

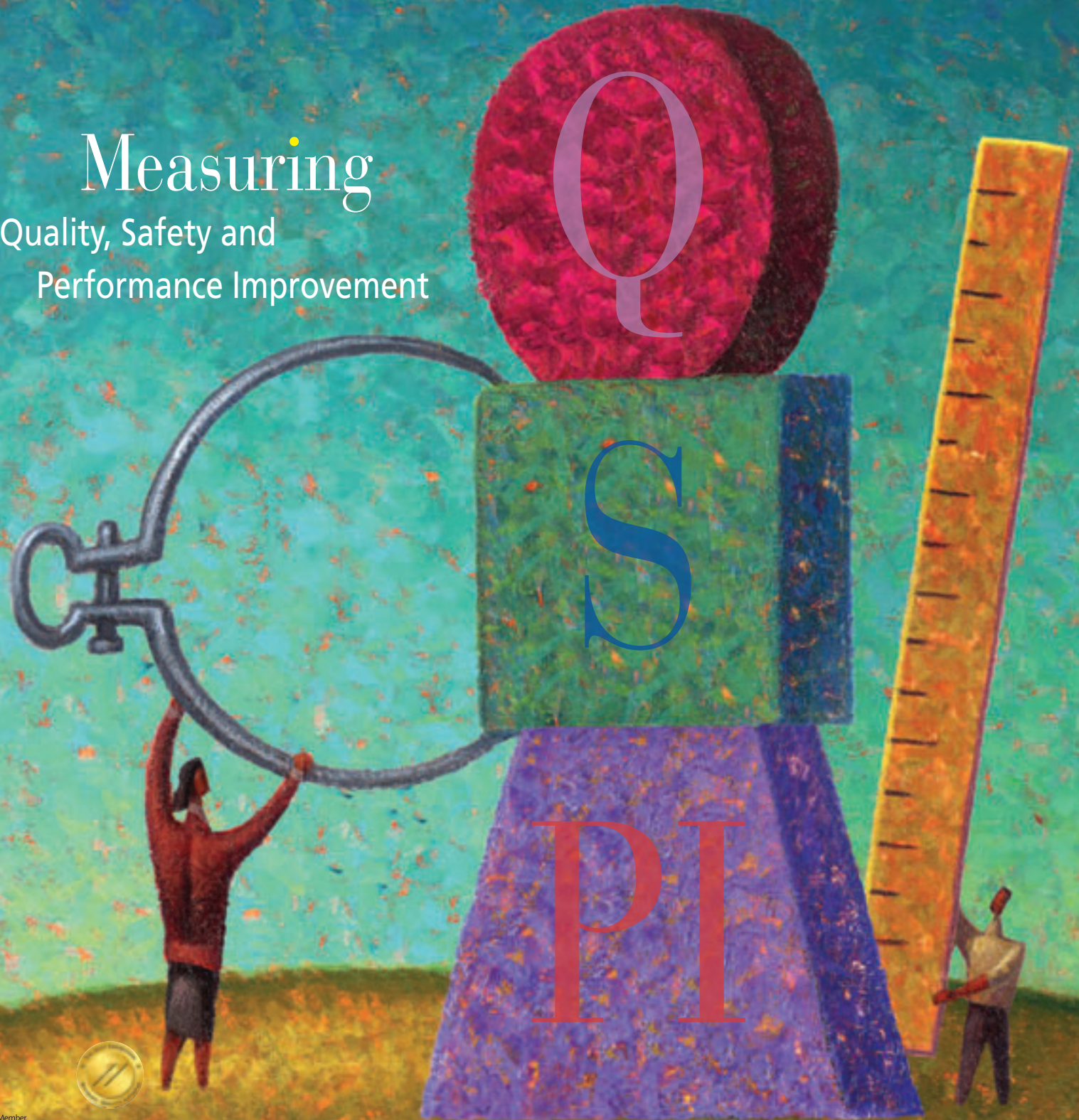
The Silvercrest
Center
for nursing
and rehabilitation

Giving Quality to Life

VantagePoint

WINTER 2009

Measuring
Quality, Safety and
Performance Improvement



Member
NewYork-Presbyterian Healthcare System
Affiliate: Weill Cornell Medical College

THE SILVERCREST CENTER FOR NURSING AND REHABILITATION

is a unique center of excellence, dedicated to quality of life for all whom it serves. Our population includes medically complex patients needing treatment after hospital discharge, patients who need restorative therapy before returning home, and the elderly and chronically ill or traumatized patients who make Silvercrest their home.

Vantage Point is as our name suggests. It will offer you—our family members, colleagues and community—an exciting look into life at Silvercrest, with updates on our developments, programs and plans for the future.

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Performance

At Silvercrest, the Department of Performance Improvement creates tools to measure how we perform against goals set by our Performance Improvement Steering Committee (see sidebar, next page) and finds ways to improve that performance. "In addition to overall quality and safety, we emphasize specific issues," says Denise Lawson, RN, Director of Performance Improvement (shown below).

Here is a closer look at three quality indicators (among several others) that Silvercrest will measure in 2009:

QUALITY INDICATOR: PAIN MANAGEMENT

Because pain affects our residents' quality of life, pain management is consistently included in every year's Performance Improvement and Safety Plan.

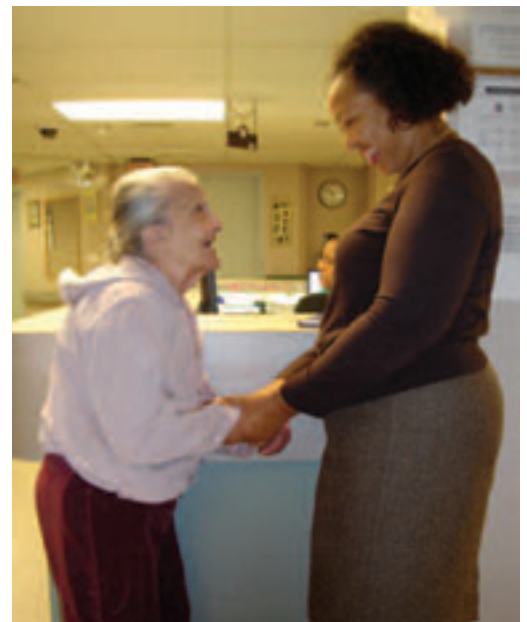
Specific processes exist to assess incidences of unmanaged pain. We have instituted systems to both inquire about pain

and to measure our residents' pain. We also track our response to reported pain. Procedures to prevent pain occurrences include such treatments as medications, physical therapy, acupuncture, and hot or cold packs, among others.

This continued emphasis on pain management has translated to excellent, measurable statistics. The average incidence of residents who report moderate to severe pain in similar New York State facilities is 3.3 to 5.3%. Our rates have held steady in the 1.6% to 2.4% range.

QUALITY INDICATOR: PREVALENCE OF FALLS

We aim to afford residents the independence to move and walk freely throughout their units and the facility if they are physically able. We don't want our residents to fall, however. Careful assessment has enabled us



You can't always prevent a fall. On Silvercrest's dementia unit, many of the residents enjoy walking and we do not want to limit that freedom. Residents, who have been identified as at-risk for falls, wear discreet padding under their clothes to protect their hips.



Improvement

to identify individuals at high risk of falling and protect them to the best of our ability. For instance, our residents with dementia are at special risk of falling. Ongoing measurement and analysis has allowed us to implement targeted supervised walking programs and to strategically place extra staff in the dining room at times when vulnerable residents are most likely to be up and about.

We are seeing remarkable success. The national rate for prevalence of falls for nursing homes is around 13%; for New York State it's about 10%. Last year, Silvercrest reported a fall rate of 2.7% in our first quarter and did even better in our third quarter, with a reported rate of 0.8%.

QUALITY INDICATOR: PRESSURE ULCERS

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services indicate that we have a pressure ulcer rate of about 22%. What is misleading about this statistic is that many of our residents and patients come to Silvercrest with already developing ulcers. The rate of pressure ulcers actually developing here on site at The Silvercrest Center is only 2.1%. This indicator has taught us to look deeper into our measurements for real-time data that helps us actually improve care.



Measuring tool.
These charts help assess the presence of pressure ulcers.

Our pressure ulcer prevention program includes protocols for skin care, regular movement of patients, diets and pressure realizing devices.

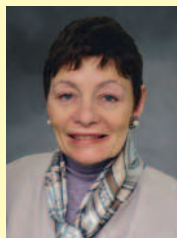
Additionally, a successful pressure ulcer collaborative between Silvercrest and New York Hospital Queens has enabled continuum of care regarding the prevention of pressure ulcers.

These charts help assess the presence of pressure ulcers.

HOW OUR BOARD SUPPORTS PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

The Performance Improvement Steering Committee is authorized by The Silvercrest Center's Board of Trustees to provide oversight for the development, implementation and evaluation of a Performance Improvement and Safety Plan. The Steering Committee is also responsible for the overall management and coordination of facility-wide performance improvement and safety activities.

One thing that is notable about the Steering Committee is the



strong presence of two board members who sit on it, Anne Alexis Coté Taylor, Trustee, (shown at left), and Kathleen M. Burke, Esq., Secretary (shown at right).

Both women have long been actively involved in promoting The Silvercrest Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation's issues of quality and safety and both come to it from different career perspectives.

A Trustee since 1999, and now currently the Board's Secretary, Ms. Burke brings her legal and regulatory expertise to bear on the Steering Committee. She is also the Vice President for Board Relations, Secretary and Counsel of NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital.

Mrs. Taylor was formerly Vice President for Nursing for New York Hospital, and has served as a Silvercrest Trustee since 2002. She brings valuable clinical experience to the Steering Committee.

"Our job is to bring our perspective and to focus attention on the bigger picture," says Ms. Burke. "The administration and staff of Silvercrest is excellent, but they also appreciate our broader, slightly more distant view of things," says Ms. Burke.

Ms. Taylor also emphasizes the Board's long tradition of engaged involvement and concern for safety. "The Board, as a whole, is very focused on patient safety. Whatever comes up at Board meetings is always considered through the prism of quality and safety. This emphasis informs the whole philosophy of the institution," she notes. 🧡



Very Important

EDUCATION TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

It's important that Silvercrest sets performance improvement goals and outlines how we will measure our performance against those goals. It's an empty exercise, however, if our staff is not educated on those efforts. Staff must learn what is expected of them in striving to meet those goals, as well as know how to gather the data that assesses performance.

Sandra Baldwin, RN, Director of Staff Development (*shown below*), manages a thorough program of education to keep staff abreast of performance improvement and safety initiatives, as well as maintain a core of clinical excellence. Key components of this education include:

- **Mandatory in-service education, as required by government and accrediting agency regulations**, which takes place for topics such as abuse, infection control and other patient safety goals.
- **Regular, scheduled in-service education**

on topics that Silvercrest has deemed a focus in our annual Performance Improvement and Safety Plan. "For both our own goals and the mandatory topics, we usually schedule in-services for a week twice a year or more to catch everyone on all shifts," says Ms. Baldwin.

• **On-the-spot education when something arises.** "If there is an incident or a near-miss, we will review with all the appropriate staff the specific processes that relate to that issue," explains Ms. Baldwin. "In addition, if a nurse manager identifies a deficit, we will generate an in-service." Individuals can ask for help, too, or access additional resources available in The Learning Center. "We really encourage that," adds Ms. Baldwin. "We want to help strengthen the skills of our staff, especially in nursing."

• **Competency assessments**, which are conducted with the nursing staff to maintain technique, clinical skills and practices of safety.

• **During orientation**, when new nurses get at least two weeks of training—one in class and then for a week or more with a preceptor on the unit. Non-nursing staff is educated on mandatory and facility-wide topics such as customer service and the

HOW WE KEEP LEARNING

To keep improving our quality efforts, Silvercrest has voluntarily joined several national and State initiatives to learn better ways for Giving Quality to Life. Examples are:

- **Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes**, a coalition of long-term care providers, quality experts, consumers and government agencies dedicated to improving quality in nursing homes.
- **Quality First**, a commitment to performance excellence by the long-term care community. This initiative is a public pledge to meet quality improvement targets.
- **STAR Program**, a CMS Web-based tool that provides methods to set improvement targets, compare our performance to national benchmarks and track performance goals.
- **The Colors of Safety**, an initiative that seeks to standardize color-coding across acute and long-term care settings. To prevent medical errors, most healthcare facilities color-code certain patient conditions through color-coded devices. From facility to facility, however, different colors are used for the same condition.



Programs & People

Performance Improvement goals, and also receive specific departmental training pertaining to their job responsibilities.

• **As a collaboration with various initiatives** (see left sidebar), in-services are done on a regular basis.

A TEAM OF EXPERTS AND EDUCATORS TO CALL ON

While Ms. Baldwin does her fair share of teaching, she is especially supported by Peaches Smith-Grinion, RN, Staff Educator (shown below, center and right during classroom and bedside in-services). There are other teachers, too, such as nurse managers and, among others:

- **Denise Lawson, Director of Performance Improvement**, who is (not surprisingly) involved in education on the year's specific performance improvement goals.
- **Rehabilitation**, which works closely with nursing staff on issues such as positioning for pressure ulcer prevention.
- **Environmental Services**, which teach much of the mandatory fire and safety components, especially during employee orientation and annual reviews.

• **Social Services**, which is instrumental in educating all staff about residents' rights, advance directives and end-of-life issues.

• **Invited guests, often from professional organizations and New York Hospital Queens**, who provide expertise in their fields. "I like to provide our staff with maximum exposure to as many people as possible," says Ms. Baldwin.

HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE

Much staff education takes place in our classroom and sometimes staff even creates the curriculum. For instance, last year, one of our quality indicators was to improve residents' range of motion. Nursing, Therapeutic Recreation and Rehabilitation videotaped an exercise program that was used in the classroom to teach staff how to improve our performance on this indicator.

Education also takes place on the units. In some cases, however, that education is self-taught. "We have created our own self-learning modules with handouts and tests," says Ms. Baldwin. "This way staff can brush up on specific skills, knowing that the education is tailored to Silvercrest policy." 🌐



HOW YOU CAN KEEP LEARNING

It requires surprisingly little money or formal education to learn new things:

- **Begin with basics.** An Internet search can unearth teaching, articles, experts in the field and local resources.
- **Visit the library.** Gather the names of authors and books you discovered online and check some out. A great hint: Go to the young adult section and look for books about the same topic. Sometimes these books are easier to learn from than their grown-up counterparts.
- **Build your own library.** Invest in books that would make good additions to your shelves for your future reference.
- **Practice.** Don't just keep the learning in your head. Go do the thing (speak Italian, build a table, write a novel, debate a policy).
- **Find new knowledge buddies.** Web sites, nearby clubs, listservs, community colleges, local lectures—these are all valuable places to find friends who are curious, too, about your new favorite field. Sharing information always contributes to learning.



HOW TO HELP SILVERCREST



There are many ways to help us build a better Silvercrest. Among them are donating to these various funds:

Capital Campaign

Silvercrest is embarking on an ambitious project to upgrade all resident rooms and nursing units.

General Fund Contribution

Donations are used for maintenance of established programs and services.

Therapeutic Recreation

Broadway shows, bingo, crafts, even happy hour—please support TR programs.

Learning Center

Where residents can further their education, access the Internet, or enjoy a good book or magazine.

Meditation Room/Chapel

Support this relaxing and peaceful space for families, visitors and residents.

Golf and Tennis Outing

Lovers of golf and tennis, should mark their calendar for the annual Silvercrest Golf Classic on May 11, 2009.

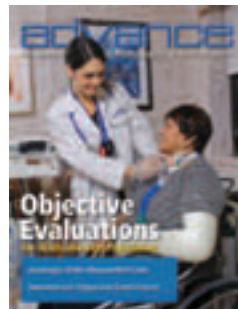
For more information on tax-saving opportunities and to give to the above, please call Lloyd F. Torres at 718.480.4023. Or donate online at www.silvercrest.org/giving.html.

To the point...

SILVERCREST IN THE NEWS

In the October 2008 issue of *Inside Healthcare*, **Michael Tretola**, FACHE, Senior Vice President and Administrator of Silvercrest, was featured in a prominent story on our facility. The multi-page piece (complete with many wonderful photos) was called, "Rest Assured: The Silvercrest Center. A veteran staff helped this company raise the bar on customer service for healthcare providers across New York."

Equally impressive, was another feature story, entitled, "Objective Evaluations for Trach and Vent Population," in the October



13, 2008 issue of *Advance for Speech Language Pathologists & Audiologists*. Our speech pathologists and residents were shown in many photos, including the big cover shot! 🧡

SILVERCREST WELCOMES NEW ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

The Silvercrest Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation welcomes Natasha Elie, MHA, our new Assistant Administrator. "The Silver-



crest Center is a gold standard for skilled nursing care. Why wouldn't you want to be a part of a facility that is making such strides in the right direction?" she says.

Ms. Elie comes to us from New Gouverneur Nursing Facility, where she served as an Assistant Administrator. She received her Bachelor's in Health Informatics from SUNY Stony Brook, and her Master's in Health Administration from Hofstra University. She is also a native "Queens girl," having grown up in the Silvercrest neighborhood, where she still currently lives. 🧡

VOLUNTEER MICHAEL BROWN'S SERVICE RECOGNIZED



HealthCare Chaplaincy, which provides pastoral care to many healthcare institutions including to Silvercrest, annually grants *Wholeness of Life* awards to one staff member from each of their partner institutions for their exceptional concern for patients and fellow staff members. This year, Silvercrest Volunteer Michael Brown was so honored. He was joined at the black-tie event by his family (*Mr. Brown is shown here on the right with one of his sons*) and proud Silvercrest staff. 🧡



A SILVERCREST SUCCESS STORY: RESIDENT FRANCES YOUMAN



Frances Youman (*shown here, far right, with Physical Therapy Assistant Maurice Botero and her roommate, Christine Cauchi*) recently returned home. Chronic heart and pulmonary conditions prompted her admittance to New York Hospital Queens a year ago, where she was put on artificial ventilation. After several months, she was transferred to Silvercrest for the ventilation weaning process. Frances was liberated from ventilation at the end of September.

One thing Frances, 51, will bring home with her is her continuing friendships with staff members from Nursing, Speech Pathology and Physical Therapy, but especially with her roommate. Because of her active participation in the social life of Silvercrest, Frances' discharge was met with joy and tears and plans for return visits. 🧡

DENTAL SERVICES EXPANDING

Within a state-of-the-art operator, dentists and hygienists care for our residents' specialty and general dental and oral-health needs. Silvercrest continues to explore ways to provide better ways to deliver this important service. Plans are underway to reinvigorate the New York Hospital Queens dental fellowship here at Silvercrest, which will allow more frequent dental coverage. 🧡

AND THE FAMILY SURVEY SAYS... 96.9% ARE SATISFIED

Silvercrest participated in an extensive survey with the Alliance Continuing Care Network. The Family Satisfaction Survey not only measured how we rate in the eyes of families but also how we compare to other area facilities. We are pleased to report that 96.9% of respondents have a positive overall satisfaction with Silvercrest and that 96.8% would recommend the facility to a friend or family member. 🧡

OUR NEWLY APPOINTED COMPLIANCE OFFICER

Lloyd F. Torres, MHA, Director, has also been appointed Silvercrest's Corporate Compliance Officer. Mr. Torres will oversee the Corporate Compliance Program, which maintains a vigorous effort to detect and prevent fraud, waste and abuse. He also strives to educate staff on fraud and abuse laws, including



the importance of submitting accurate claims and reports to the government and other payers.

"Do the right thing all the time," is the core message that Mr. Torres stresses.

"We want to remind everyone—staff, patients, residents, family, visitors—that if they have any concerns they can report them 24 hours a day to our toll-free compliance hotline, 1-888-308-4435." Callers to the hotline can remain anonymous. 🧡

Heading home

I write this letter on my last day of treatment before I go home. I would like to commend everyone at Silvercrest, especially those who work in Rehab and on 2 North. Everyone has done more than I could have asked. Thank you for your care and concern.

– Charles Talluto
Bayside, NY

Finance provides customer satisfaction

This morning I called Yeimi Ventura of your Finance Department about my mother's bill. I was quite upset at the insurance company, yet Yeimi was able to calm me down without being condescending and took the time to explain the situation to me.

I have worked with the public for my entire career and I know how difficult it can be when dealing with people who are acting on their emotions. I have taught customer service, as well, and can tell you that Yeimi did everything right. She was never annoyed or nasty and didn't react to my state of anger. Instead, she remained composed and responded with professionalism. Yeimi epitomizes the best of customer relations.

– Karen Lucas
College Point, NY

SILVER SNAPS



At Silvercrest, we're always up for a party! Here's a peek at some of the celebrations and activities that residents, staff and visitors have enjoyed. From top left and clockwise: Halloween trick-or-treaters; Diwali (Hindu) observance; visit from Elmo; one of many concert series; a resident field trip; resident music lessons; and more Diwali fun. Thanks, as always, go to the Therapeutic Recreation Department and Dietary Services who coordinate these happy events for us all.



FAMILY COUNCIL NEWS



During the June meeting, a welcome was given to our new Chaplain and Director of Pastoral Care, David Wentroble, D.Min. Dr. Wentroble proceeded to give a presentation on his role and Pastoral Care Services. Our new Assistant Administrator, Natasha Elie, MHA, was also introduced.

Questions included one on the frequency of podiatry services (typically weekly for those residents who require ongoing care), future remodeling (some time in 2009), new signs encouraging walking instead of elevators (meant for staff only), and broken door handles (all three reported were fixed shortly after the meeting).

In September, Denise Lawson, Director of Performance Improvement, gave a presentation on the Influenza Vaccination Program and infection control. Another main presentation was one from Alicia Algeo, Hospital Services Specialist, from the New York Organ Donor Network.

Family Council gives families an opportunity to meet each other and Silvercrest staff quarterly, make suggestions, express concerns and share information. All family members are welcome. Invitations and agendas for upcoming meetings and minutes of past meetings are posted on the Family Council bulletin board by Social Services.

For more information about the next gathering, speak to your unit's social worker or call Rob Herel, Director of Social Work, at 718.480.4034. 📞

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