

## In the Know



► **Medical Metal Detector.** Inspired by the device used to find lost coins in the sand, Johns Hopkins biomedical engineering majors have invented a small handheld metal detector to help doctors locate hidden ortho-

pedic screws that need to be removed from patients' bodies. The device, inserted in a small incision made near the expected site of an orthopedic screw that needs removal, emits a tone that rises in pitch as the surgeon moves closer to the metal screw. It also serves as a surgical tool to guide the removal of the hardware.

► **Surgical Misadventures Common.** About every other day, a hospital or a surgery center in Pennsylvania reports a serious error or a close call to the state's Patient Safety Authority, according to a study. In the two-and-a-half years that ended Dec. 31, the safety authority fielded 175 serious error reports. In 83 reported cases, surgery was performed on the wrong site or the wrong patient. The authority also received reports of 253 close calls where the error was detected before an incision was made. Pennsylvania is the only state that requires the reporting of close calls.

► **Summer Reading.**

Anesthesiologists Barry L. Friedberg, MD, and Adam F. Dorin, MD, MBA, are proud authors. Dr. Friedberg is the editor of

*"Anesthesia in Cosmetic Surgery,"* a 284-page text (\$95 by Cambridge University Press). Dr. Dorin is the author of *"Jihad and American Medicine: Thinking Like a Terrorist to Anticipate Attacks via Our Health System,"* due out in November (\$49.95 by Greenwood Publishing Group).

► **Propofol Problems.** Several patients who received propofol experienced chills, fever and body aches shortly afterward, says the FDA in a June 15 bulletin. The lots of propofol appear to be free of bacteria or endotoxin contamination. The FDA says propofol vials and pre-filled syringes should be used within six hours of opening and limited to one per patient.

► **Drug Patch Death.** A West Palm Beach federal jury has awarded \$5.5 million to the father of a man who died while wearing a Duragesic drug patch on his arm. Tests reportedly showed the man had at least three times the lethal dose of fentanyl in his system at the time of his death.



Dr. Dorin

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