

MAKING ROUNDS

SUMMER 2023

A Faithful Family

A family fight against prostate cancer

— Pg. 22



6



8



10



14



20

3 Letter from the CEO

4 Is weight-loss surgery for you?

6 On a mission to heal

Medical mission group travels to Mexico

8 Heart care close to home

Jimmy Stahl experienced an unexpected close call

10 Fit for duty

Plastic surgery helps military mom return to peak performance

12 Rotate!

New helicopter takes off at Bladen County Hospital

14 Care when he needed it

Cape Fear Valley's new orthopedics residency program boosts access to proper treatment

16 Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation Gratitude Report

20 Safely distracted

Busy books keep patients occupied and lower fall risks

22 A faithful family

A family fight against prostate cancer

24 Solving seizure mysteries

Data from Epilepsy Monitoring Unit speeds seizure treatments

26 Understanding anxiety

27 What our patients are saying

28 News Briefs

32 For the Community

Support Groups



Making Rounds is the official magazine of Cape Fear Valley Health, a 1,000+ bed, 8-hospital regional health system, with more than 1 million inpatient and outpatient visits annually.

A private not-for-profit organization with 7,400 employees and 1,000 physicians on our medical staff, it includes Cape Fear Valley Medical Center, Highsmith-Rainey Specialty Hospital, Cape Fear Valley Rehabilitation Center, Behavioral Health Care, Bladen County Hospital, Hoke Hospital, Health Pavilion North, Health Pavilion Hoke and Harnett Health.

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A Joint Commission
TOP PERFORMER



LETTER *from the* CEO

If you drive by Cape Fear Valley Medical Center right now – where you can see two construction cranes building up more floors of steel on one end of campus and a brand-new Center for Medical Education at the other end of campus – you'll easily get the idea that we have a lot going on. This is very true, but one of the most transformational things that's happening right now is actually happening in a smaller, less obvious way.

I am thrilled to finally announce this new project here, which we announced to the world in a press conference this spring: a new partnership with Methodist University to create a state-of-the-art Methodist University/Cape Fear Valley medical school located on our main campus. This news represents a massive undertaking, and it involves a ton of planning and organization. While we're not yet at the bricks-and-mortar stage of this project, believe me when I tell you that the “invisible” activities at this stage are just as big and momentous as any construction project currently happening here.

I'm so proud of this partnership and what we will bring to our community together as we train the next generation of healthcare professionals. We are going to create a culture of innovation and excellence in healthcare delivery for our region. Having the opportunity to partner with such a highly regarded and successful university in our community ensures those students will receive an exceptional education that will prepare them to become the next generation of physicians.

The new medical school will be an important contributor to our local healthcare industry, addressing the shortage of healthcare professionals and improving the quality of healthcare delivery – while also following a mission of providing better medical care for rural and underserved populations and diversifying the physician workforce.

The medical school will also contribute to the overall economic development of the region. We anticipate the medical school bringing \$750 million dollars over 10 years to our region, including the creation of new jobs, according to a study from economic experts.

The partnership will create opportunities for students to learn in a collaborative and innovative environment, with access to cutting-edge technologies and new, state-of-the-art facilities that will be built at Cape Fear Valley Medical Center. All of this is on the horizon for now, but not by much. Our timeline aims to begin classes in July 2026, pending approval by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

I can't wait to share more about this new development in the future as we work toward the next stage of this project.

Mike Nagowski

CEO, CAPE FEAR VALLEY HEALTH

Is weight-loss surgery for you?



Bariatric surgery can help shed extra pounds and improve your health, but it's not for everyone.

Anyone who has tried to shed a few extra pounds knows that the process can be a challenge. But for severely obese people, losing a large amount of weight and keeping it off with diet and exercise alone can be especially difficult.

Medication to control appetite helps. But medications are a substitute for lifestyle changes. People with obesity are still likely to regain their lost weight after using these techniques.

In some cases, weight-loss surgery may be the answer. Cape Fear Valley Health's Bariatric Weight Loss Program can help you take control of your health through weight-loss surgery.



Ijeoma Ejeh, MD
Bariatric Surgeon

Are you a candidate?

Weight-loss surgery, also known as bariatric surgery, can help obese people lose weight and keep it off. However, it's not right for everyone. According to the Mayo Clinic and other experts, doctors may suggest this surgery for adults who:

- Have a body mass index, or BMI, of 40 or higher.
- Have a BMI of 30-35 or higher along with a serious medical condition linked to obesity. This includes problems such as high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and severe sleep apnea.
- Have a BMI of 30 or higher with at least one serious obesity-linked condition. People in this category are eligible only for a type of bariatric surgery called adjustable gastric band.
- Have tried to lose weight using medical treatment without success.
- Are willing to keep in touch with a medical professional for many years for observation and follow-up.
- Understand the possible risks and complications of surgery, which may include infection, bowel obstruction and blood clots. Other problems, such as gallstones or hernias, can develop later.

If you meet the criteria for weight-loss surgery, you and your doctor will decide which procedure you will have. Cape Fear Valley Bariatric Weight Loss Program offers roux-en-Y gastric bypass surgery and sleeve gastrectomy. Both have their own advantages and disadvantages. Your surgeon may have a preference, and factors such as your eating habits and previous stomach surgeries are also important.

"In the past, the Lap-Band was very popular, but it's not really an option bariatric surgeons are offering now," said Cape Fear Valley Bariatric Surgeon Ijeoma Ejeh, MD. "The sleeve has really supplanted the Lap-Band."

Questions to consider

Choosing to have weight-loss surgery is a serious decision. In addition to your doctor's approval, you should consider these questions:

- Are you committed to a lifetime of eating small meals, taking dietary supplements and getting regular exercise? These and other habits can determine your weight-loss success and your health after surgery.
- Does the surgery facility you will use offer a program to help you with diet, exercise and other aspects of your care after surgery? Cape Fear Valley's Bariatric Weight Loss Program's multi-disciplinary team of surgeons, nurses, dietitians and psychologists provide a comprehensive program to help ensure your continued success.
- Do you have the support of your family? It's important to have people around you who can help you stick with the lifestyle changes. Cape Fear Valley also offers a Bariatric Weight Loss Program support group.
- Do you live close enough to the surgery facility to keep up with follow-up visits?

Weight-loss surgery is a major decision and one that should be considered before proceeding. If you are considering surgery and want to hear from others who chose this path, visit capefearvalley.com/bariatric.

On a MISSION to heal

Medical mission group travels to Mexico

By Roxana Ross

This spring, a group of 38 people traveled to Mexico to provide healthcare in the city of Valladolid and surrounding rural communities. The trip, which was organized by Orthopedic Residency Program Director Ben Levine, MD, included attending doctors, residents, occupational therapists, surgical technicians and nurses from Cape Fear Valley Health, Methodist University, Southern Regional Area Health Education Center and other organizations.

Levine has been involved in medical missions since 2010, when he travelled to Haiti to help with earthquake relief. His wife, Cyndi, began mission work in 2001 as a nurse in Ecuador.

“My wife and I started doing mission trips because we felt it was the right thing to do,” Levine said. “We continued to do them because we wanted to teach our children, who have joined us on every trip since our first, that it is OK to be successful, but if you are, it is your responsibility to share your gifts and talents, money and time with those who are less fortunate.”



It's a lesson they've shared with more than their children. Levine estimates they've brought "hundreds" of other people on their first mission trips, hoping each will get the same fulfillment they do and continue to give back to their communities and the world.

Tucked in the center of the Yucatan peninsula, Valladolid is about 30 miles east of the famous Chichén Itzá ruins. The area has a great need for medical services, especially in the outlying community, Levine said.

"Some people travel four hours to have care at Centro Medico San Lucas (CMSL), the charity hospital where we performed surgeries," Levine said. "We also met with a surgeon who runs another charity hospital outside of Chichén Itzá this year, and we are expecting to provide some care there next year."

This year, the group performed 38 general surgery cases, eight orthopedic surgery cases. They saw 90 patients at CMSL, as well as another 220 patients in outlying clinics. Surgeries included gall bladder removals, hernia repairs, an anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) reconstruction and a repair to a broken wrist. The group also participated in non-medical service projects, such as painting, while in the communities.

"One of the reasons we have chosen to work with the organizations that we have – such as Chosen, out of Erie, Pa. – is that we always have projects that are non-medical," Levine said. "This allows husbands and wives and families to share in this experience."

Two of the staff from Methodist University, Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy Sheri Michel, OTD, and Adjunct Faculty Alice "A.J." Mulholland were among those who were returning to Valladolid for a second year with this mission group.

"There are not many occupational therapists working in that region, and many patients were not aware of how we could help them before," Michel said. "We provided ways for people to be more independent in their daily lives, to make a difference in how they interact at home or do things for themselves or their families."

One of the biggest differences the occupational therapists made was in providing wheelchairs, such as one for a 7-year-old girl they'd first seen and measured last year, Michel said. This year, they returned with a wheelchair that allowed her parents to push her rather than carry her everywhere.

"There was an elderly lady who came in that had been using a broom like a cane," Mulholland said. "She was very unstable when she walked. We splinted her foot and her wrist, gave her a walker, and she was able to get around much better. She said, 'I'm free again!'"

While the group was providing life-changing medical care, they were also being changed, receiving hands-on experience in atypical learning environments, which forced them to be creative and think on their feet. Levine said the benefits to the providers who do medical missions are many, and he believes that everyone in patient care should have opportunities to do mission work.

"It reinforces why most of us went into this profession, to help other people," Levine said. "It renews your faith in people because of the simple fact that they thank you just for showing up. The patients pour out gratitude for the act of trying to help, even though the results and permanence of our treatments in these situations may not be what we are used to delivering. Part of the learning for the therapists, surgical techs, nurses and doctors is learning how to diagnose and treat without all the bells, whistles and instruments that are available to us here in the United States."

**"It reinforces why most of us
went into this profession, to
help other people."**

– Ben Levine, MD

Levine plans to return to Valladolid next spring, and he hopes to add an additional trip each year. Part of the mission trips' success was thanks to stipends for the residents provided by Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation. The average cost for one resident to attend the medical mission trip was about \$2,000, and the Foundation provided stipends of \$1,500.

"The opportunity to deepen the knowledge and empathy of physicians who perform this type of mission work is one reason the Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation assists with costs for residents to attend these types of trips," said Vice President for Foundation Sabrina Brooks.

For more information about how to support residents on future mission trips, email foundation@capefearvalley.com or call (910) 615-1285.



Heart Care

Close to home

Jimmy Stahl
experienced
an unexpected
close call

By Lia Tremblay

After nearly 30 years as a state trooper, Jimmy Stahl was pretty sure he knew what a heart attack looked like.

“When we’re called,” he said, “usually your heart has stopped.”

So it was a bit of a shock when he learned that he’d just had a heart attack himself.

It was a sunny day last May, though the temperature felt more like summertime. Jimmy was outside, getting some yardwork done, when he started to feel dizzy and nauseated.

“The heat really got to me,” he said, “so I stepped back inside and laid on the floor in our laundry room, where it’s cool.”

His wife, Julie, held some cold washcloths to the back of his neck. A registered nurse, she recognized the signs of heat exhaustion and wanted to help him cool down right away.

“He gets out there and just works and works,” she said. “He’d been out there for hours already, and it was mid-afternoon, so the hottest part of the day.”

After a cold shower, Jimmy didn’t feel much better and went to lie down for a while. Less than an hour later, he told Julie he was having chest pains.

“It was a different hurt than I’d ever felt,” he said. “It felt like my chest was crushing where I couldn’t get air. And my left arm hurt, all the way down to my fingertips.”

That was all Julie needed to hear. Fully in nurse mode now, she handed him four baby aspirins, grabbed her keys and called the nearest hospital—Central Harnett Hospital, where she works as a nursing supervisor.

“You’re supposed to call 9-1-1,” she said. “But he hates ambulances, and I knew he wouldn’t want to get in one. So I called the hospital. One of my dear friends was working

and I said, 'Hey, Jimmy's having chest pain, and I'm really concerned. We're on our way.'"

Ten minutes later, they arrived at the hospital and the staff got right to work on Jimmy. His EKG looked fine, and so did his blood pressure and heart rate. After a dose of nitroglycerin, he felt a lot better.

"Then they told me, 'We're going to do a heart stress test in the morning,'" he said. "So I said, OK, I guess we'll come back in the morning for that. And they said, 'Oh no, you're not going home tonight.'"

Although Jimmy's other tests looked fine, cardiologist Varun Kumar, MD, said his cardiac enzymes were telling another story.

"The enzymes were trending up," Julie said. "And at that point they said, 'We're not even going to do the stress test, we're going straight for the cardiac cath.'"

Jimmy was rushed to the cardiac catheterization lab, where cardiologist Amol Bahekar, MD, placed a stent to repair a significant obstruction in one of Jimmy's arteries.

"It was a 90 percent blockage," Jimmy said. "That's what caused me to go down."

The next morning, he woke up in a hospital bed, feeling unusually tired despite a full night's sleep. He saw Dr. Kumar and asked if it was normal to feel this exhausted.

"He looked at me and said, 'Well, you did just have a heart attack.'"

Until that moment, Jimmy hadn't realized that his discomfort the day before had been an actual heart attack. It's a revelation he has shared with coworkers.

"I tell them a heart attack doesn't always mean you've hit the floor and you're out," he said. "It just means something isn't right and your heart isn't working correctly. It might just be a little pain, a little nausea, but you should get it checked out before it gets worse. I was lucky I had no muscle damage, because I got to the hospital before it started to damage my heart."

A few weeks after his heart attack, Jimmy was back in the catheter lab to repair two additional, less severe blockages. He said he's been surprised by how much energy he has now.



"It's nice because for so long our community did not have that option. To be able to do that here and keep patients close to home is wonderful."

– Julie Stahl

"I have noticed some things that used to wear me out," he said. "And I'm going, wait a minute. This isn't making me breathe hard like it used to. So there were things I was chalking up to age for a long time, and I guess it was really my heart."

Julie said the experience made her grateful that Central Harnett has the capacity to perform cardiac catheterizations, a development that came along in 2019 to keep local patients from having to be transferred elsewhere.

"It's nice because for so long our community did not have that option," she said. "To be able to do that here and keep patients close to home is wonderful."

Jimmy is grateful too, not only for his healthier heart but also for the compassionate care he received that day. He beams when talking about the nurses who kept him calm and comfortable.

"He calls them his heroes," Julie said. "I really couldn't ask for better coworkers, or better friends."

This summer, cardiac care in Harnett County will take another step forward, as Cape Fear Valley continues its promise to ensure easier access to quality healthcare. The health system will open a new clinic, Harnett Health Heart and Vascular Specialists at 805-B Tilghman Drive in Dunn.



Fit for Duty

Plastic surgery helps military mom return to peak performance

By Jami McLaughlin

A soldier, wife and busy mom of four children, Symone Verduco had always been active. She joined the Army after being homeschooled and attending Fayetteville Technical Community, becoming the third generation in her family to serve.

“I live in Fayetteville, but I was born and raised in Spring Lake, the daughter of a soldier who retired at Fort Bragg,” said Verduco.

Verduco met her husband at her first duty station. She and Robert were married in 2013 and have four children, Javier, age 12; Xander, age 8; Isabella, age 6; and Mia, age 2. She currently serves as a budget analyst for the United States Army Reserves Command.

A consummate soldier with a passion for physical fitness and a daily exercise regimen that starts at 4:30 a.m., Verduco, 32, seemed an unlikely candidate for plastic surgery, but her pregnancies had taken a toll on her body.

“Physical fitness has been a part of my daily life. My husband and I even owned a gym for a while, but I felt like I could not hit peak performance in my workouts,” said Verduco. “I was injuring my back, straining it because I wasn’t able to properly engage my core. I had an above-normal gap in my abdominals.”

Through her service, Verduco had maintained her weight and had stayed generally fit, which helped her. She tried physical therapy to get her body through the challenges she was facing before realizing she might need to seek out medical intervention.

“It was my physical therapist who suggested surgery. I had bad diastasis recti from my pregnancies. He said we could do physical therapy all day long, but this needed to be repaired,” said Verduco. “The Army has a requirement for me to stay fit and maintain a certain weight, so I didn’t go in seeking plastic surgery because I was uncomfortable. I had a little pooch, extra skin on my stomach and the elasticity had gotten worse with every pregnancy. My children were average weights, but I’m 4’10”. My small frame has been stretched to the max with every pregnancy.”

When she went looking for plastic surgery options, a friend suggested Dr. Leif Nordberg, at Cape Fear Valley Plastic Surgery.

“When I looked at his before and after photos, I knew that I was going to go with Dr. Nordberg. Confirming my decision, he was very thorough in his consultation. His staff, including his assistant Tabitha Strickland, were super friendly. He just knows what he is doing,” said Verduco.

She ended up having a “mommy makeover” including her diastasis recti repaired, a tummy tuck, skin and a hernia removed, and her breasts enhanced using a fat transfer from her back.

“I wanted the least invasive method so a friend suggested that I ask if I could get like a Brazilian Butt Lift (BBL) but in my breasts. The BBL is when they take fat from your body and move it to your butt area. I asked Dr. Nordberg if we could do that but with my breasts. He said yes so that’s what we went with. I didn’t want implants, I just wanted to make sure that they looked like I hadn’t breastfed four children like I had,” said Verduco.

Dr. Nordberg said the mommy makeover is increasing in popularity in his office.

“The mommy makeover is two or more procedures at a time. That can include a breast enhancement, either augmentation or lift with an implant, liposuction, a tummy tuck or any other improvement,” said Nordberg.

As in Verduco’s case, an abdominoplasty, or tummy tuck, can help patients who have experienced diastasis recti from pregnancy, which

stretches and separates your abdominal muscles causing a belly to stick out or bulge postpartum.

“We help tighten those muscles again and flatten your stomach. The effect of having children can be a lot on a body,” said Nordberg.

Dr. Nordberg also emphasized that it is important to be near your ideal weight. He usually sees patients for the mommy makeover after weight loss either by surgical methods or where diet and exercise have left excess skin and the need for other improvements that cannot happen with intervention.

“The best results are going to be when you are at your ideal weight and when the patient is done having children. It’s going to be easier to maintain,” said Nordberg.

Verduco said she was out of work for six weeks while she recovered from the surgery.

“The first week was the hardest. You can’t shower. You still have drains. But Dr. Nordberg prepared me. He tells you everything to expect especially as you start to move around,” said Verduco.

She also said the follow-up was amazing. Six months after her surgery, Verduco said she feels more confident and assured she made the right choice.

“They called me the day after the surgery then I had several appointments over six months to make sure that everything was OK. It’s important to have that constant level of care, just in case you do have an emergency,” said Verduco. “It far exceeded my expectations. I am in love with the results.”

She also said that staying physically fit is also a priority as she continues to revel in her improved body.

“I went from the safe hands of the surgeon to the safe hands of a trainer. I wasn’t trying to substitute surgery for general health and fitness, but now that I have had it, I can do more,” said Verduco.

For initial consultations and appointments, call (910) 829-6588. Cape Fear Valley Plastic Surgery is located at 1841 Quiet Cove in Fayetteville.



Rotate!

New helicopter takes off at Bladen County Hospital

By Laurie D. Willis



Bladen County Hospital officials are serious about caring for patients. But they're also very excited about a new improvement to patient care that is landing soon at the hospital: a helicopter with round-the-clock access for patients and a community who will benefit from it.

Scheduled to go into service in early May, the new helicopter will be staffed by a nurse, a paramedic and a pilot 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

The helicopter is needed, officials say, to ensure Bladen County provides the best possible care to patients whose

health conditions warrant receiving medical treatment at more advanced hospitals ASAP.

Located in the coastal plain region of southeastern North Carolina, Bladen County has about 30,000 residents. Its hospital is among the state's 21 critical access facilities, or those in rural, often underserved communities that provide limited outpatient and inpatient services to residents who otherwise would have to travel long distances for emergency care.

Bladen County Hospital provides care for residents of Elizabethtown, where it's located, and for people in neighboring communities including Bladenboro, Clarkton, Tar Heel and White Lake. News that the hospital is getting a helicopter for emergency transportation is probably quite comforting to them.

"For serious health conditions, we're going to stabilize the patient as best we can and get them transferred to the closest hospital, and for us that's Cape Fear Valley in Fayetteville,"

said Brian Langston, Corporate Director of Patient Logistics for Cape Fear Valley Health. “We believe it brings transport solutions or connectivity from our community hospital here in Elizabethtown to tertiary areas across the state and allows rapid transport to those patients and services that are not locally available.”

The helicopter, an Airbus H-135, will be housed in Bladen County. Hospital President Stephen Fife said the aircraft is a stark example of Cape Fear Valley’s commitment to investing in, supporting and taking care of Bladen County residents.

Negotiations for Bladen County to be the home base for the helicopter – the third in partnership between Med-Trans and Cape Fear Valley Health System – began last December. Fife, Bladen County Manager Greg Martin, EMS Team Director David Howell and local stakeholders evaluated the need, benefits and potential for community utilization of the helicopter before agreeing it was a good fit.

Through the partnership, Med-Trans provides the helicopter, the mechanic, the pilot and the flight certificate, and Cape Fear Valley provides the clinical oversight, the crew, the facilities and medical supplies, including a defibrillator, a ventilator, IV infusion pumps, medications and blood products.

Additional staff, including nurses and paramedics, will undergo an intensive, 10-week training program for clinical orientation, flight safety orientation and night-vision goggle training, necessary to enhance the safety of after-dusk operations.

Recruitment is ongoing, but officials say they’ve hired about 75 percent of the necessary personnel. Toby Carter, program director for LifeLink Air and Specialty Care, said Bladen County requires three to five years of experience as providers or paramedics before people can enroll in the training that involves critical care concepts including advanced cardiology, airway management and ICU-level care.

As a previous Bladen County EMS employee, Carter said it means a lot to him to know the county’s EMS Department will now be supported with a helicopter – when needed – at accidents.

“We’ll be able to transport trauma patients to the trauma center, and I’m excited about adding the providers, the services and expanding the department,” Carter said. “Anytime we’re able to treat more patients and expand the services to better take care of our community partners, that’s a good thing and great to be part of.”



Currently, Cape Fear Valley Health operates two aircraft that service Harnett and Scotland counties. The third helicopter will allow Cape Fear Valley to move eastward and help patients in Bladen County.

“We’d be the closest access for them to get to the trauma center, or if the hospital has a patient who needs to move to a higher level of care, to ICU, we can get them where they need to go quicker,” Carter said. “The capability of having the aircraft in the county makes all the difference when seconds count.”

“We’re here first and foremost to serve our patients, and this is going to help us serve them better.”

– Stephen Fife

Another benefit of the helicopter will be the ability to provide blood to trauma patients in real time, Carter said.

“Getting blood to them right away at the scene of an accident sometimes means the difference between life and death,” he said. “Blood donations are an absolute important piece of what we do.”

Carter, Langston and Fife said the new helicopter will be a game changer.

“We’re here first and foremost to serve our patients, and this is going to help us serve them better,” Fife said. “It makes me proud to be a part of our health system and gives me a huge sense of satisfaction to know that this helicopter will help better care for our community in Bladen County.”

Care when he needed it

Cape Fear Valley's new
orthopedics residency
program boosts access
to proper treatment

Playing pool and throwing darts were favorite pastimes for Jeremy Perry, who moved to Fayetteville six years ago from upstate New York for the warmer weather and to reunite with family.

He bought a house and was setting down roots when he suffered an injury at work.

"I was hauling fuel in my tractor-trailer, and when I went to pull the hose off, I felt a snap in my arm," says Perry. "I started losing feeling in my fingers and hand, up my right arm."

Perry said his fingers and hand began to curl up, which led him to Ben Levine, MD, an orthopedic surgeon in Fayetteville.

"I had to stop doing some of the things that I loved to do or try to do them with my left hand. Dr. Levine said that it was my ulnar nerve, and so we started down the road of surgery and therapy," Perry says.

By Jami McLaughlin

At age 33, Perry had developed ulnar nerve palsy, a condition that can affect the ability to make fine movements or perform routine tasks.

He had four surgeries and worked with a therapist multiple times a week to repair the nerve damage in his hand and arm.

Now that Perry has regained feeling and function in his hand and arm, he has been able to open his own business in construction land management, working with heavy equipment.

“I can’t say enough about Dr. Levine. You can tell when he talks to you, he cares about you.”

– Jeremy Perry

He says being able to see a local physician was “absolutely amazing.”

“The procedures were here, the appointments were easy to make, and I didn’t have to travel,” Perry says. “Plus, I can’t say enough about Dr. Levine. His bedside manner is amazing. You can tell when he talks to you, he cares about you. He wanted to know more about me, so he knew how to help me. Getting that function back in my hand and arm was life changing.”

Underserved specialty

Dr. Levine, a hand, upper extremity and trauma orthopedic surgeon, moved to Fayetteville in 2019.

He and Dr. Stephen Kouba will be the two doctors on the staff of the new Valley Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, part of Cape Fear Valley Health, when it opens this month.

The clinic is at 1219 Walter Reed Road, Fayetteville.

Dr. Levine says that orthopedics is an underserved specialty in the Fayetteville area. The goal is to bring in more doctors to serve the community through the hospital-based clinic.

“We hope to expand over the next few years. The vision is to attract physicians in all the orthopedic subspecialties including sports, hand and upper extremities, foot and ankle, spine, oncology and pediatrics,” says Dr. Levine.

Dr. Levine is also the new Medical Director of the Cape Fear Valley Orthopedics Residency program, which was accredited

in 2022 and will welcome its first class starting in July.

“We will be attracting new doctors through the program. It will be a draw,” Dr. Levine predicts.

Cape Fear Valley Health, recognizing the need to address the shortage of orthopedics specialists, opened the Center for Medical Education & Neuroscience Institute in January. That is where Dr. Levine, Dr. Kouba and six other doctors will teach orthopedics residents.

Michael Nagowski, CEO of Cape Fear Valley Health, said at the ribbon-cutting on Jan. 13 that the residency programs serve to bring in more doctors and that already 50 percent of their graduates have decided to practice in the community.

Dr. Levine is certain that the orthopedics program will succeed.

“Orthopedics is competitive as a residency, so we will be able to attract high-quality surgeons to Cape Fear Valley,” he adds.

Army, health system work together

The residency program is a joint effort between Womack Army Medical Center and Cape Fear Valley Health.

“The residency program started with Dr. Ken Nelson at Womack in 2017. He brought me on board and, as I got more involved, I got more excited and wanted to be a part of it,” says Dr. Levine. “When he asked if I would lead as an associate director, I jumped at it.”

He and Dr. Nelson decided to bring the military and civilian sides together to create a stronger program. The program will train four residents over a five-year residency period, two civilian doctors and two Army doctors.

“It is a five-year residency program, so we will have 20 residents at the end,” Dr. Levine explains. “We want them to stay here and get involved in the community as well. Teaching to give back is also important.”

Bringing the physicians to the community will have a major impact over the next five years, but in the meantime, Dr. Levine and other orthopedic surgeons are making a difference.

Jeremy Perry can attest to that. “I can do things again,” Perry says. “(Dr. Levine) brought the use of my hand and arm back, and I’m thankful.”



Ben Levine, MD
Orthopedic Surgeon

COMMUNITY *giving.* COMMUNITY *healing.*

These words reflect the work of Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation. Gifts through the Foundation strengthen our community by improving and enriching local healthcare. Thanks to a community of generous givers, we are making a positive impact and providing healing to you, your family and friends, and neighbors who receive care from Cape Fear Valley Health. For more information about the Foundation, please contact our office at (910) 615-1285, email foundation@capefearvalley.com or visit our website at cfvfoundation.org.



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Safely distracted

Busy books keep patients occupied and lower fall risks

By Roxana Ross

For elderly dementia patients who are at risk of falling, boredom and confusion can lead to dangerous attempts to move around their hospital room without assistance. Five South Patient Care Manager Brandy Newtown saw patients with cognitive disabilities wanting to perform tasks they have done all their lives.

“For example, we had a patient on the unit who just really wanted to go to work,” Newtown said. “She kept saying that she had work to do! The patient kept trying to get out of the bed and go to her desk, so we created a desk. We moved her table to her recliner and gave her a pen, paper, calculator and soup. The patient became calm and content for quite some time as she sat there writing, sipping and tapping away.”

Since every patient’s altered mental status creates different patterns of confusion, some due to conditions like brain cancer or delirium, it was clear that not every patient would be distracted with a ‘desk.’ However, Newtown set out to investigate alternative methods of engagement for patients regressing. She also noticed that patients tend to get restless and pick at clothing, as well as pull at medical devices. Though they do not realize it, the patients can self-inflict harm when they remove IVs, bandages or other medical necessities.

"I started researching cognitive disorders to see what we could bring to the bedside; we needed something that would keep their hands busy and their minds engaged," Newtown said.

Newtown found busy books: colorful, interactive, cloth books that offered tactile activities for restless hands. The busy books contain zippers, buttons, shoe strings and snaps for hands-on tactile exploration and manipulation. Her evidence-based proposal was presented to the Cape Fear Valley Auxiliary Board in June 2022, which resulted in 5 South receiving a \$2,000 grant for the purchase of the busy books.

"I will never forget the first patient we gave one to," Newtown said. "That patient had dementia and was confused. When I gave the patient the book, the patient told me the book was beautiful. They cried and said, 'This is a gift for me?'"

Since September of last year, when Newtown started giving them to 5 South patients who were at high risk of falling and had altered mental conditions, none of the patients who received a busy book had a fall. Usage of the tools has since spread throughout the hospital as other areas started to request them for patients. By the end of March, approximately 25 patients had received a busy book. Once a book is given to a patient, it belongs to the patient and goes home with them when they are discharged.

"Patients who are agitated, anxious or confused, and constantly trying to get out of bed – but should not get out of bed – these are the patients who benefit from these tools," said Medical Service Line Director Allison Taylor, who has been excited to see the success of the new tool Newtown implemented. "Patients who become anxious and confused need to feel a sense of purpose, rather than being constantly reminded to stay in bed. This tool gives them that, and it helps keep them safe."

Taylor said such patients can also feel the need to fidget with their hands, and the busy books are a perfect distraction to keep their hands from finding things they shouldn't fidget with, like IV lines and other medical objects around their body. Taylor, who also oversees a special team working on reducing fall incidents in the hospital, has shared the data Newtown has gathered about the tools with other members of the fall-reduction team.

"I think these tools are really having a positive impact," Taylor said. "I want to give Brandy and her team a lot of credit for initiating this."



"Patients who become anxious and confused need to feel a sense of purpose, rather than being constantly reminded to stay in bed. This tool gives them that, and it helps keep them safe."

– Allison Taylor

Hospitalist and Geriatrician Girum Feyissa, MD, has also seen how the tools have helped patients on 5 South and throughout the medical center.

"This is a game-changer," Feyissa said. "Some of the hazards to hospitalized older adults include falls and delirium, and these tools can be used as intervention to prevent the incidence of both. Because patients are actively engaged by the tools, they are able to be more focused on their care, and it ultimately improves their outcome. Even though such interventions seem small, these tools can impact the lives of our older adults in a positive way."

Since the launch of the busy books, the Cape Fear Valley Foundation has also donated \$2,500 to 5 South, which will be used to replenish the unit with busy books.

"Because of the Foundation's continued support and an additional grant for \$5,000, we will be able to expand the project to our partnered hospitals," Newtown said.



Gifts through Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation strengthen our community by improving and enriching local healthcare. To learn more or to make a donation, visit cfvfoundation.org.



A family fight against prostate cancer

By Laurie Willis

December 2022, Jessie Crecy of Fayetteville sat alone in a doctor's office. He felt pretty good, though he'd noticed a recent spike in his blood pressure, which had prompted him to schedule an appointment.

Now it was time to learn his test results. When the words, "You have prostate cancer," were said, he was shocked yet calm.

The American Cancer Society reports about 288,300 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year and about 34,700 will die from the illness. It's the second leading cause of cancer death for men in the United States.

If radiation oncologist Dr. Sunjay Barton has his way, Crecy won't be among the men who succumb to prostate cancer this year – or any year for that matter.

Barton works for Southeastern Radiation Oncology, a private practice providing services to Cape Fear Valley Cancer Treatment & CyberKnife Center's radiation oncology department. He works closely with Southeastern colleagues, a nurse practitioner, physician assistant, radiation therapists, nurses and other hospital personnel. The cancer center on Owen Drive in Fayetteville is just one of the three cancer centers Cape Fear Valley Health offers for convenience of care.

Barton has worked with Cape Fear Valley Health for a year since relocating to North Carolina's Sandhills region from New York. A Chapel Hill native, Barton is glad to be back in his home state where his relatives live. He's also ecstatic to be doing what he loves – helping people like Crecy navigate their cancer battle.

"I think he's handling the treatment like a champ," Barton said of Crecy. "He's doing great. He has high-risk prostate cancer, for which radiation treatment is very appropriate. He's also getting hormone therapy. The combination of radiation therapy and hormone therapy is the appropriate treatment. His tolerance of those two treatments has been excellent."

Prostate cancer cells are stimulated to grow by the male hormone, testosterone. Hormone therapy lowers testosterone levels and slows the growth of prostate cancer. In combination with radiation therapy, hormone therapy increases the chances of curing cancer.

Cape Fear Valley Cancer Treatment & CyberKnife Center's physicians maintain a comprehensive suite of services, including radiation therapy, surgery and chemotherapy. Medical oncologists prescribe chemotherapy, and radiation oncologists like Barton deliver radiation to patients. Dr. Richmond Owusu, who recently joined the team, uses a surgical robot to provide more advanced prostatectomies, or surgeries to remove the prostate.

To date, Crecy has undergone 28 radiation treatments. His daughter, Nikki Crecy, a behavioral healthcare worker, has been his primary caretaker, along with her nephew. Nikki Crecy was speechless after her father first told her he had prostate cancer.

"I had to process the information," she said. "I watched him a lot and knew he was bothered, but as a family we called on our faith. To this day, we remain faithful for a positive outcome."

Nikki Crecy said her father hasn't had many bad side effects from the radiation. When he has, she and her sister are there for him.

They've had to insist he gets proper rest. Sometimes the treatments make him weak, which means he could easily lose his balance or fall. Barton praised Crecy's strong familial support, which is important for patients battling life-threatening illnesses. Crecy likewise has kind words for his oncologist and the "absolutely amazing people" on Barton's team.

"I'm very pleased with Dr. Barton and the rest of my oncology team," Crecy said.



Nikki Crecy initially wanted her dad to seek treatment elsewhere.

"I was so impressed with the clinic and the radiology doctor after meeting with them, it settled me and that never crossed my mind again," she said. "I'm quite surprised, happy and grateful for the treatment he's receiving. We're all satisfied with his treatment."

"Everyone is so attentive and kind," she continued. "From the volunteers offering coffee and snacks, to the nurses answering every question. They've

made this experience a much more positive one than we could have imagined. The doctors speak with us weekly, answering questions and being very patient with us. Dr. Barton has always made us feel that we're important and our needs matter."

"Our goal has always been and will always be, delivering the absolute best patient care," Barton said. "At Cape Fear Valley Health, we keep up with the latest trends to ensure we're on the cutting edge of innovations to improve patient outcomes."

Barton is excited about surface guided radiation therapy – a special, precise tracking system within the radiation treatment room that monitors the motion of patients by bouncing light beams off their skin. It automatically stops the radiation beams when patients move more than three millimeters during treatment.

"My colleagues and I work diligently to ensure patients like Mr. Crecy have the best chance possible, and I'm grateful to be affiliated with a medical facility that always puts patients first," Barton said.

In April, Barton gathered with the Crecy family, including Mr. Crecy's great-grandson. Just as they supported him during treatment, they were there this time to celebrate him ringing the bell, signifying completion of his final radiation treatment.

Solving seizure mysteries

Data from Epilepsy Monitoring Unit speeds seizure treatments

By Jami McLaughlin

Last May, life, as Erin Burns knew it, changed.

A 26-year-old mom of two, Burns was hit head-on in a car accident. The airbag broke her carotid artery on impact, causing a stroke, and she spent the next month in the hospital in a coma. She woke up in a hospital room not knowing where she was or what had happened.

“When I first woke up, I saw my mom and I haven’t seen her in years, so I panicked. I knew something was wrong seeing her there, but I didn’t realize it was me. It was like a dream waking up,” said Burns.

It was her dad that broke the news that she had been in a coma.

“He told me that he didn’t know if I was going to come out of it. They had called my entire family and said it was time to say goodbye,” said Burns.

Burns said hearing those words was one thing, but then the realization sunk in as she was looking in the mirror for the first time. Instead of the head of long hair she remembered, she was now bald with a scar. Away from her children, son Carson, age 7, and her daughter Colby, age 5, she spent the next several months in the hospital.

“It was hours and hours of physical and occupational therapy, every day. I also had speech therapy because I was intubated while on life support and lost my voice. I used a whiteboard to communicate for the first month after I woke up. They said I would never be able to walk again, but now here I am. I’m a work in progress,” said Burns.

She said the hospital staff made the work and the experience bearable.

“One of my physical therapists, Michelle, would sit in the hallway with me and just let me cry. It was a lot of work, and I missed my children,” said Burns.

She got out of the hospital and immediately started trying to recapture life again, with her children, at her house, even going back to work as a server and bartender at Bubba’s 33. The staff at Bubba’s 33 had been completely supportive while she was in the hospital, and she wanted to get back as soon as she could.

“They held fundraisers for me and helped keep my rent paid while I was in the hospital. For months they made sure my children had a house to go to and even had a wheelchair ramp installed for me before I got home,” said Burns, “They made sure I didn’t lose anything because of the accident.”

But then Burns started having seizures.

“It started with one after I left the hospital, then they went from once a month to twice a week before happening every day. I had one at work one day. In February, I fell on a metal bar and knocked myself unconscious. Another employee heard me, and I woke up in the hospital after the manager called an ambulance,” said Burns.

Her neurologist, Dr. Hardik Doshi, specializes in epilepsy and surgical epilepsy. When he arrived in Fayetteville to work in the Cape Fear Valley neurology department in June 2022, he started laying the groundwork to create a new inpatient unit at the Cape Fear Valley Medical Center. The Epilepsy Monitoring Unit (EMU) started with its first patient in November 2022.

“It’s a big deal to have this in our health system,” Doshi said. “In EMU, patients are monitored on continuous EEG and video 24/7 for about a week. The nursing staff is trained to recognize seizures and act in a timely manner.”

If a patient fails to control their seizures with two anti-seizure medications, the chances of becoming seizure-free with a third anti-seizure medication is only about 4 percent. At that point, a diagnosis of epilepsy needs to be confirmed first. Once confirmed, non-medication options including epilepsy surgery, which offers better chances of seizure-freedom and seizure reduction than trying more medications. The first step in that direction is EMU admission.

Doshi said that this is incredibly important because the unit not only gives an idea about potential seizure focus, but it also helps to correctly diagnose the patient, to classify epilepsy and to see if medication needs to be changed depending on epilepsy type. During the study, epileptic patients are monitored, and doctors try to induce seizures to try to determine where the seizure activity is coming from.



“For four or five days, we stop the patient’s meds and use tactics like sleep deprivation to capture the seizure activity,” said Doshi.

Once they have collected the data needed, the patient undergoes further testing through MRIs, PET scans, neuropsychological tests, etc. Each patient’s case is then presented in a multidisciplinary epilepsy surgical conference at an academic center where other doctors can confer and determine a course of action.

“Some patients have tried meds after meds, and nothing works. Once you have the answers from this study, it is easier to be treated,” said Doshi.

So far, Doshi has tried two different medicines on Burns trying to stop her seizures, but both have failed. As a prime candidate for the study, Burns started the process in March, although she was only in the unit for two days before enough information was obtained to determine her next steps.

“On the first day, she was sitting, talking, able to use her phone, but then her left arm would involuntarily jerk,” Doshi said. “She thought they were muscle spasms, but they were actually mini-seizures. On the second day, she had a grand mal seizure.”

Doshi said that is an example of why the study is important to patients, especially those who may live alone.

“It gives us good information and data. In her case and in others, some patients do not even realize that they are having seizures, especially while they sleep,” said Doshi.

Burns said her experience with Dr. Doshi and Cape Fear Valley has been nothing short of phenomenal.

“Dr. Doshi is pretty amazing,” she said. “He answers my questions right away and he’s so professional. And his staff, you can tell they are there because they want to be there, to help people. They are just incredibly thoughtful and kind, not just to me, but also to my dad,” said Burns.

Currently, Burns still cannot feel half of her face, is trying to recover from paralysis, and does not have use of her left arm, but she is hopeful that a new medicine Doshi put her on will work. She gives is a 25 to 30 percent chance of stopping her seizures. Her biggest hope is to rebuild her life, which she works toward daily.

“I hope my life gets back to normal soon,” she said. “It wasn’t long ago that I was making breakfast, lunch and dinner for my kids, and getting them to school. I miss that. It’s the little things that are the big things. Even things like folding laundry. With one hand, it takes an hour longer to fold than if I had two hands to use.”

Finding another type of job is also something she said she might need to do, despite being a server and bartender for her entire adult life up until the accident. She said her children and her faith keep her going.

“I use singing at my church to help get my voice back. I keep telling myself that this won’t be forever,” Burns said. “I pray daily. I can’t just sit and be sad. I have to learn; I have to figure out how to be creative and I need to figure out how to do things differently. At the end of the day, when my kids tell me that they are proud of me, it means everything. It wasn’t that long ago that I was teaching them to walk and now they are helping me relearn. When they are older, I can’t wait to tell them that they saved my life.”

Doshi hopes to increase the number of beds in the unit to accommodate every patient who needs to be tested. He said that anyone who thinks they might be a candidate for the Epilepsy Monitoring Unit should request it from their neurologist and get scheduled as soon as possible by calling (910) 615-3350.



Understanding Anxiety

Worries caused by generalized anxiety disorder can disrupt your daily life. But there are treatments that can help you control anxiety.

Sometimes it's more than the jitters or simple concerns. Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) can bring feelings of extreme tension, fear and worry into your life at any time, for any reason, or for no reason at all.

GAD often begins between childhood and middle age, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. GAD is also more likely to occur in people with a family history of anxiety.

Symptoms of GAD include:

- Constant worrying that you can't control, even if you know you're overreacting
- Trouble sleeping or relaxing
- Trembling, twitching or tense muscles
- Headaches
- Crankiness
- Sweating or hot flashes
- Trouble breathing
- Feeling light-headed

"Unlike some other anxiety disorders, GAD usually doesn't cause people to avoid going out in public," said John Bigger, Corporate Director of Behavioral Health at Cape Fear Valley. "But severe, untreated cases of GAD can disrupt a person's everyday activities."

Get back that mellow feeling

If you have excessive worry or anxiety along with any of the other GAD symptoms, talk to your doctor or reach out to the Cape Fear Valley Community Mental Health Center for a referral to a psychotherapist or psychiatrist. You can contact

Cape Fear Valley Community Mental Health Center by calling (910) 615-3333 and pressing "1" for scheduling.

Treatment can help. Some ways to treat GAD include:

Medication. Medicine can't cure GAD, but it can help ease anxiety. Several anti-anxiety medicines are available.

Psychotherapy, including techniques such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). This therapy helps people change the way they react to the things that make them anxious. One common technique teaches people breathing exercises to help ease their anxiety.

In cognitive behavioral therapy, people also learn how to better respond to the things that trigger their anxiety. CBT also helps people to understand and change the thought patterns that lead to anxiety.

In many cases, psychotherapy can help you learn the source of your anxiety and can help teach you ways to manage it. Sometimes, the best approach can often be a combination of psychotherapy techniques along with medication that can help you deal with the symptoms while allowing you time to develop coping skills.



Looking for more ways to ease your anxiety? Simply scan the QR code with your smart phone to see eight ways you can ease anxiety in your life.

Want to schedule an appointment?
Please call (910) 615-3333.

What our patients are saying...

Cape Fear Valley – Ferncreek General Surgery

Dr. Annamaneni is a surgeon par excellence! From his bedside manner to his exceptional surgical skills, he is phenomenal. I feel very fortunate to have been a patient of his.

– Jane Mitchell

Cape Fear Valley Pulmonary Medicine

This office is amazing from the moment you walk in all the way to checking out. Thank you all so very much. Great experience...

– Nena Monroe

HealthPlex

I've been a member of the gym on and off for over a decade. I LOVE THIS GYM!!!

– Paula Jones-Bowen

Kusum Garg, MD

My husband and I (both seniors with multiple complex health conditions) have been under Dr. Garg's exceptional care since moving to Hope Mills in 2020. She is an exceptional diagnostician, as well as very proficient, caring, knowledgeable and intuitive. She's the best PCP we've ever had. Her staff are also very efficient, friendly and professional. We highly recommend this practice.

– Santiago and Nancy Jervis

Bladen ExpressCare

The front office staff and healthcare providers have always been friendly and caring to us. Wait time is sometimes a bit long, but it seems this is the case at all medical offices these days. The doctors and nurses I have seen are all very professional and easy to communicate with, taking time to answer questions clearly. Nurse Practitioner Angie Lowry is excellent and has an especially caring attitude.

– Vicki Clark

Hoke Hospital Emergency Department

AWESOME AWESOME care. The staff is very attentive and caring. Their hospital is always clean and smells good. Their bedside manners are phenomenal. They are quick and efficient. They truly care about you and your health.

– Niurka Rosario

Yana Mikhaylov, MD

Her empathy with the patients, her professionalism, and her dedication to my daughter are something that I will be thankful for my whole life. She is amazing.

– J. Guerrios

Harnett OB/GYN

They make me feel comfortable and very welcome. Nurse Kim is really nice and funny! I highly recommend that place.

– Benjie Fede

Cape Fear Valley Podiatry – Lumberton

Excellent experience with Dr. Hannah Sahli-Carter. Equally important is the friendly front-office staff (Jan).

– Jason Woods

Cape Fear Valley Medical Center

From the Rapid Response to Emergency Room to IOBSN to 3VPS to all the surgeons, doctors, nurses and nurse assistants, this has been quite a journey and I am so thankful that you were here with me. You all are a Class Act!!!

– Retha Moore

Cape Fear Valley Blood Donor Center

I have had nothing but great experiences with the Blood Mobile and the teams that serve our community.

– Robert Brog

If you've had a great experience at any Cape Fear Valley Health or Harnett Health facility, we'd like to hear about it. Email us at info@capefearvalley.com or leave us a review on Google!



From left, Dr. Kenneth Manning, Physiologist Assistant Averil Jordan Brown and Dr. Logan Bartsch pose for a photo with their awards at the Doctor's Day event on Thursday, March 20, 2023.

Cape Fear Valley honors three at Doctors' Day event

Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation's Caduceus Society honored several providers on March 31, when Cape Fear Valley Health Medical Staff Services held its 2023 Doctors' Day celebration at Cape Fear Valley's Center for Medical Education. Three awards were presented: Advanced Practice Provider (APP) of the Year, Resident of the Year, and Physician of the Year. The Caduceus Society honors the legacy of physicians in the community while providing resources which strengthen the shared vision of the medical staff.

Diabetes Spring Ball raises money for Diabetes Summer Camp

Cape Fear Valley Kids with Diabetes hosted their 8th Annual Diabetes Spring Ball at Highland Country Club on Saturday, April 1, 2023. More than 120 parents and children attended the event, which raised about \$15,700. All profits will go toward the only summer Diabetes Camp in southeastern North Carolina. The diabetes camp will take place at Camp Rockfish from Thursday, June 22 through Sunday, June 25. Children ages 6 to 18 are encouraged to attend the overnight camp. The mission of the camp is to empower children living with diabetes. While the children have fun in outdoors activities including zip lining, wall climbing, canoeing, swimming, and hiking, they will also learn how to manage their diabetes to prevent diabetes-related co-morbidities. For more information call (910) 615-1885 or contact Brunilda Cordero, MD at bcord@capefearvalley.com. For registration, visit us at www.sweetkidswithdiabetes.com.

Physician of the Year

The Physician of the Year award was given to Oncologist Kenneth Manning, MD. Dr. Manning was nominated for his care of his patients and coworkers and his drive to keep up with and share the latest information on disease processes and new treatments. His nomination described him as "highly respected, trusted and loved by his coworkers and patients." Dr. Manning received his medical degree from Medical College of Virginia in Richmond, Va. He completed a residency in Internal Medicine at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem in 1990 and a Fellowship in Medical Oncology and Hematology at the Comprehensive Cancer Center of Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center in 1992. He has been with Cape Fear Valley Cancer Treatment and CyberKnife Center since 2003.

Resident of the Year

Logan Bartsch, DO was named Resident of the Year. Dr. Bartsch, who is a Class of 2023 Emergency Medicine Resident, was nominated for his skill and care during a multi-person trauma incident. The nomination described his performance during the incident as "above and beyond." Dr. Bartsch is a graduate of Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, Erie Campus.

APP of the Year

Physician Assistant Averil Jordan Brown was named as the 2022 APP of the Year. Brown, who works with the Orthopedic team on 7 South in Cape Fear Valley Medical Center, was described in her nominations as irreplaceable, compassionate, responsive, professional and knowledgeable. She was praised as "the backbone of 7 South," with "the best and most caring bedside manners" who "always strives to provide the best care her patients can receive." Brown graduated from Methodist University with a bachelor's degree in microbiology and a Master of Medical Science in Physician Assistant Studies. She has been with Cape Fear Valley since 2014.



Dr. Chris Aul Patient Safety and Quality Award Winners

Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation announced the inaugural winners of the Dr. Chris Aul Patient Safety and Quality Award in March. The award was presented to two individuals: one clinical professional and one non-clinical professional who are rising to the challenge and supporting patient safety and quality care each and every day. The non-clinical winner was Julia Knight, EVS Supervisor, Hoke Hospital, and the clinical winner was Angela Parker, MRI Supervisor. Awardees received a \$500 cash prize to be used for continuing education or to support a patient safety initiative.



Spirit of Children donates \$47,071

Spirit of Children and local Spirit Halloween franchise owners Bill and Carolyn Dickerson presented Cape Fear Valley Health's Child Life Department with a donation of \$47,071 in January. The funds generated from 2022 make hospital stays easier for young patients and their families through non-medical treatment and healing play. Proceeds were collected at local Fayetteville area Spirit Halloween stores, SpiritHalloween.com and from business partners. One hundred percent of local donations stay in the Fayetteville community. Since 2010, Spirit of Children has raised \$256,000 for Cape Fear Valley Health.



Sunshine and fun set the pace at Step Up 4 Health and Wellness Expo

More than a thousand people from the greater Fayetteville community gathered on Methodist University's campus on Saturday, April 15, for a morning of fun and fitness at the Cape Fear Valley Foundation's Step Up 4 Health and Wellness Expo! The event raised nearly \$55,000 to support patient care areas at Cape Fear Valley Health including cancer care, heart care, children's services, Community Alternatives Program and Cumberland County Medication Access Program. More than 500 people participated in the main walking or running events, and there were more than 50 vendors in the Wellness Expo.

Thank you to everyone who came out and supported this wonderful event, especially our top sponsors:

Cumulus Media	Presenting Sponsor
Methodist University	Host Sponsor
Cape Fear Valley Health	Expo Sponsor
Systel Business Equipment	Friend Sponsor
Truist	Friend Sponsor
Pepsi Bottling Ventures	Friend Sponsor
Valley Radiology	Friend Sponsor



We need you to donate blood and **save lives locally!**

The Cape Fear Valley Blood Donor Center is the only community blood program dedicated to serving the needs of Cape Fear Valley Health patients in Cumberland, Hoke, Harnett and Bladen Counties through blood donation by individual donors, community organizations and businesses.

Cape Fear Valley Blood Donor Center offers local volunteers an opportunity to Save Lives Locally. Located at 3357 Village Drive in the Bordeaux Shopping



Center, the center is open for donations Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and the third Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There are also two blood mobiles out in the community for mobile blood drives. Find those blood drives by scanning the QR code.



CAPE FEAR VALLEY BLOOD DONOR CENTER

For information about donating or hosting a blood drive, please call (910) 615-LIFE (5433) or visit savingliveslocally.org.





Support Groups

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group

Meets the third Tuesday of each month from 2 – 3 p.m.
Medical Arts Center 101 Robeson Street, Suite 106, Fayetteville
For more information, contact Nancy Alderete-Davis at
(910) 615-1781.

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group [second location]

Meets the first Wednesday of each month from 2 – 3 p.m.
Harmony of Hope Mills, 7051 Rockfish Rd., Fayetteville
For more information, contact Nancy Alderete-Davis at
(910) 615-1781.

Art Therapy for Cancer Patients

Meets every Wednesday from 3 – 4:30 p.m.
Cancer Treatment and CyberKnife Center conference room,
1638 Owen Drive, Fayetteville
For more information, call (910) 615-4626 or (910) 615-4435.

Bariatric Support Group

Meets the third Thursday of each month from 6 – 7 p.m.
Cape Fear Valley Village Surgical, 1841 Quiet Cove, Fayetteville
For more information, contact Debbie Wooten at
dwooten@capefearvalley.com.

Better Breathers Support Group

Meets the second Thursday of each month from 5 – 6 p.m.
Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation, 1638 Owen Drive, Fayetteville
For more information, contact Diane Schultz at (910) 615-7822.

Dystonia Support Group

Meets virtually the second Tuesday of July, September and November
from 3 – 4:30 p.m.
For more information, contact Crystal Edmonds at
cedystonia1920@gmail.com.

Life After Stroke Team

Meets the third Wednesday of each month at 3 p.m.
Cape Fear Valley Rehabilitation Center, in the Physical Therapy Gym,
1638 Owen Drive, Fayetteville
For more information, please call Meghan Dornan at (910) 615-7077.

Mended Hearts

Meets virtually the second Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.
For more information or the Zoom meeting link, contact Bill Farr at
wfarr2@nc.rr.com.

Parkinson's Disease Support Group of Fayetteville

Meets the second Saturday of each month at 10 a.m.
Kiwanis Recreation Center, 352 Devers St., Fayetteville
For more information, contact Stephen Koetter at (910) 518-0045 or
pdsgfay@gmail.com.



See the lights?
Move to the right.

It's the safest move for everyone!

If you see an emergency vehicle
approaching with lights on
– an ambulance, fire or law
enforcement vehicle –
move to the right so they
can safely pass by.