

CAPE FEAR VALLEY HEALTH *and* WELLNESS MAGAZINE

MAKING ROUNDS

WINTER 2024

A love that saves

Wife's CPR
saves her
husband after
cardiac arrest

— Pg. 4



CAPE FEAR VALLEY
HEALTH

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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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LETTER *from the* CEO

I hope everyone's 2024 is off to a great start! At Cape Fear Valley we're moving forward with multiple projects across the health system, but one of the projects I'm particularly excited about is the planned renovation and expansion of the operating room environment at Cape Fear Valley Medical Center.

Thanks to a \$14 million grant from the state, we will soon renovate the hospital's pre-surgery and post-surgery holding areas and add an additional operating room. These changes will tremendously benefit patients and also meet the increased needs of the growing orthopedic residency program, which we operate in partnership with Womack Army Medical Center.

We're very grateful the state's legislators have continued to show such strong support and commitment to all of the educational endeavors happening at Cape Fear Valley. They understand how important it is to increase the local pipeline for medical professionals who are educated and train here, and are then more likely to stay in the region, increasing access to care for all our communities.

We're constantly looking for ways to improve access to healthcare in our region. One of those happened in the

last few months, when we opened the new Valley Hospice House, which you can read about in this issue, the only facility of its kind in Cumberland County.

Because February is American Heart Month, I want to especially mention one of the ways we've improved heart care in our system with the WATCHMANTM Implant procedure. In September, our Cape Fear Valley Heart & Vascular team successfully completed their first four WATCHMAN Implant procedures, and we've done many more since. This small implant fits inside a patient's heart to help with atrial fibrillation that is not caused by a heart valve problem, and it is implanted during a minimally invasive operation that sees patients walking out the door the next day. With this device, patients who qualify can stop taking blood thinners.

Thank you for taking the time to read all the wonderful stories in this issue of Making Rounds. We're very excited to be able to reach out to the community with this publication and give everyone a small glimpse into all of the amazing work we're doing to improve patient outcomes in the community.

Mike Nagowski
CEO, CAPE FEAR VALLEY HEALTH

A photograph of a middle-aged couple walking outdoors in a park-like setting. The woman, on the left, has blonde hair and is wearing a light blue quilted jacket over a patterned scarf and blue jeans. The man, on the right, has a grey beard and is wearing a dark blue zip-up jacket, blue jeans, and a baseball cap. They are both smiling and holding hands. The background shows trees and a clear sky.

A love that saves

Wife's CPR saves her husband after cardiac arrest

By Jami McLaughlin

It happened without warning when Larry Pitts went into cardiac arrest last July.

An Army veteran who had kept active and in decent shape, Pitts, 63, had finished a little yard work with his wife Marilyn when he collapsed.

Luckily, Marilyn, a trained nurse, saved his life with her quick thinking and more than seven minutes of CPR. CPR, or cardiopulmonary resuscitation, is an emergency lifesaving procedure performed when the heart stops beating. It involves chest compressions and giving breaths during a cardiac event.

"I was just sitting there in the garage cooling off after mowing the front yard," Larry said.

Marilyn, who had been tending to their rose bushes, brought him a Gatorade and they talked a bit.

"The next thing I know is my eyes open and I'm in a hospital," he said. "For me, I had just put the lawn mower away, but here I was with a scar on my chest and bandages."

For Marilyn, also 63, it had been a completely different story.

"He got up from his chair to give me a hug and kiss, took two sips and went straight back," she said.

When he fell backward, his eyes were open, and he was stiff as a board.

"It happened so fast I couldn't catch him," she said, "He turned a dark bluish gray almost immediately and I knew he was not getting any air. There was no pulse, so I started CPR right away."

Her decades of medical training kicked in and she went to work.

"I've done CPR so many times that I didn't hesitate to do it. It was instinct," she said.

It was a weekday in the summer, so, despite her screaming for help, no one heard her.

"I thought a neighbor would hear me, but there was no one," Marilyn said. "I did a cycle or two and went to grab my phone. I was trained you get help when you can, so I just kept going, screaming the whole time to try to find help."

She said he tried breathing a few times on his own, but he was not consistent.

"He was not coming out of it," Marilyn said. "I didn't know if it was his heart or a stroke, I just knew he wasn't breathing and didn't have a pulse so kept doing CPR."

When the paramedics arrived, she had spent seven and a half minutes rotating chest compressions and giving breaths despite the heat and her asthma.

"It was the scariest thing I've ever had to do with my husband," she said.

The couple had known each other since they were in high school and living in the small town of Bradley, Ill., south of Chicago in the mid-1970s. After they graduated in 1978, he ended up joining the Army and seeing the world while she went to work in healthcare. And as luck would have it, the pair had a second chance for love at their 35-year high school reunion.

When Larry woke up a week after his coronary event, the first face he saw was Marilyn's.

"As I was coming out of it, I saw my wife and was just really confused to be in the hospital," he said.

When he found out that he had gone into cardiac arrest so suddenly, he was surprised.

"I had never had problems," he said. "I didn't have chest pain or shortness of breath. There was no warning."

She told him that he had a triple bypass and had been in the hospital for a week.

"He had a 95-percent blockage in his right coronary artery and had to have surgery," she said. "He was sedated so he couldn't move, and his heart could heal. His heart function improved from 20 to 50 to 60 percent just from the rest."

Local artist Toya Hall recently donated this heart painting and several other artworks to the health system.



He was stunned, but the next day, he was well enough to be sitting in a chair talking. She said the staff at Cape Fear Valley Heart & Vascular Center gave her complete confidence that would be the outcome.

"The whole team, every single person, from the liaison in the emergency department to the chaplain to the staff in the ICU, were stellar," she said. "Everyone knew exactly what they were doing. They never made me feel like there was no hope."

But it was Marilyn who had kept him alive until they could take over.

"She saved my life," he said. "I'm reset and back to normal because of my wife. If she hadn't done what she did, I could have lost functionality."

"People might be afraid to do CPR, but you could save someone. The key is to do it as soon as possible. If I had waited or if I had tried to drive him to the hospital, it might have been a different outcome. Jump in and start it."

– Marilyn Pitts

After six months and adhering to strict physical therapy exercises at home, Larry has fully recovered.

Now, the grateful couple enjoys taking walks through downtown Hope Mills and staying active together.

Marilyn hopes that others read their story and feel encouraged that they can help others if the situation ever arises.

To learn hands-only CPR, call Ben Beason at (910) 615-8294 or email bbeas@capefearvalley.com



In the driver's seat

Mara Conyers takes control of her health through bariatric surgery

By Jami McLaughlin

Seven years ago, Mara Conyers followed in her mother's footsteps and pursued a career in the trucking industry. Her mom has been a truck driver since 2005, and after graduating from Miller-Motte College at the age of 31, Conyers got her own truck and has been an owner-operator ever since.

But life on the road took a toll. Sitting for long periods of time and being addicted to food had her needing to make some serious life changes.

"I've been overweight my entire life and that was normal for me," Conyers said. "From the time I was ten, I've been the fat one in the family, and it was part of my identity."

Conyers said that part of growing up was involving food in everything she did. Eating, planning and cooking meals consumed Conyers' thoughts.

"For as long as I can remember, I have enjoyed eating. I'd be enjoying a meal and then sadness would come over me because the plate was now half empty," Conyers said.

She likens an addiction to food as being no different than alcoholism or substance abuse. And as much as she thought about food, she and her best friend would talk about gastric sleeves.

“We’d start and end every conversation talking about it. I still have screenshots in my phone from 2018 or 2019 when I first truly started considering it,” Conyers said.

A couple of years after becoming a truck driver, Conyers googled Fayetteville weight loss surgery, which led her to the Cape Fear Valley Bariatric program. She watched the informational video and immediately felt connected to Ijeoma Ejeh, MD, a board-certified general surgeon who has been performing weight loss surgeries at Cape Fear Valley since 2007.



“I was impressed with where she went to medical school and did her residency, but beyond that, I’d never seen a doctor who looked like me before. Then I’m listening to her, and she mentions her love for helping others gain a part of life that they’d either lost or never experienced because of their weight,” Conyers said. “That comment really resonated with me. That was exactly how I felt! I’ve been living with this lively, bubbly personality, but my weight and lack of energy kept me away from activities my heart desires to do.”

Five days later, she had an appointment for her first consultation at Cape Fear Valley General Surgery – Ferncreek. Upon meeting Dr. Ejeh, Conyers knew she was making the right move.

They decided on vertical sleeve gastrectomy (or VSG), which is a type of bariatric weight loss surgery with a minimally invasive procedure that reduces the size of your stomach to three or four ounces. This limits the amount of food you can eat to help you lose weight.



– Ijeoma Ejeh, MD

After her surgery was scheduled, Conyers started an all-liquid diet consisting of bone broth and protein shakes. Her support system came in the form of her mom.

“My mom did it with me,” Conyers said. “That first two weeks, we decided to join forces on her truck, so she was my accountability partner.”

“The process was exactly six months for me. I did experience discomfort after the surgery, but once I decided to get up and walk around, that subsided as well,” Conyers said.

For Conyers, her weight loss surgery was a game-changer for her entire life.

“My unhealthy habits were all that I knew. They ran deep!” Conyers said. “But I literally feel like I’m living a new life. God has granted me so much grace and I’m grateful for where I am.”

Conyers fully credits Dr. Ejeh and Cape Fear Valley for providing her with the perfect tool to aid in a healthier and more active lifestyle.

“Let’s be real. I miss everything about eating,” Conyers said. “I miss the burn of a nice cold soda pop. However, what keeps me from falling off the ledge is the joy of trying on new clothes and loving how I look in the mirror. That far exceeds those few minutes of food or drink on my taste buds.”

Before surgery, one of her lowest points was when she stood in line at an amusement park for three hours with her daughter and was turned away at the gate because she could not fit in the seat properly.

“But now, I’m looking forward to summer and riding all of the rides!” she said. “I’m going to zip line, indoor skydive and the list goes on. I feel good, and I’m just getting started!”

After three months, she has lost 50 pounds and is halfway to her goal weight of 195. She plans to stay active in the support groups and continue attending nutritionist appointments through Cape Fear Valley.

If you are interested in learning more about weight loss surgery, visit capefearvalley.com/bariatric.



HARNETT H
NEUROLO

Growing care

Zari Cain-Akbar, DO, is at home on the farm and in the clinic

By Kim Hasty

Zari Cain-Akbar, DO, seems to be a long, long way from home when you consider she was born and raised in the little Bayou town of Athens, Texas, near the Trinity River. She was born into a family that believed in hard work: “Salt-of-the-earth people,” she said.

But make no mistake, Harnett Health Neurology is home now, along with the rambling Agape Farm in nearby Wade that she and her husband, Oscar Martinez, bought last spring. Inspired by more than one epiphany and fueled by a heart for the weak and the weary, she’s a full-speed-ahead, North Carolina neurologist with beliefs and ideas that bring to mind an old familiar hymn.

“All things bright and beautiful. All creatures great and small. All things wise and wonderful. The Lord God made them all.”

Dr. Cain-Akbar has always been able to see the bright and beautiful in God’s creatures, a fact that led to an unlikely career path, along with three separate, exhausting moves between Texas and North Carolina. As a graduate of Campbell University’s School of Osteopathic Medicine and after having completed her residency at Dell Seton Medical Center at the University of Texas, Dr. Cain-Akbar helped start Harnett Health Neurology in August. Part of Cape Fear Valley Health, the clinic brings full-spectrum neurology care to Harnett County, including Cain-Akbar’s specialties of Alzheimer’s disease, nutrition, memory care, ALS, migraines and epilepsy. The bonds she forms with her patients are strong. Her office walls include drawings that patients have sent her.

“When I began taking care of patients with dementia, I thought, ‘These are my people,’” she said. “I’m incredibly passionate about patients with cognitive issues and dementia. I’ve never met a patient in my clinic I didn’t learn something from. I’m honored to work with them.”

She’s also an advocate for excellent medical care for those who live off the beaten path and for whom trips to larger cities would present a struggle.

“I appreciate that population,” she said. “I remember being a kid and needing medical care.”

Her path to Harnett County has been circuitous. She was 31 years old and “happy as a clam” as a nutritionist in Austin, Texas, when she felt pulled in a different direction.

She applied to Campbell’s medical school, some 1,300 miles away, with the idea of helping children.

“I did not want to go to medical school,” she said. “But when God calls you to something, he’ll qualify you.”

She first considered pediatrics, but an instructor noticed her affinity for neurology.

“He told me that he could tell I loved it,” she said. “He said, ‘You know this is what you’re going to do, don’t you?’”

Her path to Harnett County has been circuitous. She was 31 years old and “happy as a clam” as a nutritionist in Austin, Texas, when she felt pulled in a different direction.

Her neurology training while in medical school, including a rotation at Duke University, proved vital in 2019 when her husband suffered a life-threatening rupture of a brain aneurysm. Oscar Martinez’s recovery from the rupture and from a subsequent craniotomy was thanks in part to his wife’s familiarity with his symptoms and getting him immediate emergency care. Ruptured brain aneurysms can cause neurological deficits, but Martinez leads an active life and especially enjoys the daily chores a growing farm requires. They found the farm at the end of her second year of residency when Harnett Health contacted her about the position. The land, punctuated with a large pond, includes a white farmhouse with a black tin roof and an expansive porch.

“The owner told us she had been praying for someone who would buy it and keep it a farm,” Dr. Cain-Akbar said. “It’s gorgeous. I love it. My husband is happy as all get out. He never meets a stranger. He’s a reflection of Jesus and has a heart for veterans.”

Together they hope to one day emulate the therapeutic Simple Sparrow Care Farm where Dr. Cain-Akbar volunteered during her residency. The experience inspired her belief in the power of farm activities to help those with traumatic brain injuries, as well as those with Alzheimer’s and dementia. The farm also sponsored her medical mission trip to Kenya in early 2023.



HARNETT HEALTH **NEUROLOGY**

Harnett Health Neurology is located at 803 Tilghman Drive, Suite 500, Dunn, NC.

Scan the QR code to learn more about Harnett Health Neurology.



Simple Sparrow, located in Hutto, Texas, was founded on the belief that when people are taught to care for land, gardens and animals, they are empowered to better care for themselves and others.

“Potato farms grow potatoes; care farms grow care,” reads the mantra of founder Jamie Tanner.

Though her Texas upbringing will always serve as a foundation, Dr. Cain-Akbar believes she is following a higher calling in establishing strong roots in Harnett County.

She recalls a time during her residency in Texas when she noticed a patient’s weathered hands and the overalls he was wearing. Striking up a conversation, she learned he was a native of the Harnett County town of Angier, just a 15-minute drive from Campbell University’s campus in Buies Creek. He and his wife both needed neurology care but would have had to travel to Raleigh to find such a specialist. Because a family member lived in Austin, seeing a neurologist there made about as much sense.

Dr. Cain-Akbar shook her head. There she was, so far from her medical school alma mater, treating a patient who had come all that way for care.

And now, as their resident neurologist, she’s here to assure Harnett County that good care feels just like home, sweet home.

Care for the elderly

Bladen County Emergency Department receives Geriatric Emergency Department Certification

By Michael Futch

Since 1952, Bladen County Hospital has operated as a good Samaritan, assisting the people of the community and surrounding area with a personal touch and dedication that's not as easy to find in big city medical centers.

And now, Bladen County Hospital is enhancing its service to older patients. Last year, the hospital's Emergency Department earned certification as a Geriatric Emergency Department.

Susan Phelps, Chief Nursing Officer at Bladen County Hospital, prepared the application for the Geriatric Emergency Department designation. She called it part of a program that supports emergency medicine and standardizes the way hospitals do things.

"It's the same kind of standardization or best practices associated with caring for the geriatric population," Phelps said.

Phelps, who has been with Cape Fear Valley for 12 years, was working as the Corporate Service Line Director over the Emergency Department at Cape Fear Valley Medical Center in Fayetteville when she first applied for the accreditation for that Emergency Department.

"So, I was familiar with the process," Phelps said. "When I came here to Bladen as the Chief Nursing Officer, I moved forward with the process to do that same accreditation here in our Emergency Department. Then we received the letter that we had received that certification on a bronze level at Bladen."

There are three levels of accreditation – bronze, silver and gold. The entry level is the bronze, which means the emergency department is "meeting the guidelines set forth by the American College of Emergency Physicians that you've done these things in relation to taking care of geriatric patients," she said.

For Bladen County Hospital, this accreditation means "that we have the things we need, the expertise and equipment to provide geriatric patients with optimum care," Phelps said.

The geriatric accreditation, Phelps said, is a big deal for any emergency department "to commit to this level of patient care."

New aquarium is virtually peaceful

To further improve the Bladen County Hospital Emergency Department experience, the hospital installed a new 65-inch virtual aquarium screen on a wall in the waiting room of the Emergency Department, designed to ease the stress and fears that can come with a visit to the hospital.

Bladen County Hospital Foundation funded the virtual aquarium for the Bladen hospital.

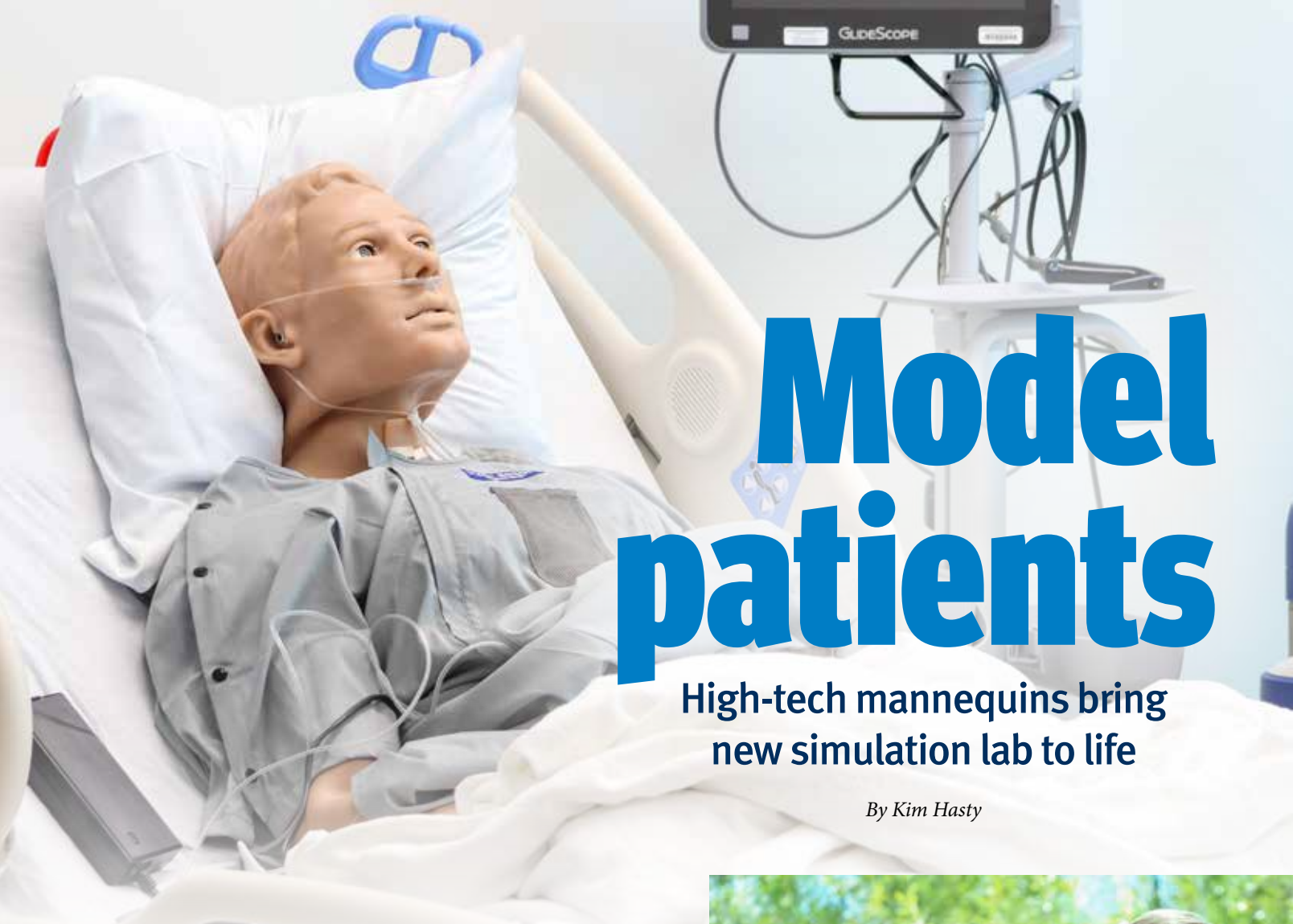
It brings the beauty of lush freshwater aquariums and its computer-generated virtual inhabitants to, well ... synthetic life.

Development Officer Kristen Carpenter works with Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation and the Bladen County Hospital Foundation.

"It's like a TV, but it's a virtual aquarium," Carpenter said. "So, you'll see fish and different marine animals swimming along on the screen. It helps create a serene and peaceful environment in the waiting room. There's also some calming music playing over the speakers. We understand that patients and families may be anxious and stressed when arriving to the ED and our hope is that the virtual aquarium will create a calmer environment."

Scan the QR code to help support more great projects like this in Bladen County.





Model patients

High-tech mannequins bring new simulation lab to life


By Kim Hasty

From the pristine hallways and glossy new elevators to the hope for the future represented here, everything shines inside Cape Fear Valley Health's Center for Medical Education and Neuroscience Institute. In fact, it's a bit difficult to settle on what exactly is most impressive inside this five-story, much-anticipated and vital addition to the community that opened in January 2023.

On the first floor, a 500-seat auditorium is large enough to accommodate a full contingent of residents, medical students and faculty members. Cape Fear Valley Health's Neuroscience Institute, on the fifth floor, is designed to attract top-notch neurologists and neurosurgeons from around the country and provide important training for residents.

However, the state-of-the-art simulation lab on the third floor definitely makes a case for itself.

"We have a level of technology very few places have," Mark Rose said.



"The ultimate goal is to improve patient care. Everything we do is with the patient in mind."

– Mark Rose
Manager of Simulation Operations

Rose, a former paramedic, is the center's Manager of Simulation Operations, and it's apparent he relishes his work. A quick tour with him will leave you blinking your eyes, stepping in for a closer look and finding it difficult to believe the realistic patients being treated inside this bustling lab are actually mannequins. These extraordinarily sophisticated and human-like models are connected to a cutting-edge technology system that allows residents, surgeons, nurses, paramedics and other medical staff members to gain invaluable, realistic training. The center

features a fully simulated emergency room, operating room and labor and delivery room, allowing doctors to train in a way that simulates the real-life situations they face.

In the simulated emergency room, for instance, a team of respiratory therapists recently was busy practicing ventilator therapy on the most realistic of artificial patients. From a computer inside an adjacent control room, the therapists' work could be monitored by an instructor.

"We're the only one in the state to have that mannequin," Rose said. "You can talk to him and ask him to raise his right arm, and he'll do it. His breath sounds and heart tones are realistic. He'll sit up and talk to you; his eyes will follow you around the room. With him, we can use any piece of equipment in the hospital."



"The longer the case goes the more in-depth it gets," Rose said. "You actually have to use all the real tools; when you're doing something, you actually do it. It's not like you're just saying what you're doing. For instance, if you want to use a certain suction instrument to remove a clot, you have to actually have to select and use all the real equipment."

"This technology allows residents to develop that muscle memory, so that it's there when they perform the actual procedures," he said. "You can never replace a real person, but this is as close as you can get."

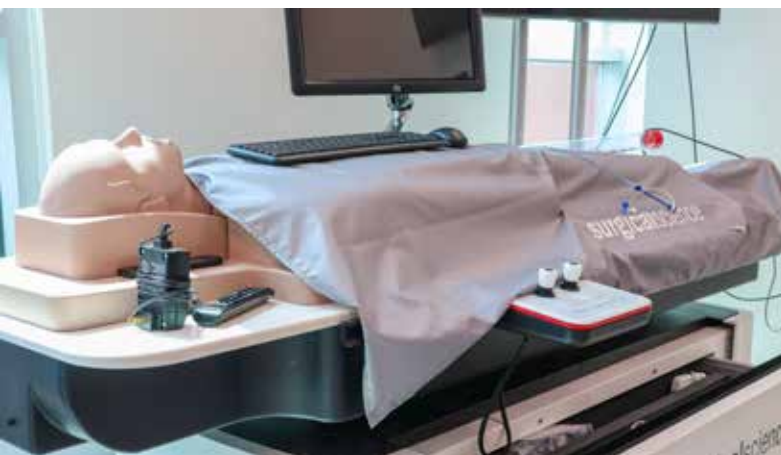
The simulation lab is a valuable tool for recruiting new physicians, as well as residents. Rose said one neurovascular surgeon being recruited was so impressed by the cardiac catheterization lab, that he lingered after the tour was complete to check it out further.

The 5,000 square feet of well-used space in the simulation lab includes its own three-dimensional print lab, in which anatomical replicas can be printed to scale ahead of complicated surgeries. It also includes an ultrasound technology room that guides users through a multitude of procedures, including those used in all three trimesters of pregnancy.

"The residents are in there almost every day," Rose said.

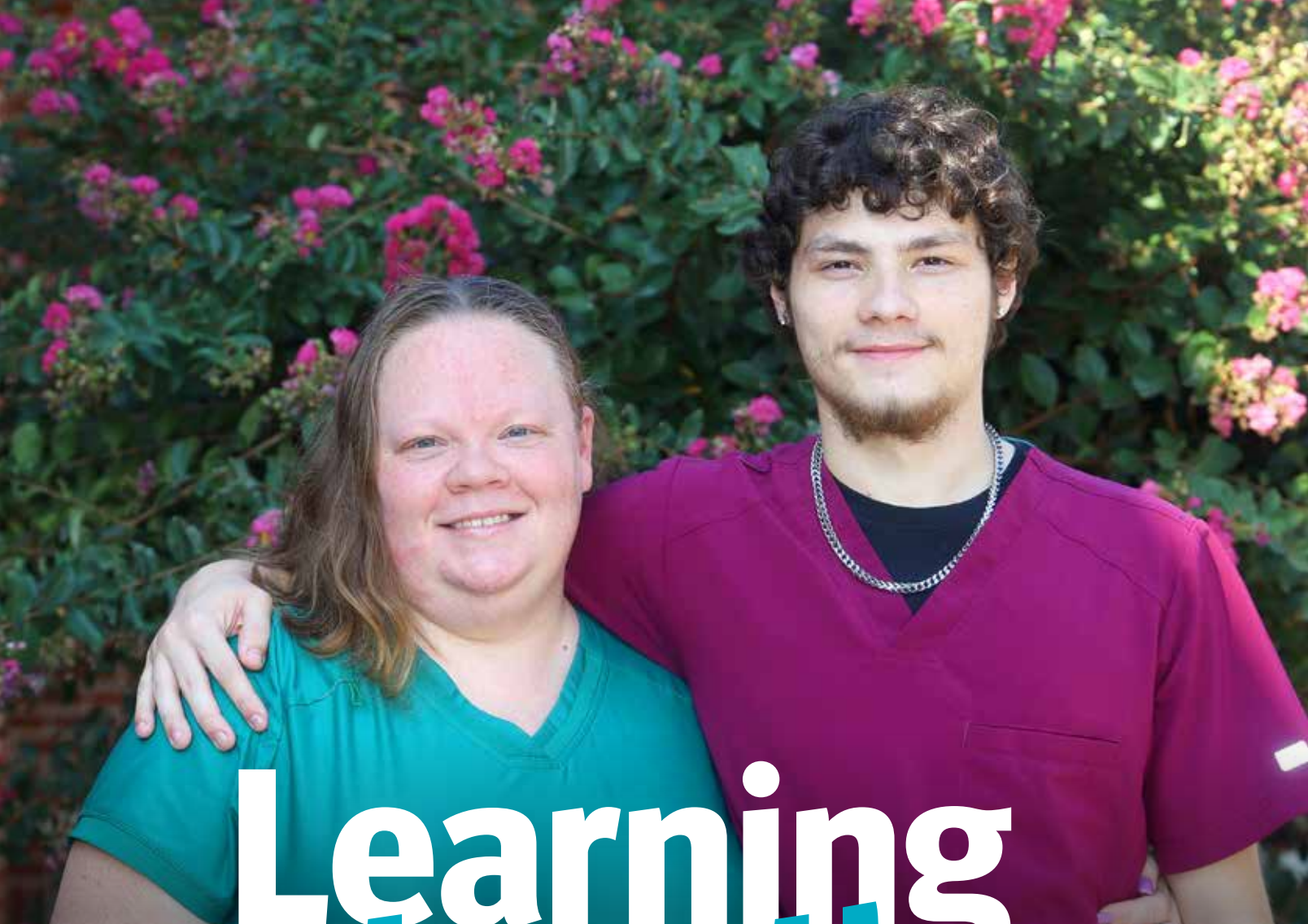
The simulation lab is designed to look like an actual medical center, beginning when you walk in the door to the waiting room, which doubles as a secondary debriefing room. Just outside the waiting room are scrub sinks, used just like those outside actual operating rooms.

"The ultimate goal is to improve patient care," Rose said. "Everything we do is with the patient in mind."



The cardiac catheterization lab simulates the minimally invasive tests and advanced cardiac procedures doctors perform to diagnose and treat cardiovascular disease.

"This technology is probably the most amazing on the market," Rose said. He points to a computer screen that displays an actual human case that translates to the work performed on the mannequin, including X-rays taken and medication given. A computer printout following the procedure gives a full summary of everything done.



Learning together

Mother and son follow nursing career dreams

By Roxana Ross

Last spring, Cape Fear Valley's internal programs for training nursing assistants experienced a first when it graduated two family members together: Delia Kempton and her son, Dathan Kempton.

"It was interesting," said Ruhama Bond, Education Coordinator and Director of the Nursing Assistant I (NAI) and Nursing Assistant II (NAII) programs. "They have two different personalities, even though they were mother and son."

Cape Fear Valley offers two levels of Nursing Assistant educational programs to help employees who wish to improve their skills and accreditations. The free 15-week programs are popular and in high demand. Cape Fear Valley Medical Center is one of only two hospital-based locations in the state with state approval for a certified NAI program. By advancing their certifications and training, nursing assistants can perform more skills, prepare for a full nursing degree and earn a higher salary. Not all of the class participants are nursing assistants or plan to be nurses, however.

“We would love for all of them to go on to be nurses, but they might go into respiratory, EMT, surgical technician or radiology technician,” Bond said. “But they’ll go on having these basic skills, and likely stay with the system.”

While the health system has had the NA II program approved by the North Carolina Board of Nursing for eight years, the NAI program was approved by the NC Department of Health and Human Services in April 2022.

“I don’t know of any other hospital that does an NAI program,” Bond said. “We credential the NAIs. The employees who come through the NAI program are the best of the best. When Cape Fear Valley started the NAI program, the goal was that the nursing assistants would be able to perform their complete scope of practice as allowed by the North Carolina Board of Nursing. In many facilities, they’re not allowed to perform the full scope.”

Now a Nursing Assistant II, Delia works with brain injury patients in Cape Fear Valley Rehabilitation Center, where she came after joining Cape Fear Valley two years ago. Before deciding to advance her certifications, she was a certified nursing assistant (CNA) for about 20 years.

“I’ve been working on and off for 20 years,” Delia said. “I never pushed for my education. After moving up here to Cape Fear Valley, where they offered it for free, that changed things. None of my previous employers offered free schooling at all.”

While she might not have pushed herself, she strongly encouraged her children to pursue more in their careers. Her oldest son, Devon, previously went through the health system’s free EMT training program. But Dathan, who has been a pharmacy technician at Cape Fear Valley for two years now, was the first to sign up for the free nursing assistant training at Cape Fear Valley. His choice to move forward helped his mother make up her mind about taking her first steps toward continuing her education.

“It was a good experience for me,” Delia said. “Test anxiety always made me think I wouldn’t be able to go through a nursing program, but Ruhama showed me I could take a deep breath and remember what I was taught.”

Though Delia hasn’t signed up for nursing school yet, Dathan didn’t wait for his NA I graduation before starting school for nursing. He began taking some prerequisite courses at Fayetteville Technical Community College at the same time he was taking his NA I class at Cape Fear Valley. He’s also planning to get his NA II certification before he finishes his nursing classes.

“I’ve been working on and off for 20 years, and I never pushed for my education. After moving up here to Cape Fear Valley, where they offered it for free, that changed things. None of my previous employers offered free schooling at all.”

– Delia Kempton

“I think a lot of it had to do with wanting me to progress at a younger age,” Dathan said. “It’s a good way to pursue what I want to do, and everybody’s been helping me out to get through school. Ruhama is the best; she always knows the next steps and she’s always there to help and guide.”

As well as taking advantage of free educational opportunities at Cape Fear Valley, Delia has also pointed several of her coworkers to the NA II program.

“I encourage all the CNAs that come through our floor to come to this class,” Delia said. “Ruhama is a great resource to further your education. She will point you in the right direction.”

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Smart choices

Harnett orthopedic team brings new options to patients

By Jami McLaughlin

Hip and knee replacement surgeries just became more precise with the help of a smart robotics machine that assists surgeon Anthony Parker, DO, at Harnett Health Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine.

“The key word is precision. It’s a game-changer for our community,” Dr. Parker said.

Dr. Parker is pioneering Stryker’s Mako SmartRobotics machine for total knee, partial knee and total hip replacements at Betsy Johnson Hospital.

He is one of two physicians at Harnett Health Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine in Dunn, which opened in September 2023.

– Anthony Parker, DO



HARNETT HEALTH ORTHOPAEDICS & SPORTS MEDICINE

Harnett Health Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine
has two locations in Lillington and Dunn.
To learn more, visit myharnetthealth.org/ortho.

Practice manager Colby Warren said that this technology is unique to the region.

“When Dr. Parker talks about it, his patients respond and their eyes light up. We are also finding that clients are specifically looking for this service,” Warren said.

Dr. Parker said the new technology eliminates the guesswork that comes with traditional surgery techniques and allows the patient to preserve their soft tissue and bone.

“It’s cutting-edge technology,” Dr. Parker said. “In traditional surgery, you could be off by a few millimeters, but this eliminates even that small of an error. This robot-assisted surgery makes it very precise, reducing a margin to one degree or a half of a millimeter.”

With the SmartRobotics technology, the doctor can take a CT scan of either the knee or hip, which creates a 3D model of the bone.

“We can use that model before we even begin the surgery to map out a plan and check for alignment and tension of the knee or hip. The robot gives very objective data. Then as I hold the robot, it is working with the exact plan we’ve created,” said Dr. Parker.

After the procedure, the doctor can also check the work through the robot and get confirmation that with a hip replacement, the leg length is the same, or with a knee replacement the range of motion and alignment is correct.

“This helps make for a more precise final outcome. We are doing what we set out to achieve beforehand. It also helps for a faster recovery,” said Dr. Parker.

Another feature Dr. Parker is offering is knee revisions, which is unique to the area in their practice.

“If a patient had a knee replacement 15 years ago, but needs an adjustment or is experiencing pain, Dr. Parker can add to the replacement. Not every doctor will do those surgeries,” said Warren.

Non-surgical services

Warren said Benjamin Petty, MD, the other physician in the practice, also offers exclusive services to the area and in orthopedics in general.

“Dr. Petty offers nonsurgical alternatives for candidates who might not be ready for surgery,” Warren said. “For instance, if a patient has a high body mass index (BMI), it can cause

too much risk in several ways. He can go in and perform a genicular nerve ablation, which essentially burns nerves in the knee, and give a patient six to eight months of relief while they are working toward their goal of weight loss.”

He continued that the nonsurgical procedure can also help a patient who needs a bilateral knee replacement, allowing them to rest until the next one is needed or with a patient who is busy with life and doesn’t have the time for recovery.



Benjamin Petty, MD

A North Carolina native, Dr. Petty’s background as a student-athlete playing basketball for North Carolina State University and running track in high school helped prepare him to become a doctor specializing in sports medicine.

“My love for sports was amplified by being a high-level athlete. Now I’m helping others get back to the game of life,” said Dr. Petty.

Warren said the best part about the practice is the synergy that has aligned with the hiring of Dr. Parker and Dr. Petty.

“Every doctor complements each other as a group, which makes it fantastic for patient care. We are expanding orthopedic services and treating patients on a much larger scale. I think we are all excited to see how it increases in the next 5 to 10 years,” said Warren.

One of the greatest benefits that Dr. Parker sees is that patients do not have to travel to get state-of-the-art services.

“This technology is outstanding for patient care and it’s great for our community,” said Dr. Parker.

Dr. Parker said the number of patients looking for robotic-assisted joint replacement surgery is growing.

“They are looking for it and finding it here,” Dr. Parker said.



Taking his time

**Dr. Bridgers’
new location has
plenty of room for
longtime patients**

By Kim Hasty

All those years ago, Herman Lewis could see potential abounding in one studious Bladen County seventh grader.

“With some students, you just know,” Lewis said. “Something about his demeanor or personality told me he was going on to be something special.”

By the same token, Stephen Bridgers remembers that being in Herman Lewis’ classroom meant being under the tutelage of a steadfastly fair-minded instructor.

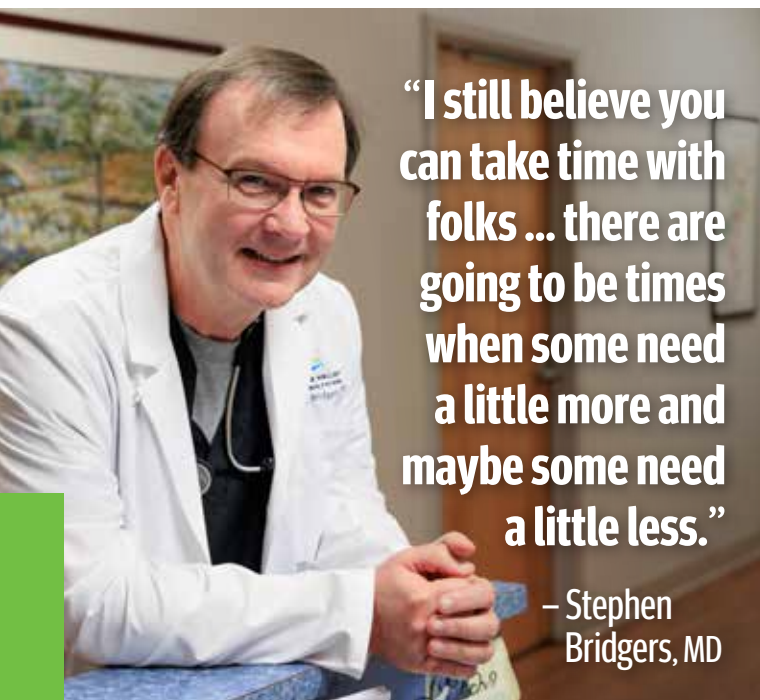
“He was always a nice guy,” Bridgers remembers. “As long as you did the right thing, you would get along fine in his class.”

Theirs was a memorable teacher-student relationship. Decades later, their doctor-patient relationship is just as strong.

That long-ago seventh grader is now known as Stephen Bridgers, MD. Bridgers left his hometown of Clarkton to study at East Carolina University’s Brody School of

Medicine, graduating in 1985, then completing his residency at East Carolina University/Pitt County Memorial Hospital in 1988. He would eventually return home to practice family medicine, where Lewis equates him to a throwback in terms of caregiving.

“You know those old movies where the family doctor would take his horse and buggy and visit people at home?” Lewis said. “That’s what Dr. Bridgers reminds me of. With him, it’s not just quick in and quick out. He takes time to listen. He’s so personable.”



That’s the way Bridgers remembers his own family’s doctor, Julian Keith. He recalls getting shots of penicillin around Dr. Keith’s family table and fighting back tears during one particularly painful inoculation. Apparently, that hurt the good doctor even more than it hurt the youngster.

“Dr. Keith told my parents to get me out of there before I broke his heart,” Bridgers said.

Lewis, who retired as a principal after going back to school to earn a master’s in administration, is an active 81-year-old. He serves on the Elizabethtown Town Council, plays piano for Mount Sinai AME Zion Church, and does all the maintenance work for the pristine home he and his wife Charity own.

He attributes his good health in large part to his former student.



From left to right: Blake Shaw, FNP-BC, Trelena Brown, PA-C, Stephen Bridgers, MD and Allison Priest, FNP

“I tell him, ‘Don’t you retire until I’m gone,’” Lewis said with a chuckle. “And I’m not planning on going anywhere yet.”

When Lewis first heard that Bridgers would be joining forces with Cape Fear Valley Health, he was concerned. After all, the days have passed when Lewis could have marched Bridgers to the principal’s office.

“When I found out they were going to move him, I thought, ‘Oh no, what am I going to do?’” Lewis said. “I went to check and found out otherwise.”

While Bridgers is officially a Cape Fear Valley Health provider, he’s still based in Clarkton at Bladen Medical Associates – Clarkton, an expanded practice that includes 12 examination rooms. And he’s still just a phone call away for Lewis and other patients.

“It’s been a really good thing,” Bridgers said. “When all this transpired, I told my wife I feel like I could kick myself for not doing this earlier.”

Bridgers and his wife Elizabeth, who is headmaster at Elizabethtown Christian Academy, raised their family in Clarkton and have established strong Bladen County roots. Dr. Bridgers’ faith and his devotion to his patients are the foundation of those roots.

“I still believe you can take time with folks,” he said. “I get it that there are schedules to keep and bills to be paid, so you shoot for a goal. But there are going to be times when some need a little more and maybe some need a little less. You pray that it all balances out. And when it doesn’t, that’s when you turn it over to the guy upstairs.”

► To schedule an appointment at
Bladen Medical Associates – Clarkton,
please call (910) 862-1217.

Celebrating Life

Valley Hospice House leader challenges stigma around dying

By Roxana Ross

When Mayra Draughn was a new nurse, she witnessed a moment that has stuck with her throughout her career: the pain a patient's death caused their loved one.

"I remember there was this sweet elderly man and his wife who came to us when she was very sick and actively passing," Draughn said. "He was not ready to let her go. I still remember his scream in agony as she took her last breath. At the time, no one from the palliative team or Hospice had seen him to talk to him about the expected course of his wife's illness. When families of terminally ill patients have an opportunity to speak at length with medical staff about their fears, concerns and questions, they may be better able to cope with their loved one's death. I really took that to heart."

As the new Patient Care Manager of Valley Hospice House, Draughn has more than 20 years of healthcare experience since that day. She's worn many different hats in multiple areas, from orthopedics to renal, claims to palliative care. One thing that hasn't changed is her belief that a loved one's death can be easier if it is talked about and prepared for when the time comes.



“There’s such a stigma about dying,” she said. “But it’s part of our journey. It might not be the beginning, but it’s the last stage. People see birth as a celebration, but passing should be a celebration, too; it’s just the end, and that’s okay. Sometimes death is definitely sad; you might not see your mom or your dad tomorrow. But the memories are there, and completing the journey is a celebration.”

Because Fayetteville has been without a Hospice House for a decade, Draughn has a lot of work to do to reintroduce the concept to the community. Valley Hospice House is designed to be as home-like as possible, with rooms for families to gather to eat, sleep and be close to their loved ones in their final days. There are no loud code calls and intercom noises, and the atmosphere is calm. Specially trained staff don’t just look after the patients, they consider the physical, emotional, spiritual and social needs of the patients and their loved ones.

“Nobody wants to die in a hospital when you cannot have peace and feel calm,” she said. “Home hospice agencies can help patients who want to pass at home, but maybe patients don’t have the support system, or maybe their families have to continue to work, and there’s no one to take care of them. It’s a big deal. They need somewhere quiet and peaceful where they can be comfortable.”

Educating the community about the benefits of a hospice experience, and a hospice house, is a challenge Draughn is looking forward to.

“As a Hispanic female, I have witnessed race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status as the leading differentiating factors fueling disparities in palliative and hospice utilization,” she said. “My goal is to strategize with leaders in the community to improve access to end-of-life care among historically underserved populations, seeking to bridge racial divides to hospice and palliative care. Addressing demographic disparities in hospice utilization can ensure more patients receive quality care at the end-of-life. My biggest goal is to build that trust in the community.”

The eight-bed Valley Hospice House will serve a portion of that need in the community, for patients who are under hospice care but cannot stay at home. Draughn says it’s a form of charity for the community, as well as a chance for others to give back. She also expects Valley Hospice House to have patients from all over the region, not just Fayetteville.

“We’re going to touch a lot of people. We’re here for everyone,” she said. “Hospice homes don’t make money,



but it’s a way for us to be there for the community. I’m humbled to be a part of this rewarding work, to do this for the community. My goal is to continue to grow, with the community’s support, and with the Foundation’s support. We welcome volunteers who want to help.”

Before coming to Fayetteville last year to take the lead at Valley Hospice House, Draughn was living in Winston-Salem. As well as offering her a chance to follow her heart to serve patients as they complete their journey, it also allowed her to follow her heart and join her husband. As a sergeant first class with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Liberty, he was splitting his time between Fayetteville and Winston-Salem, but now the entire family can stay together.

A big beach fan, it didn’t hurt that the move cut her drive to the ocean by more than half. She said she’s also enjoying Fayetteville’s diverse culture and food.

“We’re all different, and we all have different beliefs, and that’s also why the hospice house is important here,” she said. “We have a great team that will be respectful of whatever you believe, and we’ll have resources for all families.”

To learn more about how to volunteer at Valley Hospice House, visit capefearvalley.com/volunteers.

To support patient initiatives, such as Valley Hospice House, contact Brittany Dickerhoff at bdick@capefearvalley.com or (910) 615-1358.



State grants \$14 million for new operating room

By Roxana Ross

Cape Fear Valley Medical Center was grateful to receive \$14 million in state funding this budget cycle for renovations and expansion of the hospital's operating room environment. Specifically, the funding will be used to renovate the hospital's pre-surgery and post-surgery holding areas, and add an additional operating room and procedure room in support of the Womack/Cape Fear Valley Orthopedic Residency program.

The changes will allow for more privacy for patients in pre-surgery and for more room for the health system's growing orthopedic residency program, which it operates in partnership with Womack Army Medical Center. Currently, Cape Fear Valley Medical Center has 15 operating rooms.

"We're very thankful to all the members of our state legislature for providing these funds and for their commitment to supporting Cape Fear Valley's residency programs," said CEO Michael Nagowski. "We're helping to train physicians to augment healthcare access in North Carolina. Through our collaboration with the military, our

orthopedic residency will be able to provide essential skills in a new, educational operating theater."

The new operating room will be used by more than just the orthopedic residency program and will improve flow for both general surgery and trauma surgery patients. It will also help attract highly sought after staff for the orthopedic residency program. The Womack/Cape Fear Valley Orthopedic Residency program was accredited in 2022 for up to 20 physicians and will graduate its first class of residents in 2027.



"The expansion and improvement of the operating rooms are vital for us to attract more orthopedic surgeons," said Ben Levine, MD, Associate Program Director of the Orthopedics Residency program and one of the surgeons on staff at Valley Orthopedics and Sports Medicine. "Bringing in orthopedic surgeons with subspecialty training and an interest in educating the residents improves the quality of both the residents' teaching experience and the care of the patients we treat."

Melissa Dew-King, Vice President of Surgical Services for the health system, said she is thankful for patients' and the community's trust in Cape Fear Valley Health for surgical care and knows that the operating room project will improve patient satisfaction.

"This project allows us to create additional capacity, which means more access to surgical care and more timely options for our patients," she said. "Our goal is to always keep our patients and their loved ones close to home while receiving the highest quality care."



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CAPE FEAR VALLEY HEALTH
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Starting a conversation



‘Because one donor can save many lives’

By Michael Futch

According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), people of color are more likely to be in need of a lifesaving organ transplant. African American patients in need of an organ transplant are also likely to wait longer than non-African American transplant candidates for kidney, heart and lung transplants. This burden is increased when African American patients are at higher risk of diabetes and high blood pressure, which puts patients at risk for organ failures. These healthcare disparities reinforce the need for discussions in communities of color about organ donation.

March is National Kidney Month, and kidney disease often has no symptoms in its early stages. NIDDK estimates that as many as 90 percent of Americans who have chronic kidney disease don't know they have the disease until it's very advanced. In its end stage, patients require dialysis or a kidney transplant.

“Many minorities need organs,” said Courtney Turnbull, the Chair of the Organ Donation Committee at Cape Fear Valley Health. “But they may not be the number one donors. It's really about sharing the information, addressing some of the undercurrent, addressing the misconceptions. Addressing maybe some of the myths. Addressing rumors. It's going to take a different level of understanding, but it's also going to take a level of transparency.”

This is the start of a needed conversation needed, Turnbull says. That's the purpose. Because one donor can save many

lives. There are so many organs that can be transplanted – it can be tissue, kidneys, hearts, lungs, livers, corneas.

And that's a short list.

“All of the organs, no matter how big or small, are important,” Turnbull said.


More than 60 percent of the people waiting for a new organ are people of color, according to online accounts. Nearly 20,000 people of color received organ donations in 2021, but only about one-third of those organs came from other people of color.

It may come as a surprise, but one donor can heal over 75 people with just their tissue.

More widespread diversity in the donor pool is known to help everyone.

While race is never a consideration when matching donor organs and tissues for transplantation, according to organ donation organization LifeSource, compatible blood types and tissue markers — critical qualities for donor and recipient matching — are more likely to be found among members of the same ethnicity. Meanwhile, an estimated 17 residents of the United States die every day while waiting for an organ transplant.

Organ transplantation has become an established worldwide practice that is viewed as one of the greatest medical advances of the 20th century, says organdonor.gov, an official



“Death can be a devastating event, but in organ donation, there is a legacy that occurs with that person’s selfless gift.”

– Courtney Turnbull
Organ Donation Committee Chair

federal government website of the Health Resources and Services Administration’s Division of Transplantation. It’s a good place to start for information regarding organ, eye and tissue donation.

The role of Turnbull’s Organ Donation Committee is to champion deceased donation processes and practice within hospital trusts and health boards. At the same time, the committee talks about how to get the word out about organ donation and how it helps families and patients.

Kidneys, hearts and other big organs are what most people think about when they discuss organ donation, but organ and tissue donation encompass much more. Abriel Brown is a Professional Development Specialist for Miracles in Sight Eye Bank. Formerly the Eye Bank of North Carolina, Miracles in Sight has been around since 1951.

“Of course, it’s the gift of sight,” Brown said of those who donate corneal tissue for a cornea transplant. “We also partner with Industries for the Blind.”

A cornea transplant is surgery to replace part of the cornea with corneal tissue from a donor. That operation is often called keratoplasty. The cornea is the transparent, dome-shaped surface of the eye where light enters.

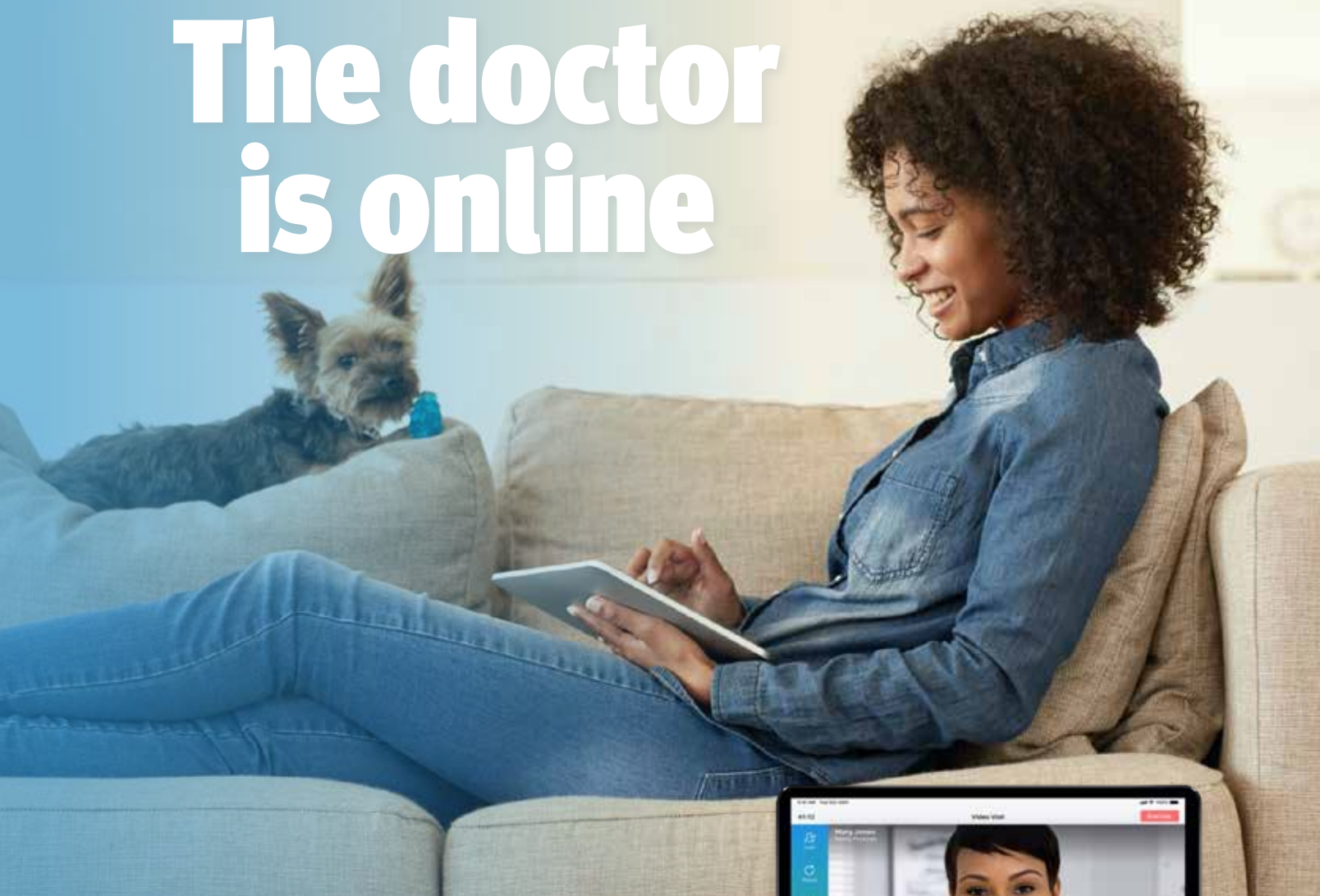
“People throughout the United States and the world that have corneal defects can actually have their sight restored through a corneal transplant,” Brown said.

Organ donation, in general, is a legacy.

“You know, death can be a devastating event, but in organ donation, there is a legacy that occurs with that person’s selfless gift,” Turnbull said. “It’s important. While understanding it’s important, it’s also very personal.”

To add your name to the list of needed donors, register at your local Department of Motor Vehicles when you apply for your driver’s license, or visit organdonor.gov or registerme.org.

The doctor is online



Virtual visits save time and reduce stress for patients

By Michael Futch



The COVID-19 pandemic significantly changed how we interact with each other the last few years.

Many restaurants have never returned to the pre-coronavirus days of leisurely dining indoors and continue to serve customers via walk-up or drive-through windows. Some schools still allow students to receive their education online rather than in the traditional classroom setting.

And more and more clinics and practices in the medical field are giving patients a choice of telehealth, or virtual visits, over in-person appointments. Healthcare may never be viewed the same way again.

Cecilia Ainolhayat, MD, is one of the providers offering telehealth appointments at Cape Fear Valley Primary Care – Fayetteville Family.

“I think the need is there. I just think it needs to be discovered,” she said of virtual visits. “I think it’s the way to go, honestly. Business wise, it’s a big niche. As a patient, I think it’s great and offers easier access. It’s another door to get to your doctor. Fast. Convenient.”

With virtual visits, patients are able to skip the waiting room and visit with their doctors from the comfort of their own homes or, in some cases, their work or vehicles. That’s because they are engaging with their physician online. These appointments can work out just fine for sick visits, prescription refills, medication checks, disease management and other needs.

“It opened the door to another way of medicine,” she said.

Dr. Ainolhayat has been practicing medicine for roughly 35 years. For her, she says, this all started during the first wave of COVID-19. People were hunkered down in their homes, afraid to go out and be around other people because of the virus.

Some doctors with Cape Fear Valley Health officially started scheduling telehealth appointments with a new platform last summer. So far, Fayetteville Family, Hoke Family Medical Center and Westside Medical Care offer the telehealth visits to patients on a routine basis.

“Not everything can be done with telehealth, but overall, it has worked out pretty good,” said Dr. Ainolhayat.

Telehealth can be very useful to the right patient with the right problem.

“They are visiting with their physician from home,” Dr. Ainolhayat said. “They don’t have to leave, they don’t have to drive, and they save on gas. During flu season and during the periods of time when COVID-19 and the offspring variants of SARS-CoV-2 are on the upswing, masked patients don’t have to sit in fear in a waiting room of sick people.

Dr. Ainolhayat said for many people, not having to be in close proximity with other patients who are feeling under the weather is a big deal.

Greg Dudak, a 48-year-old Mercedes Benz dealer who lives in Fayetteville, is on board with telemedicine visits. He has been checking in with Dr. Ainolhayat in this manner for roughly a year.

“I think it’s incredibly efficient,” he said. “Especially visits with ‘Dr. A.’ When I’m in need of help quick and I can do these telemedicine appointments from the (car) dealership. Dr. A. knows me and my history, so it’s not like I’m talking to a doctor I don’t know, which can be the issue with other telehealth providers,” said Dudak. “She

knows me well enough to know if I need to go in and see her in person following the virtual visit or not. She’s able to determine if she needs to run additional tests.”

Otherwise, Dr. Ainolhayat or her staff simply sends him an online computer link, and he logs in from his laptop or desk computer.

“Face to face,” he said. “Super easy.”

When it comes to telehealth visits with patients, Dr. Ainolhayat said, a doctor must be on time, which could be another bonus for patients.

“You cannot be running behind. The other person is waiting for the connection,” she said. “You have to stop everything and do the connection and do the telehealth.”

“As a patient, I think it’s great and offers easier access. It’s another door to get to your doctor. Fast. Convenient.”

– Cecilia Ainolhayat, MD



Currently, she said, she works seeing patients in the office Monday through Wednesday. She conducts telemedicine visits on Thursday. But when the demand is great enough, her goal is to go the telemedicine appointment route on Wednesday and Thursday.

“I can solve a lot of medical problems, order X-rays and lab tests,” said Dr. Ainolhayat.

“Even if you think you have COVID, you can go to the office and get tested. In the afternoon, I can give you results through an online telehealth visit.”

Telehealth visits can be as simple as making the appointment, clicking the link, seeing your doctor and getting help quickly. There’s no need to spend large chunks of time traveling to and from appointments.

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CAPE FEAR VALLEY HEALTH : *NEWS briefs*

Cape Fear Valley Mobile Integrated Healthcare wins awards

Cape Fear Valley Mobile Integrated Healthcare won multiple awards last year at the Association of Air Medical Services national conference. The competition included paramedics and nurses from all over the United States and Canada. In the Sim Cup event, First Place was awarded to Lead Critical Care Paramedic John “Cody” Chavis, FP-C and Critical Care Paramedic Alex Watson, FP-C. In the Clinical Skill Challenge, First Place went to Critical Care Transport Supervisor Erin Wydner, CFRN and Lead Transport Nurse Paul Grimsley, CFRN; Second Place also went to Chavis and Watson.

Celebrate your physician on National Doctors’ Day

On Saturday March 30, Cape Fear Valley Health will observe National Doctors’ Day. National Doctors’ Day is an incredible opportunity to show your appreciation for your physician(s) and the compassionate care they provide. Send your message along with your thoughtful gift to Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation today. Your message will be shared with your doctor(s). Your gift amount will remain confidential. You can also make an online contribution at cfvfoundation.org/dr-day.



NATIONAL ACCREDITATION PROGRAM
FOR BREAST CENTERS
ACCREDITED BREAST CENTER

A QUALITY PROGRAM
of the AMERICAN COLLEGE
OF SURGEONS

Cape Fear Valley Health receives Breast Care Center Accreditation

The Breast Care Center at Cape Fear Valley Health was recently re-accredited by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) through the American College of Surgeons.

“In our survey, we were compliant in 100 percent of the standards,” said Elizabeth Sawyer, MD, FACS, the Medical Director for the Cape Fear Valley Breast Center. “We are very proud to maintain this important accreditation, which is a testament to the excellent care provided by all of the staff in our breast cancer program. Patients having the trust in us to provide world-class breast care in the comfort of their own hometown is validated through a nationally recognized accreditation program such as the NAPBC. We look forward to the future and are dedicated to maintaining excellence in breast cancer care.”

The accreditation is for three years. Cape Fear Valley Breast Care Center originally received accreditation in 2010 and has been reaccredited every three years since. Accreditation is given for providing the highest level of quality breast care, as determined by a rigorous evaluation process and performance review. It also shows a firm commitment to offering patients every significant advantage in the battle against cancer.

“This important accreditation is a testament to the excellent care provided by all of the staff in our breast cancer program.”

– Elizabeth Sawyer, MD, FACS



Harnett Health Foundation Golf Tournament supports the development of a new Cancer Center

Thank you to the sponsors and community members who helped us take a swing against cancer!

Twenty-seven teams and 108 golfers joined us for the Harnett Health Foundation Golf Tournament in October at Keith Hills Golf Club, presented by Family Medical Supply. Over \$24,000 in net revenue was raised to support the development of the new Cancer Center in Harnett County.

It was a win-win for our tournament sponsors, players and the folks in Harnett County and the surrounding area.

To learn how you can make a gift to support this transformational project, contact Scott Childers at schilders@capefearvalley.com or (910) 766-7119.

Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation Gala update

Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation's Gala is moving to a new every-other-year format. Our next Gala will be in Jan. 25, 2025, and will celebrate the impact philanthropy has on healthcare in the communities we serve. Stay tuned to our social media or email us at foundation@capefearvalley.com to be added to the Foundation's monthly newsletter to learn about all the Gala and other Foundation happenings.

Scan the QR code to visit Cape Fear Valley Health Foundation's Facebook page.



CAPE FEAR VALLEY HEALTH : *NEW physicians*



Gastroenterology



Adeyinka Adejumo, MD

Premier Gastroenterology at Valleygate

Medical Degree: University of Ibadan-College of Medicine, Ibadan, Nigeria

Residency: Mass General Brigham at Salem

Fellowship: Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

Rheumatology



Anshul Rao, MD

Dunn Medical Services

Medical Degree: University of Toledo Medical College

Residency: University of New Mexico Internal Medicine

Fellowship: University Hospitals Case Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio



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Save the Date

Saturday, April 20

Join us at Methodist University for a family-friendly event featuring 4k and 1-mile walks through campus, Wellness Expo, food trucks and more.

For More information visit www.cfvfoundation.org/StepUp4Health



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, call (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, call (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 every other month – January, March, May, July, September and November from 3 – 4:30 p.m.
For more information, contact Crystal Edmonds at
cedystonia1920@gmail.com.

Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD) Support Group

Meets every three months, on the third Thursday from 6 – 7:30 p.m.
Next meeting is Oct. 19.
Cancer Treatment and CyberKnife Center conference room,
1638 Owen Drive, Fayetteville
For more information, contact Lauri Costello, (910) 615-8753.

Life After Stroke Team

Meets the third Wednesday of each month at 3 p.m.
Cape Fear Valley Rehabilitation Center,
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.



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what you make it.
Feel better. Live better. You can do it.

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of CAPE FEAR VALLEY HEALTH