About 2,400 babies are born each year at the Family Birthplace. The Unit features a full-term Nursery and a Level II Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), both equipped with the latest technology available. The Unit also provides 24-hour anesthesia services, and midwives on staff to provide an extra level of comfort for patients.

Birthing rooms feature all the comforts and conveniences of home and are fully equipped for labor, delivery and recovery. Four birthing rooms are equipped with Jacuzzi whirlpool tubs, giving moms a higher level of relaxation before delivery.

In addition, Mercy Hospital offers perinatology services for high-risk pregnancy cases and other specialized testing.

Mercy Hospital’s Family Birthplace recently opened a new family waiting area which is the first phase of a major renovation project that will convert all patient rooms to 26 new private rooms.

Expected to be completed in the Spring of ’09, the $1.8 million renovation project is being conducted with special attention to not impact patient care areas or cause any inconvenience to patients.

“Our new private rooms will be beautiful and we are very pleased to be able to further enhance the patient experience at Mercy’s Family Birthplace,” said Mary Ann Murphy, Director of Mercy’s Maternal Child Services.

Submit news items to:
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Several associates and visitors to Mercy Hospital were able to witness the historic Inauguration of President Barack Obama on the hospital’s large flat screen TV communication kiosk located in the cafeteria.

Members of the Associate Council’s Communications Sub-Committee coordinated the purchase of the TV earlier this year as an additional means of communication with staff. Associates who have information to post on the cafeteria TV can contact Kathy Guest in Administration at 821-4440 or kguest@chsbuffalo.org.

The Associate Council Management/Morale Sub-Committee reported that the Voice of the Associates Survey (VOA) results have been broken out by department and will be distributed to managers. A pilot group for 360 degree evaluations has been identified, and a roll-out process is being developed in conjunction with Performance Partners.

Mercy Hospital held a Wear Red Day on February 13th. A group of volunteers from Cardiac Services and Patient Care Services sold Red Dress pins to benefit the American Heart Association (AHA) and raffled a Valentine’s Day Basket to raise more than $700 for the AHA. In addition to free blood pressure screening, healthy snacks and free cake was served in celebration of the 7th anniversary of the first open heart surgery case at Mercy Hospital.

Mercy’s Wear Red Day Raises Over $700

Associate Donna Huson presents Father James Vacco with some homemade cookies.

The Mission Integration staff recently celebrated the ministry of Father James Vacco, OFM, with a Eucharistic Liturgy in Mercy Hospital’s Chapel followed by a farewell reception in the Mercy Rotunda. Father James, who served as a Mercy Hospital Chaplain for the past 12 years, was recently appointed Administrator of St. John’s Parish in Olean.

Good Luck, Father James!

Beautiful Esther Rose was the 10th child born to Jennifer and Albert Baker on December 26, 2008 at Mercy Hospital. The following day on December 27th, Lance Corporal Steven Baker of the U.S. Marines, their eldest son, was home on leave to be married to Beth McCarthy.

The couple exchanged vows at St. John the Baptist Church in Lockport and then repeated the ceremony later that evening for his mom and family members to witness in Mercy’s Chapel. “It was great to be there, but what a whirlwind!” said mom Jennifer Baker.

Soldier Marries in Mercy Chapel

Associate Council Update

Mercy’s Wear Red Day Raises Over $700
Quality Improvement Efforts Recognized

In conjunction with HANYS (Healthcare Association of New York State), Mercy Hospital’s ICU and CCU have been involved in a project to prevent Ventilator Associated Pneumonia (VAP) since October 2008. This project involved the formation of an interdisciplinary committee and the implementation of multiple processes that have been proven to decrease VAP and improve overall outcomes of ventilated patients. Pictured above are members of the ICU and CCU who were recently presented plaques from HANYS for their quality improvement efforts.

In addition, three other Mercy Hospital initiatives were featured in the HANYS’ 2008 Profiles in Quality and Patient Safety, a publication that recognizes and describes the outstanding initiatives by members to improve the health and safety of patients. These projects included:

- **Our Journey to 90 Minutes in 90 Days** project focused on improving door-to-balloon times as part of its plan to provide excellent cardiac care to the community. Door-to-balloon time refers to the interval between the earliest documented arrival time at the hospital and the opening of a blocked artery by an interventional device. In 2008, seventy five percent of patients were treated within 90 minutes, compared to 34% in 2007, resulting in 122% improvement.

- Another project, **Improving Bed Tracking Compliance to Reduce Discharge Delay**, focused on improving the turnaround times associated with cleaning patient beds after patient discharge or transfer. By doing so, the hospital was able to impact patient care and safety by providing vacant beds to patients coming from the emergency department and from the post-surgical recovery.

A Guatemalan boy hears for the first time.

Thirteen months ago while on his first medical mission to Guatemala, Dr. Hoeplinger said he recognized a dire need for his specialized ENT work in this country.

“I became very interested in helping meet the ENT needs of the less fortunate, particularly children with hearing loss,” said Dr. Hoeplinger. “I performed surgeries and helped with medication and hearing aids.”

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Mass Held to Give Thanks to Volunteers

A Mass of Thanksgiving was held to honor and thank volunteers at Mercy Hospital for their generous time, talents and service to the hospital. Special Valentine’s Day treats were served at a reception following the mass including cupcakes topped off with heart-shaped rings. In photo above, Sisters of Mercy from left front, Sisters Thomas Marie Murphy, Carmen Gualtieri, (back) Joan Chachula and Mary Caritas Quinn, who are volunteers at the hospital, display their new Valentine rings.

Quality Improvement,
Continued from page 3

unit with minimum delay. As a result of these efforts, bed turnaround time improved and bed tracking compliance increased by 92.5%.

• Another project, Creating a Progressive Care Unit, used the “Plan-Do-Study-Act” methodology to transform a general medical unit into a progressive unit to increase the availability of critical care beds and have patients cared for in an appropriate level of care. Extensive education was provided to the staff to prepare them for the change in the unit. The hospital saved $274,833 by having patients in the appropriate level of care and there was an 83% reduction in the use of agency registered nurses (RNs).

State-of-the-Art Carbon Monoxide Testing in ER

Thanks to a donation made by the Mercy Hospital Foundation, Mercy’s Emergency Department became the first in the region to offer state-of-the-art pulse oximetry testing for carbon monoxide levels.

The hand-held pulse oximetry monitor for the ER uses a light sensor on a small probe attached to the finger to immediately detect oxygen and carbon monoxide levels in the blood. The pulse oximetry test is a painless touch to the finger. Carbon monoxide levels are traditionally tested using an arterial blood gas draw, which is often an uncomfortable lab test for the patient.

In early January, a family of seven from South Buffalo arrived in the ER with suspected carbon monoxide poisoning. Using the new technology, staff was able to test the family within minutes, and fortunately they were able to release the family members within two hours of their arrival.

Physician Spotlight,
Continued from page 3

A volunteer audiologist changes a young boy’s life with a new hearing aid.

“Watching the children react to hearing for the first time in their lives has been such a rewarding and touching experience,” he added.

“There are many of us across Catholic Health who participate in these medical missions. They allow us to view our own lives and medical practices differently. We often have so much more than we need...it feels great to be able to share,” he said.

Sweet Mercy!
People In The News

Mercy Health Center at 430 South Park Avenue in Buffalo welcomes Gloria Wang, M.D.A board certified pediatrician, Dr. Wang completed her pediatric residency at Women and Children’s Hospital of Buffalo. She is fluent in English, Cantonese and Mandarin Chinese, and has been a Catholic Health primary care practitioner since 1992. She is accepting new patients, ages birth to 18-years-old. To schedule an appointment, call 847-6610.

Patricia Weeks O’Connor has recently been named the Executive Director of the OLV Senior Neighborhood in addition to her current role as Administrator of the Mercy Nursing Facility at OLV. She will provide overarching strategy and coordination of services for the OLV Senior Neighborhood, including the nursing facility, Victory Ridge Apartments, and LIFE- Living Independently for Elders program (a PACE program scheduled to begin in the Spring of ‘09).

Visit Mercy on Facebook

In less than one month, over 200 people have joined Mercy Hospital’s newly created “fan” page on Facebook. Launched in January, Mercy’s Fan page is designed to give associates another way of accessing all the latest information about Mercy Hospital. Visit Mercy on Facebook at www.facebook.com.