New beeper system goes into use

A new audio paging system has been installed by Barnes Hospital and is now in operation according to George Voyles, telecommunications director. The system, which cost $88,000, has been in use since Jan. 15.

The new FM system, made by Motorola, replaces an AM system installed six years ago. The dial-access system is used with "beepers," hand-held equipment which emits an audible tone when an access number is dialed, or, in some cases, emits a tone and voice.

Mr. Voyles said the new equipment is providing better in-hospital coverage because the FM signal, through an antenna on top of Queeny Tower, penetrates buildings better than the former AM system.

Approximately 180 beepers have been issued to medical personnel throughout the hospital on a one-to-one replacement basis, meaning that no additional units are in service. "Only those persons or medical services which already had beepers received the new devices," said Mr. Voyles.

JCAH continues full accreditation for Barnes, Renard

Barnes Hospital and Renard Hospital, Barnes' psychiatric care unit, have been granted full, two-year accreditations by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals (JCAH).

In letters to hospital President Robert E. Frank, the JCAH said the continued accreditation resulted from an on-site survey of the hospital last October. The two-year accreditation is the longest granted by the JCAH.

"We are very pleased to have received the full, two-year accreditation," Mr. Frank said. "JCAH requirements and standards are becoming more rigid and to receive a two-year accreditation is especially gratifying."

For the first time Renard Hospital was surveyed separately from the remainder of Barnes. JCAH now requires that all psychiatric units of 100 beds or more be surveyed separately from their related institutions.

The on-site visit followed a pre-survey report compiled by Barnes personnel and submitted to the accreditation committee of the JCAH. Rich Grisham, associate administrator, and Robert Maurer, evening administrator, coordinated the pre-survey report and on-site visit activities.

Along with the accreditation notification, the hospital also received a list of recommendations which the JCAH has identified as areas in need of improvement. The recommendations are to be acted on by the time of the next accreditation visit in 1978.

Mr. Frank said that the hospital is aware of the need to upgrade specific areas and that, in most cases, plans are already underway to implement JCAH recommendations.

JCAH accreditation is voluntary but Barnes is one of 4,800 hospitals out of 7,150 in the United States which have earned the recognition. The primary purpose of the JCAH program on hospital accreditation is to help hospitals in their pursuit of excellence and thereby provide a higher quality of care to patients.

Wages, supply costs expected to rise during fiscal year

Increases for employee wages, equipment and supplies are major parts of the Barnes Hospital budget approved by the board of directors in late December for the fiscal year which began Jan. 1.

Hospital President Robert E. Frank said that these increases are projected to average 11.75 percent during 1977 and the operating budget of the 1200-bed, non-profit hospital will be approximately $84 million.

Employee wages and stipends for medical interns and residents will total $40 million. Purchased supplies and equipment, ranging from surgical dressings to hospital beds, is expected to cost approximately $40 million.

Although in-patients and out-patients will be billed a total of $89 million during fiscal 1977, the amount actually collected plus revenue from some ancillary services is expected to match the $84 million operating budget. Uncollected money is due to charity care, unpaid accounts, Medicare and Medicaid patient charges not fully reimbursed by the government and some charges not paid by other third-party payers.

"There has been a lot of talk lately about the increased cost of health care," Mr. Frank said. "The cost of operating a hospital has risen substantially over the past few years. We have been hit hard by inflation just like everyone else. But more than that, people demand quality health care and we are providing it."

"People are living today who would not have lived a few years ago. There has been a rapid growth in medical knowledge and in medical technology," he cited kidney transplants as an example of new procedures which save lives. New surgical techniques have enabled an increasing number of persons with renal problems to resume normal lifestyles following kidney transplant surgery.

"But this costs money," said Mr. Frank. "We believe that, while we put health ahead of costs, we must operate on a solid financial basis. Our charges for services are among the lowest for any major university affiliated teaching medical center in the nation and are comparable to most hospitals in the St. Louis area."

Mr. Frank said that Barnes is now operating under a new contract with Blue Cross, the major third-party payer in the United States. Under the old contract, Blue Cross paid a set amount for primary hospital services such as the cost of the room, but paid the full amount for such ancillary charges as laboratory fees and other services.

"The new contract calls for charges which more closely fit the actual cost of the service," Mr. Frank said. "This contract does not increase the cost of health care, and is an effort to relate charges directly to costs."

(Continued on next page)
Increased governmental controls on the medical industry has also increased the hospital’s operating expense. “The initiation of the utilization review and professional standards review organization (PSRO) programs has meant that we have had to add a new dimension to our medical record area. It also means additional employees and greater expense.”

Another major expense at Barnes Hospital has been provisions for malpractice claims. Mr. Frank said, “The 1977 budget includes payments into a fund to self-insure against malpractice claims. In 1976, Barnes became a self-insurer because our experience did not justify the high cost of malpractice insurance. By changing to self-insurance, we were able to keep expenses for this component of our budget lower than if we insured with a liability company.”

Food fair planned for early March

A food fair will be held at Barnes March 9 to focus attention on the role food plays in people’s lives and to call attention to National Nutrition Week being observed March 6-12.

The fair will be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the ground floor of the East Pavilion according to Kathy McClusky, director of clinical dietetics education at Barnes. She said the theme of the fair will be “Nutrition and Fitness.”

Previous food fairs have been well received by employees, patients and visitors to the hospital. Booths focusing on different aspects of nutrition will be featured and dietetic interns will explain different aspects of nutrition as it applies to fitness and health.

The nutrition fair at Barnes is one of several St. Louis area activities during National Nutrition Week. Displays will be set up March 12 at South County, Jamestown Mall and Crestwood shopping centers and at Union and Soulard markets.

Julie Scheel, teaching dietitian at Barnes, is chairman of the St. Louis Dietetic Association’s community nutrition committee which will co-sponsor the area displays with the St. Louis Nutrition Council.

“People know what they like to eat but most know little about the nutrition aspects of different types of food,” Mrs. Scheel said. “What we will be trying to do is dispel some myths and provide some good information that will be helpful in everyday living.”

Two doctors have joined the medical staff according to the President’s Office. They are Dr. Ali Ehsani, assistant physician in the department of preventive medicine, and Dr. Isabella Collins, assistant anesthesiologist.

The President’s Office also reports that Dr. Robert Shank has been promoted from associate physician to physician. Dr. Shank is chief of preventive medicine at Barnes.

Dr. Bohigian elected v-p

Dr. George Bohigian, Barnes ophthalmologist, has been elected vice president of the St. Louis Medical Society.

Other institutions, notably Koch Hospital in St. Louis, have stopped providing coffee and have substituted tea. Some supermarkets have advised customers of the higher coffee prices and have recommended alternate beverages.

The Commissioner of consumer affairs of New York City is leading a fight to reduce the coffee consumption and the coffee boycott group has organized a “coffee brake” program aimed at reducing the consumption, thus increasing the supply and hopefully lowering prices.

Reasons for the dramatic increases are numerous but most revolve around a sharp decline in the amount of coffee being grown in South America and being sold to Western countries from Africa.

A heavy frost killed more than 900 million coffee trees in Brazil in July 1976. Brazil provides 60 percent of all coffee imported into the United States. Other factors include rains and floods which destroyed approximately 20 percent of the coffee crop in Colombia, the world’s second largest producer; the war in Angola, a major supplier of the U.S. instant coffee market, which led to a ban on exports to the free world; the February, 1976 earthquake in Guatemala, disrupting delivery to suppliers; and leaf rust and transportation problems in Nicaragua.

In all, the price of green coffee, the coffee bean before roasting and gridding, has risen from less than $1 per pound in mid-1975 to almost $2.50 per pound in early January, 1977.

What this means for most consumers is that a pound of coffee which cost approximately $1.20 in a supermarket in mid-1975 has risen to more than $3 per pound. Some suppliers are predicting that a pound may cost $4 before long.

Some of the increased costs may be due to speculation in coffee futures as a result of natural disasters such as the Brazilian freeze and Guatamalan earthquake. Another factor is the export tax placed on coffee. In Brazil, the government collects 83 cents as an export tax on each pound of green coffee leaving the country.

Joe Charleyville, president of Rose Coffee Co. in St. Louis, which supplies coffee to Barnes, said that speculation has caused him problems. “The reduction in supply meant that I was forced to buy coffee at much higher prices and farther in advance than ever before.”

He said that on top of paying for the green coffee beans, he must pay to ship the coffee through New Orleans to St. Louis where it is roasted, ground and then blended, all of which adds to the price of the product.

“We provide a quality product,” said Mr. Charleyville, “at a price to a place like Barnes, which uses so much coffee, that is lower than what the consumer pays at the grocery store. And the coffee purchased off-the-shelf is much older than the coffee supplied to Barnes. Barnes receives coffee which is consumed within 10 days after being roasted.”

When asked if the price of coffee will continue to rise, Mr. Charleyville said, “Your guess is as good as mine. The price of coffee in a year may be $1.50 a pound or it may be $4.50 a pound. The coffee crops in South America look good at this point so we might see a larger supply and some reduction in costs.”

He also pointed out that late increases in the cost of green coffee have not yet reached the consumer so that prices are expected to rise more before they fall.

Dr. Bohigian elected v-p

Dr. Bohigian, Barnes ophthalmologist, has been elected vice president of the St. Louis Medical Society.
Elmer and Marie Krueger's 53rd wedding anniversary was one to remember. They were served dinner, complete with champagne, in her room, compliments of nursing personnel on the second floor of Rand-Johnson.

Mrs. Krueger has been hospitalized since late October and had a heart valve and double bypass operation. Her husband, a retired machinist at Anheuser-Busch, has been her constant companion during her hospitalization.

"They are such wonderful people we wanted to do something special for them," said Robyn Gann, registered nurse on the floor. "When we found out the wedding anniversary was coming up, we thought we would try to make it special for them."

The special included a menu of cornish hen, rice, green beans, a cake and the champagne. "We checked with her doctor to make sure that he approved the idea and that the food would be okay," said Ms. Gann.

"The nurses here are the greatest anywhere," said Mrs. Krueger. "I was so surprised to see them all come in with the dinner and to sing 'Happy Anniversary.' My stay at Barnes has been much better because of the kindness they have shown to me."

Mrs. Krueger said that she had been coming to Barnes all of her life. "I have always come to Barnes when I have been sick or injured. There is just no better place when you're sick."

Oral contraceptives is topic of meeting

Dr. Daniel Mishell, professor of obstetrics-gynecology of the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, gave a presentation on "Current Concepts in Oral Contraceptive Treatment" at a meeting of the Barnes Hospital Society Jan. 20.

Dr. Mishell also spoke at obstetrics-gynecology grand rounds in Wohl auditorium on oral contraceptives.

Three employes retire; gave 70 years of service

Three employes with combined services of 70 years retired from Barnes Hospital late in 1976. All received certificates of appreciation from hospital President Robert E. Frank.

They are Estelle Warfield, a senior nurse assistant on 4400; Patience Steverson, supervisor in housekeeping; and Arthur Worley, plant engineering.

Miss Warfield was honored by her co-workers with a combination retirement and Christmas party on 4400. She received a money tree with the money wrapped in boxes which were hung on the tree.

She began work at Barnes in 1954 and retired Jan 2. During her retirement she plans to be more active in her church work and to visit relatives in California and New Orleans. She had previously worked on 3 McMillan and in the former Maternity Hospital.

Mrs. Steverson, who worked as a supervisor in whatever area of housekeeping she was needed, jokingly says she "floated for 28 years." She retired late in December and had been employed continuously since 1950. However, she also had worked at Barnes in the 1940's.

Housekeeping employes gave her a party in housekeeping offices and presented her with a watch. During her retirement she hopes to fulfill a lifelong dream, a trip around the world.

Mrs. Stevenson also was a volunteer at the hospital in 1943 and 1944, working in the wards because, as she says, "I wanted to help in the war effort."

Mr. Worley was employed in 1956 and retired Dec. 23. "I have really enjoyed working at Barnes and now I am going to take it easy," he said.

A native of Kennett, Mo., Mr. Worley was a farmer near Portageville, also in southeast Missouri, prior to coming to Barnes. His work has been air conditioning and refrigeration.

"I am moving back to the country," he said. "My wife and I will have four acres and some pigs and we'll have our garden so I guess I will stay busy after all."

Eye symposium held

Dr. Allen Kolker, Barnes ophthalmologist, recently participated in the second annual symposium on "Current Concepts in Ophthalmology" at the McGee Eye Institute and the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine in Oklahoma City.
January was one of coldest months on record

Mid-February will find Barnes employes and other St. Louisans looking forward to the warming temperatures of spring, but it is doubtful that they will forget the late December and early January snow storms which made driving difficult, tempers short and created additional problems for the hospital.

The 22-plus inches of snow between Jan. 1-25 far exceeded the normal amount of snowfall in St. Louis and contributed to the most snow in the area since December, 1973.

The results were monumental traffic jams on major highways, delays in reaching work, closed schools and aching backs from shoveling snow. Although schools and some businesses can be closed, hospitals cannot. Patients still must receive care, people still need to see doctors and accident victims must be treated.

The patient census at Barnes reached above the 1160 level in mid-January although the large number cannot be attributed to weather conditions. Emergency room visits increased because of snow-related falls and other injuries but clinic visits declined as some persons were unable to get transportation.

One of the major problems in the St. Louis area was a limited supply of blood available to area hospitals and some cutback on elective surgery. Although the cutback was not felt at Barnes, Dr. Laurence Sherman, director of the Barnes blood bank, said that surgical procedures were being approached on a case-by-case basis.

Dr. Sherman also appeared on television and was quoted in newspaper articles as the Red Cross appealed for blood donations. As a result of the appeals a record number 1500 units of blood were contributed during one day in mid-January. Barnes, with 1200 beds and a high percentage of acutely ill patients, uses more blood products than any other hospital in the bi-state region covered by the Red Cross.

Among the Barnes departments most affected by the severe weather were security, nursing, housekeeping and plant engineering. More than...
An unidentified housekeeping employe bundled-up to ward off cold weather, spreads salt in front of Queeny Tower.

150 cars were started by security during the first half of January as the temperature dipped to as low as ten below zero. The department’s four-wheel drive vehicle also was pressed into duty to grade snow from hospital driveways and the heliport on an employe parking lot.

Betty Falkenberg in security said that traffic control was a major problem as many people tried to park close to entrances and others attempted to drive closer to pick up visitors or employes leaving work. “The weather just made people a lot madder than they normally are,” she said.

Housekeeping employes were kept busy mopping hallways near entrances because of snow being tracked inside. Groundsmen frequently spent the night at the hospital, taking turns clearing snow and ice from walkways and putting down the more than 200 fifty-pound bags of salt used during the first half of January.

“We had to have a maximum effort from all our people to get through the rough times,” said Ernest Launsby, executive housekeeper. In addition to weather-related work, housekeeping personnel were busy over the Christmas holidays completely cleaning some patient floors closed for the holidays.

Plant engineering had to cope with freezing coils in some heating equipment and malfunctioning water valves exposed to the elements. “Heating is always a problem during the winter,” said chief engineer Don Brautigam, “but this was especially true in late December and early January when the weather was so bitterly cold. Our utility bills for that period will be much higher.”

The poor driving conditions meant that some nursing personnel were unable to report for their assigned shifts and some nurses worked double shifts. Others spent nights in the nurses residence which had some room available because Level Two students were on vacation.

School of Nursing classes continued for Level One students, most of whom live in the residence. Some of the students assisted Barnes nursing personnel in areas which were temporarily understaffed because of the weather.

The elevated and enclosed walkway was invaluable to medical center personnel going from Barnes to the medical school.

Some Barnes volunteers and Auxiliary members even took taxis to the hospital when they were unable to drive their cars. The surgical waiting area in the East Pavilion remained operative as did Baby Photo and most other volunteer services.

Also on the positive side, business was described as “booming” in labor and delivery and a nurse there said that no one started “too late” to the hospital.

Higher than normal amounts of food were served in the employe cafeteria and in Queeny Tower, apparently resulting from people, employes included, eating in the complex instead of going out. Julia King reported that the hotel section of Queeny Tower was filled to capacity during the bad weather.

John Tighe in the employment office said that persons with appointments for interviews were usually on time but that “walk-in” applications were not as numerous as during better weather.

Although drilling operations for the West Pavilion were temporarily halted, Tom Winston, vice president of the hospital, said that no significant delays would be experienced unless the bad weather persisted.

One of the major complaints around Barnes was the long driving times to and from work. Marge Ellis, clinic nursing director, said it took two and one-half hours one morning to drive from Florissant to Barnes.

Terri Clawson, cashier’s office, used a cement block in the back of her car for extra traction on snow-covered roads. A number of employes reported that their CB radios were invaluable to find out about road conditions.

All-in-all, Barnes apparently survived the January snow storms and freezing temperatures very well. But more may be on the way before spring comes back and the players return to the city’s tennis courts south of the hospital.
New Year’s baby

Deborah Ratliff holds her son, Geoffrey Bryon, born Jan. 1 at Barnes. Mrs. Ratliff is a nurse in the newborn nursery and Geoffrey is her first child.

Wandy Simmons wins safety poster contest

Wandy Simmons, unit manager for Renard was awarded a $25 U.S. Savings Bond for his entry in a poster contest sponsored by the safety committee of the nursing service.

Mr. Simmons’ poster, showing a calculator and titled “Safety is an exact calculation,” was voted by nursing service employees as the best poster of the year. It was one of eleven posters in competition for the best poster of the year contest.

Robert E. Frank, president of Barnes, made the savings bond presentation during a luncheon for contestants in Queeny Tower restaurant. He commended the safety committee for its efforts to keep safety uppermost in employees’ minds.

Members of the safety committee are chairman Christine Sims, Gloria Metzger, Nancy Jones, Viola Curry, Mildred Jamieson, Pat Toban and Becky James.

VFW Auxiliary presents money for cancer research

A check for $2,579 was recently presented to Barnes Hospital by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Ladies Auxiliary, Department of Missouri. The money will be used for cancer research.

Audrey Creel, immediate past president of the organization in Missouri, presented the check to Joseph Greco, associate administrator. Also participating in the ceremonies were Emelia Droeg, state junior vice president, and Catherine Stratton, state chaplain.

The gift was the second in two years by the VFW Ladies Auxiliary. Last year a check for more than $1,400 was presented to Barnes. Each year the organization’s 16,000 members make contributions to support cancer research on the national and state levels.

Joe Greco, associate administrator, accepts $2,500 check from representatives of the VFW Ladies Auxiliary in Missouri. From left are Emelia Droeg, Audrey Creel, Mr. Greco and Catherine Stratton.
IN HONOR OF:

Barnes Hospital
Stanley L. O'Kraksi
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Anonymous

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Mr. and Mrs. Bert Wenneker

Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Gerchen's New Home
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Jim Hubbard is named public relations director

Jim Hubbard, assistant public relations director since 1973, has been named to succeed Constance Barton as public relations director at Barnes Hospital according to hospital President Robert E. Frank. Hubbard will assume his new duties Feb. 28.

Mrs. Barton, director of the office since 1965, has been named staff director of a newly-established federal agency, Task Force on Communications, at the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Md.

A native of Sikeston, Mo., Hubbard has served as editor of the Barnes Bulletin and has assisted with media relations, special events, employe activities and photographic services. He is a graduate of Culver-Stockton College in Canton, Mo., and served the college as assistant public relations director for almost four years.

Daisy Kramer, who for more than seven years has worked parttime as media coordinator, staff writer and newsletter editor, will assume the full time duties of assistant public relations director, also on Feb. 28.

Mrs. Kramer formerly was employed by the C. V. Mosby Co., publishers of medical books, and McGraw-Hill publishers.

New look in corridor

Chandeliers accent the traditional look being created in the main hospital corridor. The work is part of the renovation of the entire corridor from Queeny Tower through the new Peters building.
A plumber (above) looks over blueprints prior to the beginning of renovation work in an area previously housing the chemistry diagnostic laboratory. The laboratory is now housed in new facilities (below) in the Peters building.