

SUMMER 2006

SANTA MONICA-UCLA

# TODAY



NEW NETHERCUTT EMERGENCY CENTER,  
HOSPITAL ON THE HORIZON

YOUR COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

SANTA MONICA-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER

# SANTA MONICA-UCLA TODAY



SUMMER 2006  
ISSUE NUMBER 3

Santa Monica-UCLA Today is produced by the Marketing and Public Relations Department at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center, in collaboration with the Office of Development.

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Project officials now expect that construction of the new Nethercutt Emergency Center at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center will be completed in late 2006, with move-in targeted for early 2007.



#### Save the Date: Sunday, October 15!

"80th Anniversary Celebration," Noon to 4 p.m., 16th Street Outside Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center

#### We're Seeking Santa Monica Babes From 1926-27

Were you born at the original Santa Monica Hospital in 1926 or 1927? If so, we want you to be part of our 80th Anniversary Celebration. Please call (800) 516-5323 to give us your contact information.

**On the Cover** An artist's rendering of the new Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center and Orthopaedic Hospital is superimposed over a vintage Santa Monica sunset.

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## This is a time of milestones for Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center.

Last year, we celebrated our 10th anniversary as an integral part of the UCLA Hospital System. This year, we will reach an even greater milestone — our 80th anniversary as a hospital dedicated to serving the health-care needs of the Westside community and beyond.

Please circle October 15 on your calendars. That's when we will celebrate this special occasion by hosting a festival right outside our existing medical center on 16th Street. The event will feature an afternoon of fun-filled activities for the entire family, including musical entertainment, refreshments, health screenings, prizes and souvenirs.



We hope that you can join us to take a look back — and a look ahead — with a sneak preview of our new Nethercutt Emergency Center, currently taking shape on 15th Street near Arizona Avenue. This state-of-the-art facility will enable us to better serve the almost 30,000 people who seek emergency care at Santa Monica-UCLA each year (see story on page 8).

Later this year, we will mark another milestone when we change our name to reflect our strategic alliance with Orthopaedic Hospital. Although the new Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center and Orthopaedic Hospital will not be completed for a while, Orthopaedic Hospital has already relocated its surgical services to our campus. We know this partnership will benefit our community, and the greater Southern California area, for decades to come.

Eighty years young and still growing. The best is yet to come! See for yourself at our "80th Anniversary Celebration" on October 15.

Posie Carpenter, RN, MSN, MPH  
Chief Administrative Officer

## A SPECIAL PLACE FOR SPECIAL CHILDREN

Where will the children play? For some special children with special needs, the answer is next to Orthopaedic Hospital's outpatient facility in downtown Los Angeles.

The Orthopaedic Hospital Foundation recently was selected by the Westside-based Everychild Foundation as its sole 2006 grantee and will be awarded \$925,000 to support construction of a universally accessible playground.

The playground will be designed to accommodate children with wheelchairs, leg braces, crutches and other barriers that have left many special-needs children on the sidelines. Its sensory-rich equipment will create a fun environment where children with disabilities can interact with their able-bodied friends and siblings.

Although the playground will be built on Orthopaedic's downtown campus, it will be open to the community.

"There is a tremendous need for a place where children of all abilities can interact and this playground will be used by more children in a single year than any other universally accessible playground in the nation," said Mary Schmitz, president of the Orthopaedic Hospital Foundation. "It will be really heartwarming to see the pure delight on the faces of children who are able to play and just be kids, regardless of their physical abilities."

The Everychild Foundation is composed of a group of Westside women devoted to making a meaningful difference for children in need. It targets one nonprofit organization each year and funds a project that helps children facing disease, abuse, neglect, poverty or disability.



A photo composite of the universally accessible playground planned for Orthopaedic's downtown campus.



William Rogers

# NEW X-STOP IMPLANT PUTS A HALT TO PAIN

by Steven Wagner



Dr. Arya Shamie holds the tiny X-Stop implant that helps halt pain from spinal stenosis.

**A**fter 2-1/2 years of suffering with painful spinal stenosis, Molly Taguchi was losing hope. She had undergone various treatments, including epidural-like injections, but the pain in her legs and buttocks always returned.

Then Dr. Arya "Nick" Shamie, a spine surgeon at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center and assistant professor of orthopaedic surgery and neurosurgery at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, entered the picture.

Taguchi, 61, of Los Angeles, had been set to undergo a traditional laminectomy, in which portions of the vertebrae are removed to eliminate pressure on the constricted spinal cord and nerves. However, just in the nick of time, the FDA approved a new medical device called the X-Stop Interspinous Process Decompression System.

Fortunately for Taguchi, her physician, Dr. Shamie, had inserted the device in more than a dozen patients while a resident at St. Mary's Medical Center in San Francisco, where he trained under the device's inventors, Drs. James F. Zucherman and Ken Hsu. Dr. Shamie was well aware of the device's promise, knew that FDA approval was close, and recommended the procedure for Taguchi — an insurance collector for UCLA Healthcare — shortly after the device received the go-ahead by the agency.



Molly Taguchi had instant pain relief after undergoing the procedure.

*"I don't routinely get excited about new technology, but this is so superior to what we've been using ..."*

*I knew this was a good procedure, but I was still surprised by how quickly her pain was gone."*

— Dr. Arya Shamie

Taguchi's procedure on Jan. 19 was a landmark of sorts. It was the first one in the U.S. performed outside of St. Mary's since FDA approval in November 2005. Dr. Shamie is one of only a handful of orthopaedists nationwide with experience implanting the device.

"I don't routinely get excited about new technology, but this is so superior to what we've been using," Dr. Shamie said. "I'd been asking Dr. Zucherman about its availability, and when the device was approved, I was one of the first surgeons in the U.S. to train with it."

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**X-Stop implantation is generally performed under local anesthesia in under an hour. The risk from general anesthesia is eliminated, trauma is minimized, hospitalization and recovery time are reduced.**

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According to Dr. Shamie, X-Stop implantation is generally performed under local anesthesia in under an hour. The risk from general anesthesia is eliminated, trauma is minimized, hospitalization and recovery time are reduced, and patients generally return to work faster than they do following a laminectomy.

Taguchi returned home the day after surgery. Almost immediately, the pain she had been experiencing was gone.

"I was pleasantly amazed," Dr. Shamie said. "I knew this was a good procedure, but I was still surprised by how quickly her pain was gone."

So was Taguchi, whose official diagnosis included neurogenic claudication — difficulty walking due to nerve impairment.

"I couldn't believe that I didn't hurt anymore," she said. "I'd been in pain for so long, and now I wasn't. I thought I must be hallucinating."

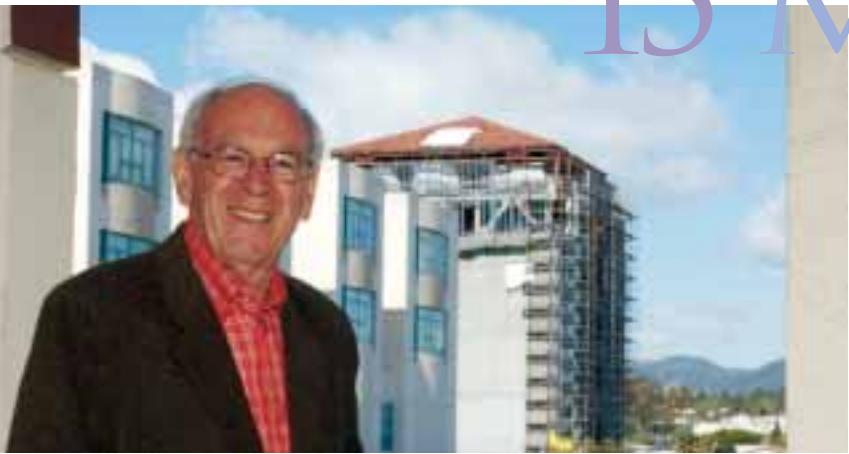
According to Dr. Shamie, many other benefits may arise once the procedure becomes established. Because patients are able to return to work more quickly, time spent away from work — and lost income — should be minimized; on a larger scale, worker productivity around the country is likely to be enhanced. Patients also are more likely to continue working without having to undergo additional spinal procedures down the road. And, because the procedure is less costly than conventional surgery, the financial burden to health care in general is likely to be reduced.

"We have to look at the big picture, that this will help patients, return them to work faster and save money," Dr. Shamie said. "In today's health-care environment, those are important factors. Most important, however, is helping the patient, and in that regard, this procedure clearly will be successful."

Taguchi agrees. "I can walk normally, drive my car and do everything I used to do," she said. "I'm 100-percent improved. I'd recommend this to anyone." ■

For a free, confidential referral to a physician at  
Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center, call (800) 825-2631.

# 15 MINUTES



Tom Neerken

To say Marvin Elkin is an L.A. kind of guy would be an understatement. Born and raised in Los Angeles, Elkin hasn't lived east of La Brea Boulevard since his 13th birthday. The 70-year-old native Angelino, now retired, spends much of his time these days giving back to the area he grew up in and loves.

"I've been blessed over these many years and I want to give a little back by helping out where I can," said Elkin, a Bel Air resident. "It keeps my mind active and it gives me great satisfaction."

One of the ways Elkin gives back is his commitment to Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center, an organization he has served for eight years. Last year, Elkin was named chairman of Santa Monica-UCLA's Board of Advisors. He looks forward to using his considerable business and people skills to make things better.

Elkin plans to shake things up a bit, he said, creating committees to address such vital issues as fund-raising, public relations, marketing and medical affairs.

"The idea is to get more people on the board involved in committee work, so they're not just attending meetings," Elkin said. "Board members should be more involved on a day-to-day basis, and serving on these committees will give them a hands-on understanding of

what's going on in the medical center. It also will give them new insight so they can make better judgments on the things that come before them."

Meyer Luskin, who also serves on the 29-member, volunteer board, said he has enjoyed working with Elkin in his new role as board chairman.

"He's a helluva terrific guy," Luskin said. "He's calm and well-adjusted in conducting meetings. He's objective and positive and doesn't seem to bring any personal agenda to the table other than he wants to do something good for the hospital."

Born at White Memorial Medical Center in East Los Angeles, Elkin was an only child. His father was a cutter in the clothing business and his mother was a stay-at-home mom and, later, a bookkeeper. When he was 13, Elkin's family moved from East L.A. to the Westside, near Third Street and La Brea Boulevard. He attended Fairfax High School and after graduation, enrolled at the University of Southern California, where he studied industrial psychology and business administration.

His education, Elkin said, taught him "how to run a plant and how to make sure employees are motivated and satisfied."

That training would serve him well at Northrop Grumman, where he worked

for 42 years. He started as a statistical analyst and worked his way up the company ladder. Elkin spent the last 10 years in the Century City corporate offices and served as corporate vice president and chief human resources and administrative officer, overseeing the well-being of 50,000 people and setting employee policies.

Elkin says his experiences at Northrop Grumman have helped him become an effective board chairman.

"I have good management skills and can bring a team together, make them gel," Elkin said. "As a leader, I try not to be heavy-handed or bossy."

His goal, in addition to more hands-on board involvement, is to increase awareness in the community about Santa Monica-UCLA's new hospital.

"Hopefully," Elkin said, "I'll be able to help with fund-raising activities and take some of the financial burden off of the hospital."

Elkin and his wife of 36 years, Simona, lived in Santa Monica for about a dozen years before moving to Bel Air. The couple was instrumental in planning "The Gala 2005," which benefited Santa Monica-UCLA's \$295-million rebuilding project. They also served as co-chairs of the "75th Anniversary Gala."

## MUSIC THERAPIST HOLDS THE KEYS TO FASTER HEALING

For Laurel Terreri, music really is "the healing force of the world," as the song says. Terreri is a board-certified music therapist — one of only a few hundred in California and perhaps several thousand nationwide, based on figures from the American Music Therapy Association and the Certification Board for Music Therapists.

Music therapists are health professionals who have completed education and training in music therapy from one of more than 70 accredited college and university programs across the country. Once certified to practice professionally, they use music to address the physical, emotional, cognitive and/or social needs of people of all ages. In hospitals or other clinical settings, music-therapy interventions can help patients to better manage pain and stress, express feelings, improve communication with caregivers and recover more quickly from injuries or illnesses.

Terreri has been a music therapist for the past 10 years. Initially, she worked with cerebral palsy and spina bifida

patients at a New Jersey Hospital. She came to Orthopaedic Hospital about five years ago, as its music therapist and activities coordinator. With the recent transition of Orthopaedic's surgical services to Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center, she has begun working with patients in Santa Monica as well.

Twice weekly, Terreri makes rounds at Santa Monica-UCLA with guitar and music sheets in tow. She works primarily with children in the hospital's Pediatrics Unit, but also visits patients in Geriatrics and the Palliative Care Unit.

Her therapy can range from simply playing music that helps patients relax to "singing and songwriting with children and adults to give them some control of their situations and an avenue for creativity." For longer-term patients, she sometimes begins guitar and piano lessons with them.

Terreri proudly recalls a 9-year-old patient who she tutored on playing the guitar during his hospital stay. After his discharge, the boy's mother bought him a guitar and he now takes lessons.

On a recent afternoon at the medical center, Terreri's musical talents and vocal range were readily apparent. First, she played an instrumental piece to support a 16-year-old from Mexico, who expressed his appreciation by drawing a picture for her. Then she coaxed an eight-year-old patient to sing with her as she played contemporary songs from Green Day and Three Doors Down. Finally, she played and sang a classic Beatles tune requested by an adult patient.

Terreri says that one rewarding aspect of her job is when she can use music therapy to help patients relax. "I've had patients fall asleep while I'm playing, then apologize later on," she says. "But to me, that's the ultimate compliment. It means the music is doing the job."

Terreri, who plays several instruments, including the guitar, piano and clarinet, has been musically oriented from an early age. "Music is a big part of my life. I use music to help me get through the difficult times."

And now she uses music to help other people, at a time when they may be feeling vulnerable and depressed.

"It's a really powerful experience to bring music into people's lives when they're experiencing a lot of pain and sadness," she continues. "Music can really connect people in situations when words may not." ■



Music therapist Laurel Terreri works with patient Jose Rodriguez in Pediatrics.

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## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE: NEW NETHERCUTT ER TO OPEN FIRST

Project officials now expect that construction of the new Nethercutt Emergency Center at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center will be completed in late 2006, with move-in targeted for early 2007.

The 14,000-square-foot facility in the new Southwest Wing will contain several innovative features to enable Santa Monica-UCLA to better serve the almost 30,000 patients a year who seek emergency care at the hospital.

Dr. Wally Ghurabi, medical director of the Emergency Center, says that first and foremost among the innovations is an on-site CT Scanner that will improve service by minimizing patient transport and enabling more timely and accurate diagnosis of various ailments, such as stroke, chest pain and breathing disorders.

Dr. Ghurabi says the new facility also will allow for more efficient and compassionate care, thanks to its updated design featuring a centralized work station, an observation unit where patients can be continuously monitored before being admitted to the hospital or discharged home and exam rooms that offer better privacy and greater versatility for diagnosis and treatment.

"One of the biggest complaints about emergency centers in general is the long waits while more seriously ill patients are taken care of first," he adds. "In our new ER, we will have the capability of providing fast-track service to patients with minor injuries and illnesses."

When the new Emergency Center opens, it will trigger a series of events that will be instrumental to completion of the new Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center and Orthopaedic Hospital.

First, the existing ER facility will be demolished. Then, construction will begin on the Central Wing, which will connect all of the buildings that comprise the new medical campus. The Central Wing will feature a new main entrance containing an airport-style drop-off zone for improved hospital access.

This phase of construction will require the closure of the current main entrance on 16th Street for approximately 18 months. During the closure, the main entrance will shift to 15th Street.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the Southwest Wing, which will house a new Birthing Center, Neonatal Intensive-Care Unit, Recovery Room and inpatients units, is scheduled for completion in mid-2007. A new, state-of-the-art Laboratory will open with the Emergency Center and be located on the building's basement level.



William Rogers

The new Nethercutt Emergency Center will be located on the ground level of the Southwest Wing on 15th Street.

Santa Monica **U C L A**  
Medical Center

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