boulevard, Brick

RIVERVIEW  
MEDICAL CENTER  
1 Riverview Plaza, Red Bank



## New Solutions for Fibroids

*Less invasive procedure  
provides alternative  
for women facing  
hysterectomies. Page 2*

### Inside

- 3 Giving the Gift of Life
- 7 PET Detects Cancer Quickly
- 10 Easing Hernia Discomfort

  
**Meridian  
Health System**  
[www.meridianhealth.com](http://www.meridianhealth.com)

## A Fight Against Fibroids

*Riverview Medical Center patient decides on minimally invasive procedure to shrink her fibroid tumor while saving her uterus.*

"I knew there had to be another option besides having a hysterectomy," says Ann Moyle, 41, of Freehold. "I was born with my uterus, and I wanted to keep it." Ann was diagnosed with a uterine fibroid about one year ago, and doctors said they wanted to watch it before making any medical decisions. Over the year, the fibroid grew at a rapid speed, and by her next gynecological visit, the fibroid was the same size as a five-month pregnancy.

During that year, Ann experienced much discomfort from her fibroid. "I always had a feeling of fullness," says Ann. "I also had to go to the bathroom a lot and take naps because I was so tired. It was just so uncomfortable."

Many women like Ann suffer from uterine fibroids — the most common tumors of the female genital tract — and until recently, many of these women had to have a hysterectomy, myomectomy, or other surgical procedure to remove the fibroids from their uterus. But today, interventional radiology allows trained doctors to perform minimally invasive procedures to help women.

### Small Incisions, Huge Benefits

Interventional radiology is a rapidly growing area of medicine in which radiologists use x-rays, ultrasounds, and other medical diagnostic imaging equipment to insert catheters (small tubes) through blood vessels or other pathways in the body to treat diseases and medical conditions through the skin.

Interventional radiologists can perform many procedures including angiography, balloon angioplasty, embolization, fallopian tube catheterization, and stenting, which,

along with the advances in medicine, can replace open surgical procedures. In some cases where the disease or condition is too far advanced, surgery may be the patient's only option.

### The Right Choice for Ann

Ann discussed many treatment options with her doctors, including *uterine fibroid embolization*. During this procedure, doctors insert a catheter through a small incision and steer the catheter through the femoral artery to the uterus, using x-ray imaging to guide the progress. According to Ann, "Once I learned what interventional radiology was and the options I had, I knew this was the right choice for me."

Pranav Shah, M.D., an interventional radiologist affiliated with Riverview Medical Center, says, "This procedure has allowed us to successfully treat the pain and bleeding associated with uterine fibroids greater than 90 percent of the time without having to perform a hysterectomy or myomectomy. In addition, this procedure is much less painful for women."

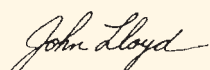
Allowing women to keep their uterus is one major advantage of uterine fibroid embolization; however, there are many other advantages for

### Message to the Community

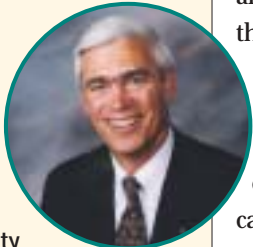
For the last couple of years, many of us in the Meridian family have been thinking about commitments to the community and to the nearly 10,000 individuals who provide care at our facilities. We've asked ourselves, "Are we creating value, good will, and loyalty for our patients?" "Have we become an employer of choice and a 'magnet' for nurses, physicians, and caregivers?" "Are we delivering quality care and extraordinary service?" All of these challenges require consistency and focus. We may be in the "health care business," but we are also in the business of "creating and maintaining lasting relationships."

In the coming months, we will strengthen our Meridian brand and change some of the ways we interact and promote ourselves in the community. We view this as a natural evolution of our health care system and an improvement in our communications with our customers. As you and your family continue to be empowered to make your own health choices, it's up to us, your health care provider, to listen to and meet your expectations.

Sincerely,



John K. Lloyd, FACHE  
President, Meridian Health System



School teacher Ann Moyle, of Freehold, didn't have to stay out of work long after having a fibroid tumor successfully minimized at Riverview Medical Center.



interventional radiology procedures including increased patient comfort. Dr. Shah says most procedures are performed on an outpatient basis or only require an overnight hospital stay. General anesthesia is not usually required, pain and recovery time are often significantly reduced, and the procedures leave only minimal scarring.

"I'm a school teacher, and I was worried about losing a lot of time at work," says Ann, who teaches computer classes to fourth, fifth, and sixth graders at Lafayette Mills School in Manalapan. "But I only needed to take off a few days from school. If I'd had a hysterectomy, I would have had to take off six weeks."

#### More Comfort, Better Results

Interventional radiology has gained more popularity over the past few years, and according to The Society of Interventional Radiology, there has been a steady increase in the number of those receiving interventional radiology procedures — more than 3,600 patients worldwide in 2001 alone. Most important, interventional radiology has allowed patients to have minimally invasive procedures performed where surgery was once required.

"I can't believe the difference in my discomfort since I had the procedure — I feel 100 percent better," says Ann. "I would suggest women check all their options before they make any decisions. And we need to be educated about all the options we have. I know this was the right decision for me, and I am so happy with the results. I got to keep my uterus."

 Beth Reiprich

#### Meridian Radiology Services

Jersey Shore Medical Center	732-776-4113
Medical Center of Ocean County	732-836-4046
Riverview Medical Center	732-530-2304

## Pay it Forward

*Two strangers, two kidneys, two operations, and an inspiring story of love and sacrifice.*

**T**he day back in August 2000 started as any other for Kathleen Strittmatter, 35, of Brick. Waking up with swollen ankles, Kathleen decided to see her podiatrist. He immediately ordered several blood tests to find the cause of her unusual symptoms. The tests and a visit to a specialist revealed that Kathleen was in full renal (kidney) failure. She would require dialysis treatments immediately.

"I had never been sick a day in my life," says Kathleen. "So, rushing to see a specialist, discovering my kidneys were shutting down, and being told I needed dialysis all in the same day was overwhelming."

Believing dialysis would offer only a temporary solution, Kathleen began exploring the possibility of a kidney transplant as a more permanent treatment option. "My whole family was tested to see if anyone was a good match," says Kathleen. "My husband, Mark, was a close match and we were all ready to go, until my sister proved to be a nearly identical match and was willing to donate one of her kidneys."

#### A Stranger Comes to the Rescue

As it turns out, it was not her sister's kidney that she received after all. "One night, right before the transplant surgery, a hospital in Baltimore called explaining that they were receiving a kidney from California, and I was the closest match," recalls Kathleen. "They asked if I wanted it. I was absolutely shocked. I called my dialysis nurse for advice, and she said, 'Kathleen, hang up the phone, and pack a bag.'"

By that night, Kathleen was in Baltimore being prepped for surgery, and was home a few weeks later. As part of a normal transplant surgery follow up, Kathleen and Mark would make the drive to Baltimore once a



Mark and Kathleen Strittmatter of Brick are grateful for the kidney that Kathleen received and for the gift of life they were able to pass on to a new friend.

week for checkups. But their story doesn't end here.

#### Passing On the Gift of Life

During one visit to Baltimore, the Strittmatters met a woman from North Carolina whose 38-year-old son, Keith, was undergoing dialysis treatments while awaiting a kidney donor. They had been on the transplant list for a long time and no one had been able to match his type O blood.

Mark, whose blood was also type O, said, "Well, we can take care of this

*Continued on page 5*

#### Organ Donation & Transplant Support Group

Meridian Health Line 1-800-560-9990

## Tender Loving Care, Three Days A Week

*Patients with kidney failure find caring, education, and support at Meridian's dialysis centers.*

**W**ith a bright smile, Mona Hudson, 51, of Lakewood, a retired Air Force secretary and grandmother of two, enters the Dialysis Unit at Medical Center of Ocean County. Known around the unit as "Queen Victoria," Mona says her good mornings and catches up with her fellow patients before settling in for her four-and-a-half-hour dialysis treatment.



to the patient. Most dialysis patients require the four- to five-hour treatments three times a week. Mona is one of the 217,000 people in the United States living with kidney failure who receive ongoing dialysis and continue to live full and active lives.

"Dialysis treatments, while routine, are not something to take lightly," says Barbara Stewart, R.N., nurse manager of Dialysis at Medical Center of Ocean County. "They are medical procedures, and the nurses, technicians, and dietitians here are all specially trained in dialysis treatments. We understand the difficulties and challenges our patients face, and we are here to help them in every way we can."

### Getting Used to the Routine

"Coming here three days a week, you really get to know all the patients and staff and build relationships, which is very nice," says Mona. "The dialysis staff are so knowledgeable and very supportive. I have been to other dialysis units, and those are the times when I remember how great the staff is here, and know I'd better get home to my unit in Brick fast."

### A Learning Process

Tony Fusco, 48, of Matawan, knows he is going to get a lot more than just a treatment when he goes to the Dialysis Unit at Riverview Medical Center. "I've had dialysis treatments for five years, and there is always something new to learn," says Tony. "The dialysis staff make education a major part of your care. They take the time to go over everything you need to know, especially nutrition."

Dialysis patients routinely learn a lot about nutritional guidelines, which can directly impact the success of the treatments. "Watching your diet is a really hard part for me — especially around the holidays," says Tony. "But my family is very supportive and keeps a close eye on me. And when I am in here, the Riverview staff teach me a lot and take care of me."

Tony says that it's very hard for people to understand how dialysis completely impacts a person's life. "For example, if you're on vacation, you still need to go to dialysis, which is a major commitment," he says.

## Expanded Hours and Convenience at Riverview Dialysis

Beginning this summer, Riverview Medical Center's dialysis hours will be extended to 11:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. And in 2004, as part of "A New View of Riverview" expansion and renovation project, Dialysis will be relocated to a new unit on the first floor of Riverview's Blaisdell wing.

"The new developments are all about making treatments easier and more convenient for our patients," says Annette Case, R.N., nurse manager of Dialysis at Riverview. "The additional hours will provide our patients with a lot more flexibility to arrange their weekly schedules, and the expanded unit will allow us to provide dedicated treatment space for outpatients in a more convenient location."

### Veteran Patient Helps Others

Sometimes a chronic health condition changes people in ways they never imagined. Since first receiving dialysis treatment 25 years ago, Carole Hernandez of Howell, is no longer just a dialysis patient. Today, she is an advocate and activist. "Over the many years I have spent as a dialysis patient, I have learned the importance of taking an active role in my care," says

Lakewood resident Mona Hudson shares her sense of humor with her fellow patients and hospital staff while undergoing dialysis treatment three days a week.

Photo: Tom Van Dyke

"Oh, we have a good time here," says Mona. "We joke with each other and sometimes we laugh so hard, it hurts. But you know you have only two choices here — you can laugh, have fun, and make the best of it, or sulk and feel sorry for yourself. I would rather have fun."

### This Procedure Saves Lives

Dialysis is an ongoing treatment needed when a person's kidneys fail to function normally. Acting as an artificial kidney, a dialysis machine circulates the blood outside the body and cleans and filters it before returning

## Organ Donation

Carole. "I try to teach others to do the same. These treatments play such an important role in your life — dialysis saves your life, so patients must learn to speak up, ask questions, and become their own experts."

Carole's emphasis on personal involvement is well supported by the dialysis staff. "Carole is a tremendous example of how a person can live an active life as well as stay deeply involved in their care," says Roseanne Cerchia, R.N., nurse manager of Dialysis at Jersey Shore. "She does so much personal research and is very active in advocating dialysis patient issues. She is truly an inspiration in our unit."

#### Not All Dialysis Units Are Equal

Carole says that over the years, she has been to many dialysis units and has tried all the options, but none have measured up to Jersey Shore. "From home therapies to independent centers, none have compared to the level of technology, expertise, and resources you get at a hospital-based unit like Jersey Shore's," she boasts.

Carole also has the support of her husband of 30 years who has become a dialysis expert himself. He shares his wife's dedication to dialysis advocacy and research, including a recent trip to Washington, D.C., to promote the importance of quality dialysis care. "Dialysis places so much stress on your personal life that it has ruined marriages," says Carole. "But thankfully, my husband and I have grown stronger. And by supporting each other, we have made a better life for ourselves and are doing our best to help others."

 Michael Valentino

*Continued from page 3*

right now if you want." Fresh were his memories of their difficult wait for a kidney, and the pain his wife suffered, and knowing how young Keith was, Mark knew he had to do something. So, he offered to donate his kidney to this complete stranger.

After necessary tests confirmed Mark's eligibility, the transplant was performed a few months later, and the two families have since grown very close. "They really are part of our extended family," says Kathleen. "They turned out to be the nicest people ever, but regardless, we were blessed with a gift, and we were able to give that gift to someone else."

#### Now They Share the Knowledge


Their experience also moved Kathleen and Mark to become involved in organ donation activism and support causes. They joined with Edna DeLorenzo, R.N., transplant coordinator at

Medical Center of Ocean County, in founding a transplant support group that now has more than 30 regular members. They also work with The Sharing Network, a non-profit organization responsible for the recovery of organs and tissue.

Together with Meridian's three medical centers, The Sharing Network spreads the word of the benefits of organ donation and transplantation and helps others make informed decisions about registering as an organ donor.

"Organ donor cards are vitally important," says Lori Christensen, M.D., program director of Jersey Shore Regional Trauma Center. "They save lives and help families make decisions during a very stressful time by already knowing their loved one's intentions."

For a free organ donor card, please call Meridian Health Line at 1-800-560-9990.

 Michael Valentino

## Cancer Services

## Tired of Feeling Tired?

*Patients battling cancer need all of their strength, and they can beat cancer fatigue with help from Meridian's physical therapists.*

**J**oe, an 82-year-old Brick resident, has been fighting lung cancer since last May. While he anticipated the physical battle that was in store for him, he was less prepared for the overwhelming fatigue that would complicate his daily life and impede his ability to stay optimistic about his recovery.

Cancer fatigue is the most common side effect of cancer treatment. It can appear suddenly and may last after the treatment ends. Fatigue may affect moods or emotions and make it hard to focus or complete normal tasks.

A lack of understanding about cancer fatigue within a family can lead to resentment and feelings of guilt.

#### The Mind Must Support the Body

"I remember when Joe first came in for physical therapy," recalls Barbara Schroeder, R.N., a clinical coordinator

*Continued on page 11*

#### Meridian Dialysis Services

Meridian Health Line 1-800-560-9990

#### Cancer Fatigue Information

Meridian Health Line 1-800-560-9990

Meridian Web site [www.meridianhealth.com](http://www.meridianhealth.com)

## FREE Program on Cancer Fatigue

Wednesday, April 2, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon  
Lance Auditorium, Jersey Shore Medical Center  
1945 State Route 33, Neptune  
Keynote Speaker: Steven Stein, M.D., Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania

*Come join us to explore the signs and symptoms of cancer fatigue and discuss coping tips. Meridian Health System multi-disciplinary oncology team will also be on hand to answer your questions. To register, call our toll-free number, 1-800-560-9990.*

## Searching for Indicators to Pancreatic Cancer

*Remembering a local physician who died from this devastating disease, we look forward to research that could help save other lives.*

In November 1999, the Krosney family of Elberon received devastating news. Neil Krosney, M.D., a prominent ophthalmologist and former chief of the medical staff at Jersey Shore Medical Center, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. He would die within a year.

There still is no way to screen for pancreatic cancer, which puts patients like Dr. Krosney at a severe disadvantage since early intervention is not an option.

According to the American Cancer Society, pancreatic cancer is the fourth leading cause of cancer death in men and fifth in women. Only 19 percent of patients survive at least one year after diagnosis, and about four percent survive five years after diagnosis.

“The hardest part of pancreatic cancer is knowing that life expectancy is so limited,” says Pamela Krosney, Neil’s wife. “You’re basically at the mercy of the disease.”

he started to look a little grayish and was tired all the time, he went to see his physician who recommended that he have an endoscopy and then exploratory surgery, which confirmed the diagnosis of pancreatic cancer.”

Knowing that he did not have long to live, Dr. Krosney decided to make the most of his final days. Neil and his

For Judson it was very frustrating. “Being a physician and not being able to help his father — to stand by and not be able to help his Dad get well — that was probably the hardest thing for him,” says Pamela.

### Searching for Hope

At Jersey Shore Medical Center, promising research spearheaded by John Davis, M.D., surgeon, Arthur Topilow, M.D., chief of the division of Hematology and Oncology, and Charles Gilvarg, Ph.D., a professor at Princeton University, may one day



Photo: Courtesy of the Krosney family

Pancreatic cancer tragically ended the life of Jersey Shore Medical Center’s prominent physician, Neil Krosney, M.D., pictured here with his wife, Pamela, and his two children, Hilary and Judson. Jersey Shore is conducting a study to identify an indicator for pancreatic cancer.

wife and their two children — Judson, a physician at Beth Israel Medical Center, and Hilary, a children’s educational counselor — made a commitment to travel and spend as much quality time as they could together. “I can remember flying home from Hilton Head and Neil had a raging fever on the plane,” says Pamela, who claims they did their best to keep their spirits up despite Neil’s bouts of infections and fevers.

identify an indicator for pancreatic cancer. The Neil Krosney Pancreatic Cancer Fund and the Herbert R. Axelrod donation to the Axelrod Study Group are funding this study.

“In our study, we are looking for a way to measure an enzyme called *carboxypeptidase*, which is only made in the pancreas,” explains Dr. Davis. “By performing a simple blood test on potential candidates and monitoring the levels of this enzyme, we believe it

### Could You Be a Candidate for a Pancreatic Cancer Study?

*If you or someone you know are over age 50 and are experiencing unexplained abdominal pain, back pain, or sudden weight loss, or has a history of pancreatitis, you may be eligible to participate in the study.*

For more information about the study, please call 1-800-560-9990.

#### Cancer Doesn’t Discriminate

Dr. Krosney had always been vibrant and healthy, so his early warning signs were dismissed as a routine illness. “He had returned from a business trip in Hong Kong not feeling well,” recalls Pamela. “He had a lot of heartburn and had been taking over-the-counter medications. When

## PET Does the Trick in Detecting Cancer

*Jersey Shore Medical Center is one of the few hospitals in the state providing this state-of-the-art technology that pinpoints problems.*



Photo: Chris Gahler

Ocean Grove resident Michael Palermo, here with his wife Betty, a long-term volunteer at Jersey Shore Medical Center, began treatment for prostate cancer after a PET scan confirmed he had the disease.

**F**or the past 10 years, Michael Palermo, 78, of Ocean Grove, was in remission from non-Hodgkins's lymphoma on the right side of his groin. He had prostate surgery at Jersey Shore Medical Center but had no other health concerns. Then, last fall, Michael's physician, Arthur Topilow, M.D., chief of Hematology/Oncology at Jersey Shore, began to

suspect that the disease was developing on the other side of Michael's groin.

Michael had a CT ("cat") scan and then a PET (positron emission tomography) scan at Jersey Shore. These tests confirmed what Dr. Topilow had suspected. "It was very wise of Dr. Topilow to order the PET scan," Michael recalls. "It confirmed the diagnosis, so I could begin treatment

right away." Michael began chemotherapy followed by radiation therapy at Jersey Shore to treat his cancer.

### More Information in Less Time

This leading diagnostic tool uses a radioactive glucose analog to pinpoint the origin of most cancers, heart disease, and neurological disorders more quickly than many other diagnostic tests. Unlike common medical tests such as a CT scan and MRI, which show details about the structure of the body, PET visualizes the metabolism (life and growth) of a patient's tissue cells by creating images using radiation emitted from the patient. These images indicate metabolic "hot spots" which often signal rapidly growing cancer tumors.

Jersey Shore became one of the few hospitals in the state to offer PET scanning when the advanced imaging system was made available to patients last November.

The advantage of this type of state-of-the art imaging, according to Pritinder Thind, M.D., a Harvard-trained radiologist at Jersey Shore Medical Center, is that it can reduce the need for major surgery for many patients by determining whether certain conditions are operable, as well as whether tumors are malignant or benign. A PET scan can also detect the spread of diseases earlier than other imaging methods.

### Painless, No Side Effects

Since the PET scan can detect very small tumors — even before a CT scan can — patients can be diagnosed and treated sooner.

The PET scan will soon be available at Medical Center of Ocean County and Riverview Medical Center. For more information and a free brochure about PET, call Meridian Health Line at 1-800-560-9990.

 Pati Caldwell

## Cancer Advancements

could be an indicator that someone has pancreatic cancer."

Dr. Davis adds that most people do not recognize the symptoms of pancreatic cancer because they are common to other ailments, so it is vital to find a way to pre-screen for this type of cancer. Some of the symptoms include unexplained abdominal pain, backache, nausea, vomiting, and jaundice.

Dr. Topilow has high hopes for the research. "If the test works, it could

potentially become a screening tool for pancreatic cancer, which would ultimately result in a cure of an otherwise fatal disease," he says.

"Maybe if it could have been discovered earlier, Neil would still be with us, continuing his invaluable contributions to the work he loved to do," reflects Pamela.

 Robin Krippa

### Meridian Cancer Studies

Meridian Health Line 1-800-560-9990

Meridian Web site [www.meridianhealth.com](http://www.meridianhealth.com)

## The Hip Replacement That Lasted 30 Years

*Riverview's very first hip replacement patient returns for new surgery and a new experience.*

**A**lthough joint replacements are performed virtually every day at Riverview Medical Center, there are several interesting reasons why the surgery that Toms River resident, Agnes Gates, underwent is considered unique.

At the age of 30, after suffering from rheumatoid arthritis and the deterioration of her hip joints, Agnes had to have hip replacement surgery. She had both hips replaced at Riverview Medical Center during surgical procedures that were six months apart. At the time, hip replacement surgery meant that Agnes remained in the hospital, flat on her back, for a full week. She then stayed in the hospital for an additional two weeks to undergo therapy, followed by outpatient rehabilitation.

The material used to replace joints usually lasted about 10 years before it, too, needed replacement, depending on the patient's age, severity of the condition, and lifestyle. Because of this time factor, physicians often

looked to other less-invasive treatments before joint replacement was recommended.

Agnes was considered young to undergo a hip replacement. But what was even more unusual was that in 1972 it was the very first joint replacement to be done at the Medical Center. Bernard Murphy, M.D., a Riverview affiliated orthopedic surgeon, performed the surgery. "Back then, I had young children, a house to take care of, and no help, so being in the hospital for three weeks was difficult, and once I got home I had to get right back into my usual routine," says Agnes. "The surgery was a tremendous help. I wouldn't have been able to get around all these years without it."

### Same Doctor, New Procedure

Over the past 30 years, Riverview's orthopedic surgeons have performed thousands of joint replacements. However, while Agnes had both her knees replaced by Dr. Murphy in 1996, it's still amazing that Agnes' original hip replacement lasted 30 years. "It's funny, but after my original hip replacements and follow-up, Dr. Murphy didn't hear from me for many years," says Agnes. "So, when I finally called him because I was

having problems with my knees, his first words were, 'I always wondered what happened to you.'"

Now, at the age of 60, Agnes is finally having her original hip replacement replaced. Once again, Dr. Murphy will perform the procedure. But this time Agnes' experience will be different because the approach to orthopedic surgery has changed and there are more contemporary views of therapy and rehabilitation.

### A Whole New Game

"Today, a joint replacement or even a revision procedure (a repeat joint replacement) is very different from in years past," says Dr. Murphy. "Most patients are out of bed the next day. Two to three days after surgery, they are transferred to Riverview Rehabilitation Center, where they receive therapy in the morning and afternoon for five to seven days. Then, they go home, with some follow-up outpatient therapy."

Not only is the hospital stay shorter, but the procedure itself has been vastly improved. "The surgical incision is half the size that it was 30 years ago, and it continues to get smaller," adds Dr. Murphy. "There is significantly less blood loss and the joint replacement material is much tougher and longer lasting. It's now made from high-density polyethylene or ceramics.

"Even though Agnes' hip replacement lasted 30 years, that has not usually been the norm," Dr. Murphy continues. "However, with the new technology and materials we have available today, we expect most joint replacements to last 20 to 25 years."

 Diane Gribbin

Photo: Russ Seuffert

**Bernard Murphy, M.D., an orthopedist with Riverview, notes that joint replacement procedures now involve more intense therapy and a faster recovery than 30 years ago.**



### Meridian Orthopedic Services

Meridian Physician Referral 1-800-560-9990

Meridian Web site [www.meridianhealth.com](http://www.meridianhealth.com)

# This Little Pill Goes a Long Way!

*A pill that takes pictures inside your body? Jersey Shore is the first medical center in Central Jersey to offer this amazing new diagnostic procedure.*

**D**id you ever think we'd get to the point that taking a major medical test would be as easy as swallowing a pill? Well, Ocean Township resident Jean Vitale, 79, was amazed at the fact that she didn't need another scope to find out where her gastrointestinal (G.I.) bleeding was coming from.

### Just Swallow the Camera, Please

Jean was recently the first patient at Jersey Shore Medical Center and the first in central New Jersey to undergo a *capsule endoscopy*. This test involves swallowing a tiny camera in a capsule that takes constant color pictures as it passes through the intestinal tract. The pill is about the size of a large vitamin.

Eric Rosenstock, M.D., director of Endoscopy at Jersey Shore Medical Center, believes that this latest technology will help a lot of patients. "Before this test was available, there wasn't any other way to study the small intestine besides an x-ray," he says. The small intestine is 20- to 22-feet long, and x-rays cannot precisely or adequately show the entire area. "In Jean's case, other tests were not giving us the answers that we needed," he adds.

This test is recommended for people who have internal G.I. bleeding, and for those suffering from chronic diarrhea, malabsorption syndrome, Crohn's disease, and abdominal pain.

### Fast and Easy Test

Jean went to the Endoscopy Suite first thing in the morning, where she was evaluated and swallowed the pill. "Patients are given a lightweight data recorder affixed to a belt to be worn around their waist, which records the

data for later review," says Leslie Stewart, R.N., nurse manager of Endoscopy at Jersey Shore Medical Center. To prep for the test, patients simply need to fast for eight hours before the procedure.



Photo: Chris Gahler

Jean Vitale of Ocean Township only had to swallow a capsule endoscopy and wear a data recorder for her physician to locate the source of her internal bleeding. This exciting new procedure was supervised by Leslie Stewart, R.N., and Eric Rosenstock, M.D.

After being ingested, the camera travels throughout the digestive tract, taking approximately 57,000 digital images at a rate of two frames per second over an eight-hour period.

About eight hours after Jean took her pill, she went back to the Medical Center to return the data recorder. "This was the easiest test I ever had to take," she remarks. "I was able to cook, clean, eat, and go about my daily routine while I was being tested!"

After the capsule travels through the digestive tract, it passes out of the body naturally and does not need to be recovered.

### Pictures Worth Thousands of Words

Dr. Rosenstock analyzed the results using the computer software that reads the recorded data. "I was able to view actual video images in color," he says. "The images are magnified eight times more than a regular endoscope and allowed me to clearly see what I needed to."

In Jean's case, the bleeding was not coming from the small intestine, but another area of her digestive system. "Without this test, I would not have been able to rule-out the small intestine as the source of the bleeding," notes Dr. Rosenstock.

 Robin Krippa

### Capsule Endoscopy Services

Jersey Shore Medical Center	732-776-4588
Meridian Health Line	1-800-560-9990

## Don't Suffer From Hernia Pain

*Invasive surgery isn't always needed. Laparoscopic hernia repair produces positive results with minimal scarring and a speedy recovery.*

**D**on't lift that, you'll get a hernia," is a common phrase often said jokingly about moving heavy objects. But, for those who suffer from a hernia, like Nancy McShane, 61, of Toms River, it's no joking matter.

A hernia occurs when the layers of the abdomen weaken, resulting in a bulge or tear. Through the weakened area, a small sac forms in which intestine or tissue can push through. There are several types of hernias, and the symptoms can vary.

### Repairs Usually Needed

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, five million Americans have hernias, but only approximately 750,000 seek treatment. "A hernia does not get better over time, nor will it go away by itself," explains Steven Priolo, M.D., a general surgeon at Medical Center of Ocean County.

"I had constant discomfort in my lower stomach," recalls Nancy. "Eventually, my primary care doctor suggested I see a surgeon to have the hernia repaired."

Photo: Tom Van Dyke

Toms River resident Nancy McShane is now pain free and able to resume her normal activities after having laparoscopic surgery to repair her hernia at Medical Center of Ocean County.



Dr. Priolo examined Nancy, ordered additional tests, and determined that she was a candidate for *laparoscopic hernia repair*. "I am impressed by how conscientious Dr. Priolo is," explains Nancy. "He ordered additional tests to make sure nothing else was wrong. That way he could repair both problems at the same time."

Laparoscopic hernia repair is less invasive than the traditional "open" method of repairing a hernia. A small telescope is linked to a special camera that is then inserted inside the abdomen. This allows the doctor to see the hernia on a monitor. Then three or four other small incisions are made so the doctor can insert long-handled instruments into the body to repair the hernia. However, not everyone is able to undergo this procedure, such as people with bleeding disorders or those who have excess scar tissue from previous abdominal surgery.

### Shorter Recovery, Less Scarring

"By performing the procedure laparoscopically, there is less chance for reoccurrence and infection, and there are smaller scars than are created in traditional hernia repair," says Dr. Priolo.

This hernia procedure, usually performed as same day surgery, is done while the patient is under general anesthesia. However, because this procedure is performed laparoscopically, a patient may experience less pain and return to normal activities faster. Recovery time typically takes one to two weeks. "I feel pretty good," says Nancy. "I have no more pain."

 Nicole Ocone

### Hernia Treatments

Meridian Physician Referral 1-800-560-9990

## Trouble Close to Home

*Program addresses problems of drugs and youth in Monmouth and Ocean counties.*

**Y**ou've read the headlines: Local high school students are falling victim to fatal doses of heroin and other drugs that are a real threat to the safety of our children. What can parents, teachers, counselors, and other adults do to help kids avoid these life-threatening substances? This upcoming informative seminar will help you understand the issues and learn about treatment options and techniques to teach kids avoidance and safety.

### Close to Home: Drugs & Youth in Our Community

A program about substance abuse in Monmouth and Ocean counties.

Friday, April 11, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Brookdale Community College  
Lincroft, New Jersey

Cost is \$20 and includes breakfast, lunch, and seminar materials. CEU credits pending.  
To register, please call 1-800-560-9990.

Sponsored by Meridian Behavioral Health, PreventionFirst, and NJDOHSS/DAS, this program takes a look at the current party drug scene, focusing on the designer drug known as Ecstasy as well as other club drugs currently being used by kids in our Monmouth and Ocean area. The growing use of club drugs, heroin, date rape drugs, and other forms of substance abuse in our area will be discussed. Physicians, law enforcement agents, and substance abuse counselors will examine the long- and short-term effects of these drugs, resource and treatment options, and other related topics of concern.

This program is ideal for teachers, school nurses, counselors, youth program leaders, community coalition members, parents, caregivers, and other concerned individuals.

 Christine Burke

Continued from page 5

in the Oncology Department at Medical Center of Ocean County. "He was in a wheelchair and appeared to be depressed. But as we evaluated Joe, we knew he hadn't given up hope. He was here because his doctor told him that services in our cancer specific rehabilitation program could help him to feel better."

Weakened by chemotherapy, the muscles in Joe's arms and legs would have atrophied without this specialized physical therapy.

"The benefits of physical therapy for Joe were two-fold," says Barbara. "It helped him realize his own physical capabilities, and emotionally, this helped to keep him from slipping into a black hole." After beginning his physical therapy, Barbara remembers how rewarding it was to see Joe out of his wheelchair, standing up tall, and doing his exercises.

Joe's daughter, Roseann, says that physical therapy provided a mental and physical lift for her dad. "Everyone at the hospital was very attentive to my dad, and that gave him a good feeling."

### Fatigue Can Be Managed, With Help

While everyone experiences cancer fatigue differently, doctors say that many cancer fatigue symptoms can be effectively managed. Strategies include planning regular rest periods, managing nutrition, getting adequate exercise, participating in physical therapy to maintain as much strength as possible, joining a support group, and keeping a diary. Even understanding which activities help you feel less tired and making those a priority can help.

Talking with your physician or nurse about cancer fatigue and developing a plan to fight fatigue can improve the cancer treatment experience for the patient as well as his or her family.

↪ Christine Burke

Meridian HealthViews March/April 2003

## Hands-Up for Arthritis Relief

*A resident with rheumatoid arthritis gets a new grasp on life after an innovative surgical procedure at Medical Center of Ocean County.*

**E**velyn Gioia, 54, from Ocean Gate, suffered for years with rheumatoid arthritis. Eventually, debilitating pain became so severe that it limited the use of her hands. Her fingers slowly "drifted" and began to look deformed. Because of her condition, Evelyn was forced to leave her job and go on medical disability. "I was in pain all the time," recalls Evelyn. "I couldn't even do simple things like button my coat."

**Swelling Can Lead to Deformity**  
Rheumatoid arthritis, a disease in which a person's immune system attacks and destroys tissues in the joints, afflicts approximately 2.1 million Americans, according to the



X-rays of Evelyn's hands show their deformity by severe arthritis and how they can be improved by joint replacement surgery.

Arthritis National Research Foundation.

One of the most common effects is the swelling of the knuckles. This swollen tissue can damage cartilage and bone and may destroy ligaments that are the support structures holding the joints together. This causes the fingers to "drift" and results in deformity and pain.

"The longer a person waits to do something about his or her pain, the more deformed the hands become, and the harder it is to treat," says Elliot Semet, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon at Medical Center of Ocean County.

But relief is available. First, medication is prescribed along with patient education about how to adapt to the limitations of the diseases and how to prevent damaging swollen joints. If the more conservative treatment does not work, surgery may be an option.

**Joint Replacement Surgery Can Help**  
*Metacarpal arthroplasty* is a procedure where the dislocated joints are removed and artificial joints (made of silicone rubber or other material) are inserted. Usually only one hand is done at a time, but all four joints on that hand can be replaced in one sitting.



Evelyn Gioia of Ocean Gate now has better movement and less pain following joint surgery performed by Elliot Semet, M.D.

The procedure requires an overnight hospital stay and extensive physical therapy, but the results are proving worthwhile. "This procedure has so many benefits to the patient," says Dr. Semet. "Most important, it relieves pain, improves function, enhances the patient's quality of life, and improves the appearance of the once-deformed hands."

Dr. Semet performed Evelyn's first surgery on her right hand in September 2001, and then on her left hand in March 2002. "I am thrilled that I had the surgeries," she says. "I have feelings in all my fingers, and I can use them for everyday activities. Plus, everyone now comments on how great my hands look." ↪ Nicole Ocone

### Meridian Orthopedic Services

Meridian Physician Referral

1-800-560-9990

## Breast Biopsy Made Simple

*At Riverview Medical Center, a kinder, gentler procedure now gives physicians a highly accurate biopsy diagnosis — without surgery.*



Frederick Zito, M.D., shown here with technician Chris McDermott, demonstrates an ultrasound-guided Mammotome on a breast model. This diagnostic procedure, available at Riverview, is a less invasive alternative to biopsy surgery.

**H**aving a breast biopsy can be an emotional — even scary experience, but there is a new non-surgical procedure for obtaining a highly accurate diagnosis that is less invasive, leaves less scarring, and has a shorter recovery period. Riverview Medical Center is projected to perform between 300 to 400 surgical breast biopsies in 2003. However, according to Frederick Zito, M.D., a radiologist affiliated with Riverview, at least 30 percent of these biopsies could now be performed using a new ultrasound-guided Mammotome procedure at the Medical Center.

“This upgraded version of a *stereotactic*, or x-ray, Mammotome, facilitates the diagnosis of certain breast abnormalities,” explains Dr. Zito. “For the physician, the ultrasound-guided system allows us to obtain more accurate results with a sampling of breast lesions using real-time ultrasound guidance. For the patient, the procedure avoids x-ray radiation exposure, and most important, potentially eliminates the need for surgical intervention.”

### So, How Does It Work?

After a lump or abnormality is detected in a patient’s breast, the physician may want to conduct a biopsy to help determine if the suspicious area is cancerous.

This procedure involves taking sample tissue for further testing. There are various biopsy options available, ranging from surgical procedures to new minimally invasive systems like the ultrasound-guided Mammotome.

If a patient decides to have a biopsy using the Mammotome System, the procedure is done on an outpatient basis and usually takes less than an hour to perform. Before the procedure begins, the patient lies on her back and is given a local anesthetic to minimize any discomfort. Once the specific area has been located, the Mammotome probe is inserted through a small incision in the breast. The probe gently vacuums and removes tissue samples for examination.

Because the probe is guided by an ultrasound, multiple samples can be collected without having to remove and reinsert the device. Following the procedure, the physician may place

## Taking Control of Your Own Health

To remain active in your own breast health, the American Cancer Society recommends that:

- Women age 40 and older should have a screening mammogram every year.
- Women between ages 20 and 39 should have a clinical breast exam by a health professional every three years. After age 40, women should have a breast exam by a health professional every year.
- Women age 20 and older should perform breast self-exams every month. By conducting these exams regularly, you get to know how your breasts normally feel and you can more easily detect any changes.

a small tissue marker inside the patient's breast (undetectable to the patient), to identify the site for future mammograms.

"The physician can visualize the questionable tissue as it is being removed, so the procedure can be accomplished faster," says Dr. Zito,

*"When I went for my routine mammogram at Riverview Medical Center, suspicious spots were detected immediately because I had previous mammogram results for comparison. I was very relieved when additional tests could be done right away, so I didn't have to wait. Luckily, everything was fine. I'm so used to getting my annual mammogram and so comfortable with the wonderful staff, that I even request the same technician."*

— Lee Vones of Freehold

adding that while the results cannot be obtained any quicker, the physician can possibly avoid performing the procedure again by obtaining as much breast tissue as needed at one time.

**Mammotome Use on the Rise**

According to Meg Levinson, the clinical program manager of Riverview's Women's Diagnostic Center, Mammotome technology has revolutionized breast disease diagnosis for the radiologist, the breast surgeon, and the patient. "The use of the Mammotome System in both stereotactic and ultrasound versions continues to greatly contribute to detecting breast abnormalities," she says.

↪ Felice Mikelberg

## Improving Cancer Detection

*New computer-aided technology produces digital images that help pinpoint potential breast problems.*

**C**onsidering all the medical evidence that points to the importance of detecting breast cancer at its earliest stages, most women now know that having an annual mammogram is critical — the earlier that cancer can be detected, the better the chance of recovery. In fact, mammography is considered the single most vital diagnostic tool in the detection of breast cancer.

Meridian's three breast centers at Jersey Shore Medical Center, Medical Center of Ocean County, and Riverview Medical Center recently introduced an important enhancement to the mammography services available at each facility called computer-aided detection or CAD. This technology uses digitized mammography images to pinpoint areas of the breast that may require further medical investigation.

**Important Diagnostic Tool**

CAD's special pattern recognition software converts a patient's screening mammogram into a digital image and highlights "suspicious" areas of the breast that may indicate the presence of an abnormal mass or growth, and the entire digital image is displayed on a video monitor. The radiologist is then able to review the image twice, comparing the original mammogram to the CAD image. "This provides two significant advantages over standard mammography screening because the radiologist receives an additional, more defined perspective of the breast, increasing the ability to detect abnormalities," says Barbara Rabinowitz, Ph.D., Meridian's director of Oncology Services. "And because of the accuracy and comparative ability of CAD, the need for call backs is greatly reduced."



Meridian's three breast centers are using computer-aided detection or CAD to pinpoint areas of the breast that may need further medical investigation. Jeffrey Gould, M.D., a radiologist affiliated with Riverview, is shown with the CAD equipment.

Call backs occur when a mammography must be repeated due to a lack of clarity in the original image.

**Proven Effectiveness**

According to an independent study, CAD technology has increased the detection rate for breast cancer by 19.5 percent. These are breast cancer cases that may not have been detected using standard mammography equipment.

"We are committed to continuously bringing technological advancements in mammography to Meridian's breast centers," says William Lerner, M.D., an oncologist affiliated with Meridian Health System. "We have every reason to believe that CAD technology is an important phase in this evolution."

↪ Diane Gribbin

Photo: Russ Seuffert

**Meridian Breast Health Services**

Jersey Shore Medical Center	732-776-4978
Medical Center of Ocean County	732-836-4083
Riverview Medical Center	732-530-2305

## What Do Our Patients Really Think?

*Survey says...they wouldn't go anywhere else but Meridian!  
National recognition and local appreciation are confirming our  
commitment to patient satisfaction.*

**B**etty Petillo, 80, of Asbury Park has been a loyal patient of Jersey Shore Medical Center for over 50 years, and she says that she would never go anywhere else. "One thing that's made my recent experiences so great has been my patient representative, Terry Rigney," says Betty. "When I was in the hospital, she would visit me and come up and have lunch with me. It was comforting to know the people who work at the hospital care so much."

Terry is part of Jersey Shore's Patient Representative Program, helping make hospital stays as easy and stress-free as possible.

### Exceptional Patient Care

"At Jersey Shore Medical Center, we want to ensure that our patients, their families, and all of our guests have as pleasant an experience here as

possible," says Dave Dixon, manager of Guest Relations at Jersey Shore.

If a patient knows she will be staying in the hospital, she can come in prior to her scheduled visit to meet with her patient representative. At that time, the patient representative will explain where to park, which entrance to use, and which department to report to. The patient representative will also answer any other questions the patient may have. If a patient cannot come to the hospital for this meeting, she can call the patient representative for information.

### Service Merits Award

Meridian was recently recognized for its efforts to improve patient satisfaction and has received the prestigious Press Ganey 2002 Compass Award for outstanding performance improvement for patient satisfaction. Press Ganey is a national measurement organization that monitors patient satisfaction through a survey process for health care institutions across the nation, including all three Meridian hospitals.

"Receiving these awards demonstrate that hard work and a continual dedication to improving patient care is worth the effort, and that teamwork pays off when we stay focused on the patient," says Jeffrey Brickman, president of Meridian Hospitals Corporation. "The staff at our hospitals have put their minds, skills, and hearts into this important effort. This is certainly an achievement on which we will continue to build."

Medical Center of Ocean County has been recognized by Press Ganey for outstanding performance in its

outpatient area. In addition, Riverview has been cited for outstanding performance improvement in the Emergency Department and in its outpatient area.

### Happy Patients Are Our Business

Over the years, Betty Petillo has made numerous friends throughout the hospital, and she says even new nurses, doctors, and staff members are very nice and caring. "It's so nice to see a hospital take pride in making their patients happy," says Betty. "It's important that you have faith and trust in your hospital."

 Beth Reiprich

### Patient Relations

Meridian Health Line	1-800-560-9990
Meridian Web site	www.meridianhealth.com

## Cardiac Rehabilitation

*Continued from page 16*

Several hours later, Bobby had a recurrence of his chest discomfort and he needed an emergency cardiac catheterization. Bobby was transferred to Jersey Shore Medical Center where Dr. Salloum's partner, Pedro Escandon, M.D., performed a *balloon angioplasty* — a procedure in which a balloon tip catheter is inserted into an artery to press plaque back against the vessel wall, and placed a stent to keep the artery open.

After Bobby recuperated, Dr. Salloum recommended that he go into Medical Center of Ocean County's Cardiac Rehabilitation program. "It is vital for a patient to return to physical activity, which helps decrease the recurrence of a heart attack," says Dr. Salloum.

### He's Grateful for LIFE

Bobby is very grateful to everyone at LIFE. "If I was exercising at another

*Meridian HealthViews March/April 2003*

Photo: Chris Cahler

Betty Petillo of Asbury Park says it's the patient representatives who have made her visits to Jersey Shore Medical Center especially pleasant.



# Your Future Wishes Are Our Commands

*A new, free national registry makes your medical wishes easy to access when needed.*

**Y**ou never know when an accident or illness is going to leave you unable to make decisions for yourself. Fortunately, you can prepare an *advance directive*, which is a legal document that protects your rights under just such circumstances in accordance with the Patient Self-Determination Act.

These written directions, prepared in advance of any debilitating or life-threatening illness or injury, have two main aspects: a *living will*, in which you state what kind of medical care you would want in the event that you were unable to make decisions, and a

*health care proxy* that can designate another person to make decisions for you if you lose the capacity to do so.

### Registry On-line 24 Hours a Day

An advance directive is only useful when the health care providers tending to your needs are aware of your wishes and can locate the advance directive. This can be a difficult task if you are away from home or in an unfamiliar hospital. That is why Medical Center of Ocean County and Riverview Medical Center have become participating hospitals in helping to promote the U.S. Living

Will Registry. This is a free nationwide service that electronically stores advance directives, making them available 24 hours a day to participating hospitals across the county.

“Often, when someone is in a health care crisis, it is hard for the family to locate his or her advance directive,” explains Rev. Mark Farnham of Pastoral Care at Medical Center of Ocean County. “The U.S. Living Will Registry is a secure way to make sure your advance directive is available to your family and doctors wherever and whenever it’s needed.”

### The Service Is Free

All individuals are encouraged to register their advanced directives with this free service. All you have to do is fill out a form giving the registry permission to fax copies to health care facilities. Your advance directive is then stored in the computer, so hospitals can electronically request a copy, if necessary. The computer will fax a copy to the hospital where it will be kept as part of your confidential medical record. Your personal information can never be viewed, downloaded, or printed from the Internet. And you can cancel your agreement to store your advance directive with the registry at any time.

### Gain Peace of Mind Today

“I decided to register my advance directive because it was convenient,” explains Anne Charles of Brick. “It gives me peace of mind knowing that I don’t have to carry my advance directive with me and that it can be easily accessible if needed.”

 Nicole Ocone

## Much More Than a Fitness Center

Besides offering first-rate fitness equipment and programs, LIFE Fitness Rehabilitation offers rehabilitation services, including cardiac and pulmonary, physical, occupational, pediatric, and speech therapies. “We offer group fitness classes, such as precision training, weight training, kick boxing, spinning, Pilates, yoga, aquatic therapy, and much more,” says Karen Kavanagh, director of LIFE Fitness. Another added advantage to being a LIFE member is that you are eligible to use all of the other centers. For more information, call Meridian Health Line at 1-800-560-9990.

facility on that day, who knows if I would have made it to an emergency room fast enough,” he says. Bobby intends to continue his member at LIFE Fitness once he completes his cardiac rehabilitation.

Karen Kavanagh, director of LIFE Fitness and Cardio-Pulmonary

Rehabilitation at LIFE Fitness, says medical supervision with fitness and rehabilitation services is what sets the LIFE fitness centers apart from the competition.

“We are unlike other fitness centers because we offer more than just fitness equipment,” explains Karen. Karen adds that LIFE members with known cardiac or pulmonary risk factors can have their blood pressure and heart rates screened regularly at any LIFE facility, at no additional charge. Even members who are not at risk can take advantage of this service.

 Robin Krippa

### LIFE Fitness and Rehabilitation

Brick	(Rehab) 732-836-4275 (Fitness) 732-836-4007
Neptune	(Fitness) 732-776-4485
Point Pleasant Beach	(Rehab) 732-295-8215 (Fitness) 732-295-1778
Wall (for women only)	(Fitness) 732-280-8118
Meridian Health Line	1-800-560-9990

### Advance Directive Information

Patient Relations	732-530-2484
Meridian Web site	www.meridianhealth.com