

## WELLNESS AT WORK

### Program encourages healthy habits among employees

By **AMY H. CARTER**  
The Brunswick News

When Edward Bland at Haven Manufacturing asks his fellow employees how they're feeling, he's doing more than just making polite conversation.

Workplace wellness is such a serious concern at Haven that the company has adopted a special program for employees and their spouses that offers discounted health insurance in exchange for healthy habits. That includes annual screenings that measure blood pressure, weight and blood sugar levels in hopes of catching serious diseases before they cost the employee his health, the company a good worker and drive everyone's insurance premiums higher.

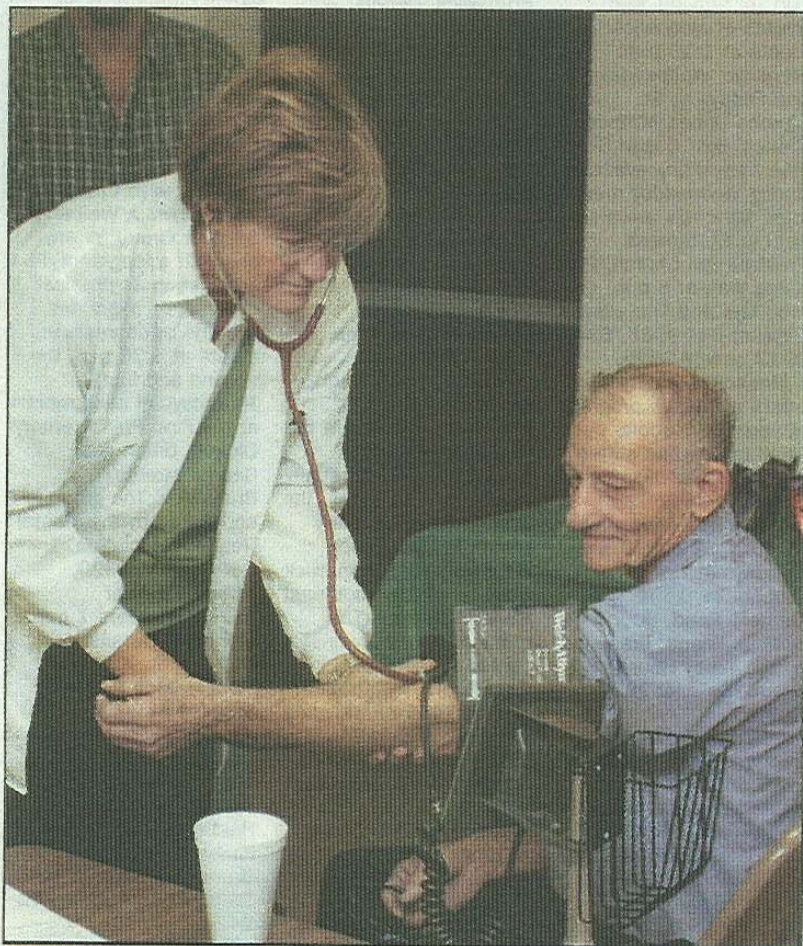
filed into the plant's cafeteria at 7 a.m. Thursday for their second round of health screenings.

"We held our first screenings in early 2005. We hope to see an improvement in our aggregate results this year."

Jan Kiss, R.N., director of development for AppleCare in Brunswick, said initial screenings of Haven's 35 employees last year identified two cases of diabetes and one case of dangerously high blood pressure. That employee was referred to a physician for treatment that very day.

"He was having symptoms and he didn't even know it," Kiss said of the employee with high blood pressure. "He just thought he had a headache."

AppleCare administers



Jan Kiss, left, of Applecare Medical, checks Craig Morrell's blood pressure as part of Haven Manufacturing Corporation's second annual Wellness Program Health Screening.



Tatiana Khorochoun, left, of Southeastern Pathology Associates, prepares to draw blood from Jamie Davis during Haven Manufacturing Corporation's Second Annual Wellness Program Screening.

design their own programs to address the health concerns identified within the individual company's employee populations.

Bland said he never sees individual results for participants in the program,

The program includes follow-up advice and support for employees with health concerns.

Bland said last year's screenings identified a number of weight problems in the company, so Haven

sored a weight loss contest for its employees.

The Coastal Health District, AppleCare and Southeastern Pathology are all partners in Haven Manufacturing's workplace wellness program, and Bland said the company will gladly serve as a prototype for other companies hoping to offer similar benefits to their workers.

Even though the program has not yet resulted in a savings in premiums charged by the company's insurer, it has certainly saved the company money, Bland said, especially by identifying serious conditions in three key employees the first year the program was instituted.

"Our annual cost is less than 1 percent of our annual insurance premiums," Bland said.

Located in the Green Swamp Road Industrial Park northwest of Brunswick, Haven is cele-