

H Hospital News & More

Western Pennsylvania
The Region's Monthly Healthcare Newspaper
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McKeesport Hospital Foundation holds 33rd annual Invitational Luncheon

By John Fries

In April, the McKeesport Hospital Foundation held its annual kickoff luncheon to announce the details of its upcoming Invitational, an annual series of three events that raises funds for UPMC McKeesport and for community health projects sponsored by the hospital. The luncheon's theme, "Highlighting Technological Advancements in Healthcare Delivery at UPMC McKeesport and in the Community," continued the theme introduced in 2009.

The event, which took place at the Youghiogheny Country Club, drew more than 40 guests, ranging from hospital administrators, doctors and staff to local businesspeople and representatives of social services agencies, all of whom have a common goal—the



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health and well-being of people who live in the greater McKeesport area and nearby communities along the Monongahela River.

The program opened with a welcome by Michele Matuch, executive director of the McKeesport Hospital Foundation, who noted that the invitational has raised \$2.3 million to date.

Following lunch, UPMC McKeesport President Cynthia M. Dorundo gave a presentation that highlighted the hospital's current strengths and future opportunities. She praised the foundation for its ongoing work and thanked the luncheon guests for their support. She was followed by Kevin M. Kane, M.D., program director of the UPMC Cancer Center at UPMC McKeesport,

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Artists Among Us—Beverly Schmidt-Rodriguez Discovers Her Walden

By Christopher Cussat

Many people have an un-ignorable and undeniable artistic drive to create, while others find an immensely gratifying solace in their creative processes. Somewhere between Florida and Wexford, and somewhere between psychology and nursing, Beverly Schmidt-Rodriguez, Ph.D., R.N., has found her own key to creativity and peace.

Schmidt-Rodriguez is a psychologist and nurse who works in medical management with UPMC Health Plan. "I have been a psychologist most of my professional life and went to nursing school several years ago. This posi-

tion has allowed me to use my new nursing skills, and I do enjoy my job considerably," she says.

After spending most of her adulthood living in Florida, Schmidt-Rodriguez moved back to the Pittsburgh area in 1999. She explains, "While in Florida, I did a great amount of private practice work—dealing primarily with sex offenders and domestic violence perpetrators." Although she felt this was a wonderful career path to follow, Schmidt-Rodriguez soon realized that "burnout" is high in that particular area. "I found the work to be very meaningful, but the responsibility not

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Beverly Schmidt-Rodriguez.



Time Loss is Brain Loss

In recognition of National Stroke Awareness Month, we remind you that every second counts for stroke treatments to be most effective!

West Penn Allegheny Health System's stroke specialists use the latest techniques, medications and devices to remove blood clots and rapidly restore blood flow to the brain,

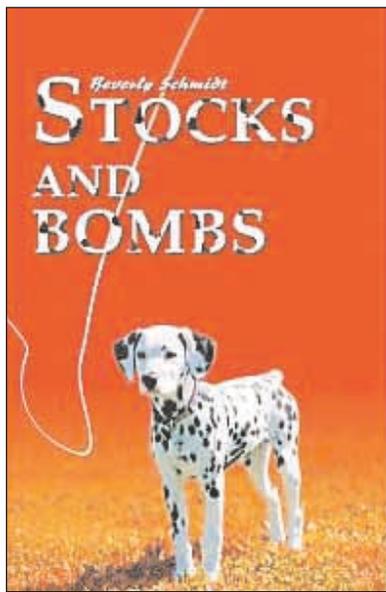
extending the critical window of treatment for stroke patients and improving outcomes. Allegheny General Hospital is certified by the Joint Commission as a Primary Stroke Center and ranks among the nation's best for stroke care with its dedicated inpatient stroke unit.



To learn more about stroke, visit www.wpahs.org

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only to the patients, but also to their victims, families, and to the community at large as well, was profound.”

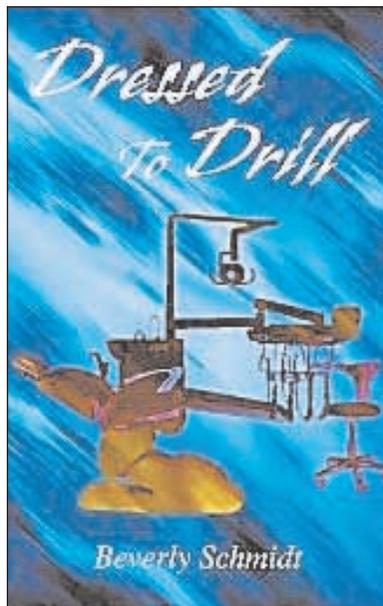
When Schmidt-Rodriguez finally moved back to her native Wexford, she felt that she needed a bit of a change from that intensity. “Believe it or not, nursing school and adding nursing to my professional direction were a nice break,” she adds.

As a result, Schmidt-Rodriguez found that she also had more time to write, which is when she began to focus on that as well. “In the past, I have written and presented primarily research-based work in the areas of sexual abuse and domestic violence. At one point, I just needed a break from the heaviness of those topics and sat down at the computer and began writing fiction.”

Although she personally feels that there is nothing remarkable about this artistic drive and enterprise of hers, and she often humbly describes her writing as really being “mediocre at best,” Schmidt-Rodriguez has found another avenue of joy and peace to complement the great satisfaction she receives professionally. “It’s a wonderful way to step outside of the structure of the healthcare field and let my imagination run wild. It’s just another outlet.”

As a person who has an instinctual need to be active and productive, Schmidt-Rodriguez uses writing and running to channel her intense energy.

Upon reflection as to whether or not she would like to write on a permanent or full-time basis if she didn’t need to work, Schmidt-



Rodriguez pauses and then replies with a wholly, Thoreau-smacked response, “Well that is exactly what I hope retirement is for me some day. Living in the woods, waking up to go for a long run, and then spending my afternoons outside with a laptop letting my imagination develop into pages of fiction—that’s my idea of a good day.”

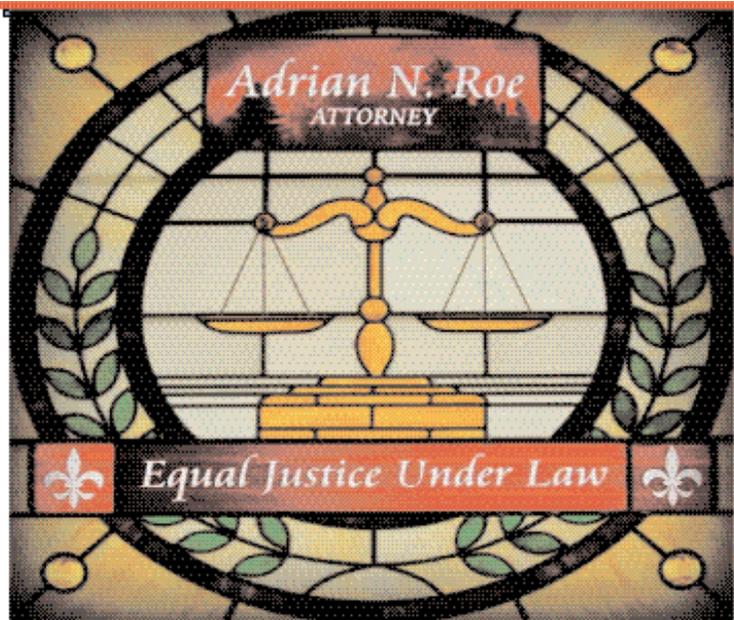
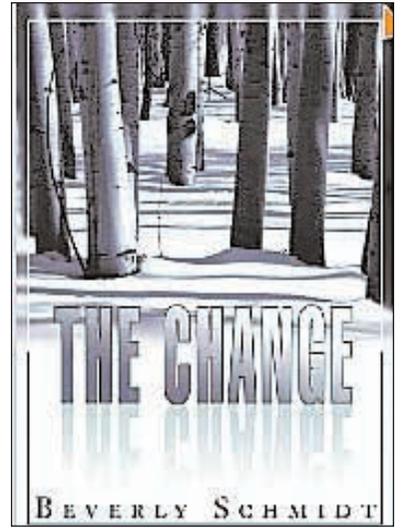
Of course this dream does not in any way diminish her love of the healthcare profession. “That’s not to say I don’t enjoy healthcare—I truly do. But given the ‘burnout’ and intensity of healthcare, I think we all need to take care of ourselves in creative and physical ways—and for me writing and running tend to do the trick.”

Schmidt-Rodriguez has written several pieces of fiction, and she is currently working on yet another. Her years of work and experience in the healthcare industry have provided her with a reservoir of creativity and inspiration. She explains, “My professional life in psychology as well as all the ‘personalities’ we deal with every day in healthcare help me to develop the characters I write about.”

In fact, many of Schmidt-Rodriguez’s characters are drawn from interactions with people in real and everyday life and those who have both positive and negative energies. “It’s never easy to deal with a mean or dishonest manager, or a rigid and arrogant coworker, so I usually turn those traits into fictional characters and let their personalities develop into the villains. It’s also nice to honor the lovely, caring, and genuine people I come across by developing characters based on their traits.”

She says that although all of her writings are fiction, she completely appreciates the fine line of influence that reality provides for any creative process. “It definitely blossoms from the impressions and ideas I have every day—and I am profoundly impacted by the behavior of others.”

Schmidt-Rodriguez publishes her fiction under her penname, Beverly Schmidt. The author’s most recent book is titled, *Dressed To Drill*. Her other books include: *The Doormat Chronicles*, *The Spring House Theory*, *The Change*, and *Stocks and Bombs*. All of Beverly Schmidt’s novels are available for purchase online at Amazon.com or at any major bookstore. T



Adrian N. Roe Attorney At Law

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The Gulf Tower, Suite 1331
707 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219
(412) 434-8187 or aroe@roelawoffice.com
www.roelawoffice.com

Couple Renews Vows While Wife Receives Gateway Hospice Care

About six months ago, Terry Stern was diagnosed with Lewy Body Dementia, a form of Alzheimer’s disease, which caused a variety of health issues. Although Terry is bedbound and receives Gateway Hospice, she communicated to her husband Bill that she would like to renew their marriage vows of 25 years. Wayne Hobbes, a chaplain with Gateway Hospice, performed the ceremony on May 11 at the Stern’s home in Pittsburgh’s South Hills.

Bill’s love for Terry is so great that he is Terry’s primary caregiver and is very active with Terry’s plan of care in their home. “Gateway Hospice has been a Godsend for us because Terry is able to receive the care she needs without leaving the home that she loves. The entire Gateway Hospice team has been very attentive but especially Terri’s nurses Shelly Shriver and Karen Cullen along with Rev. Wayne Hobbes, Katie McMonegal, LSW, Myles Zuckerman, MD, and Mary Tobin, chief operating officer,” Bill explained.

Married in Tulsa, Oklahoma on December 15, 1985, Bill and Terry wanted to move their renewal of vows to May because of the unpredictable nature of Terry’s illness. Even during difficult days, Bill’s patience does not seem to waiver as he attends to Terry’s needs.

“Terry has been my sole companion for over 25 years. She has cared for me

and our family with such love that I am only returning that love,” Bill said.



Rev. Wayne Hobbes, chaplain for Gateway Hospice, with Bill and Terry Stern.

Terry’s other two lifelong pastimes are ceramics (she took weekly classes to hone her skills) and cooking. Her specialties were Italian foods and various soups, which she cooked regularly during the years she did private catering. Everyone loved her cooking and her,” Bill said.

While Terry was a waitress for Eat ‘N Park Restaurants for more than 20 years, Bill owned and operated his own company, Gateway Time Equipment, which manufactured, sold, and installed time devices for industrial clients and schools.

“We just want to renew our marriage vows in the eyes of God so that our love will be forever,” Bill said.

For information on Gateway Hospice, visit www.gatewayhospice.com. T