

# CSNC today

A PUBLICATION OF CAROLINA SPINE & NEUROSURGERY CENTER

*Providing the most comprehensive spine and cranial services in Western North Carolina*

## CAROLINA SPINE & NEUROSURGERY CENTER WELCOMES DR. HUBERT L. GOOCH, JR.

Carolina Spine & Neurosurgery Center of Asheville, NC, is pleased to welcome Dr. Hubert Lee Gooch, Jr., to the CSNC family.

Hubert L. Gooch, Jr., MD, received his medical degree from the University of Virginia School of Medicine in Charlottesville, VA. Dr. Gooch completed his internship in General Surgery at the University of Kentucky Medical Center; He completed his residency and Chief Residency in Orthopedic Surgery at the University of Virginia Health Sciences Center; and a Spine Surgery Fellowship at the world renowned Maryland Spinal Reconstructive Surgery under the guidance of Paul McAfee, MD, in Baltimore, Maryland. While in that program he was involved in the early US investigations into Spine Motion Preservation and Total Disc Replacement technologies. Dr. Gooch also served on active duty with the US Air Force during Desert Storm as an Emergency Room physician. He went on to complete the University of Utah Graduate Program in Neuroscience in Salt Lake City, UT.

Dr. Gooch has achieved numerous awards and honors including: The 1996 American Diabetes Association Young Investigators Award; A participant in the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons 2008-2009

Leadership Fellows Program; Served as Chief of Surgery at Iredell Memorial Hospital from September 2006 – August 2009 where he also served as a member of the Medical Executive Committee; He served on the Board of Directors at Piedmont Healthcare in Statesville, NC, one of the largest multi-specialty medical groups in North Carolina, and, was the Chairman of the Information Technology Committee at Piedmont HealthCare.

*Story continued inside...*



FALL 2009

### IN THIS ISSUE...

- CSNC Gives Back to the Community by Partnering with the Local YMCA
- A Local Triathlon Competitor Regains Her Quality of Life
- WestCare Health System - ImPACT Partnership
- CSNC Only Facility in the Region to Offer Functional MRI (fMRI) Software

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**(828) 255-7776**

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**(866) 432-3637**

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**[www.CSandNC.com](http://www.CSandNC.com)**



**Asheville**  
7 Vanderbilt Drive

**Brevard**  
316 Chestnut Street, Suite 2

**Columbus**  
48 Hospital Drive, Suite A

**Marion**  
60 South Medical Court

**Rutherfordton**  
139 Henry Norris Drive

**Sylva**  
26 WestCare Drive, Suite 301

# Giving Back to the Community

## CSNC Gives Back to the Community by Partnering with the Local YMCA

The local YMCA is more than just a recreational facility – they provide services to area children and families in need. More and more families in our area are faced with financial, medical and emotional difficulties. Carolina Spine & Neurosurgery Center recently became a corporate sponsor to help the YMCA reach these families.

Last year alone there were over 150 children and families who received assistance, either financially or scholarships from the YMCA through various programs and facilities. In the past couple of months Carolina Spine & Neurosurgery Center donated “green” bags for the YMCA Strong Kids Campaign promoting the wellness of children including healthy eating and exercise.

The staff and employees at CSNC also collected backpacks and school supplies for kids going back to school. CSNC recognized a need in the community and wanted to do their part. They look forward to continuing their support through additional events that will be scheduled in the future.

*The YMCA of Western North Carolina sincerely appreciates our partnership with Carolina Spine & Neurosurgery Center. When there was an immediate need CS&NC responded and went above and beyond to help us provide for the needs of the children and families we serve.*

*- Dana Davis, Director*



# CAROLINA SPINE & NEUROSURGERY CENTER ONLY FACILITY IN THE REGION TO OFFER NEW FUNCTIONAL MRI (FMRI) SOFTWARE



In the past year, CSNC became the only facility in the region to provide Functional MRI (FMRI) service. This service provides a way to map the brain, non-invasively. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) has been used for over 20 years to generate detailed images of the soft tissues of the human body. Only recently, has MRI been used to image the functioning human brain in a non-invasive fashion. This concept is used to detect regional changes in cerebral metabolism, blood flow, or oxygenation in response to task activation.

According to Billy Moss, the MRI Coordinator at CSNC, the most popular technique is used to measure differences in oxygenated and deoxygenated blood due to their differing magnetic properties. These differences lead to small, but detectable changes in the MRI imaging. With this equipment, it is a simple and painless procedure. After the patient is educated as to what to expect, the patient is placed inside the magnet and is given certain tasks to perform. This may include being required to tap their finger, or answer yes/no questions. Once FMRI has been completed, all data is collected. The data will display areas in the brain responsible for those tasks given to the patient.

The FMRI is reviewed by the neurosurgeon before a surgical procedure is performed helping avoid critical areas that could affect speech/language, vision, and motor function. The acquisition of FMRI and other initiatives demonstrate the commitment of the partners and physicians at CSNC. We are committed to our communities health and will continue to invest in state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment and staff to further advance their mission of healing.



# A LOCAL TRIATHALON COMPETITOR REGAINS HER QUALITY OF LIFE

Nicole Crane is a very vibrant and active member of our community, and a member of the Asheville Women's Cycling Team. She competes in dozens of triathlons, running events, and cycling events each year, and loves it. According to Nicole, "Pushing my body at this level makes me feel so alive." She enjoys swimming, and encouraging her daughters to feel empowered through sports and education.



Unfortunately, several years ago, Nicole injured her neck while paddling in an event, and it had a tremendous impact on her daily activities. Her pain was 'intolerable' and for two weeks she was on very strong pain-killers, which left her feeling horrible and unable to function. She also tried alternatives including acupuncture, chiropractic treatments, physical therapy, massage, heat/cold, and even psychotherapy, but nothing alleviated her pain.

Nicole then decided to contact CSNC. She felt very fortunate to see Dr. Eric Rhoton, John Kennedy, PA and Rhonda Larimore, FNP on her first visit. They were the initial team present when her MRI results came in. "Dr. Rhoton is very professional. John Kennedy and Rhonda Larimore exemplify mid level providers in the way they take the time to answer the thousand and one questions I had. I am sure I was exhausting but they never once appeared rushed or annoyed. Brilliant!" Nicole said. Dr. Rhoton performed an Anterior Cervical Discectomy and Fusion (ACDF) of her C6-C7 vertebrae in early 2003. She felt immediate relief of her symptoms after surgery. Nicole was back on her feet and doing triathlons within three months of the procedure.

Separately, after her neck injury, she experienced a lower back injury while cycling. This injury caused a lot of pain to the point of depression. She found herself constantly adjusting her posture in order to avoid feeling intense pain. The pain generally occurred in her hip/buttock area - not in her back. She did not realize it was a back injury until the nerve pain started. The way she moved, played with her children, and exercised, as well as tasks such as brushing her teeth and washing dishes were hindered. She reached the point where she couldn't tolerate the pain anymore when she could not sit for more than an hour at a time.

After her successful treatment by Dr. Rhoton in 2003, Nicole knew what she needed to do. "I had such great results from my earlier procedure, that when it came time to evaluate what was causing my hip pain, I did not hesitate to call upon Dr. Rhoton and his staff at CSNC again," Nicole said. In May 2009, Nicole underwent a Micro Lumbar Discectomy (MLD) of T4-5 vertebrae. After the MLD, she had some initial muscle pain, but none of the intense burning nerve pain she had prior to the surgery. Nicole has completed several triathlons since the MLD procedure and feels great.



# WESTCARE HEALTH SYSTEM - ImPACT PARTNERSHIP



*Carrie Powell, an Athletic Trainer/Paramedic with Carolina West Sports Medicine is kneeling beside an athlete at a recent Swain County High School Football game.*

Not all neurological conditions encountered at CSNC are a result of disease. In fact, quite a few conditions are the direct result of accidents and sports related injuries. In an effort to advance the successful treatment of concussion related sports injuries, Dr. Lytle has partnered with Carlyle Schomberg at Westcare Health System in Sylva, NC.

The Sports Concussion Program being implemented uses software called ImPACT™ (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing), a simple, yet sophisticated computerized test to accurately detect sports-related concussions. ImPACT™ enables doctors to conduct a 20-minute baseline evaluation of an athlete's neurocognitive state, the brain processing speed, memory, and visual motor skills that physicians and athletic trainers can revisit in the event of a concussion during the season.

The symptoms of a concussion are not always easily identified. Knowing when it is safe for an athlete to return to play is not always clear, and sending the athlete back into the game too soon may expose the player to a second concussion, putting that athlete at risk for a more severe brain injury. The ImPACT program supports a comprehensive approach in the assessment, treatment, and prevention of sports-related concussions.

According to Carlyle Schomberg, the Director of Carolina West Sports Medicine at Westcare, "This is a cognitive computerized test that is given at the beginning of the season to find out the athletes normal brain functions. In the case of an injury, the student is quickly tested again to see if the injury is mild, moderate or severe when referring them to Dr. Lytle. Once the student has been treated, they have to be tested again to make sure that they have returned to the normal baseline test in order to be able to play again. Over the past few years, Western Carolina University has implemented the ImPACT program. Currently, Swain County High School in Bryson City is also using the program."

"Carrie Powell, ATC, LAT, EMT-P, an Athletic Trainer/Paramedic with Carolina West Sports Medicine is managing the ImPACT program at Swain County High School and is working to make it more available to the other area public schools in the near future," said Schomberg.

## DR. HUBERT L. GOOCH, JR. *...cover story continued.*

Dr. Gooch continue to participate in healthcare advancement and serves on several committees/subcommittees for the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons.

In May 2009, he gave a presentation on Health Care Information Technology at the National Orthopedic Leadership Conference in Washington, DC.

Dr. Gooch resides in Asheville, NC, with his wife Karen Mink-Gooch and two children, Jonathan and Alexandria.

"It is a privilege to have Dr. Gooch join the CSNC organization. Dr. Gooch has been practicing for over 10 years and brings a wealth of expertise and knowledge to our practice and to the many patients he will serve, both in Asheville and the Sylva area," said Mr. Kevin Fleming, CEO of Carolina Spine & Neurosurgery Center.

Carolina Spine & Neurosurgery Center continues to seek the most talented physicians and staff members to provide the most comprehensive spine and cranial services to our community.



*Dr. Gooch recently spoke with physicians and staff at the "Lunch and Learn" held at Sylva Medical Center. He took the opportunity to introduce himself and share some of the added services that he would be bringing to CSNC.*

**NEUROSURGERY:**

Ralph C. Loomis, MD, FACS  
Eric L. Rhoton, MD, FACS  
Jon M. Silver, MD  
Harold J. Pikus, MD  
Wesley C. Fowler, III, MD, FACS  
Jonathan D. Sherman, MD, FACS  
Richard A. Lytle, Jr., MD

**ORTHOPEDIC SPINE SURGERY:**

James J. Hoski, MD  
Mark L. Moody, MD, FACS  
Hubert L. Gooch, Jr., MD

**PHYSIATRY:**

Margaret O. Burke, MD

**INTERVENTIONAL SPINE WELLNESS:**

Chip Thompson, MD

**SPINE NEUROLOGY:**

Laura B. Fleck, MD

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## MERGER BETWEEN MOUNTAIN NEUROSURGICAL SPINE CENTER AND SPINECAROLINA CONSIDERED VERY SUCCESSFUL

The merger united Mountain Neurosurgical Spine Center and SpineCarolina into one organization named Carolina Spine & Neurosurgery Center (CSNC) which took place on January 5, 2009.

The CSNC team is comprised of seven Neurosurgeons, including Dr. Ralph Loomis, Dr. Eric Rhoton, Dr. Jon Silver, Dr. Harold Pikus, Dr. Wesley Fowler, Dr. Jonathan Sherman, and Dr. Richard Lytle. There are also three Orthopedic Spine Surgeons, which include Dr. James Hoski,

Dr. Mark Moody, and Dr. Hubert L. Gooch. Dr. Laura Fleck is a Neurologist that specializes in Spine Neurology. She performs Electromyography and Nerve Conduction Velocity Tests (EMG-NCV's), which helps determine the existence of nerve disease. The staff Physiatrist, Dr. Margaret Burke, treats patients that are not surgical candidates or patients that decide not to have surgery immediately. She also treats pain without using narcotics. Dr. Chip Thompson specializes in Interventional Spine Wellness and provides a full spectrum of non-surgical, interventional pain management services. The combination of these physicians as well as the other experienced staff at Carolina Spine & Neurosurgery Center, provide patients with the most comprehensive spine and cranial services in Western North Carolina.

In addition to the main campus in Asheville, the CSNC physicians and staff also provide patient services at locations in Brevard, Columbus, Marion, Rutherfordton and Sylva. Surgeries can be scheduled regionally at both Mission Hospitals in Asheville, and Harris Regional Hospital in Sylva. Please contact our main office for times and services available.