



# Heart Facts

A Publication of Cardiology Associates

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Comprehensive Adult and Pediatric Cardiovascular Care August 2003

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## Cardiology Associates Welcomes Three New Doctors To Their Comprehensive Heart and Vascular Team



**Michael W. Monson, M.D.** grew up on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, receiving his medical degree and completing his residency at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. He completed his cardiology fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Cleveland, Ohio, and spent an additional year at Mid-America Heart Institute in Kansas City, Missouri completing a fourth-year fellowship in interventional cardiology. Dr. Monson and his family are moving to Mobile from Kansas City, Missouri.

Both he and wife Kristi are from Long Beach, Mississippi, and are thrilled to be returning to the Gulf Coast. "We both have siblings and parents there, so we're looking forward to being close to our families again," he said. They'll be busy this summer settling in, becoming a part of the community, and preparing their children for school. With three boys ages 4 to 9 and a 1-year old daughter, they also stay busy with lots of activities such as soccer and baseball.

**Ralph S. Buckley, M.D.** is moving to South Alabama from Charlottesville, Virginia. He completed his medical degree,

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residency, internship and fellowship at the University of Virginia. Dr. Buckley will provide



*Ralph S. Buckley, M.D.*

clinical cardiology services to patients in Baldwin County. He most recently held positions as a cardiologist with Culpeper Regional Hospital and as an Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine and Internal Medicine at the University of Virginia. He earned an award for Excellence in Teaching from the University of Virginia School of Medicine in 1993.

Among Dr. Buckley's research projects are a three-year study at the University of Virginia for early treatment of chest pain patients to decrease the delay time in patients with symptoms and signs of acute myocardial infarction and the study of acute myocardial infarction in the elderly.

One of Dr. Buckley's keen interests is computers. Together with L.W. Gimple, he edited an award-winning CD-ROM, "Cases in Cardiology: An Interactive CD-ROM for Primary Care Physicians. He and Gimple also produced a number of other educational, interactive CD-ROMs for primary care physicians.

He and wife Julienne spent spring break 2003 at Gulf Shores with their son (age 9) and daughter (age 7). After that trip, the whole family was eager to move to Fairhope.



**Karl V. Hakmiller, M.D.** earned his medical degree from Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston, and completed his internship and residency in internal medicine at Maine Medical

Center in Portland. He was the Medical Director for Foreside Internal Medicine in Falmouth, Maine and for Appledore Medical Group in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. He was Assistant Professor of Pharmacology at St. Matthew's University School of Medicine in Belize and Clinical Instructor in the Internal Medicine Residency Program at the University of Vermont – Maine Medical Center in Portland.

Dr. Hakmiller had been in private practice for more than 10 years when he elected to pursue a cardiovascular fellowship at Maine Medical Center, and is looking forward to working with Cardiology Associates. "I enjoy performing diagnostic cardiac catheterization, nuclear cardiology, and both transthoracic and transesophageal echocardiography" he says. His personal interests include genealogy, golf, fishing, and boating.

Dr. Hakmiller and his wife Maggie love Maine, but won't miss "the mud season," where it's rainy, cold, and muddy for weeks on end. Maggie says Fairhope is the most beautiful place she's ever seen. The Hakmillers have three daughters (ages 13, 11, and 5) and a son (age 8).

# Cardiology Associates New Mobile Unit for Testing for Heart Disease Goes on The Road

*"Nuclear stress testing is one of the most effective, non-invasive methods to catch heart disease early in its progression and prevent heart attacks", according to J. Andrew Morrow, M.D., F.A.C.C., Radiation Safety Officer for Cardiology Associates.*

Cardiology Associates has recently purchased a state of the art cardiac imaging technology called a DigiRad nuclear camera. This new camera is a mobile unit that can be transported in a specially configured van, allowing us to expand this testing service to areas outside of Mobile and Baldwin counties

In the past, many patients from the areas surrounding Mobile and Baldwin counties had to travel to a location away from home in order to have this test. Now, the camera can travel to them. A nuclear stress test is non-invasive and requires no anesthesia or sedation, so it is routinely performed as an outpatient procedure, either in a physician's office or a hospital. Beginning immediately, physicians and their patients will have access to regularly scheduled nuclear testing at hospitals in their community.

Another advantage to this new system is that instead of the patient lying down on a "table in a tube" as

they do in traditional nuclear testing, the patient sits in a chair, with fore-



*New DigiRad System*

arms on a specially designed armrest, in a comfortable, non-claustrophobic upright position. The camera then



*Traditional System*

moves around the patient, taking pictures of the heart.

A Cardiology Associates nuclear trained technician transports the camera and conducts the test, which consists of two parts - rest and stress. A special drug is injected into the arm while the patient is at rest and approximately sixty minutes later, the nuclear camera begins taking pictures of the heart. After the stress portion of the

exam begins, the same drug is injected again and more pictures of the heart are made to show any blockages induced by stress. A Cardiology Associates physician trained in nuclear cardiology then compares the two sets of pictures to determine if a heart problem exists. The physician will study the uniformity of blood flow in the heart and the pumping strength of the heart muscle. Nuclear studies are extremely accurate and often eliminate the need for patients to undergo invasive testing in the hospital.

A nuclear test involves a small amount of radioactive material in the injected drug. This drug is cleared from the body by its natural waste removal process during the six hour half life of the drug. The amount of radiation to which a patient is exposed is comparable to that of a chest x-ray.

## **Mobile Nuclear Schedule**

Mondays

**Jackson Medical Center**

Tuesdays

**Washington County Infirmary**

Wednesdays

**Atmore Community Hospital**

Thursdays

**Jackson Medical Center**

Fridays

**Jackson Medical Center**

*For more information, call:*

**1-800-842-4009**



# Come One, Come All ! To Visit Cardiology Associates' New Website [www.cardassoc.com](http://www.cardassoc.com)

Cardiology Associates has developed a new website to better serve our patients and anyone in the community seeking information on heart conditions, care or procedures. New graphics make the pages easy to view and the site simple to navigate.

When you visit our new site at [www.cardassoc.com](http://www.cardassoc.com), you will find that patient education resources have greatly expanded. The many new features include brief descriptions of more than 25 diagnostic, invasive and interventional procedures commonly performed by Cardiology Associates physicians. For more in depth

information, you will find links to American Heart Association's Warning Signs of Heart Attack, Tips on Reducing Risk for Heart Disease and Printable Patient Education Sheets on more than 50 conditions, procedures and lifestyle changes. You can also select from links to many other heart related web sites.

In the area of Cooking and Eating, choose from nearly 50 lower fat recipes in a variety of categories ranging from Snacks to Meats to Salad Dressings. One of the best resources in the recipe section are two new features - "How Your Plate Should Look" and "Heart Healthy

Substitutions."

View newsletters and magazines, published by Cardiology Associates, on line. Click on the calendar of events to find out about seminars, health fairs and other educational events. Take a self scoring test to evaluate your level of risk for developing heart disease.

Even the sections found on our previous website have been upgraded. Maps and office locations now include driving directions. Background and Training Information can now be found on both Physicians and Physician Assistants under the Heart Team category.



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