

1995: A Year in Review

1995 was a banner year for Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth. In September, we began putting out "Good News" reports on a monthly basis. This report sums up the efforts of the men and women of NMC Portsmouth during the last calendar year.

JANUARY

- Ground was broken for the 23rd Fisher House.
- NMC Portsmouth performed its longest surgery ever: 33 hours and 40 minutes.
- LCDR Deirdre Cronin, NC and LT Janelle Wilson, NC, were awarded certification by the American Society of Post-Anesthesia Nurses.
- Two Canadian soldiers returned to Canada from Croatia, where their vehicle sustained 53 shots fired by Croatian Serbs. The soldiers were treated successfully at U.S. Hospital Zagreb (operated by Fleet Hospital Five) for bullet and shrapnel wounds.

FEBRUARY

- Fleet Hospital Five returned home after a six-month deployment to U.S. Hospital, Zagreb, Croatia. 67 men and women from NMC Portsmouth deployed as part of the 250-member hospital, which during its tour treated 10,000 U.N. patients, admitted 350 to the tent hospital, and performed 250 surgeries.
- HM2 Arthur Bailey led the Black History Month Celebration which featured a stirring performance by the Hospital Gospel Choir.

MARCH

- Branch Medical Clinic, Norfolk Naval Shipyard opened its interim clinic facility, marking the beginning of massive renovations to one of the Navy's largest occupational health facilities.
- Congressman Owen Pickett visited NMC Portsmouth to get up to date on military medical issues in his district. Primary focus was on TRICARE issues.
- NMC Portsmouth hosted the Spring Welcome Breakfast sponsored by the Portsmouth Branch, Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce. CAPT

Gregg Parker, CO of Fleet Hospital Five, gave a presentation about the unit's recent deployment.

- WVEC-TV came to one of our operating rooms to get footage of a new cranio-facial procedure developed by two of our surgeons, LCDR Mark Zukowski and LCDR Brian Curtis. The new procedure uses an endoscope to correct a cranio-facial birth defect with minimal scarring and swelling.
- LT Robert Grasso, assigned to the inpatient pharmacy division, was named the 1994 Junior Navy Pharmacist of the Year.

APRIL

- 13 NMC Portsmouth staff members returned from deployment on board USS Wasp in support of Operation Strong Resolve in the North Atlantic.
- 12 staff members were selected for promotion to Captain, four HMCs were selected for E-8, and three HMCSs were selected to pin on master chief's anchors.
- The Laboratory Medicine department put on a traveling display in area malls and Navy Exchanges featuring specimens, slides, and a "video walking tour" of the laboratory.

MAY

- The Dermatology department held its annual skin cancer screening, screening nearly 500 patients in a week's time. The Dermatology staff discovered about 15 cases of skin cancer during the screening.
- The annual Memorial Day ceremony, co-hosted with the Fleet Reserve Association, was held at the hospital cemetery. The oldest grave in the cemetery dates back to the 1830's.
- The Mayor of Portsmouth declared May 13 Navy Nurse Corps Day in celebration of the 87th anniversary of the Corps' founding.
- LT Sam Harry, Ms. Patricia Marshall, Ms. Judy Schweers, Ms. Susan Boyd and Ms. Teresa Kinley were selected to receive a Meritorious Performance Award for the Team Achievement Category of the American Society of Military Comptrollers' 1995 Team Achievement Awards Competition.

JUNE

- The Commander recognized 29 volunteers at the Annual Red Cross Volunteer Recognition Luncheon. Special awards went to Ms. Harriett Brown, who has been a Red Cross volunteer at NMC Portsmouth for over 40 years, and to Ms. Margo Lobst, who volunteered 841 hours this year.
- The Obstetrics/Gynecology department announced that it had lowered its cesarean section rate to between 19 and 20 percent of all births at NMC Portsmouth. The national average is between 22 and 24 percent. Cesarean sections bring a higher risk of bleeding and infection to the mother---NMC Portsmouth's successful effort in this area shows a commitment to minimizing these factors.
- 68 physicians completed their yearlong internships, and were recognized at a graduation ceremony. 62 physicians who completed their three-year residency programs were also recognized.
- The first cochlear implant performed in the Navy was successfully performed by the Otorhinolaryngology department at NMC Portsmouth. The active duty patient, a motorcycle accident victim, had an electronic device implanted in his ear to stimulate the remaining auditory nerves.

JULY

- RADM William J. McDaniel was relieved by RADM William R. Rowley as Commander, Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth.
- The Navy Unit Commendation was awarded to Fleet Hospital Five in recognition of their deployment to Zagreb.
- Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Chipman were the first residents of the new Fisher House.

AUGUST

- NMC Portsmouth hunkered down to await the arrival of Hurricane Felix. In 12 hours, 10,000 50 pound sandbags were filled and positioned. While Felix never showed, staff members performed flawlessly---comforting knowledge when the "real thing" happens.
- HM2 Kenneth Horsley of Boone Branch Medical Clinic was recognized for his athletic achievements. A 1995 All-Navy boxer, Horsley has his eye on a super-heavyweight bid in the 1996 Olympics.

SEPTEMBER

- The Emergency Medicine residency program was awarded full accreditation for five years. This is especially noteworthy, as most new residency programs are only given conditional accreditation's, or accreditation for shorter periods of time.
- Ward 7B (Pediatrics) completed its merge with 11C this month, and embarked on a large-scale redecorating effort. ENS Devery Kinder painted a wall mural, and every bedside was stenciled and painted. Ms. Charlotte Hughes, who provided the paint and stencils, painted a large Sesame Street mural. HM3 Brenda Vogel says it was a total group effort, and is especially proud of a new adolescent room and redecorated playroom.
- The 23rd Fisher House was dedicated on September 26. The Secretary of the Navy, Fleet Forces Command, and the Mayor of Portsmouth were on hand to help us thank Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher for the two-story brick house with luxury accommodations for up to seven families.
- John Sturdivant, national president of the American Federation of Government Employees, visited Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth to meet with collective bargaining unit employees. This was the first time a national union president visited NMC Portsmouth.
- On September 15, the First Class Petty Officers' Association unveiled a new POW/MIA monument for NMC Portsmouth. The FCPOA envisioned, designed and financed the monument.
- Branch Medical Clinic Yorktown along with NMC Portsmouth personnel participated in Exercise Display Select, a Department of Defense-wide nuclear accident drill.
- Naval School of Health Sciences, Portsmouth (formerly Naval School of Health Sciences, Bethesda Detachment, Portsmouth) was formally established as an individual command. CAPT Charles Anderson is the first commanding officer.
- The Board of Directors made a decision to alleviate the difficulties our personnel have getting to sick call. A new instruction allows supervisors to grant time off to military members who call in sick, without going to sick call. This will take some of the load off of military sick call, and will keep sick people at home and away from patients. Supervisors will retain the option of ordering personnel to sick call.

- The Medical Inspector General, as well as the Naval Base Inspector General conducted their inspection of NMC Portsmouth and its branch clinics from 11-28 SEP. With an overall rating of Satisfactory, NMC Portsmouth received numerous Bravo Zulus and several recommendations. Thanks to the IG task force members, and congratulations to all the individuals who make NMCP an outstanding institution!

OCTOBER

- Tri-Prime clinics, operated by Sentara, opened across Hampton Roads October 1. These clinics, open to TRICARE Prime enrollees, are located in Chesapeake and Virginia Beach, as well as at NAS Oceana, NAB Little Creek, NAMEDCEN Portsmouth, and Langley AFB. A Tri-Prime clinic at Fort Eustis will open in January, 1996.
- Family Practice moved to Branch Medical Clinic Sewell's Point. The Family Practice Department offers a family enrollment option which enables the entire family to be seen by the same provider, allowing for greater continuity of care. This option is ideal for families living in the Norfolk area who do not wish to drive to one of the other Tri-Prime sites.
- Six DoD and three VA medical facilities combined their buying power to develop a consolidated contract for laboratory services that will save \$2.9 million over the next five years. Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth alone stands to save \$1.3 million from the five year contract awarded to Laboratory Corporation of America. The VA negotiated the contract using methods designed to assure a high level of service and quality. Price accounted for only 20% of the award criteria. Participating facilities include Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth; 1st Medical Group, Langley AFB; McDonald Army Community Hospital, Fort Eustis; Naval Hospital Cherry Point; Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune; 4th Medical Group, Seymour Johnson AFB; Hampton VAMC; Richmond VAMC; and Salem VAMC.
- Retired volunteers were honored for their 153,000 total hours of service to Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth. Since its inception in 1988, the Retired Volunteers in Medical Service (REVIMS) have averaged 20,000 volunteer hours per year at the medical center. Individual awards were given to volunteers who had exceeded the 5,500 hour mark (there are about 2,000 work-hours in a year, for comparison).
- The 3rd annual Haunted House hosted by Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth, netted about \$800 for the command's Holiday Assistance Program. The whole command got involved in this project with entire families donating their time on the nights of 27 and 28 OCT to ensure a fun yet frightening experience for all. The proceeds from the Haunted

House go to the Holiday Assistance Program, which provides Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets to families in the command who need help during the holidays.

- Over 1,200 people attended this year's Family Fest on Hospital Point. This year's annual picnic, held 29 OCT, enjoyed a great turnout as well as terrific entertainment. Hospital staff members enjoyed a barbecue, live music, children's games and a "Battle of the Directorates."

NOVEMBER

- TRICARE Prime enrollment climbed to 38,000 family members. 27,500 of those enrolled are enrolled to the Sentara-operated clinics on the Southside, 10,500 are enrolled to clinics at Fort Eustis and Langley AFB. Sentara will be opening a new clinic at McDonald Army Community Hospital at Fort Eustis in January.
- Branch Medical Clinic realignment means expanded care at BMC Sewell's Point. A walk-in cold clinic has been established which starts every weekday at 0600. 69,000 Sailors receive their care at BMC Sewell's Point.
- Corpsman awarded Navy/Marine Corps Commendation Medal for intervening and stopping an assault. HM2 Christopher Martineau was cited for stopping to intervene in an ongoing assault on Effingham Boulevard in Portsmouth. He put his own safety at risk to stop the assault. His testimony was the primary factor in the conviction of the assailant---the victim was too frightened to appear at the hearing.
- Hospital staff volunteers distributed 229 Thanksgiving food baskets to staff personnel who needed some help over the Thanksgiving holiday. Money for the project was raised throughout the year, and funded fully by the Sailors, officers and civilians at Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth. -Four professional papers were published by staff members of NMC Portsmouth.
- JCAHO inspection discrepancies resolved. During the December 1994 Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, several discrepancies (called Type I recommendations) were noted in the physical plant, personnel training and qualification records, medical record maintenance, and policy manuals. NMC Portsmouth received word that these discrepancies are considered resolved by JCAHO in light of action taken since the survey.
- The galley at NMC Portsmouth served Thanksgiving dinner to 300 staff members and their families. The traditional dinner featured all the memories of home--from the roast turkey and ham, to the homemade

DECEMBER

- TRICARE Prime enrollment is up to 53,000. 42,000 of those enrollees are enrolled in Sentara-operated clinics in Southside Hampton Roads, 11,000 are enrolled at Ft. Eustis and Langley AFB. Retirees will be able to enroll beginning 1 JAN.
- Sewell's Point Branch Medical Clinic won the Fleet Forces Command Golden Anchor Award for outstanding retention.
- The first ship-to-shore telemedicine link in the Navy took place between USS George Washington and NMC Portsmouth. The teleconference was held to consult on a case involving a severed digit, and resulted in part of the digit being saved without having to order a medevac from the ship.
- HM3 John Cohen delivered his daughter while caught in traffic on I-264. Kirsten Alexandria Breanna made her appearance during rush hour. Mother, YN3 Cassandra Cohen, and baby are doing well!
- The Holiday Assistance Program was back in force for Christmas. This time, in addition to food baskets, stockings for the children were included. That added up to nearly 200 baskets and 300 stockings! Bravo Zulu to the volunteers who made the program work, and thanks to the countless staff members whose contributions made the program possible.
- Rescue Squad Rookie of the Year. HN Payne volunteered over 800 hours last year, and is currently the command Bluejacket of the Quarter