

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Stacey Varner will be handling all accounting for Prudential ACS Real Estate. Varner is a graduate of Valdosta State University with a BS in Business Education and a member of Kappa Delta Pi, International Honor Society in Education. She is a proud veteran of the United States Air Force.

Better patient care for Heart Patients at SGMC

The Dasher Heart Center at South Georgia Medical Center is offering a new technology that benefits patients by allowing a formerly prohibited level of care for pacemaker patients, an MRI scan.

For patients who need a pacemaker, a small device that is used to regulate the pacing of the heart, SGMC is the only hospital in the region offering a new pacemaker that is the only MR-conditional pacemaker on the market today. With this technology, pacemaker patients have the ability to undergo an MRI if needed. Until now, patients with pacemakers could not undergo an MRI scan.

Business plan competition underway

The 2011 Guardian Bank Business Plan Competition is underway. The competition, sponsored by Guardian Bank, is an initiative of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Valdosta State University's Small Business Development Center and Wiregrass Georgia Technical College to foster new business development that will raise the per capita income and quality of life in Lowndes County.

The competition is open to anyone who has a business idea and is free of charge. The business must be located in Valdosta-Lowndes County and plan to employ university or technical college graduates. The competition is an eight month process where competitors are offered free educa-

tional workshops to assist in fully developing their business plan before submitting it for judging. Business plans may also be critiqued at the workshops to ensure a quality submission.

The winners receive \$15,000 in start-up capital provided by Guardian Bank and a prize package valuing more than \$35,000 of in-kind services donated by Chamber member professional consultants.

Registration Packets for the 2011 Guardian Bank Business Plan Competition are now available at all three Guardian Bank locations, VSU's Small Business Development Center, Wiregrass Georgia Technical College and the Chamber. Packets can also be downloaded at the SEEDS Business Resource Center website www.SeedsBusinessResourceCenter.com or www.ValdostaChamber.com. Registration forms must be turned in to the Chamber by April 6 at 5 p.m.

New SGMC Administrative Director for Laboratory Services

South Georgia Medical Center welcomes Barrie Edwards as the new administrative director for Laboratory Services. In her new role, Edwards is responsible for the administrative and managerial functions of the Clinical Laboratory and Walk-In Laboratory. She will ensure that the department follows all regulatory guidelines and provides excellent customer service to the patients of SGMC.

Edwards comes to Valdosta from Gastonia, N.C., where she previously was Laboratory Manager for Presbyterian Hospital in Huntersville, N.C. Prior employments include Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte, NC and Gaston Memorial Hospital in Gastonia, N.C. She brings over 25 years of laboratory experience to SGMC. Edwards is a native of South Carolina. She holds a Master of Science degree in Healthcare Administration from The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, a BS

degree in Health and Safety, and an AS in Technology.

Nichols joins...

Wooden Nichols joins...



Nichols

and smoothies for schools and...

Lanier Cour named chair...

Lanier Cour named the surgeon at the Medical Center...

Howell, a 1970 graduate for 30 years, has been in the hospital since 1970 when a new wing was initiated.

Howell has been in the hospital since 1993. He is the director of its operation of children's hospital and the hospital's operation.

He graduated from the University of North Carolina and completed his doctorate at the University of North Carolina.

White House study shows women's gains, but...

BY ANN BELSER

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

The last time the White House took a good look at the status of women in the country, John F. Kennedy was president and Eleanor Roosevelt chaired a commission on the issue.

Now, 48 years later, the White House has come back for another look in the report titled "Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-being."

The numbers show that while women are earning more college degrees than men and more women are working than ever before, they still don't make as much as men and they are more likely to experience poverty.

The reasons are complicated, of course, but the choice of career fields combined with family responsibilities continue to weigh heavily in the stories of women's lives.

What the statistics show is a huge societal shift for women over the past 40 years, something most Americans have seen and known, but that has not been quantified in this way. The Council on Women and Girls says the report was done to help policymakers set priorities on issues facing both women and families.

What happens to women has broad implications. In a nation of 308.7 million people, there are 4 million more females than males. American women over the past

four decades have become more educated, are delaying both getting married and having children (women now marry, on average, when they are 25 - five years later than women in the 1950s) but they are still more likely than men to live in poverty.

Teenage pregnancies are down. Births to teens who are first-time mothers made up slightly more than 20 percent of all births to first-time mothers in 2007. In 1970, closer to 35 percent of first-time mothers were under 20 and just 4 percent of first-time mothers were in their 30s. By 2007, the older first-time mothers made up 22 percent of the group.

Women also are achieving at higher levels in education. In 1970,

fewer than 2 percent of women aged 25 to 34 had two or more years of graduate studies compared to more than 5 percent of men in the same age group. In 2008, more than 10 percent of women in that age group had completed two years of graduate studies and about 7 percent of men had. Also, more doctorate degrees were granted to women than men.

But the sheer volume of degrees does not mean more money. Differences in career fields as well as differences in family responsibilities and how they are handled, factor into a broad comparison showing that among full-time wage and salary workers in 2009, women earned 80 cents