



# Rehab Gab

For and about the employees of *Shepherd Center, a catastrophic care hospital*

## New Spinal Cord Injury Unit Opened This Month

By Caroline Hemingway

**A** transformation is taking place on the fifth floor of Shepherd Center's Marcus-Woodruff Building.

On Oct. 19, the 35,000-square-foot former "empty shell" opened as a spinal cord injury (SCI) treatment and rehabilitation unit. With 35 private rooms for patients — double the number previously available to people with spinal cord injuries — plus a rehabilitation gym, classroom, office space and conference room, the unit signifies a leap forward for Shepherd's SCI Program.

The new spinal cord injury unit is part of a \$9.8 million renovation and remodeling project that includes the addition of a second unit to treat patients with acquired brain injuries. In the first move on Oct. 19, SCI patients on third floor of the Shepherd Building and some on the second floor of Shepherd moved to the fifth floor of Marcus-Woodruff. In early November, NeuroSpecialty Unit patients on the fourth floor of Marcus-Woodruff will move to the third floor of Shepherd. A week later, those remaining on the second floor of Shepherd will move to the fourth floor of Marcus-Woodruff, and the second floor of Shepherd will then be renovated to create one ABI unit that encompasses space in both the Marcus-Woodruff and Shepherd buildings.

The project is a planned, multi-phased effort that began with Shepherd's expansion of the Marcus-Woodruff Building. "We didn't build out the fifth floor during that time," says Wilma Bunch, vice president of building services, "but future plans did call for adding rooms to that floor."

Patient and family requests for more private rooms were a major factor in the build-out of the SCI unit.



**Above:** Work crews prepare the fifth floor construction of the Marcus-Woodruff Building.

"It's hard on patients when they have to switch rooms because of compatibility issues, infection or other reasons," says Sarah Morrison, SCI program director. "It just brings a level of anxiety that they don't need during their rehabilitation."

Moving patients affects efficiency, as well, Morrison adds. "The charge nurses and program manager can spend up to four hours a day trying to figure out which patient will go in what room," she says. "Now, this planning time, plus the time it takes to move patients, will be eliminated by having all private rooms in the SCI unit. And that gives the staff more time to spend with the patients."

One other factor drove the SCI unit renovation — aesthetics. The new unit has a brighter look than the current SCI unit, with larger rooms to accommodate the array of equipment required to treat patients with spinal cord injuries.

"I can't even begin to tell you how wonderful these new rooms are," Morrison says. "We've had several patient families who reached the floors and thought they looked so drab that they wanted to walk right back out the door. They were extremely happy with the services they received here. They just weren't impressed with the darker and older feeling of the environment."

Construction on the fifth floor of Marcus-Woodruff has run smoothly and according to schedule, Bunch says. Once SCI patients move from the second and third floors of Shepherd, the next phase of renovation will begin early next year. The second floor of the Shepherd Building will be renovated to allow the brain injury unit to grow in both the Marcus-Woodruff and Shepherd buildings, while continuing to serve neurospecialty patients.

# Calendar

## Oct. 22: Auxiliary Bake Sale

9 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Midge Tracy, ext. 7315

## Oct. 23 – Nov. 24: Open Enrollment

Tracy Walling, ext. 7585

## Oct. 26: Paradigm Lunch and Learn

Noon – 1 p.m.  
7th Floor Auditorium  
Sign up in education database  
Colleen McCrory, ext. 1306

## Oct. 27: National Workers Comp Advisory Board

8 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
7th Floor Auditorium  
Colleen McCrory, ext. 1309

## Oct. 27: Auxiliary \$5 Jewelry Sale

7 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Waiting area across from security in  
Marcus-Woodruff building  
Midge Tracy, ext. 7315

## Oct. 29: Bloomingdale's Shopping Benefit Event (sponsored by Shepherd Center Auxiliary)

10 a.m. - 10 p.m.  
Lenox Square and Perimeter Mall  
Midge Tracy, ext. 7315f

## Nov. 5: Brain Injury Lunch and Learn:

Disorders of Consciousness and  
Outcomes in PREP Levels of Care  
Noon - 1 p.m.  
7th Floor Auditorium  
Teri Grimes, ext. 7454

## Nov. 5: Research Day 2009

Visual Presentation Judging  
1 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.;  
7th Floor Auditorium  
Jeff Lewis, ext. 7581; sign up in educa-  
tion database

## Nov. 7: The Junior Ball (Shepherd Center Junior Committee's black-tie event)

10 p.m. – 2 a.m.  
The Ritz-Carlton, Buckhead  
Anne Pearce, ext. 7302

## Nov. 7: The Legendary Party (Shepherd Center's black-tie fundraising gala)

7 p.m. – 2 a.m.  
The Ritz-Carlton, Buckhead  
Cara Puckett, ext. 7778

## Nov. 9 – Dec. 24: Pecans on Peachtree

Midge Tracy, ext. 7315

## Q & A with John Lin, M.D.

**Q: How did you come to Shepherd Center – both as a patient and a doctor?**

**A:** In 1991, I had an aneurysm-like condition known as epidural arteriovenous malformation, which left me paralyzed. A Shepherd Center admissions liaison came to my hospital to discuss rehab options. It was apparent to me that the Center had the expertise I needed since it treated more spinal cord injuries than the average rehab facility.

After my discharge, I wanted to practice medicine. I spoke with Dr. Leslie who mentored me before, during and after medical school. I practiced general rehab medicine for a while and worked at a VA hospital for a few years. Then in 2005, I joined the Shepherd medical staff.

**Q: What is it like going from patient to doctor? Does that make your approach unique from other physicians?**

**A:** It was a transformative process. At first, it was difficult to readjust my mindset. I found myself getting lost in patients' tragic stories. As a doctor, you have to be objective. Today I am better able to find a balance: be empathic when I can, but be objective when possible.

**Q: How important is research to patients with SCI? What expectations should people have about discoveries in the future?**

**A:** Research is critical to advance the field and impacts people worldwide. Without it, we would be stuck in the past. With as many clinical trials as our staff conduct and the tremendous number of patients we see with SCI, we are becoming leaders in SCI research. Our experience and knowledge in this field goes beyond what people can get at many other facilities because they simply don't have the same volume of cases.

## FUN FACTS

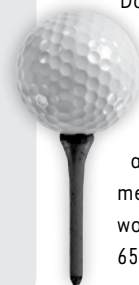


*Above: John Lin, M.D., medical director of post-acute services*

- English was Dr. Lin's fourth language. He learned Taiwanese, Mandarin-Chinese and Spanish first.
- Dr. Lin is an avid wheelchair tennis player and competes in local league tournaments.
- He travels to a new country every year.

## DAYS TO REMEMBER

- **October: Medical Librarians Month**  
**Pharmacists Month**  
**Physical Therapy Month**
- **Oct. 11 – 17: Case Management Week**
- **Oct. 18 – 24: Healthcare Quality Week**
- **Oct. 18 - 24: Infection Prevention Week**



## DR. LESLIE HITS THE GREEN

Donald Peck Leslie, M.D., served as medical director again this year for the 2009 PGA Tour Championship at East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta Sept. 24 – 27. This was his 9th year as medical director of the tournament. The tournament featured 30 of world's top golfers. Phil Mickelson shot 65 to win The Tour Championship.

# The Gab

around  
Shepherd

What is your  
favorite Halloween  
tradition?



**MITCH FILLHABER**  
Marketing

"Collecting money for  
UNICEF."



**KAREN GASSAMA**  
Environmental Services

"I love getting Snickers!"



**TERESA FOY**  
SCI Therapy

"Dr. Murray's team's  
haunted house!"

## SHEPHERD SHOOT-OUT

Shepherd Center is hosting the 14th Annual Shepherd Shoot-Out wheelchair basketball tournament Nov. 6 – 8, featuring teams from around the Southeast. The Shepherd Shoot-Out promises to be an exciting and highly competitive tournament as teams battle in a six-team, Division II round-robin tournament. As with any event, volunteers play a crucial role to make this year's tournament a success. For more information or to sign up to volunteer, contact Shannon Ali at 404-350-7474 or Shannon\_Ali@shepherd.org.

## Shepherd Launches New Web Site

Shepherd Center has a new home on the Internet. This fall, the Center launched a redesigned Web site to keep pace with the overwhelming number of people who visit the site each day to learn more about the Shepherd experience.

The new site, at [www.shepherd.org](http://www.shepherd.org), includes several new features, such as an updated overview of care programs, patient and program videos, and new online functions for submitting a referral or joining a research study.

More and more people are now using the Internet when choosing a rehabilitation facility for their loved one. The new site is geared to helping people who are considering Shepherd as a rehabilitation option.

In addition, a number of other types of visitors will find something of interest on the new site, including people interested in Shepherd's research programs, clinical trials, volunteering or giving opportunities. There is also information available for download on injury prevention tips and resources related to disabilities.

Shepherd Center expects to continue upgrading and improving the site. If you have any feedback about something you'd like to see, please contact Larry Bowie at [larry\\_bowie@shepherd.org](mailto:larry_bowie@shepherd.org).



**Above: Sarah Morrison and Dr. Thrower compete in a tricycle race at the ShepherdCares kick-off lunch**

## Resource Corner

### Resource Name:

Abilities Expo

### How to access:

[www.abilitiesexpo.com](http://www.abilitiesexpo.com).

**Abilities Expo** is dedicated to educating and improving the lives of Americans with disabilities, senior citizens, families, caregivers, healthcare professionals and professional therapists. It has been the nation's foremost event for companies to demonstrate their products and services to the largest community of end-users and industry professionals. The Expo will be at Atlanta's Cobb Galleria Convention Center on Nov. 6 – 8 and Shepherd Center will be an exhibitor.

### Nov. 6 – 8:

### Abilities Expo Atlanta

Cobb Galleria Convention Center. Visit [www.abilitiesexpo.com/atlanta](http://www.abilitiesexpo.com/atlanta). Mark Johnson, ext. 7490

## Words of Wisdom...

*"If your ship doesn't come in, swim out to it."*

— Jonathan Winters; American comedian, actor, and former United States Marine Corps drill instructor

# Welcome

## New Employees

**NEHA BEHARRY**  
ABI NURSING

**JANICE RICHARDS**  
PRN NURSING

**BENJAMIN COOPER**  
WELLNESS CENTER

**MILLICENT SHIELDS**  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERV

**APRIL CURRIE**  
OPD ADMINISTRATION

**DEON SMITH**  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERV

**KELLIS GARRETT**  
SCI INJURY RESEARCH

**LAUREN STEWART**  
ABI THERAPY

**CLIFFORD HACKETT**  
PSYCHOLOGY

**KRISTIE SUMMERS**  
OPD ADMINISTRATION

**PRISCILLA HARRISON**  
PRN NURSING

**JENNIFER SWINDALL**  
FOUNDATION

**AMY HEETER**  
ABI THERAPY

**CANKISHA THOMAS**  
SCI NSG A

**KRISTIN HENNEK**  
OPD REHAB

**SHEVICA TILLER**  
FOOD & NUTRITION SVR

**FAREEZ IMTIAZ**  
RESPIRATORY SERVICES

**PATRICE WALTON**  
OPD ADMINISTRATION

**ISABELL JAVORIS**  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERV

**SHEKILIA WEEMS**  
SCI NSG B

**MARTHA MURRAY**  
SCI NSG A

**JENNIFER YARBROUGH**  
OPD REHAB

**LAURIE NASH**  
PSYCHOLOGY

**ANGELA YI**  
PSYCHOLOGY

**MARY POURRON-BRETT**  
SCI NSG A

## Shepherd Center Physical Therapist Named Emerging Leader



*Above: Shepherd Center SCI physical therapist Joy Bruce*

Shepherd Center spinal cord injury physical therapist Joy Bruce recently received the American Physical Therapy Association's Emerging Leader Award for 2008. This honor is given to one PT who demonstrates extraordinary service and makes exceptional contributions to APTA and the physical therapy profession.

Aside from her role as a PT, Bruce conducts clinical research with Shepherd Center's new Spinal Cord Injury Research Laboratory. Studies she's coordinating include a project with the Georgia Institute of Technology investigating the Tongue Drive wheelchair navigation system for people with quadriplegia and a project with the University of Georgia on the effects on muscle plasticity and glucose tolerance of an electrically stimulated strengthening program.

"It is an honor to be recognized by my peers," Bruce says. "We cannot overestimate the importance of having strong leaders to guide research and education, and to advocate for patients and the profession."

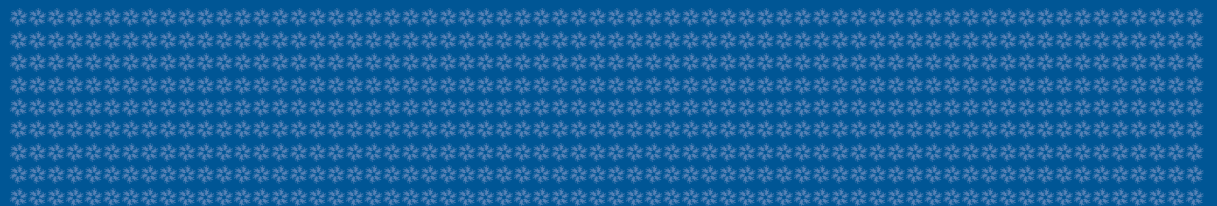
Bruce praises the mentorship she receives from Shepherd's clinicians and managers as a guiding force in her ability to emerge as a leader in her profession.

### Story Ideas?

Contact the Editor: Email Caroline Hemingway at [caroline\\_hemingway@shepherd.org](mailto:caroline_hemingway@shepherd.org) or call 404-350-7645. *Rehab Gab* is available online at [www.shepherd.org/publications](http://www.shepherd.org/publications)



**SHEPHERD  
CENTER**  
A Catastrophic  
Care Hospital



**The mission of Shepherd Center** is to help people who have experienced a catastrophic injury or disease, which has resulted in a temporary or permanent disability, rebuild their lives with dignity, hope and independence, advocating for their full inclusion in all aspects of community life.