

# COMMUNITY Healthline

ASK A PROVIDER

## Elevating Heart Care With Every Beat

EXPECT MORE  
The Meaningful  
Impact of the 24  
Hour Nurse Line

SPOTLIGHT  
A Transformative  
Journey



MEMORIAL  
HEALTH SYSTEM

Winter 2023



# ELEVATING CARE WITH EVERY BEAT, THAT'S EXPECTING MORE!



**Geoffrey R. Cousins, MD, FACS**  
Cardiothoracic Surgeon

In February, we celebrate Heart Awareness Month in the most elevated way possible! Our cardiothoracic surgery team has grown, bringing yet another unique procedure to our health system with our newest cardiothoracic surgeon, Geoffrey R. Cousins, MD, FACS.

To learn more about how our team can care for you, visit our website.



**THAT'S EXPECTING MORE**

[mhsystem.org/Heart](https://mhsystem.org/Heart)



**MEMORIAL  
HEALTH SYSTEM**

## Happy New Year!

Dear friends,

This past year has been one of continued investments in the latest technology, equipment, and facilities that support access to outstanding care for the communities we serve. We have been excited to partner with community members, state governments, providers, team members, and you as we move into 2024.

Our affiliation with the Mayo Clinic Care Network has brought forward many requests from patients and our providers to offer free, second opinions on treatment options and care plans. It's been exciting watching the impact that our membership has had and reassuring to witness the peace of mind of our patients who know it's available. This continued elevation of our quality of care and outcomes benefits everyone.

In this issue, learn how we will continue our commitment. Read about two well-known Parkersburg, West Virginia providers joining our health system this month: Geoffrey R. Cousins, MD, FACS, cardiothoracic surgeon, and Peter Filozof, MD, obstetrician and gynecologist. Both began seeing patients at our Marietta Memorial Hospital location in January 2024. We look forward to working with them as we advance care, innovate, and bring new services to our region.

You can also read more stories about our services and team members who positively impact our communities' health.

From our nurse line identifying urgent medical needs that save lives with our free 24-hour service to one of our very own team members saving not just one, but two lives within a family and the story breaking global news for the selfless act.

We take the call to improve the health of our patients throughout the region seriously. I'm proud of our partnerships and the developing services we bring to you. We deserve the best local, top-rated care right here where our families live and work. Thanks for reading and trusting us with your care.

Best Regards,

**Scott Cantley**  
President & CEO  
Memorial Health System



## Sign Up

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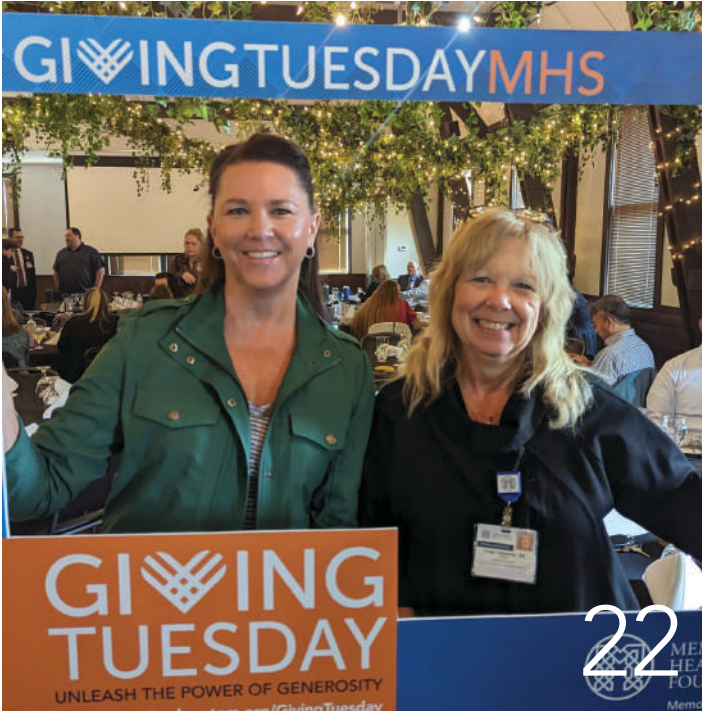
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# Bernita Watson Recognized at Lifeline of Ohio's Champions of Hope Gala

Memorial Health System's very own Bernita Watson, Clinical Nurse Manager, was honored at Lifeline of Ohio's Champions of Hope Gala on October 14, 2023—a night of celebrating heroes. Twenty individuals and organizations were honored for their roles in saving and healing lives through organ, eye, and tissue donation.

Bernita received the Donation Liaison Champion award for her hard work,

advocacy, and commitment to Lifeline of Ohio's mission to save and heal lives through the gift of donation. "High expectations," "incredible compassion," and "thoughtful and helpful" are all words used to describe her. In the past year, Bernita worked tirelessly to enhance the consistency of referrals and the quality of care for all patients in the health system.

Despite overseeing four units at Marietta Memorial Hospital, Bernita reviewed and revised every policy and procedure related to donation within Memorial Health System to ensure that each aligns with the policies of Lifeline of Ohio. Bernita goes above and beyond to ensure that the opportunity for donation is maximized every time, when appropriate. She also plans Honor Walks, spends quality time with a donor's family and loved ones, and



supports other team members throughout the process of the donation.

Approximately 104,000 people nationwide are waiting for a lifesaving transplant, and 20 times a day, an individual dies for lack of an available organ. This is why the work of donation champions, like Bernita, is so important.

# Saving Lives in the Golden Hour

In the event of a traumatic injury, the first 60 minutes after, referred to as the "golden hour," are the most crucial. Care administered within this window often determines a patient's prognosis, so it is incredibly important that healthcare teams act swiftly to ensure the best possible outcome.

Presented to a referring facility each year at the annual OhioHealth Trauma Care Conference, the Golden Hour Award recognizes outstanding patient care in the



Left to Right: Brittany Cunningham, RN, Amanda Kitchen, RN, Charles (Bob) Williams, DO, Barbara Felton, RN, and Christopher Brown, PA-C

area of trauma. Recipients of the award are nominated based on trauma cases recently handled by that department.

This recognition by OhioHealth Trauma Network indicates that the Belpre

Emergency Department (ED) provided exceptional care when faced with a devastating injury. The Golden Hour Award is a testament to the caliber of care the Belpre ED team demonstrated on that day.



Left to Right: Surgical Oncologist, Rajendra Bhati, MD, Luke Smith, Vice President, Clinic Operations, Dan Breece, DO, Vice President, Physician Services and Chief Medical Officer, and Jody Bullman, Vice President, Surgical and Cardiac Services

# Automating Excellence

Nearly 10 years ago, Memorial Health System (MHS) brought the da Vinci robotic surgical system to our health system, allowing for minimally invasive procedures, better outcomes, and quicker recovery times for those in need of surgery. On November 1, 2023, Surgical Oncologist Rajendra Bhati, MD completed his 1,000<sup>th</sup> robotic-assisted surgery using the da Vinci system.

"Surgery is a team sport and to think I could hold any type of recognition on my own just would not be true. I accomplished this with an amazing team

of people who help me day in and day out to care for this community," says Dr. Bhati.

Robotic surgery has completely revolutionized how every surgical provider practices surgery at Memorial Health System. The implementation of the da Vinci is now across all disciplines of the health system, including oncology, general surgery, OBGYN, urology, and more. At the beginning of 2023, the health system celebrated 5,000 collective surgeries.

The process of implementing the da Vinci to nearly all service lines within Memorial Health System has been remarkable for those in need of surgery.

Every team member has taken to the challenge of advancing their talent and capabilities to provide patients with world-class care—in this case, that's minimally invasive surgery that reduces hospital stays and gets patients home quicker.

Sasha Myers, robotic surgical coordinator, has been involved in the implementation of the da Vinci since its arrival nearly 10 years ago. Sasha says, "I think any milestone you can reach is big. I follow a lot of robotic groups and watch them reach 100 or even 500 surgeries, and to see Dr. Bhati reach 1,000 surgeries is a tremendous accomplishment for him and his team."



To keep up with Memorial Health System news between issues, visit our website at [mhsystem.org/News](https://mhsystem.org/News) or scan the QR code.

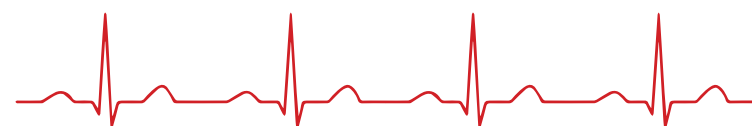


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# ELEVATING *heart care,*

# WITH EVERY *beat*



## Why did you choose to come to Memorial Health System to practice?

“One of the main reasons is the commitment of the administration to develop a world-class cardiac surgery program so that people can stay here in the Mid-Ohio Valley and receive the care they deserve.”

## What do you bring to the team?

“In addition to doing general cardiac surgery, I specialize in beating heart surgery. Beating heart surgery is used for coronary revascularization, also known as bypass surgery. This has traditionally been performed with a heart-lung machine, a pump that moves blood through the body while the heart is isolated, but this surgery removes the machine, and keeps the heart beating continuously. By removing the heart-lung machine we keep the heart beating continuously so the brain, kidneys, and lungs see the pulsatile blood flow they are used to.”

## What are the benefits of performing the procedure this way?

“Beating heart surgery reduces blood loss, transfusions, renal failure, and stroke. Patients recover faster and return to their usual activities quicker.”

## Why should patients trust you for this procedure?

“We have elevated our program to a three-star Society of Thoracic Surgery rating. The three-star rating is as good as it gets. If you compare our program to other programs in the United States and Canada, we are in the top 6-10% for performing coronary revascularization, with the added caveat of the heart beating continuously.”

## What’s one thing you want to tell the community about the care they will receive here?

“The main thing the community should know about the care they will receive here is the pride we take in taking care of every patient. We want to make sure everyone receives top-tier care throughout their journey in our health system.”

## With Memorial Health System's recent announcement of becoming the 46<sup>th</sup> member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network, are there any tools or processes you're interested in exploring?

“Being affiliated with the Mayo Clinic is very beneficial. It allows us to access all the state-of-the-art medical care and consultations, which gives us a broader toolbox as physicians. This allows us to take better care of patients and provides the patients with excellent care here at home.”

## What sets our health system and our providers apart from others in the Mid-Ohio Valley?

“What sets Memorial Health System apart is the dedication and commitment from administrators, staff, providers, and everyone involved to make this a destination for healthcare in the Mid-Ohio Valley.”

## Describe the level of care that will be administered by the team of providers you are joining.

“It is very exciting to join the team of providers at Memorial Health System. Everyone has been practicing in their areas of expertise for numerous years and is dedicated to providing the best cardiac care to people in the Mid-Ohio Valley.”

## What do you like about the Mid-Ohio Valley?

“I love the geography, the people, and the access. We are centrally located for activities and opportunities, and I like the climate.”



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To be referred to Dr. Cousins, please call our Department of Cardiology at (740) 568-5207



# TENDER MOMENTS, EXPERT CARE.

## Getting to Know Peter Filozof, MD

With a new year comes new beginnings, and nothing demonstrates that clearer than the new providers joining Memorial Health System. Sitting down with one of our most recent additions, Peter Filozof, MD from the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology (OBGYN), we were able to gain a bit of insight into the inner workings of one of the most experienced OBGYN providers in our area.

Starting out as a hospital administrator back in the 90s, Dr. Filozof had no idea the impact he would have on his community in the coming years. “I quickly realized that my fit, my niche, could be being a physician. So, I went to medical school at the hospital that I initially started working at and proceeded from there.”

Since that defining moment, Dr. Filozof’s career has been one to take note of—with over 20 years of experience in our region and helping upwards of 10,000 babies make their grand

entrance into the world, the newest addition to Memorial Health System’s Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology is not planning on slowing down anytime soon. “It has not gotten less fun,” emphasizes Dr. Filozof, “not at all.”

Dr. Filozof’s enthusiasm and passion for his profession are apparent from the very first moment he began speaking on why he decided to enter into the realm of women’s health: “It’s the energy,” he states. “It’s [pregnancy] like a woman’s superpower—I can’t do that. It’s just an amazing experience every time, all over again. There’s no other way to describe it—it’s just amazing.” For Dr. Filozof though, the best part is the impact that he can have on others, with his biggest point of pride being “solving problems.” He goes on to elaborate by saying, “Helping someone’s life be better when she walks out the door of our office than it was when she walked in.”

“You can build a building, but it’s the people that fill it that matter. You’ve got these electric, dynamic people coming on board that have this vision.” - Peter Filozof, MD

As a provider in this area for over 20 years, Dr. Filozof is earnest in explaining why he loves serving the Mid-Ohio Valley: “There’s a great sense of community here. Literally anywhere you go you see patients you know and babies you have delivered, and I can’t think of anything more amazing than that.” He also expresses his excitement for Memorial Health System’s upcoming Women and Children’s Hospital in partnership with Akron Children’s, stating, “It was one of the biggest draws for me to join the health system. When you have a comprehensive center that’s surgical, obstetric, wellness, and pediatric all in one place and you don’t have to drive to a bigger city—that huge! It’s beyond huge! I think the vision is amazing and is going to do wonders for this area.”

The Women and Children’s Hospital is expected to begin construction later this year and is projected to be completed and serving patients in 2025. As the first women and children’s hospital in southeastern Ohio, this

newest addition to Memorial Health System is one that Dr. Filozof is eager to be a part of.

“Almost every single patient has some elements of high risk, and when you start adding up those elements, they become even more high risk by the second. To be able to have a center that can accommodate them locally is going to be a win all the way around—I think it’s going to probably be the biggest thing to happen to this area that I can remember.”

We are beyond thankful to have providers like Dr. Filozof joining our mission and vision of the health system. Joining Dr. Filozof is his team, including Melissa Hutchinson, PA-C.



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Coming Soon

WOMEN AND  
CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL



### CLOSER TO HOME

1,600 births will remain local. People needing NICU-level care in our region are currently traveling at least two hours away to get the specialty care needed for their children.



### SPECIALTY CARE

The Women and Children’s Hospital fills existing care gaps currently causing patients to travel for care.



### LEVEL II NICU

200 NICU infants can stay closer to family and loved ones. In 2021, approximately 40% of NICU infants were cared for at facilities outside the service area.



### MODERN FACILITIES

Built to care for the postpartum mother and newborn with the adaptability for the nursery option.



# A Transformative Journey

## *with Memorial Health System, Department of Cardiology and TAVR Success*

Every team member at Memorial Health System takes immense pride in building relationships with our patients and their loved ones. Sometimes, we are lucky enough to care for generations of families throughout the Mid-Ohio Valley.

Max Colvin, a lifelong resident of Monroe County, has been a familiar face at Memorial Health System for over 50 years. For Max, choosing Memorial is more than just a healthcare decision; it's a commitment to the community he and his family call home.

"I don't like big cities—the hustle of it all—it's just natural for me to come here [Marietta Memorial Hospital] if I have a health problem," Max states. "I've had good results here," Max continues as he describes his personal experiences and the quality of care provided by the health system.



**"I've had surgeries, and my wife delivered all our sons and daughters here. I mean, it's our hospital; it's where we go."**

In 1992, Max faced a significant health challenge with open-heart surgery and a double bypass in Columbus, Ohio. Managing diabetes since then, he became aware of a growing issue.

"I was getting to a point where I couldn't catch my breath or walk any distance," Max recalls. "I had just had two major surgeries, both of my knees were replaced, and I was recovering."

With this realization, Max sought the expertise of John Arnold, NP, from the Department of Cardiology who recommended a catheterization to understand the

underlying issues. Following that specific procedure, John Arnold then identified an issue with Max's aorta, so he referred Max to fellow cardiology provider Jason Schott, DO, Interventional Cardiologist at Memorial Health System.

"He recommended that I speak with Dr. Schott because the TAVR [Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement] procedure was available here and not hours away, and I definitely wanted to get something done about my symptoms."

TAVR is a minimally invasive treatment option for aortic valve stenosis. This is a procedure in which a small cut is made in the groin area and a thin, flexible tube with a new artificial heart valve is guided through an artery in the leg and up to the diseased heart valve. Once the new valve is placed into the patient's diseased heart valve, it begins working immediately.

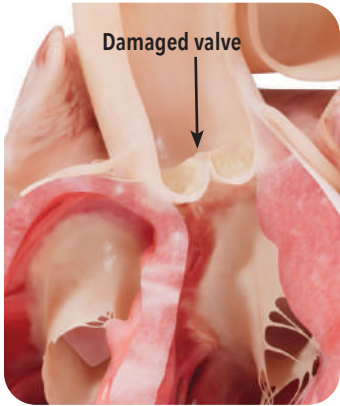
Max, determined to address his health concerns, embraced the suggestion of a TAVR replacement. His treatment with TAVR began with Kaitlyn Mullenix, RN, Structural Heart Coordinator.

"I got in touch with Kaitlyn and had an appointment with her first. Then, I met with Dr. Schott. We progressively went with the TAVR replacement," Max says. "She [Kaitlyn] has been great; she helped me through all of this."

Max's life has drastically changed since that first appointment with the Department of Cardiology, thankfully, in the best and healthiest way possible. He shares with his fellow community members words of encouragement and advice regarding American Heart Month:

"If you have any kind of problem with breathing, no energy, or stamina, go to a cardiologist and get checked out. There are many things they [cardiology providers] can do for you; more than I ever thought."

A year ago, this was happening to me, and I was failing. I couldn't even walk throughout the hospital—I had to be pushed in a wheelchair—and that's not the case today. It's quite an improvement."



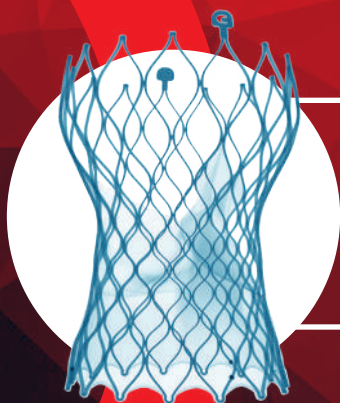
**What is Aortic Valve Stenosis or Aortic Stenosis?**

As a type of heart valve disease, the valve between the lower left heart chamber and the body's main artery (aorta) is narrowed and does not open fully. This reduces or blocks blood flow from the heart to the aorta and to the rest of the body.



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**Benefits of TAVR**



- Decreased shortness of breath
- Increased energy
- Less dizziness

*For more information about the TAVR procedure, or to make an initial appointment to see if TAVR is right for you, please contact the Structural Heart Coordinator at (740) 434-7768.*

**TAVR Team**



**Jason Schott, DO**  
Interventional Cardiology



**John Arnold, NP**  
Interventional Cardiology



**Kaitlyn Mullenix, RN**  
Structural Heart Coordinator



# NOT JUST A NUMBER

*Karen Phalin's Journey with Memorial Health System's Department of Rheumatology*



When she began experiencing extreme symptoms often associated with rheumatoid arthritis, Karen Phalin knew that she needed specialized care.

"I was seeing my primary doctor outside of Memorial Health System at the time, and he was running all sorts of tests trying to figure out what was going on," recalls Karen. "I told my doctor that I think I need to see a rheumatologist." Specializing in the diagnosis and

management of systemic autoimmune conditions and musculoskeletal diseases, rheumatologists treat patients experiencing conditions such as arthritis, gout, lupus, osteoarthritis, and Sjogren's syndrome.

Unfortunately for Karen, working with her primary care provider to get a referral proved to be more difficult than expected. "I told them I wanted to see a provider with Memorial Health

System and they made the referral, but it just wasn't quick enough for me," Karen recounts. "I was in so much pain—my feet were three times their normal size and so swollen that I could hardly walk, and my hands were swollen enough that I couldn't even hold a fork—something had to be done." Taking matters into her own hands, Karen made the call to Memorial Health System's Department of Rheumatology herself and was



You couldn't ask for better people and you couldn't ask for better care."



**Karen Phalin**  
Rheumatology Patient

scheduled for an appointment within a week.

From her first appointment with Elyse Blackston, NP, Karen knew that she had made the best choice for her care. "Elyse knew that it was rheumatoid arthritis immediately," Karen recalls, but receiving care once again proved tricky for Karen.

"She wanted to put me on Humira shots as soon as possible," recalls Karen, "but Elyse told me it would probably take up to six weeks to get that prescription authorized." Knowing that her patient needed relief from her painful symptoms as soon as possible, Elyse and her team worked diligently to get Karen prior authorization for her medication. "I don't think I could've waited that long," Karen says, "so they really came through for me and advocated for me to get my medication that very day." Within days of receiving her prior authorization and starting treatments, Karen began experiencing relief from her symptoms.

It wasn't just her rapid diagnosis and treatment of symptoms that made Elyse

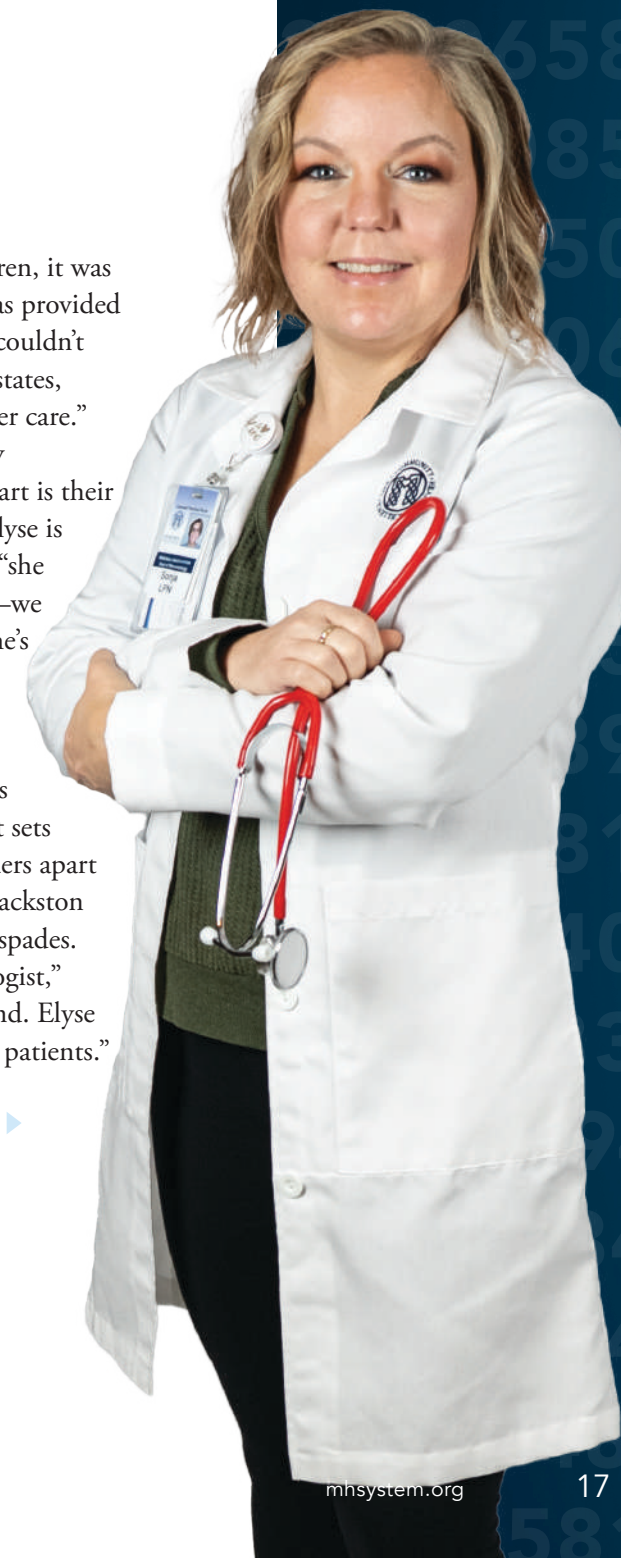
and her team stand out to Karen, it was also the caliber of care that was provided from day one onwards. "You couldn't ask for better people," Karen states, "and you couldn't ask for better care." For Karen though, what really set the rheumatology team apart is their attention to their patients. "Elyse is very personable," Karen says, "she takes her patients personally—we aren't just a number to her. She's always available and open to answering my text messages."

Exceptional communication is often an important factor that sets outstanding healthcare providers apart from their peers, and Elyse Blackston appears to have that down in spades. "She's not just my rheumatologist," explains Karen, "she's my friend. Elyse and her team care about their patients."

**Elyse Blackston, NP** ▶  
Rheumatology



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◀ **Janet Greathouse, RN** has been with Memorial Health System for 18 years. For 17 of those years, she has been a registered nurse, and her past seven with the system have involved working with our 24 Hour Nurse Line—a free service for individuals seeking healthcare advice. As a nurse with the Nurse Line, Janet’s responsibilities include offering healthcare advice to those calling the Nurse Line, as well as helping them determine the level of care they may need. It is through this part of the service that members of the Nurse Line often see the most impact—the guidelines they follow and the standard practices in place, along with nursing experience, can often result in lifesaving advice for patients.

According to Janet, life with the Nurse Line can be incredibly busy. “It can be a lot some days. To have upwards of 1,200 calls in a weekday isn’t unusual—between incoming and outgoing calls, those numbers really climb.”

One such encounter occurred recently for Janet, with a patient recounting his Nurse Line experience during a routine follow-up call with a different nurse on the team. This patient immediately brought up Janet and his recent interaction with her, stating, “She saved my life.” When asked about this patient encounter, Janet remembers that his symptoms were “textbook heart attack symptoms,” and that she “had no doubt that he was in the middle of a major cardiac event.”

This patient though had already sought care on two different occasions for similar symptoms, so he was hesitant to once again go see a provider. Janet was insistent though, “I triaged him and knew this was much more serious than he realized. I could tell just by talking to him that he was experiencing shortness of breath, and he described other typical heart attack symptoms such as chest and arm pain. His situation might not have been as dire the previous times he sought medical care, but this time was definitely different—he needed to seek help.”

In the end, Janet’s instincts and persistence saved this patient’s life, with him later recounting that because of her advice, he did go to the emergency department (ED) and was informed that he was having a major heart attack, one that ultimately resulted in needing three stents placed in his heart.

“Now,” Janet says, “he shares his experience with others and in a way, the 24 Hour Nurse Line continues to make an impact on the community through that patient.”

# THE MEAN-INGFUL IMPACT

of the 24 Hour Nurse Line

**“It’s usually those that really need to go to the ED that are the ones that don’t think it’ll be them,”**

recalls Janet. “I’m so grateful that this particular patient listened to my guidance and sought help—this is why I do what I do.”

This was not the only patient experience that has been shared with Janet. Recently, she was also reminded of an experience involving a concerned mother.

“This one,” Janet says, “this one is a story that really gets me. When I heard this story, it gave me cold chills from my neck to my toes.” The story in question being one recently shared with Janet after the patient on the other side of the phone recognized her voice. “I didn’t realize who it was at first,” Janet recalls, “but she recognized me immediately.” The caller was a mother of a young boy who received guidance from Janet the previous year.

**“When I answered the phone, she told me, ‘Jan, I’m so glad I got ahold of you! I think of you every day—you’re the reason we got a diagnosis for my son.’”**

The grateful mother then went on to explain to Janet that because of her insistence for the family to take the child to the emergency department, a leukemia diagnosis was uncovered.

“I remembered her situation,” Janet recalls. “The boy was only one or two years old, and he hadn’t been himself for days. His mother was worried because he had a lingering fever that was incredibly high—I think around 103-105 degrees—but she had taken him to an urgent care facility, and they said it just looked like he had a virus.”

The Nurse Line is fortunate enough to have many seasoned nurses, like Janet, on the team, so she knew that this wasn’t quite normal. “I insisted that she take him to the emergency department and request that they do a round of bloodwork on him.”

Labs aren’t always done on visits to the ED, especially on patients that young, but Janet knew that this needed to be completed. “I trusted my gut,” Janet states, “we have guidelines that we follow, but if I hadn’t been a nurse for so long, there’s a good chance I wouldn’t have insisted on labs.”

The results from the bloodwork were concerning, so the child was then sent to a children’s hospital—it was there that a diagnosis of leukemia was confirmed.

“He’s now three years old and undergoing treatment,” Janet shares, “but I can’t help but think about how differently this could’ve turned out if they hadn’t had labs done—it could’ve been weeks or months until that cancer was found.”

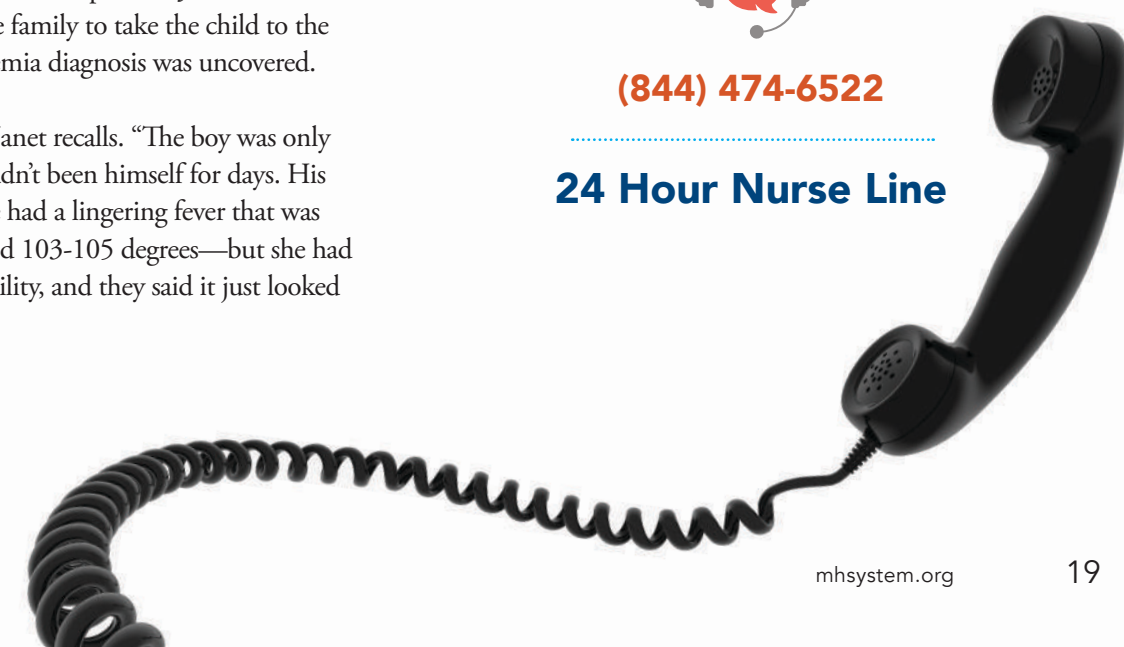
The 24 Hour Nurse Line is an incredibly valuable resource within our community, one that has provided lifesaving services to many patients, and it’s all thanks to the dedication, knowledge, and instincts of those answering the calls on a daily basis.

**Feeling Sick & Need Expert Advice?**



**(844) 474-6522**

**24 Hour Nurse Line**





# Neighbors Helping Neighbors

## A story of selfless giving and the power of living donation

When it comes to everyday selfless acts of kindness, many of us probably have similar stories—maybe you gave up your seat in a crowded room to someone who needed it more, or perhaps took some time out of your already busy schedule to help a coworker with a problem. Many of us are not making life-changing, life-altering decisions on a daily (or even monthly) basis. But for Memorial Health System (MHS) team member and Ambulatory Education Coordinator, Kristi Hadfield, her selfless act has not only directly impacted one life in a major way but has had a far-reaching impact that is still making waves on a national and international level.

In 2016, Kristi saved the life of John Cunningham, a Richie County, West Virginia, resident who walked into her local EMS station in need of serious medical intervention. John, experiencing a cardiac event, ultimately needed immediate CPR en route to the hospital, and Kristi was quick to jump into action. Continuously telling him, “Not today, John,” in the back of the ambulance, Kristi performed CPR to keep his blood circulating to his brain and other vital organs until they arrived at the emergency department. Through her life-saving act, Kristi created a connection with John and then later, his daughter, Molly.

“I like to check back in on my patients to see how they’re doing, and Molly wanted to thank the person who saved her father, so we connected on Facebook,” Kristi remarks.

In the years that followed, Kristi and Molly remained devoted Facebook friends—never actually meeting up in person, but occasionally sending well wishes back and forth.

It wasn’t until March 28, 2022, that Kristi really started to personally message Molly on social media, and that was only because Molly was in desperate need of a kidney donation.

“I had followed her journey on Facebook,” Kristi recalls, “and I knew that she was getting sicker and sicker.” Molly has a genetic kidney condition, one that ultimately led to her own mother needing a kidney donation, and her situation was deteriorating quickly. “She would’ve been gone by February,” Kristi shares, “and I knew this was what I was meant to do—I had a spare [kidney], and I wanted to help Molly.”

Knowing the need for a donation was a major possibility for Molly, Kristi had already been in contact with the necessary people before Molly had even made the donor list. “I think the most frustrating thing was the waiting. They don’t rush the process, so she had to wait until she was sick enough to be on the list. I wanted to be ready for when that happened, and when it did, I was immediately contacted.”

Once Molly was on the donor list, Kristi began to undergo extensive testing, both physical and psychological, to make sure she was a good fit as a donor.

“They want the best possible outcome for both the recipient and the donor,” Kristi emphasizes, “the Kidney Foundation really takes care of their living donors.”

It was this attention to her care that Kristi feels is an incredibly important part of the living donation process. “I had an advocate the entire time, and they made sure I had control throughout the process. They aren’t just pushing you towards donation and only seeing you as an organ—they fully support you and want you to make sure you have no doubts surrounding this incredibly important life decision.”

When asked about how she felt leading up to her operation, Kristi was earnest in her reply: “It was such a God thing—that’s why I felt such a peace about it all. That’s why John came into the station that day back in 2016—so I could help Molly.” Although it would be easy to say that their journey together ended on December 27, 2022, with a perfect and successful transplant, it was just the beginning for Kristi and Molly.

“Our mission now,” shares Kristi, “is to educate others about living donation. We want them to know that this is an option—you don’t have to die to help someone else live.” With so much stigma and apprehension surrounding the concept of living donations, Kristi and Molly see their story as an opportunity to spread the word together.

**“Over 100,000 people are waiting for kidney donations and 13 people die every day waiting, we want to see that number dramatically decrease through living donations.”** says Kristi.

Since their transplant, Kristi and Molly have had their story shared through various news outlets, with big names such as People Magazine, Good Morning America, and the Jennifer Hudson Show highlighting the inspiring tale. “It’s amazing,” Kristi says, “people keep reaching out asking questions and wondering how they can get involved.”

For Kristi though, it’s definitely more than just an opportunity for some publicity: “I’m not a hero, I’m a human that did what she could to help someone in need. Now, I have an extended family and the opportunity to see all of this come together. As a living donor, I’m blessed to see everything that’s happening in Molly’s life because I donated before I died. I get to see her thrive and live her life, and as wonderful as all of this has been for her, I think I have received even more blessings through it all.”





# Memorial Health Foundation

*raises nearly \$400,000 for Giving Tuesday Campaign*

Giving Tuesday, a global generosity movement that encourages people and organizations to give back to their communities and causes on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, was a successful day for Memorial Health Foundation. Driven by support from the community and sponsors, Memorial Health Foundation received an impressive \$398,544 from 250 generous donors.

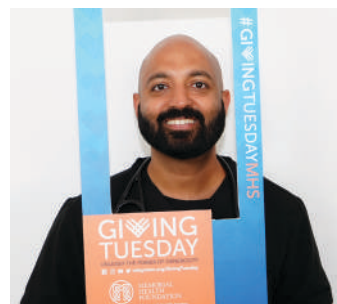
Jarrett Stull, Executive Director of Memorial Health Foundation, expressed his gratitude in response to the campaign's success. "The outpouring of support we received from our sponsors has made an incredible impact on our mission to provide world-class healthcare services to individuals in our community regardless of their ability to pay."

Throughout the day, local companies generously sponsored Power Hours and offered matching gifts, doubling the impact of every donation. Memorial Health Foundation would like to thank Morrison, Inc., Marietta Welfare League, Peoples Bank, Southeastern Ohio Credit Union, and West Virginia Central Federal Credit Union for their leadership in issuing challenges for our community to rally around.

All the funds raised during the day play a vital role in supporting Memorial Health Foundation's 30+ patient-centered caring initiatives. These initiatives are designed to enhance healthcare services and improve the lives of countless individuals in the community.



Memorial Health System team members and Tucker, Therapy Services dog



Joseph A. Zacharias, MD



Jarrett Stull, Executive Director of Memorial Health Foundation, and Family

To learn more about Memorial Health Foundation and how you can GIVE TODAY, visit [foundation.mhssystem.org](http://foundation.mhssystem.org).



SCAN  
NOW,  
LEARN  
MORE!

**\$398,544  
Raised**

**250  
Donors**

**30+ Patient  
Assistance  
Initiatives**

#GIVINGTUESDAYMHS

# Introducing the Memorial Health Society

Do you want to make a difference in the lives of your loved ones, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and community members? If so, we invite you to become a member of the prestigious Memorial Health Society, our Annual Giving Society at Memorial Health Foundation.

By giving \$1,000 or more to the Memorial Health Fund, you will have a direct impact on improving healthcare outcomes for our community members in need.

## Memorial Health Society Membership Benefits:



### Exclusive Newsletter

Receive a special newsletter from the desk of our CEO, delivered to your mailbox quarterly.



### "Lunch and Learn" Events

Join us as our esteemed doctors and hospital administration present valuable health and wellness tips and tricks over a delicious meal.



### Recognition and Appreciation

Your name will be listed on our website and other publications, demonstrating your dedication to the well-being of our community.

Your gift of \$1,000 or more provides patients in our community with:

- Transportation to and from appointments
- Lifesaving charity care
- Access to state-of-the-art medical equipment
- Free medication



## What is the Memorial Health Fund?

30+ Initiatives, One Mission: **Patient-Centered Care**

At the heart of our commitment to compassionate health-care lies the Memorial Health Fund. With more than 30 dedicated special patient assistance initiatives, this fund is a beacon of hope for patients within our community.

Supporting Patients: **Access to Care for All**

The Memorial Health Fund is a lifeline that ensures patients receive the care they deserve, irrespective of their ability to pay. These initiatives bridge gaps, eliminate barriers, and create a healthcare ecosystem that leaves no one behind.

Bringing Innovation Home: **World-Class Treatment**

Your support enables us to bring cutting-edge medical treatments and technologies to our local area. Through our Memorial Health Fund, we break boundaries and pave the way for world-class healthcare, right here at home.

## Contact Us

Have a question about the Memorial Health Society?

Contact our office at:

Phone: (740) 374-4913

Email: [foundation@mhssystem.org](mailto:foundation@mhssystem.org)

Mail: PO Box 112, Marietta, Ohio 45750

[mhssystem.org/Foundation](http://mhssystem.org/Foundation)





## LEARN

Do you know your 4 For More? 4 For More is the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC)’s four lifestyle practices that are proven to have many benefits to a person’s quality of life. Within four years of changing your lifestyle to abide by these four simple steps, you can have a 35% lower risk of heart attack or stroke.

What are EPIC’s four steps?

1. No smoking
2. A Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 or less
3. At least 30 minutes a day of physical activity
  - 30 minutes of exercise at least five days a week
  - 10,000 steps a day
4. A healthy diet that is high in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains as well as low consumption of meat.
  - Fruits and vegetables: five servings a day
  - Whole grains: two servings a day
  - Legumes (beans, peas, lentils): one cup a day

With EPIC’s 4, there is:

- 93% less risk of diabetes
- 81% less risk of a heart attack
- 50% less risk of a stroke
- 36% less risk of cancer
- 80% less risk of major chronic disease
- Increased life expectancy of approximately 14 years

Yet only 3% of Americans consistently practice EPIC’s 4 For More.

Along with EPIC’s 4 For More, Dr. Drozek recommends:

- Stress management
- Sleep - at least seven and a half hours each night

- Avoid Caffeine after 2 p.m.
- Minimize or eliminate alcohol
- Build loving relationships
- Do the 4 For More Steps with a buddy



## EAT

### Black Bean Sloppy Joe

**Serves:** Six

**Prep time:** 15 minutes

**Cook time:** 10 minutes

**Ingredients:**

- One sweet yellow onion, chopped
- One green bell pepper, diced
  - Or frozen pepper and onion blend, 12 oz size
- 1/3 cup of water
- 1-15 oz can of no or low sodium black beans (can substitute pinto or kidney)
  - Or soak ½ cup dry beans the night before and simmer for 1 ½ hours or until beans are soft
- 8 oz can no or low sodium tomato sauce
- ⅓ cup quick-cooking oatmeal (do not cook, put in dry)
- One tbsp low sodium soy sauce
- ½ tbsp prepared mustard of your choice (i.e. Dijon, Honey-Mustard, Stone-ground)
- If need to sweeten try 1 tsp of honey or pure maple syrup (not pancake syrup)
- One tsp chili powder
- Whole-wheat buns or bread, or Ezekiel bread

**Directions:**

Place chopped onion and pepper in a saucepan with water. Cook, stirring frequently, until veggies soften—about five or so minutes.

Meanwhile, mash beans with a potato masher. Do not put in a blender as you want them a little chunky and not as smooth.

Add mashed beans and all other ingredients into the pot with onion and pepper, except for the buns. Cook over low heat until all is heated through—about five minutes or so.

Serve on buns, or open face on a slice of Ezekiel bread, with a choice of condiments: lettuce, tomatoes, more onion, non-sweet pickles or relish, and mustard. Also served well over whole grain toast, pasta, or potatoes.



## MOVE

### Benefits of Tai Chi

Tai Chi is a form of exercise that began as a Chinese tradition. It’s based in martial arts and involves slow movements and deep breathing. Tai Chi has many physical and emotional benefits such as:

**Reduces Stress**

Tai Chi includes meditation and focused breathing, thus can help with stress and anxiety.

**Improves Cognition**

Tai Chi may help improve memory and executive functioning skills like paying attention!

**Promotes Weight Loss**

Healthy exercise is always a bonus for improving your quality of life!

### Reduces Risk of Falling in Older Adults

Tai Chi can improve balance and motor function and reduce the fear of falling.

### Reduces Pain from Arthritis

Always talk to your doctor before beginning Tai Chi if you have arthritis. You may need modified versions of the movements.

*Information provided by the Health Library.*




## SHARE

Looking for more ways to live a healthier life? Check out our LiveMemorialWell page.



## Creating Healthy Habits for the New Year



**David Drozek, DO**  
Lifestyle Medicine

**LISTEN NOW**  
[mhsystem.org/MemorialHealthRadio](https://mhsystem.org/MemorialHealthRadio)



# Tips For A Healthy Heart

from a Mayo Clinic cardiologist

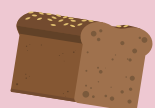
With access to quick information and constant updates on medical advancements, it's easy to get overwhelmed by how you can take steps toward a healthier and happier you.

When it comes to your heart, Mayo Clinic cardiologist Francisco Lopez-Jimenez, MD states that prevention through diet and exercise can be a positive change for your physical wellbeing.

## Tips and strategies for a heart-healthy diet



Eat more vegetables and fruits for vitamins, minerals, and heart health.



Select whole grains for fiber and nutrients.



Choose healthy fats.



Choose low-fat proteins, including lean meat, poultry, fish, and legumes.



Plan daily menus emphasizing vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean proteins, and good fats.



Control portion sizes to manage calorie intake.



Reduce salt intake to lower blood pressure.



Enjoy occasional treats in moderation without derailing your healthy eating plan.



As a member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network, Memorial Health System has special access to Mayo Clinic resources that can be shared with our patients and community.

# Welcome New Providers



**Geoffrey R. Cousins, MD, FACS**  
Cardiology

"One of the most exciting things about moving to the Mid-Ohio Valley is the opportunity to bring the beating heart platform to this community. We have had such great success with this platform, and we are excited to be able to offer this technology to the region."



**Peter Filozof, MD**  
Obstetrics and Gynecology

"There's a great sense of community here. Literally anywhere you go you see patients you know and babies you've delivered, and I can't think of anything more amazing than that."



**Leandrea Squires, NP**  
Bariatric and General Surgery

"As a nurse practitioner, I value being able to create a trusting, collaborative relationship with both my patient and their family. To be able to create a positive impact and see the patient take an active role in their health journey is very rewarding to me."



**Melissa Hutchinson, PA-C**  
Obstetrics and Gynecology

"I get to know my patients so that I can offer the most individualized care I can. I see patients of every age—from adolescents to elderly—so I see that their needs change year after year, and me being able to adapt my focus to each woman's needs that particular visit is my goal."



Call our referral line at  
**(740) 568-5241**



**FIND A PROVIDER**

Are you looking for a new provider? Visit our new and improved 'Find a Provider' search function on our website! Search by location, specialty, provider rating, and more.

[mhsystem.org/FindAProvider](https://mhsystem.org/FindAProvider)

## Pediatric EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT NOW OPEN



[mhsystem.org/EmergencyCare](https://mhsystem.org/EmergencyCare)



**Belpre Medical Campus**

## Sistersville General Hospital is currently hiring Registered Nurses!

- Different options to fit your desired schedule
- \$18,000 sign-on bonuses for full-time positions
- Comprehensive and competitive benefits package for full-time employees



Scan the QR code to apply now!







**Belpre Emergency Department** team members held a food drive that collected 1,400 items! Donations were then donated to the Belpre Area Ministries (BAM).  
Way to go, team!



**Welcome the October 2023 Nurse Residency Cohort** that includes 12 nurses representing multiple departments at Marietta Memorial Hospital. This next year will be spent building these nurses both professionally and clinically!



**Jason Reed, DO** from our Department of Orthopedics in Athens, Ohio, donated 213 turkeys for families in need.



**A Wrap on Matter of Balance for 2023**  
Community members learned the clinically proven skills needed to reduce the fear of falling in one of our last Matter of Balance classes before the new year!



**The first annual MammoFest** was such a fun way to embrace early detection and lifesaving knowledge. Two of our breast health experts, Dr. Bhati and Jane Kessler, RN, OCN, CN-BN, led conversations on the importance of breast health for those in attendance.



**Stop the Bleed** team members visited The Vinton County School's Rapid Response Team to lead a Stop the Bleed training session! Stop The Bleed helps prepare people on how to stop traumatic bleeding before professional help arrives.

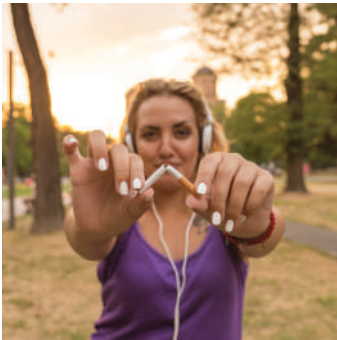


**Megan Fryman, RN** on our Women and Newborn Unit brought some extra cheer and joy to our patients and team members with her free-hand painting! The month was extra special because Megan's son, Knox, is a December baby!



CLASSES

**Facebook Live Exercise Classes**  
Memorial Health System Facebook Page (@mhsystem)  
Every Friday  
11 - 11:45 a.m.  
Classes can be found anytime in the "Videos" section under the playlist: "Move!" on our Facebook page.



**Freedom From Smoking (FFS)**  
The FFS program provides a variety of evidence-based tools and techniques to help you set a quit date, build a quit plan, and become tobacco-free! To learn more about our in person and virtual class options call (740) 541-2714.

**Group Exercise Classes**  
Frontier Shopping Center  
148 Gross Street, Suite A  
Marietta, Ohio  
Call (740) 568-5380 for information or additional class details.  
Cost: \$10 per month (unlimited) or \$5 drop-in fee per class.  
Variety Class (Intermediate/Advanced):  
Mondays and Wednesdays; 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.  
Tai Chi Easy (Beginner-friendly):  
Mondays and Wednesdays; 9:45 - 10:30 a.m.  
*\*Variety classes include strength/body weight training, pound, Zumba, yoga, flexibility, and more!*

**More Than a Makeover**  
Belpre Medical Campus  
807 Farson Street  
Belpre, Ohio (1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room)  
February 19; 10 a.m. - Noon  
Call (740) 423-3617 or (740) 568-5632 for more information.

SCREENINGS

**Free Community Health Screenings**  
Frontier Shopping Center  
148 Gross Street, Suite A,  
Marietta, Ohio  
8:30 - 10:30 a.m.  
Have your blood sugar, blood pressure, and weight checked for free!  
Walk-ins are welcome and no appointment is needed!  
Call (740) 568-5232 for more information.



**Heart Month Screening**  
EKG & Blood Pressure  
Belpre Medical Campus  
803 Farson Street  
Tuesday, February 13  
5 - 7 p.m.  
Call (740) 568-4731 to RSVP.

**Mobile MedCheck**  
John Dodge Senior Center  
Beverly, Ohio  
Every second Thursday  
9 a.m. - Noon  
Lower Salem Village Hall  
Every fourth Tuesday  
9 a.m. - Noon  
Free community health screenings including blood sugar, blood pressure, and weight checks.

SUPPORT GROUPS

**Bariatric Education & Support**  
Call (740) 434-0565 for information about support groups and educational sessions.

**Cancer Support Group**  
Belpre Medical Campus  
807 Farson Street  
Belpre, Ohio (1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room)  
Last Thursday of each month | 1 - 2 p.m.  
Call (740) 401-0257 or (740) 568-5632 for more information and for the updated schedule of sessions.



**Diabetes Education Center Classes & Support Groups**  
Belpre Medical Campus  
803 Farson Street, Suite 100  
Belpre, Ohio  
Individual counseling, group classes, and dietitian visits for people with diabetes and their families.  
Please call (740) 568-1702 for more information.

**Sweet & Sour Club: Diabetes Youth Support Group**  
Diabetes Education Center  
February 20 | 6 - 7 p.m.  
March 19 | 6 - 7 p.m.  
Call (740) 568-1702 for information on meetings, gatherings, and other special events! FREE to participate!

**Head and Neck Cancer Education/Support Services**  
Belpre Medical Campus  
807 Farson Street, Belpre, Ohio (1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room)  
March 12 | 1 - 2 p.m.  
Call (740) 568-5632 for more information.

**Sleep Apnea Support Group**  
Broughton Health Center  
210 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Suite 100  
Every third Tuesday  
5:30 - 7 p.m.  
Call (740) 568-5310 for more information.

**Stroke Support Group**  
Selby General Hospital  
Conference Room  
Marietta, Ohio  
February 13 | 5 p.m.  
March 12 | 5 p.m.  
Please call (740) 374-1463 for details.

EVENTS

**Go Red for Women Heart Month Luncheon**  
Broughton Community Building, Marietta, Ohio  
Friday, February 9  
11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.



**Havana Nights**  
The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Memorial Health Foundation Fashion Show  
Dyson-Baudo Recreation Center at Marietta College  
Friday, April 12, 2024  
Visit [mhsystem.org/FashionShow](https://mhsystem.org/FashionShow) for more information.

**Memorial Health System Golf Outing**  
Marietta Country Club  
Friday, May 17  
For more information contact Memorial Health Foundation at 740.374.4913 or [foundation@mhsystem.org](mailto:foundation@mhsystem.org).

**Doctors Day**  
Join us March 30<sup>th</sup>! Follow us on Facebook to see how you can support your local providers.

**REGISTER TODAY**

[mhsystem.org/Events](https://mhsystem.org/Events)

SCAN NOW, LEARN MORE!

To see a full list of events, screenings, support groups, & classes, visit [mhsystem.org/Events](https://mhsystem.org/Events).

*Please note: Scheduled events are subject to change based on circumstances. Call the listed contact if you would like to know if the activity is still taking place.*



SAVE THE DATE

MEMORIAL HEALTH SYSTEM

GOLF OUTING

When: **Friday, May 17**  
Where: **Marietta Country Club**





MEMORIAL  
HEALTH SYSTEM

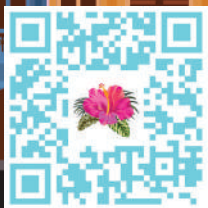
Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Marietta, Ohio  
Permit N. 52



# HAVANA

*Nights* THE 19<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEMORIAL HEALTH FOUNDATION  
*Fashion Show*

Friday | April 12, 2024



MEMORIAL  
HEALTH  
FOUNDATION

Memorial Health System