



P.5

Driving New Vehicles



FOR&ABOUT: The Health System Community

# Noninvasive Vascular Lab Team: Protecting Patients from Ruptured Arteries

Shadowy images of blood flowing through veins and arteries; the aberrant ballooning of a weakened vessel; the whoosh, whoosh rhythm of the heart's pulse – a symphony of hidden portraits and sounds fill Mary Nicholson's days. As chief vascular technologist for UVa Heart and Vascular Center's noninvasive vascular lab, Nicholson works with thousands of patients, helping doctors track unusual blood flow patterns, growing abnormalities or dangerous leaks.

"We see about 500 patients a month," says Nicholson, R.T., RDMS, RVT. "But it's not just about me. We are a team of five registered vascular technologists, all working together...it's the best thing about the lab."

Nicholson and her fellow technologists – John Dunham, RT(CT), RDMS, Houston Richardson, RDCS, CCT, RVT, Denita Benston, RVT, and Todd Oickle, RVT – help vascular experts diagnose, observe and monitor the size of abdominal aortic aneurysms (AAA). AAA is characterized by an atypical swelling or ballooning in the wall of the abdominal portion of the aorta, the major artery from the heart. "The original screening is with ultrasound. If an aneurysm is found we do studies over time to follow the size," says Nicholson. "When it gets to about 5 cm, something has to be done."

Early Diagnosis is Key  
AAAs account for 15,000 deaths each year in the United States, but often grow undetected because there are few, if any, symptoms.



At UVa Health System's noninvasive vascular lab, these vascular technologists use ultrasound to locate bulging areas of patients' aortas so that doctors can repair the arteries before they rupture. From left to right: Denita Benston, Todd Oickle, John Dunham, Houston Richardson and Mary Nicholson.

Nonetheless, 1 in 3 asymptomatic AAAs eventually rupture if left untreated. Once ruptured, the prognosis is grim. "It's important to find it before it ruptures," says Nancy L. Harthun, M.D., a vascular surgeon and medical director of the lab. "Of those who make it to the hospital, only 50 percent survive." For this reason, the United States Preventive Services Task Force recommends routine screening of at-risk men – smokers over age 60 with a family history. And this month, Medicare approved payment for screening of certain people over 65, including all

men who have smoked at least 100 cigarettes, and men and women with a family history of aortic aneurysm.

**Less-Invasive Option**  
In the past, major open surgery was the only treatment option. It required a 10-inch incision and weeks of recuperation. High-risk patients, including those with heart or lung problems, were often too ill to undergo the surgery. UVa Health System offers a less-invasive technique known as endovascular repair. Instead of a long incision, this technique uses a catheter-and-balloon system that allows physicians to repair an aneurysm through an artery in the leg. Patients are generally back home the next day. "Even those not considered surgical candidates can undergo this less-invasive procedure with good

See "Vascular Lab" on page 4

P.4 Lights of Love contributions benefit children

P.3 Spread the word about free health screenings

BP Enroll in a clinical trial (on back page)

## National magazines to feature UVa

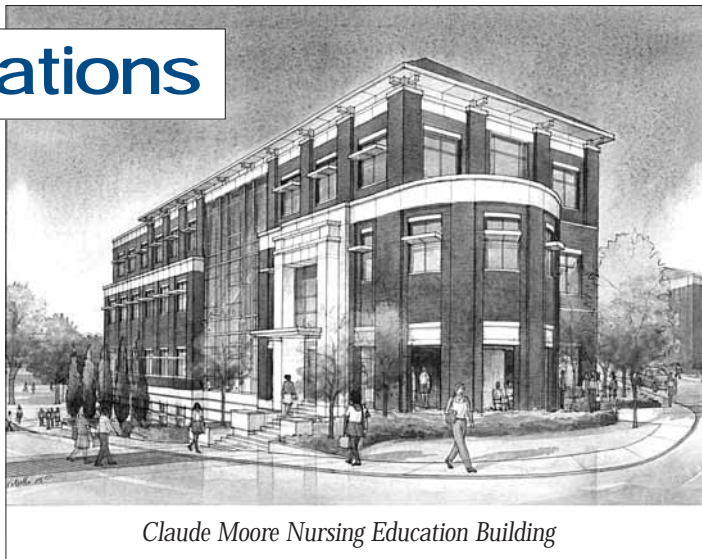
A patient who had her AAA (abdominal aortic aneurysm) successfully repaired at UVa will be featured in an advertorial that will run this April in *Time*, *Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report*. If you subscribe to any of these publications, look for the one-page feature in your magazine. That month, AAA repair will also be featured on [www.uvahealth.com](http://www.uvahealth.com).

## Gifts & Donations

● **\$5 Million Gifts Benefit Nursing, Cancer**  
For the UVa Health System, 2006 began with the news of two remarkable gifts. The first, a *\$5 million grant from the Claude Moore Charitable Foundation of Fairfax*, will allow the School of Nursing to expand its facilities for educating nurses.

The second, a *\$5 million commitment from the Smithfield-Luter Foundation of Smithfield, Va.*, will support cancer prevention efforts in the UVa Cancer Center.

● **Unprecedented Nursing School Gift**  
The Claude Moore gift, the largest single gift ever received by the School of Nursing, will be used to construct a new nursing education building and to upgrade McLeod Hall. Groundbreaking for the new building, to be located across 15th Street from McLeod, is planned for spring 2006. The proposed four-story, 32,000-square-foot Claude Moore Nursing Education Building will provide large, flexibly designed classrooms equipped with cutting-edge instructional technologies, a student life center, computer kiosks placed throughout the building, conference rooms, and offices for



Claude Moore Nursing Education Building

administrators, faculty, staff, and graduate students. The new facility will be adapted to support the latest innovations in wireless telecommunications.

According to School of Nursing Dean Jeanette Lancaster, R.N., Ph.D., FAAN, the expansion has been anticipated for some years. "Each year we turn away qualified applicants due to a lack of space, at a time when the shortage of nurses is increasingly severe," says Lancaster. "The new space will enable the school to expand its research mission, upgrade its clinical simulation labs, and graduate more new nurses."

● **Supporting Cancer Prevention Efforts**  
The UVa Cancer Center's gift from the Smithfield-Luter Foundation will support efforts to recruit an internationally recognized cancer prevention specialist and expand

the Cancer Center's cancer prevention research team. The gift will also help UVa find new ways to assess cancer risk, detect cancer earlier, and develop individualized prevention therapies.

"More precise knowledge of cancer at the molecular level will lead to better and safer care for our cancer patients," says Vice President and Dean of the School of Medicine

Arthur Garson, Jr., M.D., M.P.H. "Thanks to Smithfield-Luter's generosity, UVa will join an elite group of cancer centers developing new models for 'individualized medicine.' This means that because each patient's cancer may respond differently to treatment, we must learn to predict the most effective course of treatment for each patient."

Smithfield's gift was made in memory of longtime Smithfield associate and director, Palmer Weber, father of UVa Cancer Center Director Michael Weber, Ph.D. The gift will endow a professorship and provide programmatic support for research laboratories and start-up funds for an investigative team that will use molecular profiling technologies to improve individual and public health.

"This new cancer prevention research program has the potential to develop tests for early detection and individualized prevention that will benefit our patients within three to five years," says Weber.

These two new gifts support significant needs within the Health System. They also serve to sustain the momentum of the \$500 million fundraising campaign, which is in its early stages and scheduled for public launch in September 2006.

## Vehicles Get New Look

Over the past few months, you may have spotted UVa Health System vehicles wearing a vibrant new look. In addition to the vehicles pictured, UVa's new digital mobile mammography unit (featured in last month's LINK) and handicap shuttle bus are sporting a blue and orange paint scheme. As vehicles meet their service limit over the coming years, they will be replaced with vehicles displaying the new look. The next to appear this summer will be NETS2 (neonatal emergency transport system), an ambulance, and an additional ground support vehicle. Drivers C.C. Vencil, David Cornelius and Chris Hucks (left to right in cover photo) are enjoying their new vehicles.



## Pegasus Bids Farewell to its Last Original Nurse



When Wendy Caldwell became a UVa flight nurse 22 years ago, she only flew on sunny days and her uniform consisted of khaki pants and a white cotton shirt. Today, she and her crewmates wear helmets and flame-retardant flight suits and fly even on cloudy days in the most state-of-the-art helicopter. In April when she retires, Pegasus will lose its last original flight nurse.

In 1984, where University Hospital now stands, UVa Health System's Pegasus helicopter touched down for the first time, making UVa one of the first hospitals in Virginia to offer emergency transport by air. That year, Wendy Caldwell, R.N., already a veteran surgical nurse at UVa, was among UVa's first nursing crew to take their skills to the air. In April, after completing more than 4,000 air and ground emergency missions to transport critically ill patients, Caldwell will retire. "She is the last of UVa's original five flight nurses," says Robert E. Knox, R.N., MSN, NREMT, UVa's Prehospital Medicine manager whose duties include overseeing the operations of the Pegasus ground and air units. In 1984, Knox was one of the first paramedics to join the Pegasus crew.

Over the past two decades, Caldwell has served many roles with Pegasus, including taking care of time and attendance, helping run educational programs and serving as acting chief flight nurse. "Wendy is truly the matriarch of Pegasus," Knox says. "She has been a constant pillar of strength and a resource to both old and new employees. She is greatly respected by everyone. Her typical smile in the morning even after a long night will be missed."

## Colon Cancer Screenings Relieve Fears

Having been healthy all her 60-some years, retired schoolteacher Joyce Mitcheltree of Mineral was understandably scared about going to the hospital for the first time. On March 11 last year, she was scheduled to have her first colonoscopy – a procedure in which doctors look for, and remove, polyps that can lead to colorectal cancer (cancer of the colon and rectum). She thought the procedure would hurt and, frankly, was embarrassed by the whole thing.

To her surprise, that day ended up being a very pleasant experience. In March 2005, Mitcheltree and 16 other seniors from outlying rural counties were participants in the first-ever Senior Colonoscopy Day at UVa Health System. The day was made possible by a collaboration among the UVa Digestive Health Center of Excellence, UVa Cancer Center and Jefferson Area Board for Aging (JABA).

Mitcheltree was so pleased with her experience at UVa that she wrote the organizers as soon as she got home: *"The four ladies from Louisa County extend to you our sincere thanks and appreciation for a smooth and eventful day wherein we achieved a milestone in having our colons tested and the soothing reassurance that 'all is well.' The many treats and hospitality extended to us will give us fond memories. We are aware that much planning went into the dovetail-*

*ing that made our day flow from pre-registration to coordinating our transportation with JAUNT and to the charming receptionist meeting us and leading us to our destination. Every effort was made by one and all to calm our anxiety attacks for we all were fearful of the unknown."*

UVa and JABA decided to team up for several reasons, says Nila Saliba, cancer control

### Two Convenient Locations to Get Screened

**The American Cancer Society recommends that by age 50 everyone should be tested for colorectal cancer. Talk to your primary care physician about referring you for a screening colonoscopy. UVa Health System offers two convenient locations – the Digestive Health Center and UVa Outpatient Surgery Center.**

coordinator/outreach for the UVa Cancer Center. Seniors from outlying rural areas often have a difficult time finding a ride to the hospital; at the same time their age puts them at an increased risk for developing colon cancer.

Colorectal cancer is virtually preventable through screening but is still the second-leading cause of cancer deaths among men and women. Among the Senior Day participants

last year, half of them had polyps removed that, if left alone, could have led to cancer. Because last year's event was so popular, UVa hosted another Senior Colonoscopy Day this March 10 during National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Not only did the event prove vital to the seniors' health, it was designed to alleviate their fears and make the entire process as easy as possible.

At JABA senior centers in Louisa, Greene, Fluvanna and other areas, seniors were invited to sign up for a screening colonoscopy after learning about its importance. A few days before their scheduled colonoscopies, each senior received a call from Kathy Tapscott, R.N., a UVa Digestive Health nurse. She made sure they understood how to prepare and weren't taking any medications that could interfere with the procedure. On the day of the event, they were picked up at their homes, driven to UVa and escorted to the Digestive Health Center. After the procedure, they were invited to have lunch in an education room that staff turned into a "hospitality suite" for the day. "We just talked about it the whole way home," Mitcheltree recalls. "We just had a wonderful time. I'm so delighted UVa is going to do it again ... A lot of these people would have never gotten to go if it wasn't arranged for us like that."

## [People & News]

The UVa Department of Chaplaincy Services and Pastoral Education presented the Clyde M. Watson Jr.

Distinguished Service Award in Pastoral Care and Education to **Stan Nolan, M.D.**, retired chief of the Thoracic Cardiovascular Surgical Service. The award is named for the former director who joined UVa in 1965 and helped develop UVa's first accredited clinical pastoral education program.



Stan Nolan, M.D.

**Vamik Volkan, M.D., DLFAPA, FACPsa**, retired UVa professor emeritus of psychiatry, has been nominated for the second year in a row for the Nobel Peace Prize, mainly for the work he did as the former director of UVa's Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction. For his 2006 Nobel Prize nomination, letters of support came from 20 countries. Volkan's notoriety continues to grow. His study of re-grief therapy was cited in Joan Didion's grief memoir "The Year of Magical Thinking" that recently won the National Book Award in Nonfiction.

**Mildred Best, MDiv, MSS, BCC**, Medical Center program manager for the Department of Chaplaincy Services and Pastoral Education, accepted an invitation to the editorial

### Free Saturday Health Screenings

Stroke. Cancer. Heart Disease. Diabetes. No community is immune from these serious diseases, but regular checkups and education can go a long way in prevention. For this reason, UVa Health System is offering free health screenings on the first Saturday of every month. From 10 a.m. to noon in the University Hospital lobby, UVa health professionals will check blood pressures, calculate BMIs (body mass indexes) and teach participants about their health risks. No appointment is necessary. This is a walk-in event with free parking. For more information, call 924-DOCS (3627).

board of the Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling, an award-winning professional publication offering articles and book reviews on pastoral care, counseling, clinical pastoral education, and ministry in specialized settings. The Association of Clinical Pastoral Education supports the journal along with the Association of Professional Chaplains, the National Association of Jewish Chaplains, the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education, the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy, and the National Institute of Business and Industrial Chaplains.

UVa School of Nursing **Dean Jeanette Lancaster, R.N., Ph.D., FAAN**, helped create an international alliance of nursing educators to improve patient care worldwide and to ensure a robust global supply of highly educated nurses. Representing the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) in a December meeting in London, Lancaster met with other founding members to establish the Global Alliance on Nursing Education (GANE). Lancaster also will become the AACN's president this month. The AACN is one of the world's preeminent nursing education organizations.

**Carolyn Craig**, an administrative specialist for the Office of Telemedicine, is the Medical Center's Employee of the Month for January: A colleague says of Craig "She has tons of tasks over her head, yet that doesn't keep her from smiling. She is always willing to stop what she is doing to help someone. She is a real team player here ... Words can't express how wonderful she is to us here. Without her, Telemedicine would not be the same, we wouldn't be the same." An undergraduate student who works part-time in the office adds: "Carolyn has been an

excellent role model for me. She does a tremendous job of keeping everything organized and on schedule. I see that Carolyn is constantly working hard and that she truly has a passion for working in the Telemedicine office."

### UVa Doctor Featured at a Va. Festival of the Book Event

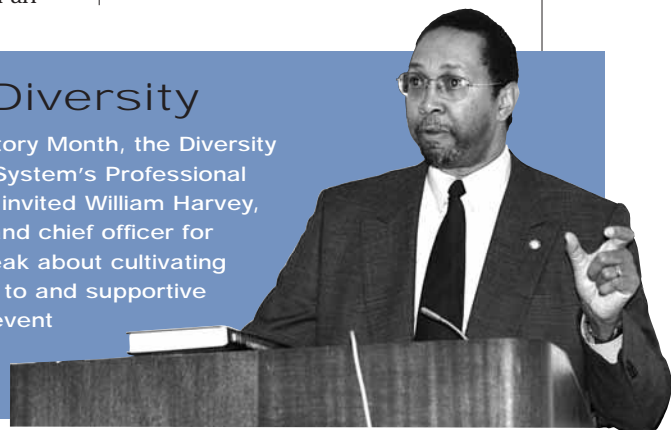
**Jonathan Evans, M.D., MPH**, head of Geriatric and Palliative Medicine and a primary care geriatrician at UVa, will share his expertise on long-term care during a March 22 Virginia Festival of the Book event. Dr. Evans will respond to remarks by **William H. Thomas, M.D.**, geriatrician and author of "What Are Old People For? How Elders Will Save the World." The event takes place 2-4 p.m. at Piedmont Virginia Community College in the Dickinson Auditorium and is being hosted by the Community Partnership for Improved Long-term Care.

**Emily Gray**, grants administrator for the Department of Internal Medicine, is the School of Medicine's Employee of the Month for January. Colleagues who nominated her commended her effectiveness in all stages of grants management. They applauded the sensitivity, patience, organization and enthusiasm she brings to all of her tasks and collaborations with others.

Both the UVa Medical Center and School of Medicine raised more money and had the highest number of participants in 2005 than any previous year during the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign. In total, **the Medical Center and School of Medicine raised \$326,310**. In addition, the School of Medicine produced the highest average pledge per donor of all UVa participants. Compared to the previous year, the Medical Center and School of Medicine together increased their number of pledges by \$9,054 and their number of donors by 90 people.

### Celebrating Diversity

In celebration of Black History Month, the Diversity Committee of UVa Health System's Professional Nursing Staff Organization invited **William Harvey**, UVa's first vice president and chief officer for diversity and equity, to speak about cultivating an environment conducive to and supportive of minority retention. The event took place Feb. 9 in Camp Heart Auditorium.



## Spotlight on Patient Safety



### New Guidelines for Preventing Blood Clots

Prevention of potentially fatal blood clots, such as deep vein thrombosis

(DVT), is an important consideration for all hospitalized patients. A blood clot in the lungs (pulmonary embolism) is a major killer in the U.S. and remains the leading cause of preventable hospital death. The critical importance of risk assessment and prevention for a blocked blood vessel (thromboembolism) in surgical patients has long been known, and evidence is mounting about the importance for other high-risk populations. Most hospitalized patients have at least one of the known risk factors including: advanced age, malignancy, cancer chemotherapy, pregnancy, acute medical illness, heart or respiratory disease, obesity, estrogen therapy or smoking.

Based on recommendations from the American College of Chest Physicians, a UVa Medical Center task force led by Jonathon Truwit, M.D., senior associate dean for Clinical Affairs and division chief of Pulmonary Medicine, has developed institutional guidelines for venous thromboembolism prevention (VTE prophylaxis). Patients are assessed for risk factors and bleeding risk and then categorized into low-, medium-, and high-risk groups with associated prevention strategies.

Recommended strategies may include use of anticoagulant drugs, mechanical methods such as elastic stockings and sequential compression devices, and early patient ambulation. The task force reviewed existing department guidelines and evidence from the literature to develop a standardized approach that incorporates VTE prevention into the admission process to trigger early assessment and prompt start of preventive therapy when indicated.

The new guidelines go into effect this summer. Clinicians should incorporate VTE prophylaxis when educating patients, including awareness of individual risk factors and how patients can participate in prevention strategies. Documentation of assessment and strategies will be key in monitoring the effectiveness of the new guidelines and their impact on patient outcomes.

Learn more about how to put National Patient Safety Goals into practice at [www.healthsystem.virginia.edu/library/portal/patientsafety/](http://www.healthsystem.virginia.edu/library/portal/patientsafety/)



## Lights of Love for Children

Kathy Quale, president of the UVa Hospital Auxiliary (second from left), presents a \$10,000 Lights of Love check to: (left to right) Nancy McDaniel, M.D., medical director of the UVa Children's Hospital; Margaret M. Van Bree, MHA, DrPH, chief operations officer; and Terry Lucas, administrator for Women's and Children's Services. Lights of Love is an annual holiday event in which donors give a light on the

Lights of Love Tree in honor or in memory of a loved one. Donations are directed toward a recipient within the UVa Health System selected by the Auxiliary. This year's gift will help make the UVa Children's Hospital more comfortable for patients and families. It will be used to purchase art to brighten the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and air mattresses for parents who stay overnight with their children.

## Vascular Lab

*continued from page 1*

expected outcomes," Harthun says. In collaboration with interventional radiologists, Harthun and other vascular surgeons stent the arterial wall by inserting the device through a small incision in the groin. The aneurysm eventually shrinks. However, AAA patients must come back to the lab routinely for the rest of their lives. "They could develop a leak," explains Harthun. "We can easily fix it, but we have to look for it."

**New, Larger Space for Lab**  
As part of a Heart and Vascular Center expansion to the second floor, the noninvasive vascular lab is scheduled to move to a new space in a few months. In the original



Nancy L. Harthun, M.D., is a UVa vascular surgeon and medical director for the non-invasive vascular lab.

space, technologists shared diagnostic rooms. The new location gives everyone more space and better access to equipment. "The patient flow will be much better and patient wait times will be even shorter," Nicholson notes.

# Advancing health care through *clinical trials*

Please call the trial coordinator to enroll confidentially or for additional information.

**Genes, Salt and Blood Pressure Study**  
Generally healthy men and women ages 18 to 70, normal to moderate weight, are needed for a study on genes and the response of blood pressure to dietary salt. Participants with low, normal or high blood pressure are selected according to their genetics and will receive: physical exam, EKG, chest X-ray, blood chemistries and urine tests. The study includes two weeks of prepared food and \$100 for study completion. HIC#11494(L), UVa Endocrinology, **Cindy Schoeffel, M.D., 924-1634, cds2t@virginia.edu**

**Pain Management Studies**  
Men and women ages 18 and over with chronic pain (complex regional pain syndrome or radiculopathy) are needed for studies involving investigational drugs for 12 weeks. The studies involve seven visits to the Pain Management Center, physical exams, blood testing and completing pain questionnaires using an electronic Logpad. The investigational drugs are given to the participants free of charge. HIC#11496(L) and HIC#11902(L), UVa Anesthesiology, Pain Management Center, **Erik Nicolai, M.S., 243-9102, ean8n@virginia.edu**

**Sleep Disturbances Study**  
The UVa Department of Internal Medicine invites adult volunteers ages 50 to 70 with insomnia to participate in a study using a form of noninvasive acupuncture on the ear. The purpose of the study is to determine if

small magnetic pellets placed on acupoints promotes improvement in sleep and quality of life. The study involves six visits over a 17-day period. Eligible participants will receive four sessions and complete questionnaires. Study-related tests are provided at no cost. No compensation for completing the study. Principal Investigator: Justine Owens, Ph.D., IRB-HSR#12268(L), UVa Internal Medicine, **Virginia Hisghman, Ph.D.(c), 284-0151 (not a UVa extension), vih3e@virginia.edu**

**Severe PMS Study**  
Women ages 18 to 49 are needed for a study of an investigational medication for symptoms of severe PMS, also known as premenstrual dysphoric disorder. Symptoms may include depression, irritability, angry outbursts, or changes in sleep or appetite. Study-related tests and medication or placebo are provided at no charge. Compensation provided. HIC# 11969(L), UVa Center for Psychiatric Clinical Research, **Tracy Woods, 243-4631, tlw8n@virginia.edu**

**Flu Study**  
Volunteers ages 18 to 47 are needed for a study investigating how it feels to have the flu. Participants will make two outpatient visits for collection of blood and nasal swab samples and may attend one discussion group. Compensation is up to \$175 for study completion. Please call within 24 hours of onset of fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, and/or runny

nose. Principal Investigator: Birgit Winther, M.D., UVa Internal Medicine, IRB-HSR#12199(L), **Kathy Bohorfoush, R.N., MSN, 924-2371**

**Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy Study**  
Those with type 1 or type 2 diabetes with a diagnosis of painful neuropathy due to diabetes are needed for a 14-week study investigating an FDA-approved medication when given three times a day. The study will evaluate the effectiveness of two times a day dosing. Study drug and study-related visits provided. HIC#11886(L), UVa Endocrinology, **Shirley Fleishman, R.N., CDE, 243-5652, sf9v@virginia.edu**

**Infrequent Periods Study**  
Women ages 18 to 43 with polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) are invited to participate in a study involving the influence of acupuncture on reproductive hormones and ovulation. PCOS symptoms may include infrequent periods, weight gain and unwanted body hair. The study involves 16 visits over a five-month period. Eligible participants will complete glucose-fasting tests, blood and urine samples, and questionnaires. Study-related tests are provided at no cost. Compensation is \$170 for completion of the study. Principal Investigator: Lisa Pastore, Ph.D., IRB-HSR#12045 (LMP001), UVa Obstetrics and Gynecology, **Virginia Hisghman, Ph.D.(c), L.Ac., 982-6657, vih3e@virginia.edu**

Send trial submissions to [linktrials@virginia.edu](mailto:linktrials@virginia.edu).

the **LINK** newsletter

To submit ideas or join our mailing list, email [linkpub@virginia.edu](mailto:linkpub@virginia.edu) or FAX 924-2969. LINK is published 12 times a year for the employees, faculty, students, volunteers, donors and patients and families of the University of Virginia Health System. Find archived copies at [www.healthsystem.virginia.edu/link](http://www.healthsystem.virginia.edu/link). ©2006 by the Rector and Visitors of University of Virginia.

**Editor:** Kelly Casey, **Art Director:** Diana Boven, **Contributors:** Kathleen Phalen Tomaselli, Patient Education Workgroup, Health System Development **Photography:** Andrew Shurtleff (cover and page 4), Health System Media Services, Gary Smith (page 5).

UNIVERSITY  
of VIRGINIA  
HEALTH SYSTEM

P.O. Box 800224  
Charlottesville, VA  
22908-0224

434-924-8053

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Charlottesville, VA  
Permit #232