



# The Vantage® Family of Companies

## The Vantage Healthcare Network Hospitals:

**Armstrong County Memorial Hospital**  
Kittanning



**Corry Memorial Hospital (CMH)**  
Corry



**DuBois Regional Medical Center**  
DuBois



**Meadville Medical Center (MMC)**  
Meadville



**Millcreek Community Hospital (MCH)**  
Erie



**Saint Vincent Health System (SVHS)**  
Erie



**The Ellwood City Hospital (TECH)**  
Ellwood City



**Titusville Area Hospital (TAH)**  
Titusville



**UPMC Horizon**  
Greenville/Farrell



**UPMC Northwest**  
Franklin/Oil City



**Warren General Hospital (WGH)**  
Warren



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A For Profit Company that Forms Health Care Partnerships to Create Revenue, Savings and New Services

September/  
October 2004



www.vhcn.com

## The Next Day: What Washington Will Be Talking About After The Presidential Elections *by J. Fries*

As in most election years, healthcare is a widely discussed and debated topic. Sometimes the debates are highly partisan; sometimes, both sides of the aisle are in close agreement on the fundamental issues. At present time, polls indicate that both major presidential candidates are in a close race. One outcome, though, is certain: whoever occupies the White House for the next four years—President George W. Bush or Senator John F. Kerry—will have a broad range of important healthcare issues to address.

Healthcare is always a topic of interest in Washington. Last December, President Bush signed into law the landmark Medicare, Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003. The law provides a prescription drug benefit for millions of older Americans and people living with disabilities, and more choices and better benefits under Medicare.

Progress on a number of healthcare issues is being made. To gain some insight into which will likely be front and center after the election, we asked the experts at Premier Advocacy in Washington, D.C. for their thoughts. Premier is a leading healthcare alliance Group Purchasing Organization, (GPO), collectively owned by more than 200 independent hospitals and healthcare systems in the United States—one of which is Vantage Healthcare Network®. Premier Advocacy focuses its efforts on direct and grassroots lobbying related to key health care public policy issues such as patient safety, adequate Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement and medical liability reform. Linda Rouse, Director of Federal Affairs, and Barbara Babauta, Grassroots Manager, provided a preview of what we might expect.

### Healthcare Information Technology (HIT)

“Technology is a major issue,” said Babauta, “especially the development of a national electronic health record system.” So important is this concept that, in April, President Bush created a new position—National Coordinator for Health Information Technology—and Dr. David J. Brailer was appointed to fill it.



*Our Capital as viewed from the Hay Adams Hotel hosting June's Advocacy Meeting*



*Barb Babauta, Manager, Federal Affairs and Grassroots Network*

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*Celebrating 20 Years of Quality Health Care Services*

**Vantage®** 20 years

www.vhcn.com

The Vantage® Point



## WORDS of WISDOM

**Alternative Dictionary** - Bringing new meaning to an ever changing world.

The Washington Post's Style Invitational once again asked readers to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting, or changing one letter, and supply a new definition.

Here are this year's winners:

**Intoxicatation:** Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with.

**Reintarnation:** Coming back to life as a hillbilly.

**Bozone (n.):** The substance surrounding stupid people that stops bright ideas from penetrating. The bozone layer, unfortunately, shows little sign of breaking down in the near future.

**Cashtration (n.):** The act of buying a house, which renders the subject financially impotent for an indefinite period.

**Giraffiti:** Vandalism spray-painted very, very high.

**Sarchasm:** The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.

**Inoculate:** To take coffee intravenously when you are running late.

**Hipatitis:** Terminal Coolness.

**Osteopornosis:** A degenerate disease. (This one got extra credit.)

**Karmageddon:** It's like, when everybody is sending off all these really bad vibes, right? And then, like, the Earth explodes and it's like a serious bummer.

**Decafalon (n.):** The grueling event of getting through the day consuming only things that are good for you.

**Glibido:** All talk and no action.

**Dopeler effect:** The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.

**Arachnoleptic fit (n.):** The frantic dance

## Win A Prize!

The first person to contact us by e-mail answering all seven questions correctly will win a \$50.00 US Savings Bond.

To enter: E-mail the corresponding numbers with correct letter identification (ex: 1 B, 2 C etc.) along with your name, phone number, month of game, to: Val Travis valt@vhn.com by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of each newsletter cover month.

July/August Winner is:  
**Nancy Carroll - Hospital News**

July / August Answers on Tobacco

1. (D) 2. (D) 3. (B) 4. (C) 5. (A) 6. (D) 7. (C) 8. (C)

## WHAT'S NEWS



Vic Vidoni

### Vantage Mobile Services...On the Move

**Vic Vidoni** named Director of Mobile Services. In his new capacity, Vic will report to Bill Henwood, Senior VP Clinical Sales, for sales and service, and for operations and administration to Mike Mosbacher Sr. VP and CFO of Finance. Vic joined Vantage in November 1992 and began his service as a marketing representative, splitting time between the PPO and Mobile Services divisions, until July 1995. For 1 year he worked for Alliance Health Network, an Erie based HMO/PPO developed by Saint Vincent Medical Center and Hamot Medical Center.

In 1996, Vic returned to Vantage as Assistant to the Vice President of the Mobile Services division where he was responsible for sales of MRI, Lithotripsy, and also supported various mobile service developments including; joint venture partnerships with Mobile Services. From February 2000-March 2002, Vic served Vantage Healthcare Network, Inc. as Director of Business Development where he reported to the CEO. Prior to accepting this new position, Vic served for two years as Director of Linen Sales for Vantage Healthcare Linen Services, where he worked with customers on the implementation and support of their linen programs.



Jason C. Ball, D.O.

### Doctor Joins Meadville Medical Center's Medical/Dental Staff

**Jason C. Ball, D.O.**, emergency medical physician has joined MMC's Medical/Dental Staff and will be providing services in the Emergency Department.

A life long Meadville resident, Dr. Ball earned his Bachelor's degree from Grove City College and his Master's Degree from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, (LECOM), in 2000. Dr Ball recently completed an emergency medicine residency at St. Johns Westshore Hospital, Westlake, Ohio.



### Donald Tuttle, Pharm.D.

Erie, PA - August 25, 2004 - A new dean with a long history with Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine will lead the LECOM School of Pharmacy as it prepares to graduate its first class of pharmacists.

College President, John M. Ferretti, D.O., announced that **Donald Tuttle, Pharm. D.** will become the Dean of the School of Pharmacy. Dr. Tuttle succeeds Diane S. Swaffar, Ph.D., R.Ph. who leaves LECOM on September 10.



## Vantage Life Trivia

- Who was the political cartoonist in the late 1800's that used the Donkey and Elephant as party symbols? A. Thomas Nast B. John J. Appel C. Albert Bigelow Paine D. Steven Becker
- Who was the only President of the United States to remain a bachelor for his entire life? A. Harry Truman B. James Buchanan C. Theodore Roosevelt D. Calvin Coolidge
- How many Presidents have died in office (four by assassination)? A. six B. eight C. ten D. twelve
- George W. Bush won the presidential election in 2000 having lost the popular vote. Who was the first president that lost the popular vote but won the election? A. Abraham Lincoln B. Grover Cleveland C. John Quincy Adams D. Calvin Coolidge
- The following presidents were all left handed; (20<sup>th</sup>) Herbert Hoover, (31<sup>st</sup>) Harry Truman, (33<sup>rd</sup>) Gerald Ford, (38<sup>th</sup>) Ronald Reagan, (40<sup>th</sup>) George Bush, (41<sup>st</sup>) Bill Clinton. A. True B. False
- What president said: "Associate yourself with men of good quality, Tis better to be alone than in bad company"? A. George Washington B. Ulysses S. Grant C. Thomas Jefferson D. Abraham Lincoln
- This president served in two wars, was involved in many duels, was the first president to ride on a train and is currently on a denomination of our paper currency. A. James Monroe B. Martin Van Buren C. Andrew Jackson D. John Tyler

# The Vantage® Forum

Presented By: Vantage Healthcare Network Inc.®

## U.S. Rep. Phil English - hosts successful business development meeting in Erie by Tom Surman

Local and Regional employers and over 12 Federal agency representatives met at Gannon University's Small Business Development Center on August 3, 2004. Congressman Phil English, organized, moderated and hosted this well attended event.

This second annual meeting and seminar provided business representatives and local companies with access to resources that the U.S. government offers small businesses. (A small business is considered as one that has 500 employees or less). Congressman English stated "local employers need all

the help they can get to stay in and grow their businesses, and most importantly to create jobs."



Lyn Doverspike Director U.S. Commercial Service, Dept of Congress, Catherine Baker, Contracting Officer, GSA. Kristin Marsteller, Rep. Phil English's office



Denny Watson, Mobilcom, Marsha Walker, Crawford County Development Corp., Charlie Anderson, Meadville-Western Crawford County Chamber of Commerce



Aubri Sheppard, Government Contracting Specialist, Rich Mihalic, Associate Director Northwest PA PTAC, and Diane McCartney Government Contracting Specialist



Host - Congressman Phil English

Featured speakers were: Daniel Bloom, Director of the U.S. Department of Commerce Trade Advocacy Center. Ms. April Foley, First Vice President and Vice Chair of the U.S. Export/Import Bank. Three rounds of breakout sessions provided over 6 hours of information packed meetings that focused on: Doing Business Abroad, EMIX Bank Export Financing, GSA Government Procurement, OSHA regulations, and a series of SBA topics covering Domestic and Export Financing. The only regret shared by those attending was that several of these highly informative meetings ran concurrently and individuals had to choose which to attend.

Rich Mihalic, from the Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission, was one of the Breakout Session presenters and highlighted many key points on procurement, stating that the US Government is the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world with over \$280 billion a year spent on buying millions of different items and supporting services. Rich, as well as the other session presenters, outlined the opportunities and also gave advice and direction on how to implement the process.

If business in Northwestern PA is of interest to you, make sure to get an invite to next year's event. It is time well spent.

Sites of interest for additional information:  
www.nwcomission.org  
www.fbo.gov  
www.aptac-us.org  
www.sba.gov  
www.gsa.gov



## Health Hints

By: Tom Surman  
Sr. Vice President  
Communications/  
Marketing VHC, LLC

### Blood Test Better Predicts Cancer Treatment Outcomes

A new technology that counts cancer cells in the blood helps predict the success of breast cancer treatments more quickly and more reliably than established methods, researchers reported.

More than 1.2 million people are expected to be diagnosed with breast cancer this year worldwide, and the disease will kill 40,000 in the United States alone.

A study published several weeks ago in The New England Journal of Medicine said the new technique allows doctors to determine within weeks, not months, whether a breast cancer patient's treatment is working. The study — funded by a company that helped develop the technique — could lead to more tailored treatments that would spare some women from the most potent chemotherapy or recognize which patients need more aggressive therapy at the start of treatment, said lead author Massimo Cristofanilli.

"It makes a huge difference in case you have to decide how aggressive you want to be with a woman with breast cancer," Cristofanilli, of the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, told Reuters. However, he noted that the system was only tested on breast cancer that had spread. Further research will be needed to see if the technique helps against less aggressive breast cancer or other types of tumors where cancer cells are less likely to be shed into the blood.

Source: BOSTON (Reuters) -

### CREDITS

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## Employee Recipes & Wine Tips

### SALMON SALAD

(serves 4 generous lunch salads)

1 - 1 1/2 lb. Salmon Fillet (deboned, skinned from the Ocean or farm fed)  
2 lbs. Romaine Lettuce (salad in a bag saves time)  
3 Tablespoons Horseradish  
3 Tablespoons fat free Ranch dressing  
Pepper  
Seasoned bread crumbs  
Caesar Salad Dressing  
Home made croutons, optional  
Parmesan Cheese, freshly grated, optional

Heat oven to 375 F. Prepare Salmon: rinse, pat dry and put into a baking dish with a little water to cover the bottom of the baking dish. In small bowl, combine horseradish, ranch dressing and pepper (to taste) until well blended. Smear this mixture over the salmon until well coated. Sprinkle seasoned bread crumbs generously on top. Bake until fillet is done and topping is golden. Cool, then chill approximately 8 hours.

In large mixing bowl combine lettuce and enough Caesar salad dressing to coat leaves and the croutons. Divide the lettuce evenly on 4 lunch plates. Cut the salmon fillet evenly into 4 sections. Place one section on top of one plate of salad greens (and so on until all plates have a piece of salmon on top). Sprinkle with freshly grated Parmesan cheese if desired. Serve & Enjoy.



**Rosemarie Van Der Molen**  
Office Manager, Vantage Health Group Telecommunications

### Wine Recommendations:

Kenwood Chardonnay – Reserve 2002  
The Wine Spectator rated at 91 \$11.49  
Rutherford Hill Napa Chardonnay 2001  
The Wine Spectator rated at 89 \$9.99

### Cover Story continued

for solutions. **“Washington wants to help, but hasn’t yet figured out an effective way to do that in the long term,”** said Rouse. “Both parties have explored the issue in bits and pieces, but each has recommended different approaches for how to best solve the crisis.”

Due to the rising cost of health care and the increasing numbers of Americans without health insurance, hospital billing practices has come under congressional scrutiny and is likely to continue.

### Medical Liability Insurance and Tort Reform

This issue continues to be evenly split along party lines. “On Capitol Hill, most Republicans support tort reform and most Democrats don’t,” said Babauta.

The evidence supporting the need for tort reform is extremely compelling. We’ve become a litigious society, and as malpractice cases have become commonplace, unlimited and unpredictable liability awards have driven up the cost of insurance premiums for all Americans. Hospitals, physicians and nurses are now faced with skyrocketing liability premiums, the cost of which threatens access to healthcare. **Many doctors are now said to be practicing “defensive medicine,” as a result, and some are weighing the benefits of practicing medicine in Pennsylvania against the investment they need to make to continue doing so.**

Earlier this year, Bush proposed the national adoption of proven standards to make the medical liability system more fair, predictable and timely. His contention was that it would reduce federal government costs by more than \$28 billion a year and reduce the cost to Americans by more than \$60 billion a year, while improving access to quality care. In his proposal, he said that litigation reform would also lead to improvements in healthcare quality and patient safety.

### Prescription Drug Reimportation

Just a few years ago, a group of American senior citizens took a trip across the border into Canada where they were able to purchase prescription drugs at a fraction of the cost they were required to pay in the U.S. Others soon followed. This practice, although illegal, has become commonplace as Canadian pharmacies gladly sell products to American customers who need them but have a difficult time affording them back home. An estimated two million Americans now engage in the practice. Because of this, Washington leaders have been exploring how the lower-cost drugs can be made available to their constituents.

**“A bill was passed by the House that would allow wholesale reimportation of Canadian drugs,”** said Rouse, adding that, **“many senators also support prescription drug reimportation. However, some legislators continue to be concerned about the ability of the FDA to guarantee the efficacy and safety of the products.”**

The new Medicare law permits reimportation, but only if the Secretary of Health and Human Services will certify to Congress that there’s no additional risk to the consumer, and that there is a significant reduction in cost.

The presidential election is still several weeks away, and we don’t know yet whether President Bush or President Kerry will be taking the oath of office in January. Nor do we know who will comprise the House and Senate. We do know, however, that the months ahead will present numerous opportunities to the hospital and medical community to propose, debate, discuss and lobby members of Congress on a number of issues, many of which will have a profound impact on how we do business.

*Premier’s next Federal Affairs Network (FAN) meeting is scheduled for Dec. 6-7, 2004 at the St. Regis Hotel in Washington, DC. Premier’s FAN meetings offer an opportunity for healthcare managers to network with government affairs officials. For more information contact Tom Surman 814-336-1781 ext. 124 or [tomsurman@vhn.com](mailto:tomsurman@vhn.com)*

*To see what the FAN meetings are all about go to: <http://www.premierinc.com/all/advocacy/about/events/index.html>. To sign up for Premier Advocacy’s e-mail publications, go to: <http://www.premierinc.com/all/advocacy/publications/index.html>*



**Linda Rouse, Director of Federal Affairs, Premier Advocacy**

### Cover Story continued

Over this past summer, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary, Tommy G. Thompson, released an outline of a 10-year plan to computerize health care. According to Brailer, up to 100,000 people each year die from medical errors. A national electronic system would reduce medical errors and costs, and provide hospitals, physicians, insurers and other necessary users with immediate access to medical records.

“It’s a complicated issue and many privacy and security issues need to be addressed, but it is a topic both democrats and republicans are discussing,” said Rouse. President Bush budgeted \$50 million for electronic health record demonstration projects, and next year’s budget would double that amount. Kerry has proposed establishing a technology bonus for insurers and providers who convert their systems to electronic records. However, some critics contend that these sums would only cover part of the cost, and that incentives would need to be introduced to persuade the healthcare industry to invest in the technology.

### Medicaid

Medicaid is another perennial issue that maintains a prominent place on the front-burner, as states’ budget problems continue to worsen and negatively impact health care spending and beneficiaries. In July, a federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) bill was introduced by Senators John D. Rockefeller (D-WV) and Gordon Smith (R-OR) that would temporarily increase the federal matching rate to states by 1.5 percent over a three-year period, with special consideration given to states that have particularly high unemployment rates.

“We are hopeful FMAP will be addressed before Congress adjourns,” said Rouse. “However, some congressmen are not in favor of the bill, because the original FMAP increase, passed last year, was supposed to be temporary.”

### Growing Number of Uninsured People

More and more people continue to find themselves in the position of not being able to afford health insurance. Unemployment is still a major national problem, and many of those who are self-employed, including farmers and ranchers, continue to contact their congressmen and women looking



**Tommy G. Thompson**  
Health and Human Services Secretary

## Premier Advocacy Meeting



**Margaret R. Reagan**  
Corporate V.P.  
Premier, Washington, D.C.



**Herb Kuhn, Director, Center for Medical Services, CMS, U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services**



**Duane Koller, Meadville Medical Center; Stephanie Alexander, Sr. V.P. Healthcare Informatics, Premier, Inc.; and Tom Surman, Vantage Healthcare Network**



**Bruce Lesley, health policy advisor to Sen. Jeff Bingaman and Leah Kegler, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services**



**Jamie Uranga, Premier’s Director of Advocacy Communications, Washington, D.C.**



**Dave Fisher, professional staff, Senate Health, Education, and Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee**

## Doctor of the Month



**John Michael Ferretti, II, D.O.**

Doctor and Professor John Ferretti is considered by many as one of the outstanding medical leaders in Western Pennsylvania. He is the Clinical Professor of Internal Medicine and President/CEO of LECOM, the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Dr. Ferretti’s roots are firmly planted in Erie where he attended Strong Vincent High School with continued education at Gannon University. He obtained his Masters of Science Degree at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and returned to Erie for his Internship in 1973. From 1975 to 1977 he served at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine as Chief Medical Resident. From 1987 to 1995 Dr. Ferretti was the Medical Director/Director of Medical Education at Millcreek Community Hospital. During most of that time he also was Director, Internal Medicine Residency at Millcreek. Concomitant to his work at Millcreek Community Hospital he continues to serve as a Professor at LECOM in the Department of Internal Medicine. Dr. Ferretti’s Appointments, Honors, and Awards are extensive. As a visionary, however, he considers one of his most current and notable achievements to be the expansion of LECOM.

Dr. Ferretti is the driving force behind LECOM and its expansion into launching a new and innovative branch campus in Bradenton, Florida. The new Lakewood Ranch campus is scheduled to open this month. This new 100,000 square foot Florida Campus facility will use the latest in smart-lecture hall technology with all A/V controls at the professor’s lectern. For more information on LECOM, please go to [www.lecom.edu](http://www.lecom.edu)



## Vantage® Invitational Golf Outing

### Quotable "quotes"

*"The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the Universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction."*

- Rachel Carson

*"No human investigation can be called true science without passing through mathematical tests."*

- Leonardo da Vinci

*"Mistakes are part of being human. Appreciate your mistakes for what they are: precious life lessons that can only be learned the hard way, unless it's a fatal mistake, which at least, others can learn from."*

- Al Franken

*"Somewhere deep down we know that in the final analysis, we do decide things and that even our decisions to let someone else decide are really our decisions, however pusillanimous."*

- Harvey G. Cox

*"Some problems are so complex that you have to be highly intelligent and well-informed just to be undecided about them."*

- Laurence J. Peter

*"Again and again, the impossible decision is solved when we see that the problem is only a tough decision waiting to be made."*

- Dr. Robert Schuller



This year's Vantage Golf Invitational was held on July 21 at the Sharon Country Club with over 140 hospital executives, doctors, and healthcare service suppliers taking part in a great day of golf and camaraderie. John Papalia, Warren General Hospital's President/CEO, also hosted another successful Summer Sizzler golf event on August 16th. Earlier this summer, Mary LeRowe, President/CEO of Westfield Memorial Hospital, an affiliate of Saint Vincent Health System, hosted their second annual outing at the Chautauqua Club in New York. Here are a few pictures from those events.

### Warren Summer Sizzler



### Westfield Golf Outing



### Vantage Employee Picnic '04

