Pediatric News has changed its look and its purpose. We are hoping to make this a newsletter that will provide all of our employees, staff, faculty and student, with information regarding the various activities of our divisions and co-workers. Additional features will offer tips and suggestions for navigating through the UNM system, community activities that may be relative to our department’s mission, and helpful suggestions regarding ways to succeed in the workplace. If you like the new direction that we are taking, please let us know! If you have ideas about how we can make this a successful newsletter, please pass those along as well. We would like for you to feel like your contributions to this format are welcome, whether they are photographs, articles, or suggestions. Ideas can be e-mailed to Cynthia Martin at cymartin@salud.unm.edu.

Some of the features that we hope you’ll enjoy include Best Regards, a column specifically devoted to posting your notes of appreciation to specific employees for the small things they do to make your day brighter; Ask Miss Demeanor, a guest columnist feature that will specifically address issues of business etiquette; The Crone’s Corner, a “view from below” look at the workplace today; Employee Profile, focusing each issue on a fellow department member you may not have met yet; and the Poetry Moment, dedicated to providing snippets of great poetry. Hopefully you’ll like what you find here and want to contribute. That’s the whole idea.

**Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk-a-Thon Coming Up**

The American Cancer Society will be holding its annual MAKING STRIDES AGAINST BREAST CANCER walk-a-thon on Sunday, April 18, 2004. Last year more than 8,000 people participated, helping to raise money for breast cancer research, local education, patient services, and raising community awareness about breast cancer. A planning breakfast will be held on Wednesday, February 18, 7:30am. If you are interested in leading a Department of Pediatrics team, or participating in the walk, please contact Eileen Sever at 2-4842 for more information.
Computer Updates
by Vernon Bell, Pediatrics User Support Analyst III

I know everybody's been experiencing difficulties with the internet lately. This has been due, for the most part, to the "My Doom" worm that you may have heard about in the news. The worm was set to "self-terminate" on Feb. 12. However, it will still remain in an infected system. Please continue to be cautious of suspicious e-mails and their attachments. I would urge users to scan their at-home systems as well. The Salad e-mail system has a filtering system which will detect any known worm/virus and will intercept an infected message.

You may have seen the worm at work here on North Campus. This happened because it came in through POP3 mail accounts. POP mail is where you get the e-mail from a mail server and it then downloads a copy of the e-mail to the hard drive on the computer. When information is stored on a local machine, the information is vulnerable and can be scanned by worms for personal information and address books.

It has been reported the all of North Campus had under 50 computers infected. Thanks a whole bunch!

Heme/Onc News

Several employees in Heme/Onc have added new qualifications to their resumes, and we'd like to congratulate them all. Paula Dorris-Osborn received her Child Life Certification, Claudia Mackaron passed the Pediatric Oncology National Certification, Liz Dillman passed the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner exam, Edwina Valdo completed her career ladder to AAIL, and Becky MacMurray and Moyna Robeson were recently put onto career ladders. Moyna will also be graduating from the UNM Management Academy in April.

There have been several new employees coming into the division. Nancy Eisenberg is our new Research Coordinator, Amy Skarsgard joined the team back in August as Data Manager, and Raychelle Creech has just come on board as our new oncology nurse.

And last, but not least, Cathy Chavez was recently nominated for the "People Living Through Cancer" award. Congratulations Cathy! Way to go.

Employee Profile
Meet Brent Davids

Brent Davids came to the Department of Pediatrics last November, filling a newly-created position for the department that has been much-needed. Brent is our Medical Practice Specialist, assisting Peds doctors and clinics with streamlining and improving billing and collections practices and procedures. Brent has had years of experience managing a private pediatric clinic in Roswell, and we are lucky to be able to take advantage of his knowledge and expertise! Brent and his wife recently moved to Albuquerque in order to be closer to their grandchildren. Brent's office is right next to the Department reception area, so if you are in the neighborhood, be sure to stop in and introduce yourself!

Poetry Moment
ON BECOMING A GOD.
ADONIS REMEMBERS THE WORLD
Praxilla, 5th Century BCE, Translated by Brooks Haxton

Of all I leave, most beautiful is the sunlight.
Next come the stars at nightfall, and the moon's face,
and in season, peaches, muskmelons, and pears.
Ask Miss Demeanor!

Dear Miss Demeanor:

How does one politely get M & Ms out of a chicken feeder?

Yes, it is true that many of us are happily refreshing ourselves at the department chicken-feeder, and it is equally true that this poses certain etiquette issues. Nevertheless, good etiquette is as important at a chicken feeder as it is at the table, at least for us humans.

Here is the appropriate way to gather M & Ms from a chicken feeder.

Please start with clean hands. Next, if you only intend to take one or two M&Ms, you may simply remove them, using thumb and forefinger, from any of the slots facing you. However, if you were hoping for a small handful (please, never a huge, grasping one!), or in the event that the supply has been reduced so that there are only a few remaining candies at the bottom of the feeder, you may pick the feeder up by the glass jar, and gently tip the M&Ms into your palm. This occasionally results in some M&Ms dropping onto the table or floor, which you are obligated to search for and dispose of in any of the nearby trash receptacles.

Also of importance is the number of times that one visits the chicken feeder on a daily basis. Once or twice is certainly fair. However, if you are one of those people who is in need of more sustenance than you may have provided for yourself at your desk, you are obligated to take care of your needs in another way, that is, by utilizing either the vending machine, the coffee cart, the gift shop, the cafeteria, or your neighbor's good will. Additionally, if you are one of those people who enjoys the chicken feeder on a somewhat regular basis (even once or twice a week) you are, in fact, obligated by social custom and etiquette to offer to take a turn at replenishing the supply. M&Ms do not magically appear, nor are they a line item on the department budget. They are donated by polite and gracious users of the chicken feeder who realize that one good turn deserves another.

Dear Miss Demeanor:

Is it still necessary to send a thank-you letter after a job interview? If so, will e-mail suffice?

It is never a mistake to send a thank you letter after an interview, and it might be a mistake not to, so hedge your bets and send one.

There are differing opinions on what method of delivery is best. If you are hoping to convince your interviewers that you are a sincere person with good old-fashioned manners, a handwritten note is best. However, if your goal is to show off your powerful business acumen and hard-hitting sales abilities, a computer-generated letter (please, no typewriters!) with an original signature might better serve your purpose. In either case, mention something that you learned or appreciated about your interview, just to show that you were listening and to demonstrate your enthusiasm. Be sure to mention as well that you are interested in the position (assuming that you are), and point up the various skills you have that could best serve the needs of the employer. In a pinch, e-mail will do, but it should be a last resort effort. It will get there quickly, but lacks the classy impression that an original letter can make, when done well. NEVER pre-write a thank you note and leave it with the receptionist at the end of your interview. This gives the impression that you are merely going through the motions, never a good idea.
The Crone’s Nest

Being an on-going commentary by Cynthia Dean, AAll, long-time department employee, curmudgeon-at-large

First column, hmm, what to write to about? World unrest? The current political picture? I think not. I think perhaps the Department of Pediatrics and its people should be the subject of my first endeavor.

We all hear talk and/or complaining (none of us are the culprits of course) about working in this department at the University. The shortage of money, the pay scale, the lack of raises, the load of work, blah, blah, blah, ad nauseum. Well, get over it. It’s all true and more . . .

BUT, it’s also a great place to work. Where else can you come to work with people who care as much as this group does—about each other and even about the world at large? Where else can you absolutely be yourself—no matter how unusual or odd or wonderful that might be? Not only that but be accepted for these—a hem—gifts?

There is a common perception that many people who are members of the department are “stuck” and can’t or won’t go elsewhere. I disagree. We choose to be here, whatever our reasons. What we do is hard and difficult (yes, they are different things) and we wish there was a larger return on our efforts, it is true. The bottom line is, if the economy in general and the health care economy in particular is dreary, our jobs still need to be done. There is something satisfying and important about being necessary and we all are.

So, all that having been said, how do we put a more positive face on the fact that we all have to work, that we all have to be somewhere? Let’s think about that for a minute. Think about how much fun pot lucks and department parties are for us. Why is that? It is because we come together as people, as friends, not as employees. So perhaps we need to recognize each other’s importance, not just to the collective effort, but also to each other as individuals and human beings.

Care Committee Update

The ideas were really flowing at the last meeting of the Peds Care Committee. Several good fund-raising proposals were submitted.

For February, the committee will continue to collect winter outerwear for children, including coats, blankets, blanket-sleepers, hats, mittens, etc. These items will be donated to the Storehouse. In April the committee is planning a Frito Pie fundraiser, to be held on the 14th, from 11AM to 1PM in the Peds Lounge. The committee will be serving frito pie, drink, and dessert for a minimum donation of $5. Money raised will be used to purchase books for the peds waiting area and/or to make donations to local charitable organizations.

Since some people don’t eat beef, the committee is looking for a few good meatless chili recipes. If you have a recipe that you think would work well in a frito pie, please contact one of the care committee members.

This fall the committee also plans on putting together teams of people to enter items at the state fair, i.e., pies, spam contest, clothing, quilts, canned veggies, etc.

Mary Merchant has a book of last year’s categories and we are hoping that we can have a number of different teams entering these contests. Prize money won will be donated to a specified charity.

Care committee members are Eileen Sever, Lucy Thompson, Marcia Delgado, Mary Merchant, Eula Michaels, Moyna Robeson, Mary Anne Flanagan, Dale Pease, Julie Zuniga, and Jill Randolph-Sikking.

Photograph by Robert Katz

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”

Mahatma Ghandi
Neo News

Christine Fong, MD, former Neonatology colleague, came back to us for a visit on February 5th from Lake Mills, Wisconsin to show off her adorable 4 month old son Oscar. He’s a very smiley happy baby!

On February 6th Robin K. Ohls, MD traveled to Chevy Chase, Maryland, where she served as a Program Project Grant Reviewer on a project through the Review branch of the National Institutes of Health/National Heart Lung and Blood Institute.

Dr. Ohls was also listed as one of the 2003 Top Investigators by the General Clinical Research Center in their Spring 2004 newsletter. The staff of the GCRC extended their thanks to Dr. Ohls, as well as all investigators and their staff for their commitment to research in 2003, noting that Dr. Ohls was especially diligent in recruiting subjects. With 392 scattered visits and 457 scattered hours, Dr. Ohls had amongst the highest numbers as a GCRC investigator. (“Scatterbed” is a research visit to a subject hospitalized in a unit other than the research unit.)

Congratulations New Mexico Newborn Transport Team!

On December 31, 2003 the New Mexico Newborn Transport Team received their very own State of New Mexico Air Ambulance Certification for Critical/Specialty Care (in the transport of neonates). Long hours and a lot of hard work were put into developing and formatting the Air Ambulance Certification project. The team worked together and did a wonderful job for the state inspection which was conducted in December of 2003.

Where would we be without the Coffee Cart? Eula Michaels and Mary Ellen Snyder take advantage of the two-for-one happy hour and share a decaf iced mocha with extra whipped cream.

Best Regards

“I want to acknowledge Carla and Eileen for helping me with intern interviews when I was out of town January 26 through 28. They kept the applicants moving according to schedule and I felt totally at ease with being gone because I knew they were there for me. I owe them big time!!! Ben Hoffman and Loretta Cordova de Ortega also stepped up to the plate and I appreciate them as well.”

Lucy Thompson

“Wanting to say "Thank You" for all the people who were involved and participated in the Staff Awards. Really appreciated the prize!!!”

Vivian Plakio

“I would like to extend a special thank you to a team of folks who have tirelessly supported Grand Rounds for the last several weeks. These special people offered their time, in addition to performing their usual tasks, in order to help keep Grand Rounds running smoothly. What a team! – Dale Pease, Mary Merchant, Lucy Thompson and Eileen Sever. THANK YOU!”

Carla Sleazak
Great People Doing Great Things

Balloon Campaign 2004

It's Balloon Campaign time again, running now through March 5, and the Department of Pediatrics is off to a great start, thanks to the support of many enthusiastic, dedicated employees. The campaign, sponsored by Children's Miracle Network and UNM Children's Hospital, is a fund raiser to help purchase state-of-the-art equipment for UNM Children's Hospital, UNM Carrie Tingley Hospital, UNM Children's Psychiatric Center and UNM Department of Pediatrics. There are great prizes for people who participate with their departments, as well as a prize for the individual person who raises the most money.

Prizes will also be given on a weekly basis to the department that raises the most money, and there will be a one-time award to the department with the most creative display of their balloons.

If you haven't come up to the main reception area and seen our giant flower garden display, you really should take a moment to check it out. This is our department's attempt to win the "Most Creative Display" award; and we think we have a shot at it. Thanks to all of you who have donated already! As you can see, your contributions are making a difference.

If you have not participated in this campaign - please consider trying it this year. You will have lots of fun and it's very rewarding to know you have helped make the lives of our smaller patients much brighter! For more information, please contact Eileen Sever at 2-4842.

DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS MISSION

The mission of the UNM Department of Pediatrics and UNM Children's Hospital is to provide the children of New Mexico with comprehensive, family centered health care that is unequaled in the state and region. The providers of UNM Children's Hospital and Health Services apply advanced medical science and an abiding concern for the well-being of children to improve and restore health for New Mexico's youngest residents.

Robert Katz, MD
Chair

Loretta Cordova de Ortega
Vice Chair