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# Portraits

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S E R V I C E



*Friends for life.*®

THE WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL  
1988 Annual Report



As we move ever closer to the 1990's, there emerges an ongoing struggle within society to reconcile the frontiers of the future with the safe harbors of the past.

■ Nowhere is this conflict more keenly felt than in the field of health care. Survival for hospitals today requires a unique combination of business savvy, competitive agility and technological know-how. And yet, it isn't enough to simply survive. Those who have the desire to go above and beyond the rest are the ones who never lose their perspective on the very reason for their existence: to serve the community. ■ In striking the right balance, West Penn Hospital has a decided advantage: a 140-year history of serving the people of the tri-state area. Reflecting on that rewarding heritage and realizing the importance of a service orientation to the future of the institution, West Penn Hospital has taken the opportunity to formally acknowledge the unique spirit and dedication of its employees. Today, every member of the staff is a participant in the Hospital's Personal Touch Program, a formal training program that reinforces and amplifies the concept of service. ■ The basic framework of the Personal Touch Program is structured around three premises: □ The patient is the focus of everything we do. □ We work as a team. □ We treat everyone with dignity. ■ Throughout the remainder of this publication, you will have the opportunity to meet just a few of the 3,000-plus employees and Medical Staff members of West Penn Hospital. ■ You will read, through these "Portraits in Service," just how deeply the precepts of the Personal Touch Program are felt at all levels of the Hospital, and how the Program serves as the foundation for every effort at West Penn. ■ Together, the entire West Penn team supports the Personal Touch Program as an essential element in achieving our ultimate goal: to be the best hospital in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

*The patient is the focus  
of everything we do.*

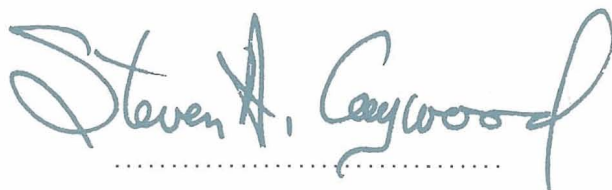
This statement, upon first reading, appears both simple and obvious. But listen to those who have been patients in any number of facilities and you begin to realize it is a concept all too frequently forgotten. ■ For those of us practicing medicine today, it is easy to understand why this occurs. We are faced with a multitude of changes that can limit the amount of valuable time caregivers are able to devote to their patients. The changes in reimbursement, the dramatic shift from inpatient to outpatient treatments, and the adherence to new regulations has created a business side to medical care that can inhibit patient focus. ■ However, those of us who recognize this possibility are working hard to create a proper balance. It's simply a matter of maintaining the right priorities. ■ At West Penn Hospital, no decision has ever been made without first determining how it will affect our patients. In fact, most initiatives arise from a realization that there is always something more we can do for our patients. ■ This strong patient focus is found in every member of the West Penn team. The physicians here are fortunate to receive the support of caring, concerned individuals who are so strongly committed to serving our patients.



William F. Bauer, M.D.  
President, Medical Staff

*We work as  
a team.*

Teamwork is important to the success of most endeavors. It is crucial when dealing with serious illness or injury. ■ At West Penn Hospital, our brand of teamwork is unique because every member of the team shares the same concern for and commitment to the welfare of our patients. And the importance of the contributions made by each and every staff member are recognized and appreciated. ■ A primary factor in engendering this feeling of teamwork is the Personal Touch Program itself. While many institutions talk about service, West Penn puts words into action, ensuring that everyone receives the same formalized, comprehensive curriculum. ■ All employees and volunteers participate in a day-long training session designed to enhance communication skills, teamwork and, overall, the service orientation to patients and visitors at West Penn. ■ There are also follow-up workshops at the departmental level, which help employees better understand and explore their unique roles and responsibilities in relation to the Personal Touch Program. These workshops, entitled "Personal Touch—Making It Work," further instill in the staff that the Personal Touch Program truly is a way of life at West Penn Hospital. ■ In addition, a recognition program has been created for those at West Penn whose exceptional commitment to the Personal Touch Program is noted by patients and/or fellow workers. Exemplary individuals are acknowledged for their dedication to the basic premises of this institution-wide program. ■ Finally, all participants in the Personal Touch Program are reminded continually that the most valued members of our team are our patients and their families. ■ Working together, we are unbeatable.



Steven A. Caywood  
President and Chief Executive Officer

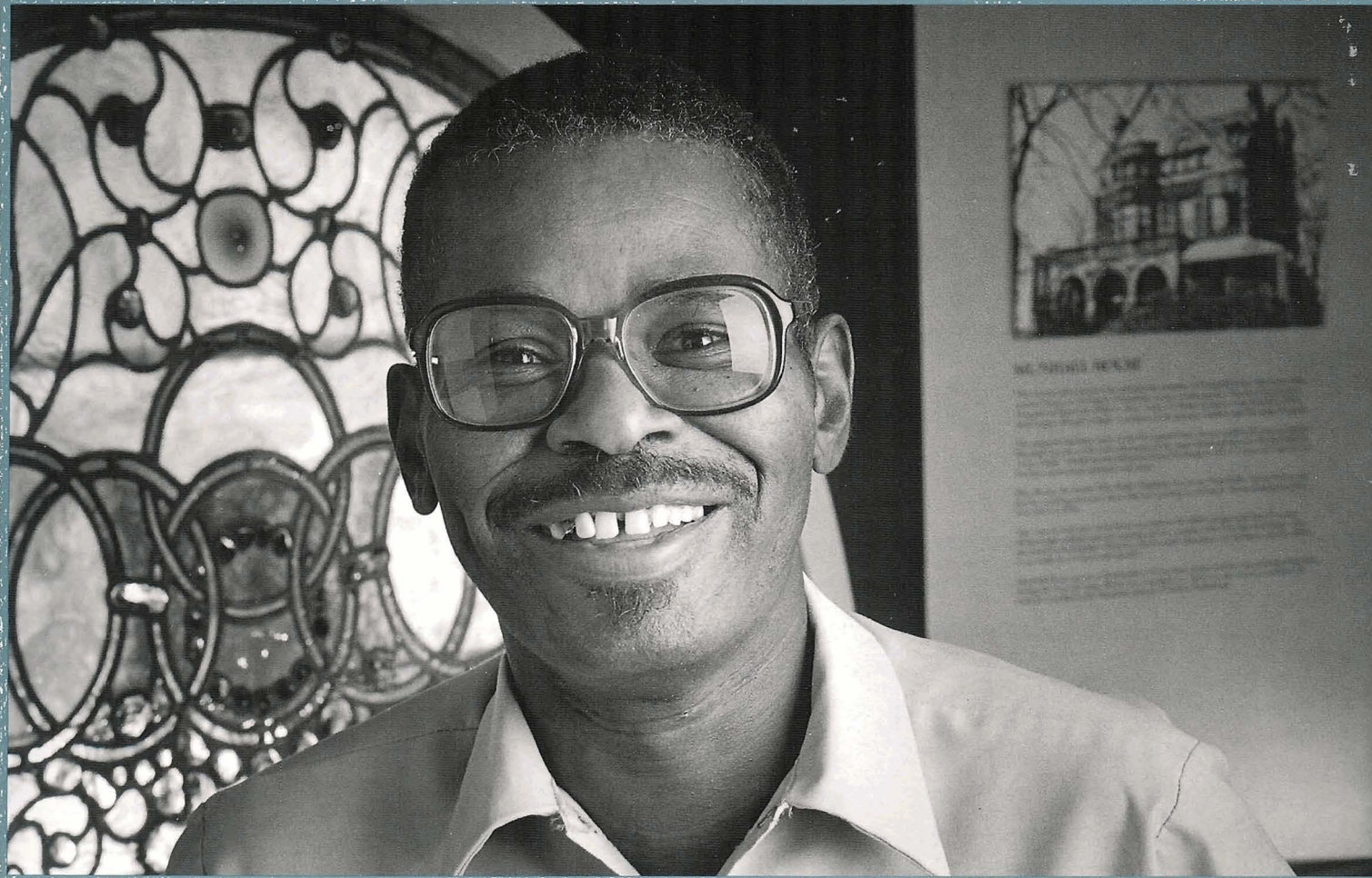
*We treat everyone  
with dignity.*

Webster defines dignity as "the quality or state of being worthy, honored or esteemed." ■ Being treated with dignity is something we have a right to expect in every aspect of our lives. All too often, though, life doesn't live up to our expectations. At West Penn Hospital, we know we are able to succeed where others may fail. ■ This concept of the Personal Touch Program is all-encompassing. Dignity is not reserved for patients or co-workers alone. It is found at West Penn in unlimited measure and is symbolized by the attitudes and gestures of each and every one of us. ■ Our commitment to treating each other with dignity is a positive factor that will enable us to attract new staff members of the highest caliber. It is also a critical factor in developing strong, long-term relationships, both within and outside of our work environment. ■ Attracting and retaining employees who personify this and the other premises of the Personal Touch Program is the best mechanism we have for ensuring our success in becoming the best hospital in Southwestern Pennsylvania.



Richard M. Johnston

Chairman of the Board of Directors



*Frank is standing next to West Penn's Antiquity*

*Display, designed as part of the Hospital's*

*140th Anniversary celebration. The display,*

*made possible through a generous dona-*

*tion, is a constant reminder of West Penn's long-*

*standing tradition of the patient focus.*

*"I don't like to see children here. Children aren't supposed to be sick."*

*That simple statement goes a long way toward explaining the extra effort Frank Robinson makes for West Penn's smallest patients.*

*Ask the children at West Penn and they'll probably tell you Frank gets their votes for M.V.P. "I've got a lot of pictures at home that I took with the kids. There was one—a little boy, Georgie. He wouldn't eat. The nurses couldn't understand it. So they always called me. I used to play steam shovel to get him to eat...every now and then I still look at the pictures."*

*But Frank doesn't limit his 'Personal Touch' to just*

*youngsters. He's a special friend to any patient. "Most of the time, I just try to be a good listener for anybody who needs one."*

*Frank and his co-workers in Environmental Services spend their days keeping the hospital clean and germ-free so patients can recover quickly. "Everyone plays a part. When you think of a hospital, you think of doctors and nurses. But it takes more people. It takes a team to run a hospital."*

*Hearing Frank's words and seeing the warmth and affection with which he is greeted by patients and staff alike, it doesn't take long to realize that when Frank says "I like everybody and everybody likes me," he isn't boasting—just stating a fact.*

*"We understand that all our sophisticated technology isn't worth a nickel if the information it yields is not communicated well to the patient."*

*In an area such as genetics, where much of the work occurs in a laboratory setting, it would be easy to lose the focus on the individual patient. But at West Penn, under the leadership of Chairman Kenneth L. Garver, M.D., Ph.D., the Department of Medical Genetics has determinedly focused on direct interaction with patients and their families.*

*"I have always encouraged our counselors to take as much time as necessary with our families, to explain test results in meaningful terms, and to provide all the appropriate information and reassurance along the way."*

*Another example of the Department's sensitivity to patients is the Pregnancy Safety Hotline. "We constantly get calls from women or their physicians with concerns about various exposures—chemical, environmental, etc. We give each caller an in-depth readout of what, if any, the risks to her pregnancy may be. It's a free service that requires an enormous amount of staff and physician time. But with our capabilities in this area, it just somehow doesn't seem right to only provide it to a chosen few. You'd be surprised how many calls we get from physicians and patients at other hospitals."*

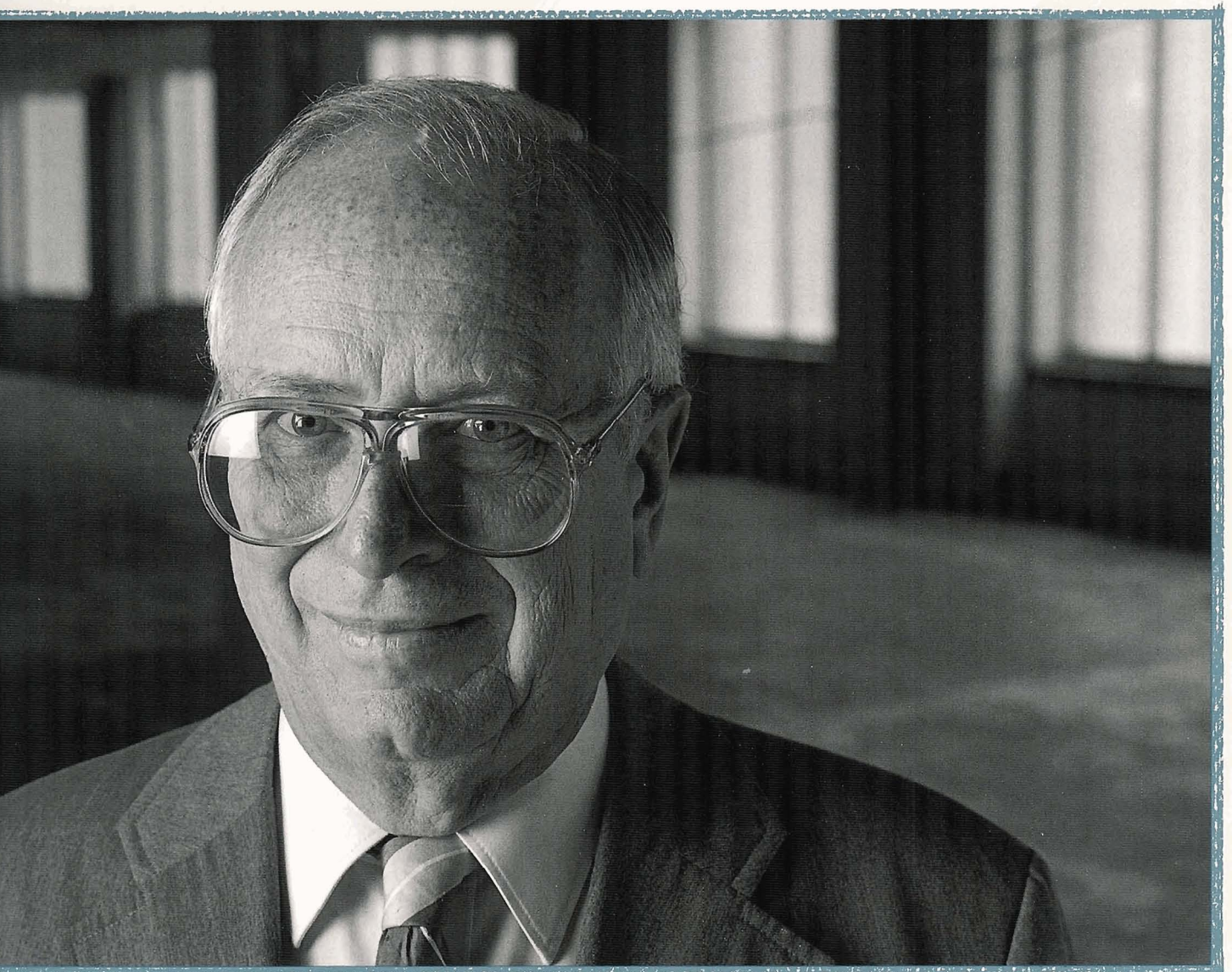
*Dr. Garver's special attitude towards patients is perhaps best described by the words found on a plaque in his office: "No community, whether family, village or state is really strong if it will not carry its weak and even its very weakest members..."*



*Kenneth L. Garver, M.D., Ph.D., is shown in West*

*Penn Hospital's research building which  
is scheduled for completion in the fall of 1989.*

*The facility will house all of West Penn's  
research activities.*



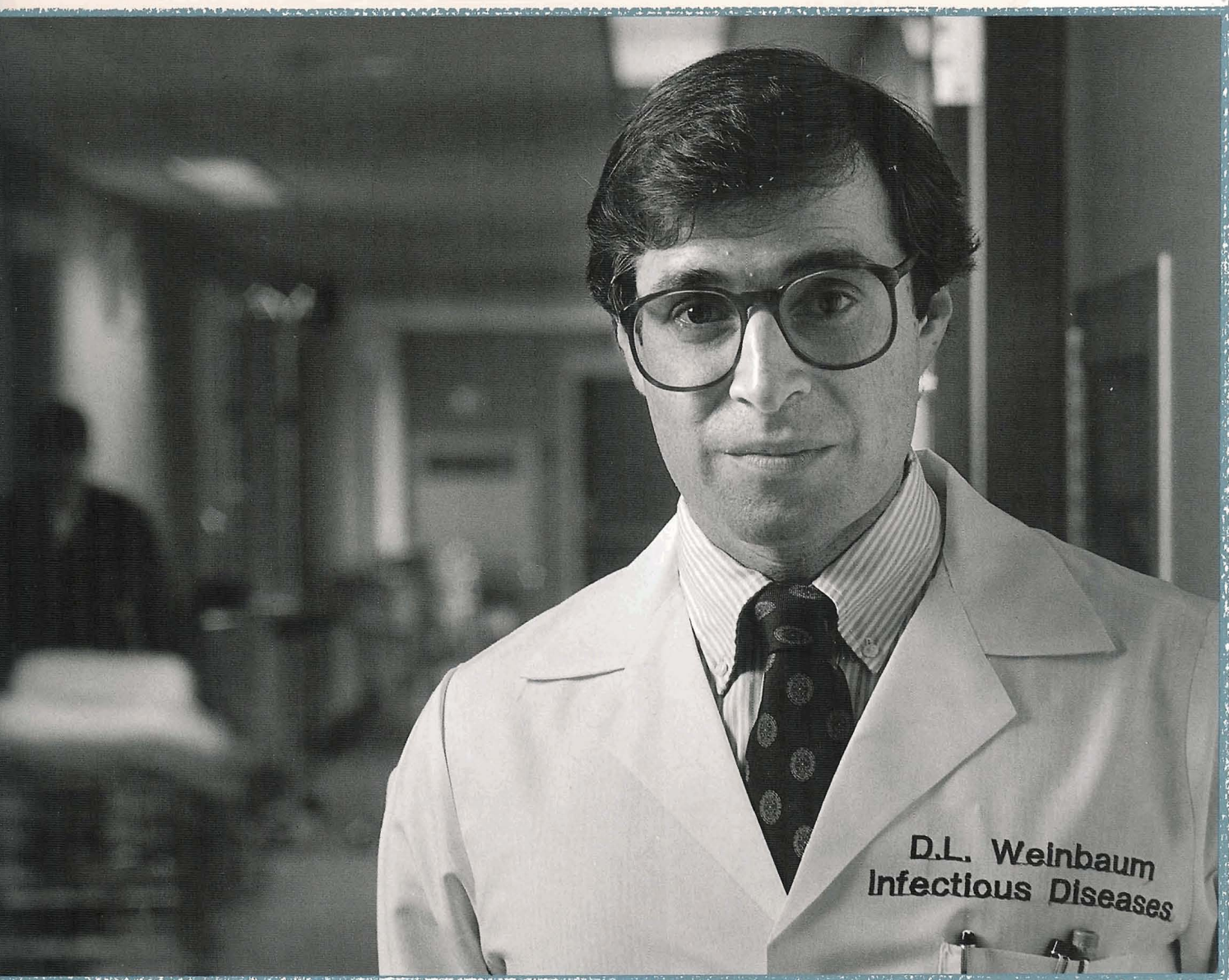
Dr. David Weinbaum is the chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases, an area relied upon by virtually every part of the Hospital. He and the Infection Control Committee recently instituted a universal precautions program, the result of a year-long effort that focuses on the needs and concerns of the patient. A program of this nature would not ordinarily take so long to create. But Dr. Weinbaum wanted to be certain that every aspect from the patient's point of view was covered.

*"The program provides the means for taking precautions one step further, for both ourselves and our patients. We know that there are some people who are concerned about contracting a disease in a hospital setting. In truth, it's not a very realistic fear. But a formal precautions program can help to put their minds at ease and eliminate any doubts. It's another mechanism we have for comforting our patients and their families."*

*In Dr. Weinbaum's eyes, the cooperation he received throughout his work on the program left him with no doubt that a commitment to the patient is West Penn's highest priority. "We've always focused more on the patient as a person, rather than as a condition or a room number. West Penn is truly patient-oriented. I've always been impressed by that."*

*And knowing Dr. Weinbaum, he'll go to great lengths to help keep it that way.*





*Dr. Weinbaum's approach to infection control*

*doesn't stop with the clinical aspects.*

*A keen sensitivity to the needs of patients, visitors*

*and staff has led to the development of a*

*precautions program that is easily understood*

*and appreciated by everyone.*



Mary Ann is entering one of West Penn's redesigned patient rooms, where comfort is a priority. The Hospital's newly renovated patient wings offer pleasant surroundings for visitors and patients, and efficient work areas for hospital staff.

*"You're the patient. You come first."*

A few short years ago, an energetic high school student, born and raised in Bloomfield, joined the staff of West Penn Hospital. Today, Mary Ann Ficorilli displays her 'Personal Touch' as a West Penn escort.

"There's always been West Penn Hospital right up the street." But because Mary Ann's mother and sister were already on the hospital staff, she had a unique perspective on the personal satisfaction of being part of the West Penn team.

Despite the demands of a hectic college schedule, volunteer work with blind children, and an evening shift at the Hospital, Mary Ann never loses sight of her most important responsibilities.

"When I escort patients, I ask them, 'Are you tired? Am I pushing you too fast? Do you want me to get you something?' Some don't want to talk and that's fine; others talk all the time and that's okay, too. I just try to take it nice and easy with them."

Mary Ann truly understands the importance of the work she does everyday. "I'm here for the patients."

LOIS CLEARY, R.N., ON PATIENT FOCUS

For her more than thirty years at West Penn,

Lois has witnessed many changes in the

field of nursing. Some of the most significant

changes for West Penn came about this past

year when the Patient Care Services Division went

to all R.N. staffing and began implemen-

tation of Primary Care Nursing.

*"You don't remember pain. God doesn't let you do that or you wouldn't have more than one baby."*

Lois Cleary, R.N., knows all about seeing new mothers forget the ordeal of childbirth. She has witnessed the beginning of a new life tens of thousands of times since she first came to West Penn as a nursing student in the mid-1950's. But it is a miracle she never takes for granted.

*"The first time that baby cries it's just the most fantastic thing you're ever going to hear in the world—it's new all over again."*

But Lois' focus goes beyond even the newborn and its mother. "In this unit, you can't just focus on the patient. You have an entire family that you're working with. I always tell the fathers, 'Now, at some point, she may throw us out of here, but trust me—she needs us both and she wants us both.'"

Lois has an incredible dedication to helping families through perhaps the most emotional time in their lives. Even so, her thoughts return to her tiniest patients. "A baby is a baby. You watch those little eyes open up and look at you and think—this is another whole human being. It's somebody new and wonderful."

We think Lois is pretty wonderful, too.



Deborah Willis, M.D., works with West Penn's

Physician Support Services. This innovative department became fully operational in 1988, with a staff of specially trained professionals who help physicians enhance their office practice and facilitate their use of the Hospital and its services.



"I set up my own practice in September of '87. And I've got to say that West Penn helped me tremendously. This was five or six years after I left my residency and the door was still open."

It's hard to imagine anyone closing the door on Dr. Deborah Willis of the Division of General Internal Medicine. She's the very embodiment of the dedicated physician.

"When I served as medical director at another facility, I established a continuing medical education program. And West Penn was instrumental in providing CME

accreditation for the physicians involved. Support systems like that are nice."

Looking beyond such direct assistance, Dr. Willis recognizes other ways in which her affiliation with West Penn has been beneficial, both to her patients and her private practice.

"When it comes to my patients, the Hospital staff is right on top of things. For example, the dietitians even cut out pictures for an illiterate patient to help him understand special diet instructions. Teamwork like that is special to me."

And Dr. Willis is a special member of the West Penn team.



*West Penn's Magnetic Resonance Imaging*

*(M.R.I.) Center includes the latest diagnos-  
tic equipment, highly qualified clinical personnel  
and special design features for patient comfort.*

*Members of the M.R.I. Implementation Team*

*include: Jim Varley, Dan Sacco, Bill Hixson,  
Karene Scott, Samuel Mendicino and Jim Collins.*





Karene Scott knows better than most how important the Implementation Team was to making West Penn's new Magnetic Resonance Imaging Center a reality. She's the manager of the Center.

"There are a lot of resources here and you need to use those people. That was the way to do it, relying on the other departments. And everyone was so enthusiastic; help arrived from every direction. It truly was a joint effort."

That joint effort represented quite a number of departments—including Planning, Purchasing, Finance and Facilities Management, to name a few.

Together, they addressed every aspect of a patient's visit to the M.R.I., with particular attention to patient comfort and convenience. "We found special headsets so that patients can listen to music to help them relax. Then someone on the Team suggested we put a chair in the procedure room so that a family member can sit with

the patient. And everyone put forth extra time and effort to create a special waiting area just for children."

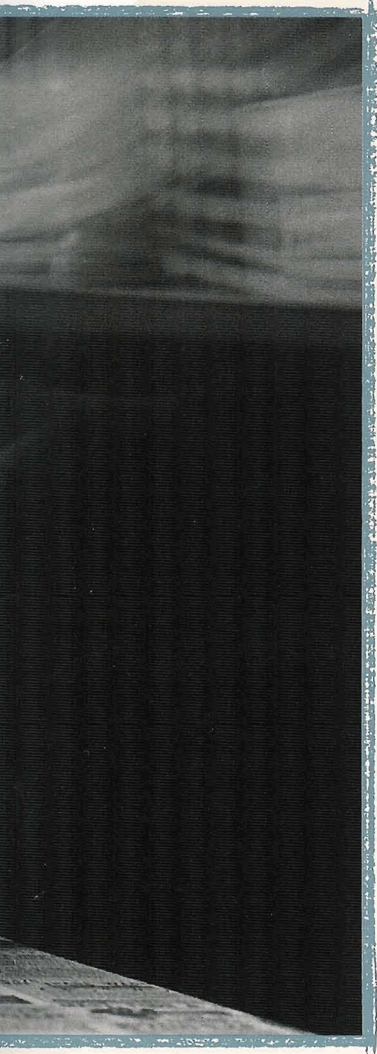
As a long-time West Penn employee, this overriding effort to pull together for the good of the patient came as no surprise to Karene.

"We're all, in some way, related to and affected by each other. Departments here work together, employees work together. That's just the way we do things at West Penn Hospital."



Anthony's visit to a local restaurant is representative of a special opportunity provided by the Burn Trauma Center for its pediatric patients.

The often difficult experience of a patient's first outing from the Hospital is lessened considerably when it takes place in such familiar surroundings.



*"The nurses were crying when I left. They were actually crying—hard. I didn't understand why."*

Seeing Anthony Razzano walk out of West Penn's Burn Trauma Center was enough to bring tears of joy to anyone's eyes. Just ten short weeks earlier, twelve-year-old Anthony had entered West Penn with burns over 87 percent of his body.

Statistically, his prognosis was extremely grave. But someone forgot to tell Anthony about those statistics. "I remember one time Dr. (I. William) Goldfarb came in and said 'How are you feeling?' I couldn't talk and I went (thumbs up)." Dr. Goldfarb's response at the time describes Anthony in one word: "Amazing."

Dr. Goldfarb relates the scene when Anthony left the

Burn Trauma Center. "The halls were literally lined with the people involved in his care. I don't mean just nurses and physicians. I mean everyone from the physical therapist to the housekeeper who cleaned the room. Anthony's plight galvanized the people in the unit. And I think that absolutely everyone in our unit felt intimately involved in his care."

That involvement triggered some positive reflections by Anthony—in spite of his difficult experience.

"If you need to get an operation or something's wrong, check here before you go anywhere else. Once I went to another hospital and it was different. I told my dad I want to stay at West Penn. It's a better place to be."

*“Working in admissions is a lesson in humanity. It’s an inspiration to work here, meeting different people and hearing their stories. They just inspire me—that’s all I can say.”*

Terry McLaughlin is the manager of an Admitting Department that is inspirational in return. “A manager is only as good as the staff that supports that manager. I will take credit for one thing, however—I hire well. When you get right down to it, we may have a formal training program for our staff, but it sure helps to hire people who are nice to begin with.”

Because Terry understands that there’s only one chance to make a good first impression, she focuses on the belief that the patient comes first and everything else is

secondary. Often that means having special procedures for special cases—such as geriatric patients.

“One of my goals for the last two years has been to increase the percentage of bedside admissions so that patients can go from the front door of the Hospital, or the doctor’s office, directly to a bed on a nursing unit. Most patients respond much more positively to this kind of compassion and concern for their comfort.”

Fortunately for West Penn patients, the Admissions Department has compassion for young and old alike. Terry can recount many special examples. “I recently learned that one employee took a family from out-of-town to the airport on her day off. Some bring in food for patients’ families—they even take patients’ family members home for holiday meals.”

And what does Terry think this says about her staff? “These people aren’t just here to collect a paycheck. They truly exemplify the meaning of the words ‘Personal Touch.’”

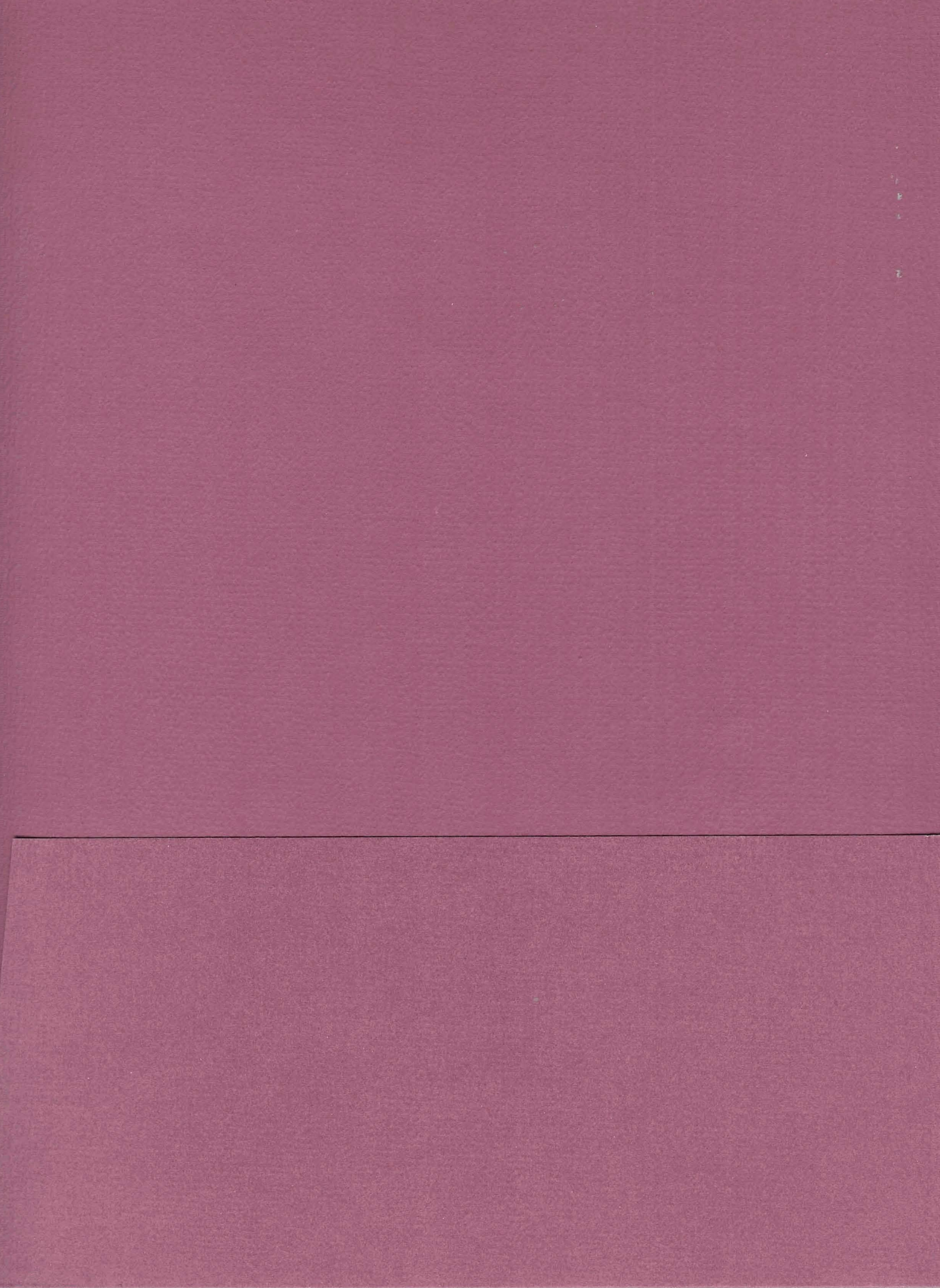


Terry and the admissions staff offer individualized attention to patients, particularly those needing special care—such as geriatric patients.

West Penn's commitment to geriatrics grew even stronger in 1988 with the appointment of a staff geriatrician and a variety of new programs, including Coordinated Senior Care, a case management approach to care of the older adult.



*The preceding portraits are only a representative sample of the over 3,000 physicians, employees, volunteers and Board members who are committed to the Personal Touch Program and dedicated to serving the community. We only wish that time and space would allow us to share each of their special stories with you. ■ At a minimum, we can at least introduce you to the remainder of this West Penn Team of which we are so proud...*



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