

Cornerstone News

National Cornerstone Healthcare Services

June 2006



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Peace of mind for your healthcare needs.

Note from the President



Putting a face on IT

By David S. Espinosa
President, NCHS

As the Age of Information rolls along, more and more companies are recognizing the need to have a creditable information technology (IT) person on staff. At NCHS, we realized early on the value of having someone on board who could establish and run our web site while managing the computerization that we expected would evolve. Meet IT Manager Daniel O. Bazan.

Certainly, every strong company has people working behind the scenes, doing things that largely aren't seen by either its customers or employees but whose productivity greatly affects the success of the company. At NCHS, that someone is Daniel, who came to us in 2003 with a background in database management and web/graphic design and has put it to good use.

"NCHS stood out because of its good reputation, its strong foundation for service, and the positive moral compass of both the people who worked there and the business itself," Daniel said. "It takes people with those qualities to comprise a company with those qualities, so it was really the people in the company who drew me into hemophilia."

When Daniel came to us we asked him to establish a web site and to maintain our existing data server (at that time, a PC with a good hard drive), where information is stored. In a relatively short period he has done just that, at the same time establishing a hemophilia dictionary that allows those browsing our site to learn more about bleeding disorders.

"My hope was to give the company a visible foundation, to create a site that would show people that NCHS is here and what we're all about," said Daniel, who also manages graphics as well as our telephone system, edits our newsletter, and advises our reps regarding their computer systems in the field. "With the dictionary, I wanted to give people basic knowledge so that they could ask friends and family members who had hemophilia specific questions in a knowledgeable manner."

Thus far, Daniel's biggest challenge has been acquiring the most robust system capable of handling our anticipated growth while keeping costs as low as possible so that the maximum benefit falls to our customers. If that is achieved, our customers stand to benefit in the long run through better service and pricing.

In that regard Daniel has succeeded. Since he arrived at NCHS the company has tripled in size. And, we've been able to maintain the confidentiality of our customers' information. Clearly, Daniel and NCHS have been a good fit.

"In my mind, it's good to have an IT person on site—especially someone who has other skills," Daniel said. "I've enjoyed my years here, but there's more left to achieve for the company and our customers. I'm looking forward to accomplishing much more on behalf of NCHS during the coming years."

So are we. We're pleased to have Daniel on board.

Sincerely,

David S. Espinosa

Events Update

In Search of enhanced performance...and a perfect night sky

Mary R. Blahut RN CPHQ
General Manager



In search of enhanced performance...and a perfect night sky

Recently, on a cool spring evening, a small troop of National Cornerstone Healthcare Services staff ventured out in search of the perfect retreat venue, a place where we might clear our heads and thoughts and strategize for the upcoming year.

Dressed warmly for fear that Old Man Winter might make an unexpected reappearance, we made our slow journey by van to a spot above the 7,000-foot level in the mountains. It was here that we were quite certain there would be no distractions, nothing to keep us from accomplishing our important mission: to make sure that NCHS stays on the right track as we looked down the road toward 2007.

We arrived at our destination without incident following a short, 30-minute drive: a spot just off a paved road where a modest dirt clearing beckoned. We were, quite clearly, in the wilds, and only a glimmer of city light was visible in the distance.

Our goals for the retreat were myriad: to discuss ways of enhancing our level of service to customers, sharpen our focus on the future, revisit our efforts to meet the needs of customers, revitalize our relationships with our representatives, and increase our overall productivity—all to the service of our patients.

Additionally, with the implementation of new IT software fast approaching, we welcomed the opportunity to discuss the training required in anticipation of that.

All in all, the retreat was a success. Our vision for the future remains unchanged: to provide customers with



Cornerstone Kids

the best product and highest level of service possible. We'll do that as we always have: by increasing staffing when and where needed, remaining technologically astute and keeping our eye firmly fixed on the customer.



As the retreat wound down, each of us was rewarded for our hard night of strategizing. With little warning, a guide accompanied us to the clearing where our entertainment for the evening awaited us: a large telescope measuring eight feet from end to end. Once there, we were introduced to our escort for the night—an astronomer.

When the moment was perfect, with no light in distance to interfere, we began a journey into the night sky. The question on everyone's mind may have been the same: what's beyond the Big Dipper?

We began our search by examining nearby stars, progressing to those in galaxies well beyond ours—into the nebulae and star cluster. Then, as our noses and toes grew numb from the cold night air, Saturn came into clear view. Each of us took turns gasping, as the view through the telescope was so clear that it appeared our astronomer had placed a picture of the giant ringed planet in the lens. We then shifted to Mars and its moons with equal excitement.



Throughout the latter evening a personal evolution continued. We were, at once, scientists amazed at what we were seeing as well as small children, with myriad questions on all of our minds. After all, few, if any, of us had ever experienced the sky and all it

has to offer with such perfect clarity.

As the evening passed, we put aside the telescope to sip on hot chocolate as our guide told us an Indian story of the sky we were investigating and why the star clusters are named for animals. Had I not been so transfixed on the night and the view and the tale we were hearing, I'd have looked around to see others in our group as attentive as I, I'm certain.

In a perfect spot we not only had a chance to perfect our performance for the coming year, but we found our perfect sky (as anyone can). Simply venture out late at night, far from the city, and gaze upward. You can't miss it.

For more information here are a few websites to search for your perfect sky.

<http://www.nasa.gov/audience/forkids/kidsclub/flash/index.html>

http://www.nasa.gov/centers/glenn/events/star_gazing_06.html

<http://www.stargazing.net/david/index.html>

<http://www.astronomy.com/>

No Bake Cookies

By Tami Velazquez

The following are the ingredients you will need to make this: sugar, butter, cocoa, milk, oatmeal, vanilla, and wax paper.

2 c. sugar
 ½ c. butter
 3 T cocoa
 ½ c. milk
 3 c. oatmeal
 1 1/2 tsp. vanilla
 Wax paper

Have your wax paper spread and ready for the cookies. An **adult must help** you with the part of the boiling contents.

Boil together sugar, butter, cocoa, and milk for approximately 2 1/2 minutes stirring constantly. Remove from heat and add vanilla and oatmeal. Stir quickly. Drop by spoonfuls onto wax paper. Put into fridge to harden. YUM!!!

"STAR GAZING"

M I L K Y W A Y I H A L U B E N
 C E T I U S S E R G O R P E H T
 O M T S F I U A C A A G D L Y H
 M K P E I F P K V N O I S A S E
 E W A R O L N E U D J R G N I P
 T S A T U R N S R U T D N T C O
 S E Z T P V O P P B E B I I A C
 R A O W E O E I O Z E S R A T S
 U L V T V N T C D H B L H I O E
 N T A G P E E M D S T D T L H L
 S U S E R S N S A B C R A U O E
 E I E N A I L U S R D R O T R T
 I I N E C P E O S L S M X I A E
 X A U M E R C U R Y P U E O P L
 A S T E R O I D S I S S N N I B
 L S P R E V H T R A E N I P S B
 A C E A M N E N E M T A E R T U
 G S N O O M D K A G O D W N A H

SUN
 MERCURY
 VENUS
 EARTH
 MARS
 JUPITER
 SATURN
 URANUS

NEPTUNE
 PLUTO
 KUIPER BELT
 METEORIDS
 ASTEROIDS
 COMETS
 MOONS
 SOLAR SYSTEM

RINGS
 GALAXIES
 STARS
 NEBULA
 MILKY WAY
 HUBBLE TELESCOPE

Note from the Pharmacist

The Sharps Disposal By Mail System®

By Richard Aguilar, Jr., Pharm.D.
Director of Pharmacy Operations

Each year, millions of Americans use needles, syringes and other venous access devices—also called “sharps”—to manage various medical conditions at home, including diabetes, cancer and multiple sclerosis.

Through the years, sharps disposal by self injectors has typically not been regulated, leading to haphazard disposal practices and increased community exposure. Such unsafe disposal puts people such as sanitation and sewage treatment workers, janitors, housekeepers, children, and even pets at the greatest risk of being punctured by used sharps.

Individuals exposed to sharps not only face the risk of a painful stick, but also the risk of exposure to HIV or hepatitis. Needle sticks that result in injuries and disease are a preventable health risk and one that we as a company support in order to protect our families and community.



At National Cornerstone Healthcare Services, we utilize the Sharps Disposal By Mail System® for all of our patients who use injectable drug therapies. Sharps Compliance, Inc., of Houston, TX, developed this innovative and complete disposal system, which cost-effectively manages medical waste, minimizes paperwork, and complies with municipal, state, and federal regulations. The Sharps Disposal By Mail System is available in a variety of convenient sizes, from 1-quart to 3-gallon. Additionally, a 2.5-gallon double pack was recently introduced to a favorable response.

The Sharps Disposal By Mail System is comprised of a sharps container, a government-approved return-by-

mail shipping box, a protective 3-mil red bag liner, instructions for use, and a simplified tracking form. When the sharps container is three-quarters full, the patient simply returns it to its original packaging—a postage-prepaid return box that is sent to Sharps Compliance, Inc., via regular mail. Upon receipt from the U.S. Postal Service, receipt, weight, and destruction of containers are documented by Sharps. The certified proof of destruction is then promptly returned to the generator.

Occasionally, the postal carrier or Post Office may resist accepting a Sharps Disposal By Mail package, as Post Offices must process them. If difficulties are encountered, please call the Sharps Customer Support Department at (800) 772-5657.

The following patient information reminder points are key to the successful implementation and utilization of the Sharps Disposal By Mail System:

- ✓ *Save the box and bag—do not remove the tracking form.*
- ✓ *Deposit only needles, syringes, sharp objects, bloody items, and chemotherapy-contaminated items into the container immediately after use. Do not fill the container past three-quarters full. Do not deposit any fluids into the container. Always keep the container out of the reach of children and pets.*
- ✓ *Once a container is three-quarters full or no longer needed, close the lid and place it inside the red bag. Use a twist tie to close the red bag, placing it inside the white box. Secure the locking tabs atop the box.*
- ✓ *Hand the box to your mail carrier or take it to the nearest Post Office; do not throw it into the household trash.*

Remember: NCHS is committed to the safe delivery and use of injectable pharmaceuticals in the home, and we respect the right of our patients to a convenient and confidential method of medical waste disposal.

