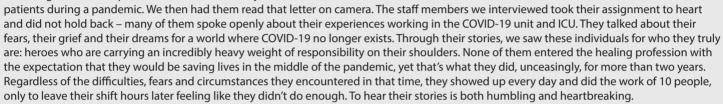


#### LETTER FROM THE

### PRESIDENT & CEO

It takes a special person to work in the field of healthcare. I've always known this to be true, but over the past two years, I've had the opportunity to really witness the sheer commitment and selflessness required for this particular line of work. Healthcare is an exhausting and oftentimes thankless field that can be physically and emotionally demanding, particularly for those who work on the frontlines. Each day is filled with highs, lows and everything in between. It's a career that requires more than just skills and training – it requires passion.

Last fall, our community had an opportunity to see and hear that passion through a series of videos we released on social media called "Voices for Vaccines." We asked several of our frontline staff members if they would be willing to write an open letter to the community about what it's like to care for



We shared the Voices for Vaccines videos on our social media platforms, and the response was huge. Every one of the videos was shared countless times, with the entire series collectively reaching 90,000 people and counting. I had the opportunity to personally share the videos with Gov. Mike DeWine, who, in turn, forwarded these on to the Ohio Hospital Association. Thanks to the willingness of our frontline workers to be open and honest about the experiences they've faced during the pandemic, their testimonies have helped raise awareness about not only vaccines, but mental health. Burnout is a very real problem affecting thousands of healthcare workers across the country. Those who work in healthcare struggle to find the respite, relief and rejuvenation that all of us require as human beings to refuel and recharge. It's vital that we as a community not ignore this problem. Throughout this pandemic, our healthcare workers have gone above and beyond to take care of us. Now is the time when we need to step up and take care of them.

So how can we do this? To start, if you have not been vaccinated against COVID-19, I strongly encourage you to take this important step.

Vaccinations can decrease your chance of becoming severely ill and requiring hospitalization. All of us want to lessen the threat of COVID-19 and avoid another surge. Getting vaccinated is a great place to start.

Second, if you know a healthcare worker, tell them how much you appreciate them. Offer to make their lives a little bit easier by delivering a home-cooked meal or providing childcare so they can take some much-needed time for themselves. Sit down with them and *listen* to their stories. Talking is therapeutic and much more beneficial than keeping your feelings bottled up inside. If you feel like your friend or loved one would benefit from speaking to a professional, encourage them to take that step. There is no shame in seeking therapy for mental health, especially given the circumstances of the past two years.

Lastly, if you have not yet had the opportunity, please take some time to watch our Voices for Vaccines videos, which can be found by scanning the QR code to the right, or on our website at fmchealth.org/armor. These stories need to be heard and shared.

Thank you for your continued support.



John R. "Jack" Janoso Jr.



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Has Fairfield Medical Center made a difference in your life? We want to hear your story. **Email us at marketing@fmchealth.org, or share your story on our Facebook page.** 



A sudden feeling of fatigue – that was the first and only warning sign Terri Garrett experienced hours before she suffered a debilitating stroke in the middle of the night.

It was Oct. 7, 2013, and Terri, then 49, had just come from a fun evening at the Fairfield County Fair with her family when she was hit with an overwhelming feeling of exhaustion. Shortly after 9 p.m., she was ready to turn in for the night.

"I usually stay up much later than that, so my husband asked if I was feeling alright," Terri said. "I brushed it off thinking it was due to all of the walking around we had done that day."

Three hours later, a feeling of nausea woke Terri from a deep sleep. She quickly walked to the bathroom, turned on the light and immediately fell against the wall. Her entire left side had gone numb. In the midst of her fear and confusion, Terri tried to remain calm. She had to get help – and fast. Using her head and the right side of her body, she fought hard to push herself upright so she could open the bathroom door and call for help. Within seconds, her husband, Keith, came running.

"The only words I could say to him, which he thankfully understood, were 'stroke' and 'squad," Terri said.

Over the past eight years, the fighting spirit Terri exhibited on the night of her stroke is something that has helped push her through a long, but productive, recovery. Luckily, she hasn't had to do it alone. Terri credits her caregivers at Fairfield Medical Center – both those who treated her on the night of her stroke and the ones who guided her through months of subsequent therapy – for helping her maintain hope during a challenging time in her life.

"I'm forever thankful that Fairfield Medical Center was there for me that night, and continues to be there for me today," Terri said. "My life could be totally different. I could be in a wheelchair, I could be unable to talk and to do all the things that I can now do for myself. They took something that was scary and life-altering and gave me the best possible chance for normalcy again."



Every 40 seconds, someone in the United States experiences a stroke. The most common type of stroke – an ischemic stroke – occurs when the arteries that supply oxygen to the brain become narrowed or blocked, reducing or completely stopping blood supply to the brain. When this happens, patients may experience speech difficulty, arm weakness,

loss of balance, a drooping face or numbness in their body. Time is of the essence, and stroke patients need to seek immediate treatment when experiencing symptoms in order to achieve the best possible outcome.

Terri said while her memories are blurry from the night of her stroke, she does recall a team of physicians and nurses waiting for her when she arrived by squad at FMC. After a quick assessment, it was determined that a drug called tPA (tissue plasminogen activator), which helps break down blood clots and restore blood flow to the brain, would need to be administered before Terri could be transported to The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center for additional care. Within an hour of arriving at FMC, Terri was stabilized and en route to Columbus.

"I couldn't have asked for a better group of people than the team at Fairfield Medical Center to assess the situation and get me the quick treatment I needed," Terri said. "From the physicians being there, to the nurses answering questions and defusing

They took something that was scary and life-altering and gave me the best possible chance for normalcy again.

the stressful situation, to the team starting the medication as quickly as possible ... those were all critical parts of that night."

Two weeks after her stroke, Terri opted to receive speech, occupational and physical therapies at Fairfield Medical Center's Outpatient Therapy Services. Her speech and walking came back guickly, but her left arm and hand had been greatly affected by the stroke. At the start of occupational therapy, Terri was able to raise her left arm to approximately shoulder level in front of her and, with effort, bend her elbow just past a 90-degree angle. The movement of her wrist and hand were extremely limited, leaving her unable to perform daily activities like putting on her coat or driving a car. Determined to return to her position as an elementary school principal for Lancaster City Schools, Terri set the first of many goals at the start of her therapy she wanted to be able to type again, one of the main functions of her job. Upon sharing that goal with therapists Larry Sheridan and Julie Wellstead, the trio formulated a plan of action and got to work.

"During Terri's occupational therapy visits, treatment focused on activities to facilitate improved muscle activation throughout her left arm and hand," Julie said. "As Terri was able to develop improved strength in more muscle groups of her arm and hand, we introduced activities that allowed Terri to work on gross and fine motor coordination activities in an effort to work toward more functional use."

Terri's occupational therapy lasted for eight

#### **STROKE** WARNING SIGNS

Do you know the warning signs of a stroke? The acronym BEFAST can help you remember. When someone is experiencing a stroke, every second counts. Don't wait for symptoms to improve. Call 911 immediately.

Balance

Is the person experiencing dizziness or a loss of balance? Are they walking differently?

Eyes

Ask the person if their vision is blurry or if they are having trouble seeing.

Face Arm Speech

Time

Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face look uneven or feel numb?

Ask the person to raise their arms and look to see if one arm drifts downwards.

Is the person's speech hard to understand or do they seem confused?

If you see any of these warning signs, call 911. Don't drive to the hospital.

months. By then, she was back to work and able to complete a number of tasks that had been impossible before, such as putting on her coat, buckling her belt and typing on her computer. Upon completing the program in the spring of 2014, Terri was given the option to come back to therapy any time she felt she needed assistance. It's an invitation that she's accepted on multiple occasions throughout the past eight years as she has continued to work toward improving the mobility and strength in her left arm and hand.

"My therapists have been a great support system for me," Terri said. "I try to keep up with new technologies and new apparatuses to try on my hand, and Julie and Larry are always willing to learn them and to try to put me through the steps of therapy to progress the use of my hand."

The willingness of Terri and her therapists to explore new types of therapy and continue pushing forward has been extremely instrumental in her success.

"Terri arrived to every therapy session with a great big smile on her face and a 'can-do' attitude," Julie recalls. "It is so refreshing as a therapist to work with patients like Terri who work so hard, maintain such a positive outlook and never give up."



Eight years later, Terri, now retired, is still setting and achieving goals. She and Keith make it a priority to stay active and get regular check-ups with their primary care providers, including their cardiologists at Fairfield Healthcare Professionals Cardiology. Following her stroke, Terri learned that she has atrial fibrillation (AFib), a type of abnormal heart rhythm that can be a risk factor for stroke. To better manage her condition, she now has a heart loop recorder and an established relationship with a team of heart experts.

"I ended up switching all of my cardiology care to Fairfield Medical Center because if something serious happens to me again, I want them to be the ones to take care of me," she said. "Fairfield Medical Center has become a part of my family, and I don't feel like I'd be where I am today if it wasn't for them."

In addition to her cardiology team, Terri is grateful to continue to have the support of Julie and Larry when she needs them. Over time, she's managed to develop adaptations that allow her to do the daily tasks that seemed so simple prior to her stroke, and she has learned when to ask others for help with tasks that are still too difficult.

"I can be stubborn and bullheaded sometimes," Terri admits with a laugh. "I still have some things that I'm working on, and I still have some residual effect in my arm. There are times that I have to slow down and make sure I don't get too excited. I'm not where I was before my stroke, and I've accepted the fact that I might never be. But I've also come a lot further than I ever imagined."

#### TERRI'S CARE TEAM





Fairfield Medical Center's Outpatient Therapy Services is committed to helping patients improve their safety, lifestyle and ability to do the activities they enjoy. Services offered include:

- Aquatic therapy\*
- Audiology and hearing services\*
- AlterG® anti-gravity treadmill
- Hand and foot orthotics
- Hand therapy
- · Industrial rehab
- · Lymphedema management
- · Neurological rehab

- Occupational therapy\*
- Physical therapy\*
- Speech therapy\*
- · Sports medicine\*
- Spine and orthopedic rehab
- Trigger point dry needling
- Women's health services
- · Vestibular (dizziness) rehab

\*Also offered for pediatric patients

#### **Two locations in Lancaster:**

- 2384 N. Memorial Drive
- 1143 E. Main St.

Fairfield Medical Center's Outpatient Therapy Services cares for all ages, accepts all insurances and offers telehealth appointments. To schedule an appointment, call 740-687-8602.

# SURVING AND THRIVING

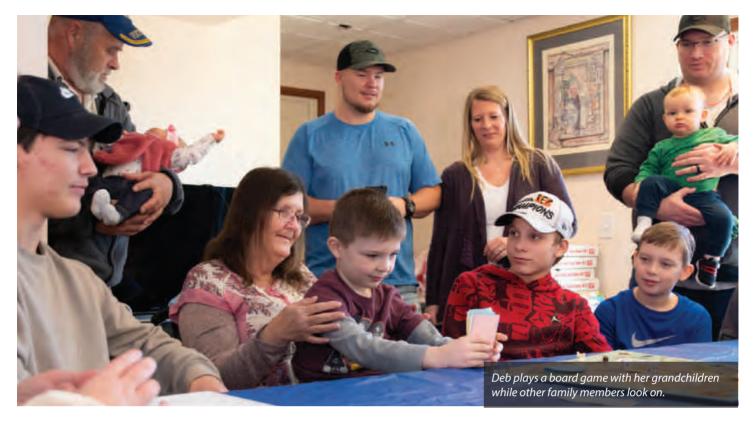
Deb Gilbert, 57, may move and speak a bit slower these days, but when it comes right down to it, she's simply happy to be alive. It's an outcome that was uncertain when her heart suddenly stopped beating one afternoon in November 2020.

For several weeks, Deb had been experiencing brief episodes of fatigue, shortness of breath and an unsettling fluttering sensation in her chest. Amid preparing for a move and all the responsibilities that come with maintaining a household, Deb brushed off these feelings of discomfort. It's a reaction that can be all too common when life becomes busy: We put our needs last and keep pushing forward. Women, especially, tend to fall into this pattern, sometimes to their own detriment.

"The symptoms would come and go," Deb said. "I never had that textbook chest pain you hear about, so I thought it couldn't possibly be my heart. I chalked it up to stress or thought it might be related to smoking, and then I would move on with my day."

Looking back, there was one night during which Deb felt strange enough to consider waking her husband, Jerry. But, in true caretaker fashion, she reminded herself that he had worked late and didn't want to bother him. She waited for the symptoms to pass, and these did – this time.





By morning, Deb felt fine. As she told Jerry about her restless night, he insisted she get checked out. But with no lingering signs of distress and a busy day ahead, Deb's stubborn personality prevailed. Ultimately, it would be that same no-nonsense trait that would later allow her to survive and recover.

"Later that day, I went outside to smoke a cigarette, and that's the last thing I remember," Deb said, adding that she's given up the habit for good these days. Her then 12-year-old grandson Traven Miller, however, recalls the day in detail. His grandmother had been outside for longer than he expected, so he decided to check on her. He found Deb sitting on the patio, slumped forward and not breathing. Thinking quickly, he dialed 911, making the phone call that would save Deb's life.

"When it comes to cardiac arrest, the chances of survival decline by 10 percent with every minute that passes without medical attention," said FMC interventional cardiologist John Lazarus, MD, PhD. "Intentional and timely action are crucial. Traven's awareness and prompt call to EMS were gamechangers in Deb's resuscitation."

Paramedics arrived within minutes to begin chest compressions, pushing hard and fast in the center of Deb's chest to supply her body with oxygen-rich blood. In the middle

#### **HEART DISEASE IN WOMEN**

"Heart disease is the leading cause of death in women in the United States, accounting for 1 in 5 female deaths," Dr. John Lazarus said. "Although heart attacks are most frequently associated with intense chest pain, heart disease in women can look much different. Sometimes heart disease can even be silent and not diagnosed until there's an emergency, which makes remaining vigilant even more important."



Deb Gilbert hopes sharing her story will inspire others to take their heart health seriously and encourages anyone experiencing symptoms of heart disease to get checked out sooner than later. Symptoms of heart disease in women may include:

- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea or vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Discomfort in the chest, jaw, neck or back (with or without activity)

of the chaos, Traven called Jerry at work to inform him of the situation. Deb's loved ones quickly headed to the hospital, not knowing what they might find when they arrived.

"When we got there, the staff allowed us to stand in the hallway as she was going in for surgery," Jerry said. "They were giving us a chance to say goodbye, because we might not get another opportunity."

In the end, Deb survived nearly 40 minutes of advanced cardiac life support, an

emergency procedure to open the blocked artery in her heart, and the two-week coma that followed. This waiting period was marked by setbacks and grave news, but Deb's fighting spirit continued to shine. The family was informed that, even with quick action, Deb had suffered neurologic damage due to the lack of blood flow to her brain when her heart stopped. With few signs of improvement in the early days of recovery, they began to fear the worst.

In a determined effort to gauge Deb's ability to respond to the world around her,

Dr. Lazarus leaned close to Deb's bedside, speaking her name in hopes of waking her from her deep slumber – and her eyes popped open. "Up until that point, Jerry said they had been calling me Debra," Deb said. "As far as I'm concerned, that's not my name, and I refuse to answer it. I've always been stubborn that way."

From that point, the road to recovery began. Deb completed several weeks of rehabilitation in an acute care facility, where she began to overcome her brain injury by relearning the basics of controlling her movements and strengthening her body. This foundation of recovery allowed her to move on to Fairfield Medical Center's Outpatient Therapy Services, where she not only continued to regain strength and balance, but learned how to accomplish daily tasks and adopt tools to support her safety and independence.

"Physical therapy for neurologic conditions takes advantage of the nervous system's ability to 'rewire' and find alternate pathways of communication from the brain to the body," said physical therapist Elizabeth Poklinkowski. "Deb's treatment sessions focused on breaking down movements into smaller chunks, then putting those elements together and practicing until she was comfortable and confident."

Today, Deb is not only surviving, but thriving. "I've worked hard to get back to something close to normal. The day I was able to tie my shoes by myself, I cried," Deb said. "Now, I'm back to cooking dinner and helping with homework and caring for my family – it looks a little different than it

used to, but I'm doing it, and I'm grateful to be alive, to be here."

Deb's experience reminds us that to care for others, we must care for ourselves, too. Her all-too-common decision to delay medical attention reminds us of the unintended consequences that may await us. And her progress and recovery are a testament to

the power of optimism, determination and perseverance.

"I refuse to think, 'Oh, poor me," Deb said.
"This all started on Friday the 13th, and
when people comment about my bad luck,
I make sure to tell them I'm the luckiest
person in the world because I survived
something that so many don't. I have
Fairfield Medical Center, Dr. Lazarus, the
paramedics and my grandson to thank
for that."

#### **DEB'S** CARFTFAM



John Lazarus, MD, PhD is an interventional cardiologist with FHP Cardiology, 740-689-4480.



Elizabeth Poklinkowski, PT, DPT is a physical therapist with FMC's Outpatient Therapy Services, 740-687-8602.



**Rachel Pan, MD**is a neurologist with FHP Neurology,
740-687-8888.



Jarrod Bruce, MD is a pulmonologist with FHP Pulmonary & Critical Care, 740-689-6833.



I'm the
luckiest person
in the world because
I survived something
that so many
people don't.



## THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

As a heart attack coordinator and nurse who works in the Cardiac Cath Lab at Fairfield Medical Center, Deserae Belcher, RN, has seen firsthand the importance of bystander CPR when it comes to saving the life of someone who is experiencing cardiac arrest. So last July, Deserae and Mike Proctor, the Violet Township Fire Department CPR Coordinator, decided to see how many people they could provide CPR training to in just one day. They picked a popular venue – Festival Fair Day at the Fairfield County Fairgrounds – and brought along the Violet Township Fire Department's Mobile CPR Training Unit. The bright red unit quickly attracted the attention of festivalgoers and by the end of the day, Deserae and Mike had successfully provided hands-only CPR training to more than 120 people.

"Those of us who saw the CPR training unit in action that day thought of how great it would be to have another unit that would allow us to expand our efforts," said FMC community outreach coordinator Teri Watson, who attended Festival Fair Day along with fellow Community Heart Watch members John Lazarus, MD, PhD and Matt Wideman.

Less than a year later, that dream is now a reality. On April 28, members of Community Heart Watch proudly cut the ribbon on a new 14' mobile training unit. Community Heart Watch is a collaborative effort of Fairfield Medical Center, EMS, businesses, schools and medical providers in Fairfield, Hocking and Perry Counties that is focused on saving lives from cardiac arrest through education, training and improving access to lifesaving AEDs.

The new unit was fully funded through donations from corporate and individual sponsors totaling almost \$20,000. Corporate sponsors included Fairfield Federal, Park National Bank, Friendly Bremen Banking Center, Rotary Club of Lancaster, Stebelton Snider and LifeLink AED Specialists.



"This mobile training unit will be an invaluable asset to the community for years to come," Matt said. "We are grateful for the support of our sponsors, and their recognition of the importance of making our community more heart safe."

Cardiac arrest occurs when the heart suddenly stops beating. The victim stops breathing and becomes unresponsive as the brain and organs are deprived of oxygen. Training community members on how to perform CPR and use an AED is the key to improving cardiac arrest survival rates.

"In our own community, nearly 10 people every month suffer a cardiac arrest, which is why we need to collaborate to strengthen each of the links in the chain of survival," Dr. Lazarus said.

Strengthening those links is a goal that Community Heart Watch is eager to take on. The mobile training unit will be traveling to numerous events this summer to provide free hands-only CPR training to adults and children (see box). Along with the mobile training unit, Community Heart Watch is working to ensure that AEDs are more accessible to everyone. To date, the committee has placed more than 300 AEDs in the community and has created a registry using the PulsePoint AED app

that allows users to immediately locate the nearest AED.

In addition, the committee is also ramping up its Heart Safe Accreditation program, which allows businesses, schools and even parks to become designated as "Heart Safe." More than 40 schools and businesses in the community have achieved this accreditation since the program was launched in 2013, a number that is expected to quickly grow with the launch of the "Heart Safe Park" initiative in May. As part of this accreditation, AEDs will be placed in local parks, which will host community training and awareness events. Rising Park in Lancaster, Buckeye Lake State Park in Millersport and Alt Park in Baltimore are all slated to become Heart Safe in 2022.

Dr. Lazarus said he hopes to see continued engagement and support from the community in the coming months as many of the Community Heart Watch initiatives are put into place. He said the support he's witnessed thus far has been inspiring.

"Physician Mark Hyman once said, 'The power of community to create health is far greater than any physician, hospital or clinic'," Dr. Lazarus said. "What we are doing with Community Heart Watch and with the mobile training unit would not be possible without an engaged community coming together."

#### **LEARN** CPR

The Community Heart Watch mobile training unit will be traveling to the following events this summer. Free CPR training will be offered for both adults and children:

- Health & Safety Day June 11 Buckeye Lake State Park
- United Way's Day of Action June 17 Downtown Lancaster
- Sugar Grove Stars & Stripes June 25 Berne Union Schools
- Perry County Fair July 17-22
   Perry County Fairgrounds
- Festival Fair Day July 23 Fairfield County Fairgrounds
- Heart & Lung Run Aug. 13 Fairfield Medical Center
- Hebron Pie Festival Aug. 20
   9 W. Main St.

To request the CPR mobile training unit at your event, or to volunteer to provide community education, visit fmchealth.org/community-heart-watch/

#### A SURVIVOR'S STORY

It happened without warning – one minute, student Hayden Voris was sitting in his culinary class at Lancaster City School's Stanbery Campus. The next, he was lying unconscious on the floor, not breathing. Amidst the shock of the moment, Hayden's teacher Debra Bates remained calm. Several years prior, Debra and her colleagues had all received training from Community Heart Watch on how to respond to a cardiac arrest situation. Debra quickly called the office, which dialed 911 and alerted a response team. District health coordinator Sarah McGraw-Thimmes, RN, rushed to the classroom and began performing CPR while another teacher ran for the nearest AED. By the time EMS arrived, the staff members present had done everything by the book – and together, their efforts saved a life.

Hayden's story might have ended differently if the individuals who witnessed his cardiac arrest had not responded the way they did. On average, it takes emergency medical services 7-8 minutes to arrive on scene. In a cardiac arrest situation, the best outcomes occur when CPR is started immediately and an AED is used within 4-6 minutes. If those actions are not taken, the patient's chance of recovery or survival decreases significantly. Since Lancaster City Schools received its Heart Safe Schools accreditation in 2012, there have been three incidents, including Hayden's, where staff members have had to use an AED. Community Heart Watch is proud to work with schools, businesses and parks to help them become more heart safe. To learn more about the Heart Safe Accreditation, visit fmchealth.org/community-heart-watch/.



Stanbery Campus.



## AREASSURING PRESENCE

It's every parent's worst nightmare: a sick child.

When Katie and Kyle Vanatta's two-year-old son, Levi, began showing symptoms of a respiratory infection in October, they suspected it was yet another common cold. With the past year full of ear infections and various bugs, they were prepared to deal with a few days of fussiness. They quickly realized, however, that this bout of illness was something different.

On a Friday night, the concerned parents decided to take Levi to Fairfield Medical Center's River Valley Campus for an evaluation, where he tested positive for RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) – a common, yet potentially serious, viral infection that impacts the lungs and respiratory tract. RSV can be especially dangerous for young children, but at the time of his first visit, it was determined that Levi's lungs were healthy. His treatment plan included rest, extra snuggles and supportive at-home care, an approach used to manage most viral illnesses. The family returned to its Lancaster home to weather the storm through the weekend with instructions to monitor Levi closely and follow up with their pediatrician on Monday.

"Levi didn't feel well on Saturday, but he wasn't noticeably worse," Katie said of her son. "On Sunday, he seemed a little lethargic. He usually hits the ground running, so that was our first sign that he wasn't bouncing back like we'd hoped, but there weren't any major red flags."

When Monday rolled around, Katie and Kyle returned to work while Katie's grandmother stepped in to care for Levi and his four-month-old brother, Landon. Unfortunately, Levi began to decline. His breathing became fast and shallow, and his great-grandmother contacted Katie right away.

"When I heard there had been an obvious change in Levi's breathing, I called our pediatrician as soon as I could," Katie said. The office shared her concern, and they instructed Katie to take Levi to the Emergency Department, where he could get the level of care he needed.

Aware of Fairfield Medical Center's partnership with Nationwide Children's Hospital, a collaboration that ensures pediatric hospitalists are available to care for children from the nursery to the Emergency Department, Katie and Kyle chose to bring Levi to FMC's Main Campus. After several tests and an additional set of X-rays, he was admitted for observation under the care of Jean Robertson, MD, a pediatric hospitalist from Nationwide Children's.

"RSV or bronchiolitis can be a scary experience for parents, especially since most children experience this illness between the ages of birth to two years," Dr. Robertson shared. "I tell parents to call their provider whenever anything does not feel right, and that's exactly what Katie and Kyle did."

There had been changes in Levi's chest X-rays when compared to those taken just a few days before. His case of RSV had progressed to pneumonia, and he would need additional care to help him recover. When Katie learned a transfer to Nationwide Children's was in Levi's best interest in case he needed to be placed on a ventilator, she began to feel overwhelmed. Despite her worry, she was confident in her son's caregivers and felt comforted by Dr. Robertson's calm and reassuring presence.

"During encounters with patients and families, I envision myself in their position and ask myself what they may be thinking or feeling, and then the words flow easily," Dr. Robertson said. "I make sure to include them as active participants in their child's care, and I'm honored that Katie and Kyle expressed such trust in our team."

FMC's respiratory therapists visited Levi while the transfer was discussed, using the time to assess the young patient's lung

#### **PARTNERS** IN CARE

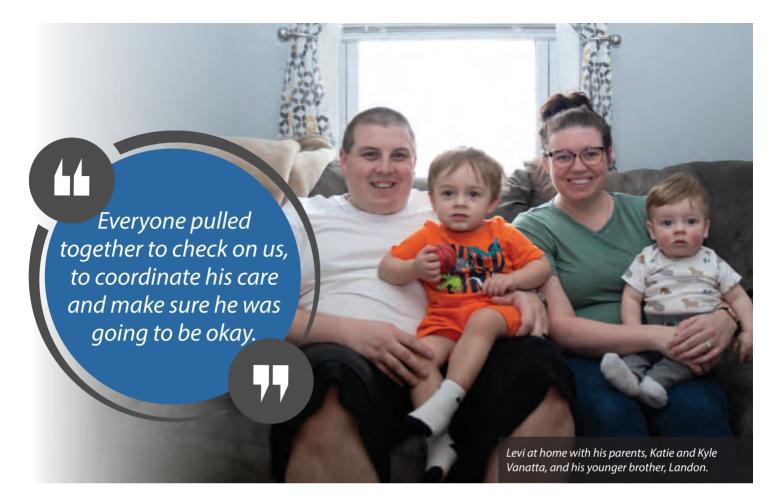
Fairfield Medical Center's partnership with Nationwide Children's Hospital has allowed for the availability of expert pediatric inpatient care when your child needs it most.

"Nationwide Children's pediatric hospitalists are active members of the community who have a wide background of experiences both living and raising families here," said Dr. Jean Robertson. "These skilled physicians work closely with FMC's clinical staff and your child's primary care providers to offer comprehensive, advanced care in a variety of hospital settings, including the Maternity and Emergency Departments. Through this partnership, your child can receive the best care possible while staying close to home."



When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™





health and administer breathing treatments. When they learned Nationwide Children's didn't have any available beds, the team pulled together to create an alternative plan for Levi.

"Dr. Robertson told us she would stay through the night to watch Levi until a bed opened up in Columbus," Katie said. "Everyone pulled together to check on us, to coordinate his care and make sure he was going to be OK. It was phenomenal. As anxious parents, that level of support made a big difference for us."

Fortunately, the team soon received word that a helicopter would be dispatched to transfer Levi to Nationwide Children's, where he would stay for four nights, including three in the pediatric intensive care unit.

"I believe Dr. Robertson saved my son's life. We didn't realize how close Levi was to being placed on a ventilator, and it was her confidence and honesty that helped us stay calm and focused during a really scary time," Katie said. "To be able to receive that initial care at Fairfield Medical Center and lean on them to help us navigate the next steps was very comforting. We had a great experience, and it gives me peace of mind to know we have such great care available close to home."

#### **RSV** IN INFANTS

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, by the time most children reach two years of age, they will have been infected with RSV. Many of these illnesses begin with mild cold symptoms that resolve on their own, but some can become severe within a few days of onset.

"Children at higher risk for severe illness often have chronic health issues like asthma or heart disease, and premature infants are at higher risk for the first two years of their life," said pediatrician Jean Robertson, MD. "But children of any age can experience worrisome symptoms."

Warning signs of a severe infection may include:

- · Apnea, or pauses in breathing
- Wheezing or difficulty breathing
- Straining of the chest/stomach or flaring of the nostrils when breathing
- · Breathing faster than normal
- Blue tint to the skin of the lips, fingers or toes
- · Difficulty waking up

RSV may or may not be accompanied by fever. If you suspect your child is experiencing a viral illness, contact your primary care provider. If you notice signs of respiratory distress, call 911 or proceed to the nearest emergency department.



We are all used to receiving advice from our healthcare providers – eat more fruits and vegetables, get more exercise, wear sunscreen – and we do our best to follow through. But sometimes these recommendations turn from gentle reminders into lifesaving guidance, which is what Patty Swinehart discovered last spring.

During a yearly physical in April, Patty's primary care provider, Mark Lepi, MD, strongly encouraged Patty to receive a screening for lung cancer – a low-dose computed tomography (LDCT). As a former smoker, Patty was a prime candidate for this screening, which doctors have found can provide early detection of lung cancer in people at high risk of the disease, improving the chances of successful treatment.

After some convincing from her doctor, Patty, 58, scheduled the screening several weeks later with Fairfield Medical Center's Imaging Department. "I'm so grateful Dr. Lepi told me about FMC's lung scan program," Patty said.

Later that night, Dr. Lepi called Patty with news she never expected – the screening had found two spots on her lung. "Immediately when you hear that, it's like a death sentence," Patty said. Despite her fears, Dr. Lepi assured Patty that the next steps would move quickly, and she would be in good hands with the team at Fairfield Medical Center.

After receiving her LDCT results, Patty experienced a whirlwind of procedures and appointments. Her official diagnosis was Stage 3 lung cancer. Though she and her family were shaken up by the cancer diagnosis, Patty says what made the rush of information and scheduling manageable was her oncology nurse navigator, Holly Griffith. "I really appreciated Holly being there all the time," Patty said. "She was at every appointment, and that made a world of difference."

#### PATTY'S CARE TEAM



Jarrod Bruce, MD is a pulmonologist with FHP Pulmonary & Critical Care, 740-689-6833.



Kanwaljit Singh, MD is an oncologist with FHP Hematology & Oncology, 740-687-4505.



Holly Griffith, RN, O is an oncology nurse navigator with Cancer Care & Infusion Services, 740-689-6889.



P. Aryeh Cohen, MD
is a cardiothoracic surgeon
with FHP Cardiothoracic
Surgery, 740-681-9020.
He also serves as Director of
Cardiothoracic Surgery at FMC.



Mark Becker, MD is a radiation oncologist with FHP Radiation Oncology, 740-687-8550.



Mark Lepi, MD is a primary care provider with Buckeye Family Health, 740-689-9860.

Oncologist Kanwaljit Singh, MD, of FHP Hematology & Oncology and pulmonologist Jarrod Bruce, MD, of FHP Pulmonary & Critical Care came up with an aggressive treatment plan designed to stop Patty's cancer in its tracks. Shortly after her diagnosis, Patty started simultaneous chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

"My team made me feel really at ease," Patty said. "I felt comfortable in the care I was getting – the procedures and the doctors. I knew in my heart that it would work out."

Throughout her treatment, Patty was surrounded by a wide support network of family, friends and coworkers. Despite visitation restrictions due to COVID-19, Patty's sister and FMC catering representative Molly Jones and fellow FMC sous chef Ashlee Brown would meet Patty outside the hospital doors to share encouraging words before her radiation treatments. And Patty's daughter-in-law and grandson, who live near FMC's Main Campus, turned their daily walks into an opportunity to boost Patty's spirits with smiles, hugs and special signs after those same appointments.

As a final step in eradicating her cancer, Patty underwent a surgical lung resection to rid her body of any remaining cancer cells. The procedure, performed by P. Aryeh Cohen, MD, of FHP Cardiothoracic Surgery, included the removal of three lymph nodes in addition to a small piece of her lung.

Patty was impressed by the way all the members of her care team worked together to ensure she was receiving the best care possible. "There was a sense of security in them all talking together," Patty said. "They had a plan – they knew what they wanted to do. It made me more confident in the quality of care."

And their teamwork paid off. Patty finished treatment, recovered from her surgery and, by the second week in November, was back at work.

Looking back on her experience, Patty said she feels an overwhelming sense of gratitude. She is grateful for a primary care provider who pushed her to get a test she needed. Grateful for the availability of lung screenings. Grateful for the loved ones who supported her through her treatment. And grateful for the team who handled her care.

"Without the lung scan program, my cancer could have gone further and would have spread further," Patty said. "My team were all optimistic that my treatment program would work. I'm grateful for every doctor – everybody who was involved."



#### LUNG CANCER **DETECTION**

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in both men and women in the United States. Doctors have found that screenings and timely biopsies can lead to early detection of the disease, which improves the chances of successful treatment.

#### **Lung Cancer Screenings**

If you meet the following criteria, you may be at an increased risk for developing lung cancer, making you a candidate for LDCT lung cancer screening:

- Age 50-80
- Current smoker or has quit in the past 15 years
- Have smoked at least one pack per day for 20 years or two packs per day for 10 years

If you do not meet these guidelines but are concerned about your risk, talk to your primary care provider or call 740-687-8134 for more information. A physician order is required and financial assistance is available for those who qualify. *To learn about screening for lung cancer, talk to your healthcare provider or call 740-689-6889*.

Clockwise from top left: Ashlee Brown, Molly Jones, Patty's daughter-in-law Courtney Rutter, Patty's grandson Lincoln Rutter-Swinehart and Patty.



### THE POWER OF **PRECISION**

Fairfield Medical Center is committed to improving cancer survival rates by investing in state-of-the-art technology that allows patients to receive the care they need without having to travel far from home. In 2021, with the help of a \$1 million donation from the Fairfield Medical Center Foundation, FMC purchased a new piece of radiation therapy equipment called the Varian TrueBeam® linear accelerator (pictured above) that is revolutionizing the way patients receive treatment for cancer. In early 2022, FMC made yet another crucial investment in patient care with the development of its innovative robotic surgery program. With the addition of robotic surgery, patients can undergo minimally invasive procedures for everything from hernia repairs to lung biopsies.

#### VARIAN TRUEBEAM® LINEAR ACCELERATOR

**HOW IT WORKS:** Radiation therapy uses various forms of radiation to safely and effectively treat all types of cancer and other diseases. One way to administer radiation therapy is through the use of a linear accelerator. This technology can be used to deliver external beam radiation to almost any area of the body, precisely targeting cancer cells with less damage to surrounding healthy tissue.

TRANSFORMING CANCER CARE: The linear accelerator treats all types of cancer and can target very small or deep-seated tumors within the body. Using heightened doses of high-energy waves to destroy cancer cells, the linear accelerator can effectively cut treatment times in half, with some sessions taking only five to 10 minutes. Patients may also undergo fewer treatment sessions overall.



#### ROBOTIC SURGERY AND LUNG BIOPSY

**HOW IT WORKS:** During a robotic-assisted procedure, your surgeon remains in the operating room with you, seated at a console that provides them with a magnified, high-definition, 3D image of your surgery. Using the controls at the console, the surgical instruments follow your provider's motions exactly, acting like an extension of their hands. This technology improves range of motion while ensuring stability and precision.

TRANSFORMING CANCER CARE: In addition to cardiothoracic and general surgery procedures, robotic-assisted technology is used to perform lung biopsies. These samples are collected from within the patient's airways, and even small or suspicious nodules located anywhere in the lung can be biopsied almost immediately after detection. This technology is leading to earlier diagnosis, faster treatment and better outcomes for those battling lung cancer.



### HEALTHY HABITS

Guest Columnist: Dylan Ekstrand, DO, FHP Family Medicine of Amanda To learn more, call 740-969-4828.

#### Preventative Maintenance

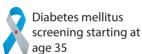
The dreaded "check engine" light. We've all experienced that sinking feeling of knowing it's time to make an appointment at the mechanic to avoid further issues with the car.

Just like your car, your body needs routine maintenance. Regular check-ups and screenings with a primary care provider can help navigate the "check engine" light of your body. These short visits are necessary investments in your health, just like oil changes and tire rotations are an investment in your car. Preventative health screenings exist so that we can intervene before the problem gets worse. A colon cancer screening, for example, may reveal pre-cancerous polyps that can be removed before they become cancerous.

My responsibility as a primary care provider is to listen to and guide my patients toward their idea of better health. This includes staying up to date on routine maintenance and screenings, which can vary based on age or condition:



Breast cancer screening starting at age 40





Colon cancer screening starting at age 45



Depression screening starting at age 12

\*Some patients may require earlier screening based on personal or family history. If you are overdue for a wellness exam or screening, or if you do not have a primary care provider, take steps to make your health a priority.



- Management of chronic disease and conditions, such as diabetes or high blood pressure
- **✓** Immunizations
- ✓ Comprehensive examinations for all ages
- ✓ Non-emergent mood disorders
- ✓ School and sport physicals

## Start your wellness journey **SCHEDULE TODAY**

Fairfield Healthca e Professionals Primary Care

Our goal is to create long-lasting relationships with all of our patients and remain a trusted partner in their health and wellness. Avoid that "check engine" light by establishing care with one of our primary care providers.

Services are located in Amanda, Canal Winchester, Carroll, Lancaster, Logan and New Lexington. Our team can accommodate your family's schedule by connecting with you remotely through a telehealth appointment.

Start your health journey by booking your appointment today. Scan the QR code with your smartphone or visit fmchealth.org.



#### FOUNDATION **SPOTLIGHT**



## A Toutell REUNION

Philip DeLong did not know the names and faces of many of the staff members who cared for him during his 34-day stay at Fairfield Medical Center in 2020. What he does know is that, without them, he likely wouldn't be here today.

Philip, 65, was admitted to FMC on Nov. 17, 2020, after testing positive for COVID-19. A month later, he was discharged to another facility for ongoing therapy and rehabilitation before returning home on Feb. 21, 2021. While he continues to experience the long-term effects of COVID-19, he is grateful to be alive and thankful for the many staff members who cared for him during his long stay.

"I don't know how the nurses, doctors, housekeepers and staff do it – to come to work every day, risking their lives to care for others," he said. Throughout his stay at FMC, Philip and his wife, Sandie, interacted with staff members from almost every department, including Fairfield Healthcare Professionals Pulmonary & Critical Care, Outpatient Therapy Services, EVS, OBS, ICU, Respiratory Therapy, Fairfield Healthcare Professionals Infectious Disease and Pulmonary Rehabilitation. Last year, the couple had the opportunity to thank those staff members face-to-face during a Legendary Caregiver award presentation and reunion, which was coordinated through the FMC Foundation Grateful Patient Program.

Jarrod Bruce, MD, of FHP Pulmonary & Critical Care, spoke during the reunion about his patient's long and difficult journey to recovery. At one point, Philip's family was brought in for an emergency meeting amid concerns that he would not survive. After Philip was discharged to another facility, Dr. Bruce feared he might



never see him again. Then one day, Phillip walked through the doors of his office for a follow-up appointment.

"It was a completion of a journey – an amazing one," Dr. Bruce said. "That time was so busy for so many of us in the ICU that we didn't really have a chance to know about our patients who were discharged, about how our patients who survived their ICU stay fared. There was this feeling of joy. It was evidence that what we did mattered."



#### **Express Your Appreciation: The Grateful Patient Program**

The Grateful Patient & Family Program celebrates the care you or your loved one received at Fairfield Medical Center. Sharing your story allows you to recognize and lift the spirits of our healthcare team. Any financial gifts donated to honor a caregiver will help FMC fulfill its mission of providing high-quality healthcare to every patient, including purchasing new equipment and offering specialized patient care. Scan the QR code to learn more about how you can recognize a caregiver through the Grateful Patient Program.



## Calendar Calendar



#### Childbirth Education Series Fairfield Medical Center's certifies

Fairfield Medical Center's certified childbirth educators offer private, in-person classes to help prepare expectant mothers and one support person for the arrival of a new baby. These education courses are free and should be completed 4-6 weeks before your due date.

Registration is required and space is limited. Scan the QR code to register for classes today.

You also can tour FMC's Maternity Unit for free. Registration is requested. Register online at fmchealth.org or call 740-687-8218.



#### Childcare & Babysitting Safety (CABS)

Learn what to do in an emergency, what to expect at what age and how to positively discipline kids. Participants will receive CPR and Foreign Body Airway Obstruction Training. For attendees ages 11-15.

#### **Dates/Times:**

June 3 – 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. July 8 – 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Dec. 29 – 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Registration is required.
Call 740-687-8477 or email
resa@fmchealth.org to register.
Price: \$35/person

**Location:** To be determined

#### **CPR & AED Classes**

Receive adult, child and infant CPR and a certificatior card upon completion of a written exam.

written exam.

Registration is required. Call
740-687-8477 or email
resa@fmchealth.org.

Price: \$35/person

#### Dates/Times:

June 4 – 8:30 a.m.-noon July 9 – 8:30 a.m.-noon Aug. 6 – 8:30 a.m.-noon Sept. 10 – 8:30 a.m.-noon

#### ocation:

To be determined

#### **First Aid**

Receive hands-on emergency training and a certification card upon completion of a written exam.

Registration is required. Call 740-687-8477 or email resa@fmchealth.org to register.
Price: \$35/person

#### Dates/Times:

June 4 – Noon-3:30 p.m. July 9 – Noon-3:30 p.m. Aug. 6 – Noon-3:30 p.m. Sept. 10 – Noon-3:30 p.m.

#### Location:

To be determined

#### **Tobacco Cessation Program**

The Tobacco Cessation Program at Fairfield Medical Center is designed to help tobacco users break the habit.

Call 740-687-4404 or email tobaccocessation@fmchealth.org to set up an appointment.

Price: Most insurances accepted.

Location:

Fairfield Medical Center

### FREE SPORTS PHYSICALS

FMC is offering free scheduled sport physical appointments for grades 7-12. We have taken multiple steps at our clinic to protect athletes.

#### **Register:**

Register online at fmchealth.org or scan the QR code. Please book one appointment slot per athlete and include the name of the athlete booked for that time slot.

**Appointments Available:** Saturday, June 4, from 8-11:30 a.m. **Location:** Lancaster High School, 1312 Granville Pike, Lancaster

Please remain in your vehicle until your appointment time.





Medical grade masks will be required for all classes. For an updated list of event offerings, visit fmchealth.org/calendar.



There is never a wrong time to focus on your health, and Fairfield Medical Center is making that easier than ever with our series of Healthy Habits seminars. Whether you want to improve your diet or focus on self care, our seminars are designed to help you invest in yourself.



Each session offers a free health screening.



All attendees receive a 7-day pass to the Robert K. Fox Family YMCA.

Attendance is limited, and registration is required.

Register at fmchealth.org/ healthy-habits, scan the QR code or call 740-687-8007.



#### Thursday, June 30

**ABCs of Diabetes:** *Tips to prevent and manage diabetes.* 

#### Saturday, Aug. 6

Healthy Mind and Body: How self-care promotes holistic wellness.



#### Tuesday, Sept. 13

**The Heart of the Matter:** *Nurturing a healthier heart.* 

#### Thursday, Oct. 6

**Put Your Best Fork Forward:** *General nutrition and tips for weight management.* 

#### Tuesday, Oct. 18

**Life is Better in Motion:** *Learn about joint pain relieving strategies.* 

#### Thursday, Nov. 17

**Trust Your Gut:** Overcoming heartburn and other GI ailments.



740-689-4480

### Join our team. Make a difference.

740-681-9020

For more than a century, we have been a regional healthcare provider that delivers **exceptional care** to our patients by creating **exceptional experiences** for our employees.

To learn more, visit fmchealth.org/careers





740-687-9182



#### Fairfield Medical Center Bariatric Services

Our comprehensive program includes:

- In-depth education
- Insurance and eligibility coordinators
- Specialized team to ensure seamless care
- Routine follow-up and free support groups

Learn more at fmchealth.org or schedule your appointment today by calling 740-475-0442.

If you've been considering weight loss surgery, Fairfield Medical Center is here to offer support.

From start to finish, our program is staffed with compassionate, caring individuals who are committed to helping you reach your goals.

VOLUNTEER

SPOTLIGHT

Bettye Layne

Twice a week, Bettye Layne boards a bus and takes the short ride to Fairfield Medical Center so she can give back to others as a volunteer in the Wishes gift shop and the Volunteer Services office. It's a role that gives Bettye a sense of purpose – and a lot of joy. Over the course of almost 10 years,

of joy. Over the course of almost 10 years,
Bettye has served more than 3,300 hours and
has volunteered in a number of service areas,
including the Main Information Desk, Outpatient
Lab and Messenger Services.

ent

"I love to meet people, and FMC has so many nice people," Bettye said. "I am so grateful for this privilege, and I hope I can help a little."

There is no better time to be the difference as a volunteer at Fairfield Medical Center. For more information, contact the Volunteer Services office at 740-687-8109 or heidire@fmchealth.org.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO, BETTYE!

#### **MONITOR**

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Fairfield Medical Center, located in Lancaster, Ohio, provides healthcare services to more than 250,000 residents in Southeastern Ohio. FMC is a nonprofit medical center that strives to provide outstanding care to its patients, their families and visitors.

The Monitor, produced by the Marketing & Community Services Department, is published to share health information and updates with members of the communities we serve. All material is property of FMC and may not be reproduced without permission.



401 N. Ewing St. Lancaster, Ohio 43130-3371 fmchealth.org

## TWIG 13 is Sweet As



#### TWIGS: Togetherness, Willingness, Imagination, Giving and Sharing

Since 1948, a powerful network of women and men in the community has dedicated itself to transforming healthcare at Fairfield Medical Center. The impact of the collective power of the TWIGS has produced nearly \$4.6 million, which has gone toward purchasing lifesaving equipment, creating new programs and supporting patient care.

The second TWIG to form outside of Lancaster was Millersport TWIG 13, established in 1958 with 21 charter members. Over the last 60 years, TWIG 13's fundraisers have evolved from bean and chicken dinners to rummage sales to afghan sales. Its most popular fundraiser, however, has been its homemade pie sales, which are held twice a year in Millersport. TWIG 13's pies and other fundraisers have helped support a variety of projects throughout the hospital, including ScriptAssist, Pediatric Services and the Maternity Department. TWIG 13 also was instrumental in the renovation of the Millersport Lab. Since its inception, TWIG 13 has donated over \$140,000 to the FMC Foundation, supporting patient needs at FMC.



