# THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Tues, Dec 6, 11:30 - 1:00 in SFGH Wellness Center PAB sponsors Laurie Barkin, author of memoir *The Comfort Garden* - reading & discussion.

### Community Wellness Center Calendar of Events

http://www.wellnesscenter.org/calendar

### Senior Cards Available for 60 & Over

- Room 104 City Hall
- discounts on this, that & the other thing
- 30 lb food boxes available weekly

### Exercise Classes for the Brain

Over 50? Having trouble remembering where you put your keys? Contact the PAB to enroll in free computer brain training classes at the Wellness Center.

### **Patient Advisory Board**

### LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD PEOPLE

If you would like to support The Community Clinic and help make health care here better, join the PAB. We meet once a month, do regular projects like writing and publishing this newsletter, installing the Clinic Comment Boxes, advising the clinic on the best health pamphlets to be placed in the waiting rooms (coming soon) and others.

We need writers to write for The Patient Voice

We need translators to translate The Patient Voice

We need a webmaster to set up our website.

We need volunteers for our Exercise Classes for the Brain. (see above)

### Contact us to join the PAB or to help.

### In the Next Issue

Contact us to tell us what you would like to see in the next Patient Voice.

### PAB CONTACT INFO:

Telephone: 415-

Email:

### We are on the Wellness Center's Website

www.sfghwellnesscenter.org/Patient Voice

# THE PATIENT VOICE

Volume 1, Issue 1

November 1, 2011

### Inside This Issue **PSA** Test Prep 1 Comfort Garden 1 Wellness Center 10 8 Comment Boxes Dr. Odd - Allergies Know the Staff 5 **Our Origins** 6 Laura Interview Dr. Hammer inter-Stanley's Article Things to Know 12 Join the PAB 12 Help Yourself 11 12

### Take Comfort

by Armando Martinez

### Take a peaceful walk in the garden!

Just south of the clinic building between it and 22nd street is a charming, garden space with meandering walking paths, peaceuful benches, a beautiful array of lovely plants and flowers and an angelic "Madona". Created to provide solace and nurturing during trying times, it is a small, peaceful place where patients, staff and visitors can take a few minutes to rest and heal from the pressures and stress of illness and hospital life.



The Comfort Garden

(Continued on page 2)

## **PSA** Test Preparation

### by David McClure

Newsletter Staff

- Armando's Landlady
- Armando Martinez
- Jane Redmond
- Stanley Stevens
- Laura Pullen
- Barbera Feldstein
- Dr. Priya Shashidharan
- Dr. Diana Coffa
- David McClure

Recently, I was scheduled for a PSA test. Since I had colon cancer a few years ago – removed pronto at SFGH with no recurrent symptoms (knock wood) - I requested the PSA test myself when I started having those middle of the night symptoms we all love so much. The problem was I didn't know how to prepare or how much improper preparation could mean to the results. No knowing that could have killed me.

PSA tests, though a very useful tool, are known for giving false positive results. That's what mine did. My PSA had been stable below 3.5 for years and suddenly (another cause for concern – a sudden change) it was 5.5. So, the next step would involve an intrusive procedure where they take 12 samples and biopsy them all.

(Continued on page 4)

### Up from the Compost Heap!

This wonderful garden began as a composting pile created by hospital gardeners in a long forgotten and neglected area, covered in rock-hard dirt and weeds where not even grass would grow. In the early 1980s, the hospital hired two gardeners, Joan Varney and Alain Kinet, and armed them with a power mower, a lawn trimmer, and no budget for plants. Relegated to a windowless basement room, they were given little instruction or supervision as to what to do with the 23 acres of grounds and buildings. When they asked about growing plants, their bosses (mostly engineers) simply responded, "Plants?! You've got a power mower, why don't you mow the lawn!" So that is just what they did for years.

Still, sometime in 1985, with no plan in mind, Joan and Alain began nurturing the area next to the clinic destined to become the Comfort Garden. First, they piled up fresh clippings from the lawns to create a composting site. Over time, they converted this now-fertile area into a mixed flower bed. Eventually, when they approached the nursery at Golden Gate Park, they were pointed to the park's "throw-aways" bin and they began planting the castaways from there and other nurseries along with plants salvaged on the grounds where construction projects went up. When SFGH spearheaded treatment for the AIDs epidemic, people began to spontaneously sit on milk crates left in this open area to commiserate and talk about their experience and the gardeners had an epiphany - what they were creating was a new Comfort Garden. Over the following years, Alain used a simple wheelbarrow to muscle heavy serpentine rocks into the area from a dirt parking lot. He also planted the numerous clippings he collected on his many walks and hikes around the Bay Area. As the garden expanded and began to take shape, relatives of patients and staff who had died began planting flowers there from hospital bedsides and their home gardens and by 1990 the Comfort Garden was thriving.

Entering from 22<sup>nd</sup> Street you are greeted by giant, dark brown-orange sunflowers on the left. To the right is a small boulder surrounded by succulent and cactus plants and beyond a small lawn leads to a magnificent and towering Deodora cedar (wood of the gods!) as tall as the clinic building itself. In all, there are six large trees — the Deodora cedar, two Monterey pines and coastal redwoods and one Eucalyptus. The five lawn areas are bounded by walking paths and flower beds where some fifty rose bushes make up the rose garden, including rare heirlooms, donated by two elderly clinic patients, Ettore and Luciana Bonadori. There are four benches...one made from a plank of a tree trunk set upon smaller stumps and large rocks. Tree stumps border flower beds. Small yellow sunflowers are located below among a long row of perennials, annuals, shrubs and trees that extends to western end of the garden. Highlights include a large echium shrub that blooms bright blue flowers in the spring, cordyline palms, a taro plant, a crab-apple tree, and a Brazilian justicia.

*The Madonna* is the garden's most recent addition. This prominent 21,000 pound sculpture was carved in the 1960s from red granite and adorned with glass mosaic by Beniamino (Benny) Bufano, the famous San Francisco artist. She was first exhibited in front of Grace Cathedral on Nob Hill, but was moved to a small out-of-theway garden near the old hospital MRI building in 1974 . After standing mostly unnoticed for 35 years, this heavenly missile was eventually found by Alain, a long time Bufano enthusiast, who spearheaded its relocation to the comfort *(Continued on page 3)*  Since its inception in 1872 SFGH has been a place where the sick and injured come for treatment of an illness or injury. With the knowledge that modern medicine provides, we now know that many of those illnesses and diseases are the result of poor diet, lack of exercise, high stress levels, and other factors in our daily lives that we can control or influence. In other words,our modern, unhealthy lifestyles are literally killing us.

The staff at SFGH recognized the need to do something beyond providing traditional services in order to adequately serve the needs of the people of San Francisco. The Community Wellness Program being developed at the Community Wellness Center is one of the primary initiatives designed to begin doing that in 2011.

# Help Yourself

# Good Online Reference Sites www.sfghwellness.org/calendar SFGH Community Wellness Center Calendar of Events www.nia.nih.gov US National Institutes of Health (HIH) in English www.nia.nih.gov/Espanol US National Institutes of Health (HIH) in Spanish www.nia.nih.gov/health US National Institutes of Health (HIH) in Spanish To sign up for regular email alerts about new publications and other information from the NIA http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ Medline Plus - the National Institutes of Health's Web site for patients and their families and friends. Produced by the National Library of Medicine, it brings you information about diseases, conditions, and wellness issues in language you can understand. Medline Plus offers reliable, up-to-date health information, anytime, anywhere, for free.

www.nihseniorhealth.gov, Seniors - National Institute on Aging and the National Library of Medicine. Health information for older adults - special features make it simple to use. For example, you can click on a button to have the text read out loud or to make the type larger.

http://www.cancer.gov/ National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health

# How do I contact the Community Wellness Center?

Contact NasrinAboudamous, theWellness Center Project Coordinator at <u>415.206.4996</u> or through email at <u>Nasrin.Aboudamous@sfdph.org</u>

### Who do we have to thank for this?

Many, many people at SFGH and in the community have contributed their valuable time, ideas and resources, but the three staff members at the Community Health Center who have worked tirelessly for the past many months to bring this to life are:

Shermineh Jafarieh, Director of Diagnostic & Wellness Services

Blue Walcer, Wellness Innovator, and

NasrinAboudamous, Wellness Center Project Coordinator

# **The Community Wellness Center**

### by David McClure

On July 15, hundreds of patients, staff, community members, their friends and family celebrated the opening of the new SFGH Community Wellness Center with a boisterous, music, dance, massage, information and free services celebration at Summer Fest 2011. It was held in the new Community Wellness Center in the former cafe space across the hall from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor SFGH main hospital cafeteria and in the cafeteria itself. Now that it is open, many people are asking just what the Wellness Center is, what it does, who can use it and how it might benefit them.

# Who can use the Community Wellness Center?

The Wellness Center was created for all SFGH patients, their families, SFGH staff and our neighbors.

# What does the Community Wellness Center do?

The Community Wellness Center is part of a new initiative at SFGH to provide and promote preventative care, complementary care, and better health and well-being through interactive education and community building.

We will be offering speakers, programs, training and other events in the areas of gentle and aerobic movement, yoga, massage, stress reduction, diet, nutrition, cognitive development and more. We have a small, four-station computer network that has a fast internet connection and is available for the public to use to access health information and related resources. We will also provide referrals to other wellness resources in San Francisco that have other services addition to ours or more appropriate to your specific needs.

The intent of the wellness program is to transform health at SFGH and in our community. We will develop and sponsor programs to help patients and staff maximize what they can do for themselves to improve their health and quality of life. We aim is to demonstrate ways in which making healthy choices can also be easy choices. We will provide resources and training for you to make the best, healthiest choices for yourself and your family.

### Is there any charge for what you do?

All of our services are free of charge and open to all.

# When will the Community Wellness Center be offering these services?

For the last few months we have been immersed in remodeling the physical space that is our new home across the hall from the cafeteria in the main hospital and in organizing and publicizing Summer Fest. Now that we are open, we are planning and scheduling events and will have a full calendar of fun and engaging health enhancing classes available in the beginning of October.

### How can I find out when you offer what?

We have a web site under development (http:// sfghwellness.org/) that should be live with current information by the end of September. We will also be installing an information board next to the entrance to the Center that will maintain a current schedule. Beyond that, stop in to see the Center anytime (we are usually there) and just ask. While you are there tell us what kinds of things you would be interested in. In addition, if you have a speaker or would like to hold an event there, just ask. We have certain requirements and guidelines that we must follow but if your event can benefit our community, it likely will be something we can host.

Why did SFGH start the Community Wellness Center?

(Continued on page 11)

### (Continued from page 2)

garden in 2009 in preparation for the construction of the new hospital wing and trauma center. As the moving crane was about the set down the delicate yet dense statue, Alain intervened. "She needs to be moved!" he insisted and she was rotated slightly to appear to be gazing down the path at approaching walkers rather than straight ahead at the trees.

For patients the garden is a place of respite between appointments or after a long day of taking numbers, waiting in line, and sitting in crowded waiting rooms. On a recent visit to the garden, I ran into Jose who stops to feed the birds once a month after his clinic appointments on his way to the pharmacy. I also met Rhonda who was mourning Baby while holding Cuddles, both mice: Cuddles is an adorable albino and Baby was a frequent visitor to the garden. The garden is also home to a few small, harmless field mice that you may, on occasion, see scurrying in a flash across your path. Indeed, according to Alain, a Coopers hawk used to perch on The Madonna and a pair of red-tailed hawks can sometimes be spotted soaring high above, both drawn to the garden by the mice and pigeons!

Life and work at the Family Health Center and the other understaffed outpatient clinics may be rewarding, but it does entail very long hours by the overworked nurses, doctors and other staff. In June 1990, the garden was officially dedicated as a "living memorial" to hospital employees who had died in service. For fifteen years (until recently due to budget cuts) a non denominational ceremony was held to honor those hospital employees who had died during the year. A plaque in the garden, recording its inception, concludes with the words: "It is meant to be a place of solace where nature's beauty can bring you comfort."

A former psychiatric nurse on the trauma unit,

Laurie Barkin has written *Tales of the Comfort Garden*, a memoir in which she writes about encouraging patients to talk about their traumas so that they could integrate what happened to them into their life stories. Her book makes clear that failure to do this or something similar can result in post traumatic stress disorders familiar to war combatants. When job pressures overwhelmed her, Barkin herself took refuge in the Comfort Garden. In a foreword to the book, Diane Myers, RN, observes that "In using The Comfort Garden as a metaphor, we are reminded of the necessity to trim, prune, fertilize, and care for our lives in order to be able to flourish and give to others."

The Comfort Garden is also a healing and therapeutic place for the gardeners who care for it. "While pulling weeds, pruning back bushes and piling up the clippings," Alain says "You can often work out life's or the day's frustrations and you get immediate gratifying results and a sense of accomplishment." As I walked through the garden with Joan Varney, she said, "More than at any time in my 30 years here, I felt and experienced the importance of the Comfort Garden when the Webcor construction began. I mean I was really dragging my lip on the ground! Hundreds of trees and plants were cut down, the great lawns torn apart: these areas, the plants and trees had a history for us. The Comfort Garden felt unadulterated and peaceful, protected and I really began to appreciate its importance." The Comfort Garden garden is the one place on the entire hospital campus where one cannot hear or see the construction underway. Ironically, as I was interviewing Mr. Kinet for this story, 4 construction workers walked in to have their lunch and commented on the peacefulness of the place.

Alain Kinet retired in June of last year after 30 years of service but the Comfort Garden continues to grow and prosper from the love and care of Joan, Cory and the other gardeners. END

### (Continued from page 1)

Nope - didn't do it. Because I knew of the false positive issue and because nothing else had changed dramatically, I elected to study how to prepare. I changed my diet and started exercising 30 minutes a day. I stopped eating red meat, started the mornings with a bowl of plain oatmeal with fresh fruit, ate a big helping of vegetables every day (including broccoli, tomatoes and garlic), stopped drinking beer and started drinking a glass of red wine each night. Then I had a series of PSA tests over several months to compare. (Nothing like a potential cancer diagnosis to focus the mind and stiffen the will!)

Yep - it came down steadily and last results were below 3.5. I'm a happy camper again and back to testing once a year.

So, since prostate issues of some kind will affect 80% of men by the age of 60 and are something all men have to look forward to if we live long enough, it seemed to me that a primer on how to prepare for the PSA test is a very good way to start the Hombre-to-Hombre column.

# You should NEVER take a PSA test without proper preparation.

You should always discuss any treatment program and test results with your doctor – and follow their advice. The medical staff here at SFGH is very good and they will take the time to answer your questions. But, **like all medicine** you have a part in proper treatment too – in this case your part is to know how to properly prepare for the test and to be scrupulous in your preparation.

### What is a PSA test?

A PSA test is a simple blood test which has become the most commonly used method for diagnosing and monitoring prostate health. It is often recommended after a doctor does a digital rectal exam (DRE) and finds the patient has an enlarged prostate. PSA stands for prostate specific antigen, a protein produced by prostate cells. Prostate cancer cells produce larger amounts of this protein than normal prostate cells so an elevated PSA level can be an early warning of cancer. However, an elevated PSA level does not, by itself, mean you have cancer. Only a biopsy of the prostate can tell that with absolute certainty.

### When should I have my PSA level checked?

A man (especially if he is over 40 years old) should discuss with his doctor if he should have his PSA level checked particularly if he has any of the following potential warning signs of prostate cancer:

1. A change in urination patterns lasting two weeks;

- 2. Frequent urination (especially at night);
- 3. Persistent pain in the back, hip, pelvis or thighs;
- 4. Burning sensation during urination;
- 5. Inability to urinate or difficulty starting urination;
- 6. Weak or interrupted urine flow;
- 7. Painful urination.

8. Frequent pain or stiffness in lower back, hips, pelvic or rectal area, or upper thighs

9. Dribbling of urine

If you have any of these symptoms, see your doctor right away.

If a man chooses to be tested, **the PSA test is most often done every year** to screen:

### Men ages 40 - 75.

(Continued on page 5)

# Origins of The Patient Voice

The initiative to publish a newsletter logically followed another Patient Advisory Board project: the Patient Comment Boxes. They are installed in the four Family Health Clinics--red, blue, green and gold. At a clinic staff meeting one of the nurses commented that she'd like to see a clinic newsletter to hand patients waiting for appointments. It could explain the purpose of the comment boxes and create increased response. The Family Health Clinic staff liked the idea of a newsletter and positive results it could have for patients, staff and the clinic in general.

The idea was mentioned at the PAB's meeting the following week and all those attending thought it was a great idea and should be PAB's next project. At a PAB planning meeting less than a week later everyone brought good ideas and examples of other newsletters; the result: we were able to establish goals and to flesh out a design, content and publishing framework for the newsletter including a name: *The Patient Voice*.

PAB chose to follow the example of *As the Daikon Spins,* the Berkeley Bowl's newsletter, which is laid out on 8 1/2 x 11 inch colored paper, and folded in half. Much like Daikon, *The Patient* 

back for a job well done and your positive feed-

back has brightened difficult days for many staff

members who work hard in an often trying envi-

But, frankly, it is your suggestions for how to

make improvements when something has gone

(Continued from page 8)

ronment.

wrong that will lead to changes that make our clinic better.

So, please spend a few minutes before you leave to help improve our clinic – fill out a comment slip today.

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*Voice* will have a series of regular columns as

well as those that vary from issue to issue. It

ics of interest to its community of patients, as

well as columns and articles of interest to the

hospital community at large. The Patient Voice

will focus primarily on wellness issues and not

dispense medical or health recommendation nor

SFGH Community Wellness Center column and

others that focus on upcoming events, programs

and a calendar. Eventually, the newsletter will

include articles and stories from the Spanish

The Patient Voice editorial board will meet at

least twice monthly to discuss content, layout,

standing that the process of writing and putting

PAB is aiming to make it a monthly publication.

required and the volunteer nature of the staff, so

staff and patients will actively contribute to the

editing, printing schedule, etc. While under-

together the newsletter is a learning process,

We recognize and value the community effort

we will work to review that schedule over the

first year. Indeed, it is the hope of PAB that

The Patient Voice.

speaking PAB, or El Comité de Pacientes.

opinions. For example, there will be a regular

will focus on the Family Health Center and top-

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### THE PATIENT VOICE

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JOHN- The best thing I like about my job is working with the Elderly from Viet Nam, because they do not understand the US medical system, and look to me for guidance. The Health Care System is different over there. No preventive medicine in Vietnam, you only go to the Doctor if you are sick. (We were interrupted at least

# **Comment Boxes**

by David McClure

About a year ago the Patient Advisory Board (PAB) began our first project to improve service in the clinics. After reviewing several ideas and numerous comments and suggestions from other patients, we decided the most appropriate first project was to provide some way for patients to have direct feedback to the clinic staff on the quality of their care. In addition, we wanted to create a way patients could give constructive criticism and contribute their ideas about improving problems here at the clinic.

The clinic staff developed the questionnaire and had it translated into three languages. They also give the questionnaires to patients and explain how to use them. After the comments are deposited in the boxes, they are collected each week. Then they are reviewed and discussed by the clinic staff who take the problems most mentioned by patients and work to find specific solutions to each one. Monthly meetings are held including both the PAB and the clinic staff where the comments, problems, suggestions and possible solutions are discussed.

So now it's up to you. We all want to improve the service at the clinics and you, the clinic patients, are the best source of ideas regarding what needs improvement.

5 or 6 times by patients that JUST had to talk to John, and that just was just more proof to me, the popularity of this hard working, family man.)

JANE- What are your favorite foods?

JOHN- I like foods from all nations, and I tell John to let's wrap up the interview – some of his patients head out to where he is and others are knocking on the door for him.

We are asking you to take five minutes or less at the end of

vour visit to

fill out a com-

If you liked

the service,

say that. If

made a spe-

cial effort to

someone

ment.



give you great service praise them.

If you didn't like the service, say that. If something went wrong tell us what it was and give us your suggestions on how to fix the problem.

Sign the forms or make your comments anonymously, but, please, tell us how it went and how we can make it better for you and for all the other patients in the clinic. I promise you that we will read and take action on every one.

The positive comments you have made so far have made the clinic staff very aware of how much they mean to you and how much you appreciate their efforts. We all like a pat on the *(Continued on page 9)* 

### (Continued from page 4)

Men with a family history of prostate cancer (especially a brother or father) and African-American men, should think about starting testing around age 35 because they may have a higher chance of developing prostate cancer.

PSA testing is not recommended for screening men over age 75.

### **Risk Factors:**

<u>Age:</u> Men aged 50 and older run a higher risk. . (Another reminder that getting old ain't for sissies.)

**<u>Race</u>**: Prostate cancer is most common among African American men.

**Family History:** If your father or brother had prostate cancer, you are more likely to have it too.

**Diet:** Eating high-fat food with few fruits and vegetables may raise your risk.

### How should I prepare for testing?

PSA test results are known for showing false positives and the next step is often an invasive biopsy of the prostate itself. For this reason, men should prepare properly for the test.

Before you discuss your situation with your doctor make sure they have or you **bring**:

Copy of your medical history

List of all current medications you are taking

Things you must do before the actual test:

Follow your doctor's instructions regard-

ing whether to stop taking any medicines before the test. Some drugs can dramatically affect the results of a PSA test.

Avoid physical activities which apply unnatural pressure on the genitals and stop all activities like bicycling and horseback riding for three days before the test. Pressure on the prostate can falsely increase the PSA test results.

Do not have sex for at least 72 hours prior to the test since after a man ejaculates (whether with a partner or from masturbation) the results will show a false, high reading.

Do not take a PSA test immediately after a digital rectal exam (DRE), which can alter the results of a PSA test.

### What do my results mean?

A high PSA level has been linked to an increased chance of having prostate cancer. However, a high PSA level only identifies patients at higher risk of having prostate cancer. It does not mean you have cancer.

As a general guideline, the following results indicate a need for further follow-up and testing:

A PSA of 4 or above for most men				
For men under age 49, PSA levels above 2.5				
For men aged 50 - 59,	"	"	u	3.5
For men aged 60 - 69,	"	u	ш	4.5

A significant rise from one year to the next may also indicate a higher risk

African Americans and Asian Americans may need follow-up testing if they have lower PSA levels.

A rapidly changing PSA, even within the normal range, raises the possibility of cancer.

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### THE PATIENT VOICE

### (Continued from page 5)

### What else should I know?

Keep in mind that, although PSA testing is an important tool for detecting prostate cancer, it is not foolproof. Your doctor is the trusted expert you should rely on for guidance and direction on the next steps to take.

### What it I have prostate cancer?

Whatever you do, don't ignore the symptoms of prostate cancer. See your doctor right away to begin diagnosis and treatment. Today, a cancer

### Dear Dr. Odd

By Dr. Priya Shashidharan

### Dear Dr. Odd,

I have 3 daughters, ages 9 yrs, 5 yrs, and 3 yrs. My 2 oldest daughters were tested for all allergies at the Family Health Center, and my 9 yrs is allergic to wheat and is on a gluten-free diet. My 5 yr old has no allergies. Dr. Odd, my baby always has a runny nose and I am really worried that she also has allergies, what do you think I should do? Is she also allergic to wheat because of her runny nose?

Linda

diagnosis is not the death sentence it used to be. There are modern treatments that can be very effective in slowing or stopping the spread of the disease. And there are two types of prostate cancer, fast growing and slow growing. If you have slow growing prostate cancer, it is much less dangerous and may even be something you can live with. Though some men will face other cancers in their lives, prostate cancer, when caught and treated early, has one of the highest success rates.

Whatever your diagnosis, rest assured the medical staff at SFGH will recommend and deliver the best possible care. You're in good hands here.

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Dear Linda,

It could be possible that your 5yr old daughter has allergies. The most common allergy condition is known as "allergic rhinitis." This is when there is inflammation in the nasal passages due to an allergic reaction. Usually allergic rhinitis is caused by things in the environment like pollen or dust mites. When a person breathes those allergens in the reaction occurs in the nasal passage and causes them to sneeze or have a runny nose. They can also get into a person's eves and cause them to be itchy or watery, which is commonly seen also in a person with allergic rhinitis. It is possible you're your 5yr old has this condition, and it does run in families. I do not think that your 5yr old is allergic to

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### THE PATIENT VOICE

wheat though. The gluten (the allergic component of wheat) allergy is a reaction that occurs in the intestines. It usually manifests as abdominal pain, bloating, or diarrhea when a person eats things that contain gluten. It does not manifest with a runny nose.

I recommend that you bring up your concern for allergies with your doctor during your child's next visit. It is not usually necessary

### Get to Know the Clinic Staff

### By Jane Redmond

to do allergy testing to figure out what your child may be allergic to. Avoiding what you think may be causing it is the best initial strategy and controlling the symptoms with antihistamine medications which your doctor can prescribe when they occur is more important in treating allergies.

Sincerely,

Dr. Odd

It is with a great honor that my 1st interview, the "3 Minute Interview", is with John, who works on the 1st Floor Red Team. To anyone that is new to our Health Center, the Red Team is right next to where someone would Register to be seen in any of our Clinics. I met John for his interview on a busy Wednesday afternoon, right after lunch, and as usual, he met me with a positive attitude and a ready smile. As we sit down in an empty exam room, I soon learn there is more to this man than meets the eye, and that was exactly what I expected.

JANE - Hello John, our Team wanted to interview you 1st, it is not difficult to notice what a hard worker and team player you are. I have been a patient here for a long time, and I have always seen you here, how long have you worked at the Family Health Center?

JOHN- Believe it or not, I have been here for 24 years, 19 years in the Green Team and 5 years on the Red Team.

JANE- John, what country are you from?

JOHN - I am from Viet Nam. I came here to live 25 years ago for good, but in ???? the US Navy gave me the I had the opportunity to go to San Diego, CA for 2 years to learn to be a US Navy Corpsman. When I was finished in San Diego, I went back to Viet Nam for 2 years to work, after that, I came to the USA, to San Francisco and 19 years ago to SFGH.

JANE- W hat is your job here, every time I see you you are on the run.

JOHN- My job title is MEA or Medical Evaluation Assistant, I have a certification from the State of California. My job is like a Nursing Assistant.

JANE-Do you have any children?

JOHN-I have a son, who is in high school and a daughter, who just graduated from the University of California at Santa Cruz as an Accountant.

JANE- I can see you are a family man and very proud Father, when you talk about your children you can tell just how proud you are of them. John, what do you like the best about your job?

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