

Our patients say **#1** **WE'RE #1**

An informal poll conducted by the Glens Falls Post Star named Hudson Headwaters the best Medical Center in the region. Two of our offices and one of our practitioners were also recognized. "We are especially gratified to be recognized this way because there are so many good physicians throughout the area," said John Ruge, M.D., CEO of Hudson Headwaters. "It's challenging to care for so many thousands of people, and we are grateful for the trust that our patients give us."



Spotlight ON YOUR HEALTH

CDC: Bug Spray with DEET works best, but be careful!

With the arrival of warm weather, North Country residents are waging their annual "Battle of the Bug." When it comes to keeping insects off, most authorities recommend repellents containing DEET (N,N-diethylmetatoluamide) as the most reliable and long lasting. DEET repels mosquitoes, ticks, black flies and other insects when applied to skin or clothing. In general,

the more DEET a repellent contains, the longer time it can protect you.

The Centers for Disease Control recommend the use of DEET, with the following precautions:

- Use enough repellent to cover exposed skin or clothing. Do not apply repellent to skin that is under clothing. Heavy application is not necessary to achieve protection.
- Do not apply repellent to cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.
- Do not spray aerosol or pump products in enclosed areas; do not inhale the aerosol.
- Do not apply aerosol or pump products directly to the face. Spray your hands

and then rub them carefully over the face, avoiding eyes and mouth.

- When using repellent on a child, apply it to your own hands and then rub them on the child. Avoid the child's eyes and mouth and apply sparingly around the ears.
- Do not apply repellent to children's hands. (Children tend to put their hands in their mouths.)

Continued on page 2

WHAT'S INSIDE?	
Why I Support Hudson Headwaters	2
Community Champions Dinner	3
Free Drug Program	3
National Health Center Week	4
Around the Network	4
Dr. Ruge: On the Personal Side	5



- Do not allow children under 10 years old to apply insect repellent to themselves; have an adult do it for them. Keep repellents out of reach of children.
- Protect infants under two months of age by using a carrier draped with mosquito netting with an elastic edge for a tight fit.

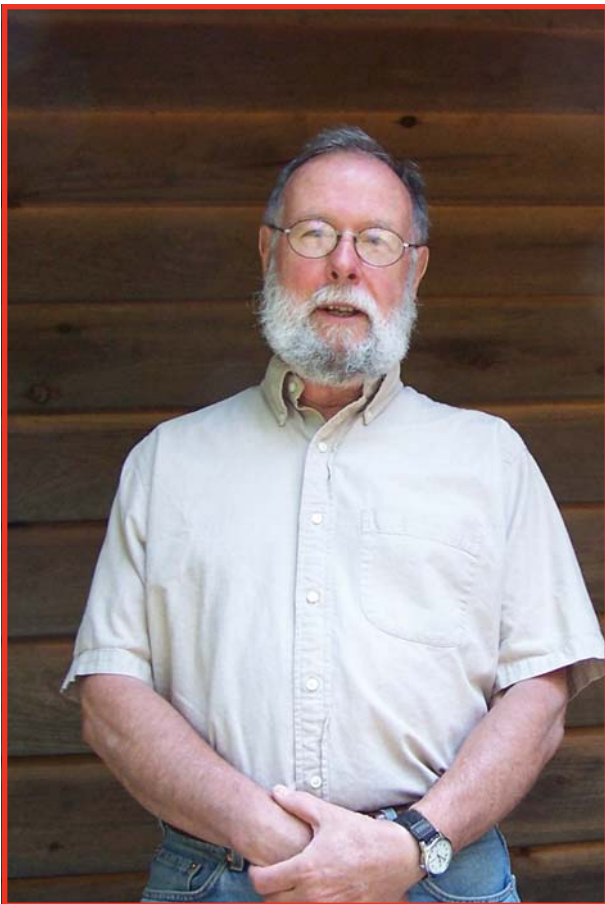
The recommendations for DEET use in pregnant women do not differ from those for non-pregnant adults.

Because DEET is so widely used, a great deal of testing has been done, and over the long history of DEET use, very few confirmed incidents of toxic reactions to DEET have occurred when the product is used properly.

(Source: CDC Yellowbook, “Health Information for International Travel”)

WHY **I** SUPPORT

HUDSON HEADWATERS



John Sullivan of Chestertown

By John Sullivan

Okay, there was the time that the hot water heater blew up in my face one night, setting my beard on fire and burning a hand and arm. Very exciting, for a while, until I pulled in to the Warrensburg Health Center and moaned my story to a Physician’s Assistant (I wish I could remember his name) who calmed me down, cleaned my cooked arm and slathered on that miraculous Silvadene cream before sending me on my way. There was also the heart scare, a little more complicated than an explosion but with a similar happy ending, thanks to Drs. Paul Bachman and Michael Layden.

So what’s the big deal? It is this: our part of the world has never been an easy place to obtain medical care and once upon a time it was nearly impossible. No local doctors, no Hudson Headwaters. It was easy to neglect problems that did not seem to warrant an all-day trip to the doctor. Then, a slightly burned arm could easily become seriously infected; a minor heart irregularity could escalate into a life-threatening emergency.

No longer. Now it is easier to get treatment than to ignore the problem. More important, women now have reasonable access to prenatal care and well-baby visits. Older people can obtain regular checkups, so that small symptoms do not grow into major illnesses.

Those are big deals. They mean that attention is now paid to the health of all the people as well as the sicknesses of the few. That marks the value of Hudson Headwaters and the difference between a decent life here and a dismal one.



This newsletter is published by Hudson Headwaters Health Network, a not-for-profit, community-based system of health centers serving the Lake George/Adirondack and Glens Falls Region for more than 25 years.

Please direct questions or comments to us at P.O. Box 357, One Broad St. Plaza, Glens Falls, NY 12801, or email us at hnelson@hhhn.org or from our website at hhhn.org.



Teresa Sayward



Charles H. Bracken, Jr.



Harry "Mac" DePan

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Dinner to Honor Sayward, Bracken and DePan

Hudson Headwaters will hold its second annual Community Champions Dinner on Sunday, September 9 at Jimbo's Club on Brant Lake. This year's honorees will be Assemblywoman Teresa R. Sayward, Charles H. Bracken Jr., CEO of The Barton Group, and retired Glens Falls surgeon, Harry "Mac" DePan. Channel 13 anchor and health reporter, Benita Zahn, will serve as mistress of ceremonies.



Benita Zahn

"Last year's event was attended by 300 of the area's community leaders," said James Himoff, chairman of the Hudson Headwaters Health Foundation Board. "It helped raise funds to upgrade the Net-

work's ultrasound equipment used to perform general diagnostic imaging in a broad range of clinical applications, including abdominal, breast, Ob/Gyn and cardiac imaging."

LIVE AUCTION SLATED

This year's dinner will include a live auction with an Adirondack theme, Himoff said. Several select items will be offered for bidding, including:

- A "LOST POND" boat built by renowned Adirondack boat builder, Peter Hornbeck of Olmstedville
- "Peak Pleasure," a print of the Adirondacks in autumn by the highly regarded artist, Loren Blackburn of Queensbury
- Two nights at The Hedges, a peaceful getaway on Blue Mountain Lake

- Dinner for four at the Chef's Table plus overnight accommodations at the Inn at Erlowest
- A weekend at the Sagamore on Lake George, golf included
- Custom designed etched glass from Heritage Creations

The 2007 Community Champions sponsors are Barton Mines, Cool Insuring Agency, Creative Stage Lighting, Glens Falls National Bank and Point O'Pines Camp for Girls.



Peak Pleasure by Loren Blackburn

If you would like an invitation, contact Howard Nelson at hnelson@hhhn.org or call 761-0300, x160. Ticket levels for the event begin at \$125 for individuals.

Network Program Provides Free Drugs

Hudson Headwaters, working with more than 30 drug manufacturers, will give away more than \$400,000 in free prescription medications this year. The Pharmacy Assistance Program (RX Assist), begun in December of 2005, provides a way for qualified, low-income patients of Hudson Headwaters to receive prescription drugs at no charge. But it isn't easy.

"I think that most people would be overwhelmed by the paperwork associated with the program," said Jim Donnelly, who directs the Network's pharmacy programs. "Each drug manufacturer has different rules. This is confusing to the average patient, especially those on multiple medications."

To help patients sign up and continue to receive free medications, the Network

employs a full-time Rx Assist specialist who helps to fill out the patient forms, tracks the ongoing information that is required of physicians and coordinates delivery throughout the Network's 12 health centers. "Clearly, many people are benefiting who probably wouldn't be able to afford these medications," Donnelly said.

The program currently serves 474 patients. Since it begun, the program has provided more than \$570,000 in free pharmaceuticals from 37 different manufacturers.



NATIONAL HEALTH CENTER WEEK
celebrates
“Your Health Care Home”

Community-based health centers like Hudson Headwaters are the focus of National Health Center Week, August 5-11. This year’s theme is “Your Health Care Home.”

“The community health center program was founded more than 40 years ago to make sure that everyone in the United States would have a health care home, a place where they know their primary care provider and their provider knows them,” said Elizabeth Swain, executive director of the Community Health Care Association of New York State.

“Community Health Center Week is a time to recognize and celebrate the people who work tirelessly to keep their communities healthy,” Swain said. “Hudson Headwaters Health Network is an excellent example of a community health center that has become woven into the fabric of the communities it serves.”

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MILLIONS RECEIVE CARE

Nationally, community health centers serve more than 15 million citizens at more than 4,500 health care delivery sites in urban and rural communities.

Nearly half of the people served live in rural communities.

In 2007, Hudson Headwaters expects to serve about 60,000 people accounting for 260,000 patient visits in the Adirondack/Lake George and Glens Falls area – a region that is more than 3,700 square miles. In its Adirondack service area, Hudson Headwaters is the only local source of health care.

As a Federally Qualified Health Center, Hudson Headwaters is owned and directed by the very people it serves. Its board, composed of 18 volunteers from local communities, provide oversight and strategic planning. The Network’s staff is made up of more than 480 local residents. Federal grants to support the community health care program locally bring several million dollars into the region each year.



Moriah Health Center

Contracts have been signed, and the long awaited construction of the Moriah Health Center is scheduled to begin as this publication goes to press. The new health center will be a testimony to the hard work of area legislators to bring health care to the medically underserved Moriah community. Congressman John McHugh, Senator Elizabeth “Betty” Little, and Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward have each played significant roles in securing the \$1.2 million necessary to construct the new health center, to be located in the Moriah Industrial Park. Economic Development funds from the U.S. Department of Commerce were also key, along with the work of the Essex County Industrial Development Agency. And of course much thanks goes to Town Supervisor Tom Scozzafava. The

new 4,800-square-foot facility will have five exam rooms, one procedure room and a room for counseling.

Business Office Addition

The Hudson Headwater’s business office, once the Warrensburg Post Office on Stewart Farrar Ave., has a new 2,000 square foot addition. The extra space will enable the Network’s billing staff to improve efficiency and create better access to recent patient billing records. Staff moved in during June, and landscaping has begun. Our thanks to Senator Betty Little who secured state funding of \$250,000 toward this project.

Harvard Divinity School Award

Dr. John Rugge was recently recognized by one of his alma maters– the Harvard Divinity School – with the Rabbi Martin Katzenstein Award. The award was established “to honor among its graduates one who exhibits a passionate and helpful interest in the lives of other people, an informed and realistic faithfulness, an embodiment of the idea that

love is not so much a way of feeling as a way of acting, and a reliable sense of humor.”

Meeting the Ticket Challenge

Hudson Headwaters recently received an interesting and welcome proposition when the Producing Director of the Epiphany Theater Company, offered a \$1,000 donation to the Network if we could fill 50 seats in their May 17 performance of “Love Letters.” With the gauntlet thrown down, the free tickets were quickly snapped up and the lively, intimate performance at the Saratoga Dance Museum met with rave reviews.

A big thank you goes to Amy Kaissar of the Epiphany Theater Company, which performs in New York City and Saratoga Springs. Their 2007-08 season includes upcoming performances of “Tuesdays with Morrie,” “A Christmas Carol,” and “Antigone.” To learn more about this professional theater company in our own backyard, check out their website: www.epiphanytheater.org.

ON THE *Personal Side*

John Ruge, M.D.

I happened to take a roundabout route to medical school, making it more likely, I suppose, that one of my “preparatory” schools would someday put the touch on me.

Last month, Harvard Divinity – my last stop before taking the plunge into medicine – offered me dinner and an award. The dinner was wonderful, a reunion with friends and professors from years past. As for the award, there was a mistake. Billed as a lifetime achievement kind of thing, I sorely hope that it was way premature.

The consolation is, I was only a stand-in. The recognition was really intended for Hudson Headwaters Health Network and directed to the efforts of many, many people who, working together, have achieved something that is especially worthy, even in the eyes of the Divines of Harvard.

Anyway, my assignment for the evening was to make a few remarks suitable to the occasion. I can tell you that a roomful of theologians helps one to focus on the Significance of Things. So I now consider myself well qualified to comment on what makes Hudson Headwaters a special place.

Viewed from almost any perspective, this Network of ours is a tiny enterprise, one planted in an American backwater, the Adirondack backwoods. Yet, despite the small scale and out-of-the-way location, our health centers are widely admired because they do something that is unusual – something that shouldn’t be unusual at all.

What they do is provide basic, essential health services to everyone who cares to walk through the doors. What’s truly unusual is that all kinds of people make that choice – lots of people with no insurance, limited means, and nowhere else to turn; and also (in remarkably equal measure) people like accountants and bankers, nurses and doctors, lawyers and judges who can obtain their health services anywhere they like. And, once inside our centers, all these people receive the very same care, the best that we know how to provide. All this is only right, and it shouldn’t be anything unusual.

An additional fact is that, after more than 25 years of doing the right thing, our little system of care is very, very fragile. Weirdly enough, it is because we provide basic, primary care for everyone, rich and poor alike, that everything we do is in fiscal jeopardy. Despite quality care, despite deep community support, and despite the fierce loyalty of our patients, our



health centers are operating on the knife edge because of the messed-up way that we Americans pay for health care.

During the early years, Hudson Headwaters had to struggle because so many of our patients are poor. But, over the decades, government has listened and learned. Both in Albany and in Washington, our public officials have come to recognize the value of Hudson Headwaters and of a thousand other community health centers around the nation, health

“Both in Albany and in Washington, our public officials have come to recognize the value of Hudson Headwaters...”

centers that serve America’s most needy and difficult-to-serve communities. That recognition has led to legislation – and reimbursement – that now supports our services to the poor.

The irony is that Hudson Headwaters’ great struggle now lies with certain managed care organizations, commercial insurance companies who have been glad to ride on the back of government but are now failing to provide the reimbursement that is necessary to carry our health centers into the future.

For more than a year, we at Hudson Headwaters have been having quiet, serious talks with these commercial payers, and we have not always liked what we have heard. You probably wouldn’t either.

I am now thinking that the time has come to open these discussions up: to talk with our patients, our business leaders, our community groups, our schools, our resort owners, our public officials – all of you. Everyone needs to know how the HMO’s are treating the North Country. Everyone needs to know how the future of health care looks from here.

Believe me, there is a lot to say.

Wait ‘till the theologians get hold of this.

Fill your prescriptions at Hudson Headwaters' Partner Pharmacies!

Hudson Headwaters has joined a national program that allows us to raise funds by partnering with select local pharmacies. In turn, we are able to offer prescription drug discounts to qualified low-income families and individuals, and keep vital health care services available in our communities.

HOUSECALLS/PRICE CHOPPER PHARMACIES

HouseCalls Pharmacy

100 Broad Street, Glens Falls
(at The Health Center on Broad Street)
(518) 798-3700

HouseCalls Pharmacy

3761 Main Street, Warrensburg
(on the Warrensburg Health Center campus)
(518) 623-2993

Price Chopper Pharmacy

Route 9, Queensbury
(In-Store Pharmacy at Price Chopper)
(518) 798-0622

ADIRONDACK APOTHECARY

Schroon Lake Pharmacy

Main Street, Schroon Lake
(518) 532-7575

Remote Pharmacy

at the Indian Lake Health Center
(518) 532-7575

Moriah Pharmacy

4315 Main Street, Port Henry
(518) 546-7244

YOU CAN NOW DONATE ONLINE

You can now donate on-line to Hudson Headwaters Health Network at www.hhn.org. Just click on Donate to HHHN/Ways to Donate. In 2007, the Network will provide more than \$2 million in charity care and pharmaceutical discounts, account for more than a quarter million patient visits, and care for everyone in the communities it serves regardless of financial or insurance status.

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