

loon — market
at and veggies, not

orld Features Syndicate



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rst onto the British
scene in October
their sketches,
ms and books have
laughing on both
e pond for almost
cades since.

part series "Monty
Personal Best,"
tonight on PBS,
member of the
dupe introduces his
its from the
aking "Monty
lying Circus."

ery is a place to
rn and yes, laugh.
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ditor,
5, or [ktabacsko@
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Kristine S. Roethlisberger, simula-
tion lab coordinator, traveled to Laerdal
headquarters in Texas for training.
Planning how best to use the device
continued through the fall.

"A simulation could run for several
hours, with students caring for the
'patient,'" Roethlisberger said. "We can
program in a crisis event to happen at
any time."

SVSU keeps a band of mannequins
stored on cadaver carts in the Wickes
building. Some dating back to 1960s are

bathing and turning, but nursing has
changed a lot. It's much more complex
today. We do so much more now."

Simulator mannequins also are used
in training emergency medical person-
nel, trauma teams, anesthesiology pro-
fessionals, military units and medical
students.

Synergy Medical Education Alliance
of Saginaw is looking at models like
SimMan with plans to purchase one and
have a simulation lab for residents by
September, said Dr. Christine Rohr,

and practice to do it better."

Laerdal Medical started making real-
istic plastic dolls in the '60s, then moved
on to create a new life-like resuscita-
tion-training mannequin, Resusci Anne.

Laerdal now is exploring virtual real-
ity products and launched its first virtu-
al IV arm in 2004.

Central Michigan University's new
Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow College
of Health Professions building features
classrooms equipped for video confer-
encing and "telemedicine," said Timo-

Students studying for doctor
health administration degrees
use software that helps them s
hospitals decide to reduce cost
improve quality.

"Simulation is so powerful,"
said. "We can do disaster plan
inside a computer at much low
and more often." ♦

Jill Armentrout is a features writ
Neighbors coordinator at The Sa
News. You may reach her at 776

Simple gift brightened holiday

JILL ARMENTROUT
THE SAGINAW NEWS

For Valerie J. Heiser, a little gift made for
a brighter Christmas.

Gift cards for 221 disabled adults living in
foster care were purchased last year as a
result of Saginaw County Community Mental
Health Authority's "First Choice" project,
which raised \$12,000.

Heiser, 56, of Saginaw Township received
her \$50 Wal-Mart gift card and put it to good
use.

"I used it for things I needed that I had been
waiting to get," she said. "It was a wonderful
surprise. Everyone in our house got one at a
Christmas party. I bought three fluffy, bright
bath towels in spring colors and some Chantilly
perfume. I also needed some skin cream.

"I get a monthly stipend of \$64, so I have
to save up for things. My family is in Florida,
and I couldn't be with them for the holidays,
so this gift really cheered me up."

For adults with developmental disabilities
or mental illness who live in adult foster care
homes, federal Supplemental Security
Income pays for housing, food and care —
but often supplies less than \$50 a month
more to pay for all other personal care
expenses, says Sandra Lindsey, chief execu-
tive officer for the authority.

Phyllis C. Merriam, 54, says it's hard to
live on the \$10 a week in spending money she

receives. She buys her clothes at thrift shops
and has to wait to get yarn for her knitting
projects. She used her gift card to purchase
new underwear, she said. And after her story
appeared in The News last year, Merriam
said she received knitting
supplies from a donor.

Both Merriam and Heiser
live in an adult foster care
home owned by Lori Gar-
chow on State Street in Sagi-
naw Township.

Leaders hoped to raise
enough donations to give the
cards to 800 people in time
for the holidays, but that goal
wasn't met, said Mary Ellen
Usimaki, authority adminis-
trative coordinator.

The campaign will continue this year, with
a book sale and lunch fundraiser within the
agency set for April. Officials will ask for
community help this fall. A First Choice
account is open for donations throughout the
year. Direct checks designated to First Choice
to Jan Histed at the authority, 500 Hancock.

The Saginaw County Community Mental
Health Authority serves about 5,000 people a
year with an annual public budget of \$44.4 mil-
lion to provide inpatient and outpatient care,
case management and residential services.

There is no money in the budget to pay person-
al expenses for the adults, officials say. ♦



Phyllis
C. Merriam

Knee brace has benefits but doesn't work miracles

JANET CROMLEY
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Anyone limping down the
aisle at the local drug store has
probably seen them: inexpen-
sive elastic or neoprene knee
braces beckoning — promising
relief for aching knees.

Simple knee sleeves are
popping up with greater fre-
quency on professional ath-
letes and weekend warriors,
who don them for pickup bas-
ketball, softball and football
scrimmages in hopes of
staving off pain and injury.

Although statistics aren't
available on how many people
are using these sleeves, the
number is probably high. An
estimated 19 million Ameri-
cans seek medical attention
for aches and pains in their
knees each year, and many,
sports doctors say, will treat
their bum knees with over-the-
counter braces.

Although lacking the glam-
our of high-tech braces used
for serious injury and rehabili-
tation, inexpensive sleeves
have their place, says Dr.

Marc Safran, chief of
Medicine at the Univer-
sity of California, San Fran-
cisco. "I see a lot of
people with sore or
injured knees, mild a-
nd even those recov-
ering from a sprain or knee
surgery. They serve three ther-
apeutic functions.

They can reduce sw-
elling and keep the knee wa-
rm, which reduce pain.
They can also improve
mechanics of the knee
through what is know
as proprioception — the bod-
y's ability to determine where
the knee is in space and time d-
etermined from sensors in t-
he muscles, skin and tendon-
s. A brace reminds the br-
ain that there are restrictions
on the joint and to modify m-
ovements to reduce knee stress.

But don't expect m-
iracles from the sleeve. Alth-
ough a brace may relieve pa-
in and swelling so the wear-
er can be more active, it probab-
ly won't cure an underlying in-
jury, says Dr. Ali Motamed

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