

Festival to Benefit Children's Hospice

Tickets are available for "Savor the South: A Southern Food Festival," to be held on Sat., June 14, from noon to 5 p.m., in the green area next to MacArthur Center (at the corner of Freemason and Monticello). This event will raise money for EDMARC Hospice for Children, an organization that provides 24/7 medical care, counseling and home care to gravely ill children on the Southside and the Peninsula. Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$5 for children ages five through 12. For more information or to purchase tickets, contact EDMARC Hospice for Children at 967-9251.

Chesapeake Regional to Offer Nursing Program

This summer, Chesapeake Regional Medical Center will host an externship program for nursing students who are enrolled in either an accredited associate's degree or bachelor's degree program. Those selected to participate will spend 10 weeks rotating through various units within their nursing interest areas at CRMC. For more information and to request an application, call (757) 312-6566.

Groundbreaking Planned for Sentara Princess Anne

Sentara Healthcare plans to break ground this year for a new 120-bed facility—Sentara Princess Anne Hospital—in southern Virginia Beach. The opening is set for late summer 2011.

Sentara Adopts SPY Technology for Coronary Bypass Surgeries

This year Sentara Heart Hospital and Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital have implemented the SPY Intra-operative Imaging System—a new technology used before and after coronary bypass surgery to reduce post-surgical complications.

Rehab Wing Now Open at Sentara Hospital in Virginia Beach

Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital has opened the area's first inpatient rehab facility. The eight-bed unit is run by physicians and staff who care for patients recovering from trauma, stroke, spinal injuries, burns, amputations, hip fractures, neurological disorders and other conditions that limit independence. Services offered include medical care and nursing; physical, occupational, recreational and speech therapy; psychological and social services; support groups and patient and family education.

Former ER Doctor Turns Up the Heat and Gets

BAKING

Feeding a child with food allergies can be a challenge—learn how a mother's search for safe but tasty treats turned out sweeter than she ever imagined.

WRITTEN BY BRENDA H. WELCH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRIAN M. FREER

While children tend to be wary of doctors, the kids attending preschool at Ghent United Methodist Church in Norfolk fidget with excitement at the prospect of seeing Dr. Lucy Gibney. The secret to "Dr. Lucy's" popularity isn't a warm stethoscope or painless shots—it's her cookies.

Gibney, whose four-year-old son, Colin, attends the school, frequently provides cookies and other snacks for Colin and his classmates. But Gibney doesn't mix and bake the treats at home in her kitchen—she brings them straight from her nearby cookie factory.

Four years ago while working as an emergency room (ER) physician at Sentara CarePlex Hospital in Hampton, Gibney never imagined she would one day trade in her doctor's coat and prescription pad for a chef's apron and six ovens. "I knew that when Colin was born, life as we knew it would change," Gibney says. "But I didn't anticipate it would involve owning and operating a cookie factory."

The 2,500-square-foot factory located off Tidewater Drive in Norfolk is unique in that it is free of ingredients such as wheat, gluten, dairy, milk, casein (a milk protein), butter, eggs, peanuts and tree nuts—a decision Gibney made not as a matter of principle but one born of love and necessity.

A frightening diagnosis

The impetus for Gibney's career change came when Colin was just four months old. Still breastfeeding him at that time, Gibney decided to introduce a dairy-based formula into Colin's diet. When Colin's face became red and swollen and his breathing labored, Lucy and her husband, Paul, also an ER physician, recognized that Colin was experiencing a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction to the formula. They gave him infant Benadryl before rushing him to the emergency room. Colin survived, but the Gibneys remained paralyzed with fear.

"Even with our medical backgrounds, we were confused and scared," says Paul. "Colin came very close to dying, and we needed answers."

After a battery of tests, the Gibneys learned that Colin had developed severe food allergies, which occur when



Drs. Lucy and Paul Gibney, founders of Dr. Lucy's, LLC

the body's immune system determines that a certain food ingested is harmful and in turn creates antibodies to attack it. The next time the food is eaten, the immune system releases a wave of chemicals meant to protect the body, but instead they cause allergic reactions that can affect the respiratory and cardiovascular systems, the skin and the gastrointestinal tract. Symptoms can appear within minutes or as long as two hours after the person has eaten the allergenic food.

Dr. Angela Hogan, a pediatrician specializing in allergies at Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters (CHKD) in Norfolk, has treated Colin for the past four years; she says one of the most important items all new parents should have readily available is a liquid antihistamine (such as Benadryl for infants), as food allergies can emerge at any time. "Benadryl helps decrease symptoms during an allergic reaction, which can buy parents precious time if they need to get their child to the emergency room," Hogan advises.

Like Colin, some children may experience anaphylaxis—a serious allergic reaction that happens instantly and can be fatal. Certain foods and medications as well as bee stings and exposure to latex can trigger this response in a person with such allergies, and administering epinephrine (adrenaline) immediately is crucial. Says Hogan: "If a parent suspects that their child is having a reaction, they should immediately call their pediatrician; if it is severe and the child's breathing is impaired, they should call 911."

Ninety percent of all food allergies involve eight foods: milk, eggs, wheat, soy, peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish and fish.