WE SURVIVED
COVID-19
Memorial Hospital Belleville COVID-19 Survivors Share Their Stories
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A Message from the President

First, I want to take this opportunity to recognize Mark J. Turner, who retired in April, after serving Memorial for 16 years. You will read about Mark’s legacy at Memorial and in the community on pages 4-9 in this issue. I personally want to thank Mark for his service and friendship and wish he and Mary Ann all the best as they begin a new chapter in their lives.

As I look back to February 24, which was the day I assumed the role as Memorial’s president, who would have known what the first several months had in store? COVID-19 forced all of us to adapt to a variety of personal and professional changes in our lives.

And, while we continue to adapt to what likely will be our new normal, it is important to remain vigilant in safe practices (masking, handwashing, social distancing, etc.) to keep you, your family and friends, as well as our region healthy.

I am very proud of our team as Memorial cared for most of the COVID-19 patients in the region. This took tremendous teamwork and resiliency by all our staff. Two of our first COVID-19 patients share their stories starting on page 22 in this issue. Both credit the exceptional care given by the Memorial team for their recoveries.

Understandably, much of our attention and focus this year has been on COVID-19 issues, but we cannot lose sight of those patients and families who seek our care for other health issues such as diabetes and heart disease, the birth of a baby, a broken bone, etc.

This issue of Insights & Outlooks also features stories about the opening of Siteman Cancer Center on the campus of Memorial Hospital East. Siteman opened in January 2020 and in June was recognized as a top U.S. cancer institution being ranked as exceptional by the National Cancer Institute. You can read more about this ranking as well as how the community has embraced the Siteman Cancer Center on the Memorial Hospital East campus on pages 12-13.

You also will read about Maria Matthews, one of our occupational therapy assistants, and how she along with volunteers help improve the lives of others with the help of horses.

In closing, I feel compelled to acknowledge another growing public health issue in our country—social justice. Understanding racial biases is paramount to the safety of our community, patients, and staff. To that end, Memorial started racial/social justice peer support groups at both hospitals in order to facilitate positive change through understanding and collaboration.

As we approach year end, I give thanks to our patients who continue to place their trust in us for healthcare services. This is something we don’t take for granted. It is something we take very seriously and continuously seek opportunities to improve upon what we do. I also give thanks for our employees, Medical Staff, and volunteers who are dedicated to our mission of providing exceptional healthcare and compassionate service. I&O

Best wishes for a blessed and happy holiday season,

Mike
Dr. William Casperson receives Physician Excellence Award

Dr. William Casperson received the Matthew B. Eisele Physician Excellence Award at Memorial Regional Health Services’ annual Medical Staff Dinner in February.

Dr. Casperson was chosen from among 19 nominations submitted by employees, peers, Auxiliary, and board members.

This award was established in 2007 to recognize a physician on Memorial’s Medical Staff who exemplifies dedication to medicine, delivery of quality care, and a commitment to the community. The nominee also should inspire others to provide quality service and a high level of care; demonstrate clinical excellence, as well as caring and compassionate communication to patients, families, and hospital staff; model teamwork; be responsive to the needs of patients, families, and staff; support Memorial as well as its mission and values, and set a positive example for others.

In addition to Dr. Casperson, nominees included Drs. Syed Abdul-Aziz, Muhammad Jaffer Ansari, Muhammad Asghar, James Boivin, D. Scott Crouch, Douglas Dothager, Matthew Koch, Edward Kuntz, Susan Laduzinsky, Wendy MacLean, Jennifer Neville, David Nyquist, David O’Neill, Hayden Smith, Michelle VanDorn, Anandhalakshmi Varadharajan, Andrea Volkerding, and Srinivasarao Yaganti.

Past recipients include:
2017-18 Dr. Randy Freeman
2016 Dr. Hans Moosa
2015 Dr. Bill Daily
2014 Dr. Douglas Dothager
2013 Dr. Omer Badahman
2012 Dr. Duk Kim
2011 Dr. Stuart March (posthumous)
2010 Dr. James Clanahan
2009 Dr. Brad Ringhofer
2008 Dr. Jay Haines
2007 Dr. James Vest

The Matthew B. Eisele, M.D. Physician Excellence Award is named for Memorial’s first medical director. Prior to serving as Memorial’s medical director, Dr. Eisele was an obstetrician/gynecologist in the community for 22 years. He was instrumental in shaping the medical director’s role into the key position it is today—a liaison between the board of directors, Medical Staff, and administration.

Dr. William Casperson
Receives Physician Excellence Award

Compassionate Care

Dr. William Casperson, who served as Memorial’s chief medical officer since 2008, retired early this year. Prior to joining Memorial, Dr. Casperson was a general surgeon in Belleville for 20 years and served as medical director at St. Elizabeth’s Hospital. He was instrumental in developing a robust leadership structure for Memorial’s Medical Staff over the past 12 years as well as in helping Memorial achieve excellent results for patient care and performance.

Dr. Randy Freeman, an anesthesiologist with Anesthesia Associates of Belleville (1991-2020) and immediate past president of the Memorial Hospital Belleville Medical Staff has assumed the role of Memorial’s chief medical officer. Prior to joining Anesthesia Associates of Belleville, Dr. Freeman served as staff anesthesiologist at Mercy Medical Center in St. Louis and Scott & White Memorial Hospital in Temple, Texas.

Dr. Randy Freeman Assumes Role of Chief Medical Officer

Memorial Foundation, Inc. · 3

Medical Staff Distinguished Service Award

Hayden B. Smith, MD, was posthumously awarded the Medical Staff Distinguished Service Award in recognition of distinguished service to Memorial Regional Health Services, Inc. for providing professional and compassionate care to his patients and serving as a teacher and friend to staff members.

Although Dr. Smith was not at Memorial for a long time, he made a lasting impact with his colleagues and staff as well as the patients and families he cared for.

Dr. Smith, who served as Memorial’s assistant emergency department director, unexpectedly passed away in April 2019.

Staff noted that he always went above and beyond to help his patients. He was always willing to take time to explain things and to go the extra mile. He educated not only his patients but the staff as well.

Dr. Randy Freeman Assumes Role of Chief Medical Officer

Dr. Freeman grew up in Belleville and aspired to be a geotechnical engineer, receiving his Master of Science from the University of Illinois before deciding to pursue his medical degree at Texas A&M University.
With a lengthy list of accomplishments to his credit during his 16 years at the helm of Memorial Regional Health Services, Mark J. Turner, who retired in early 2020, said his most memorable are the relationships he made here.

“My most memorable moments have included the openings of Memorial East, Siteman Cancer Center at East, and completing the strategic affiliation with BJC HealthCare,” Turner said. “However, I think I will remember most the relationships with employees, patients, physicians, Auxilians, and community and board members. I am amazed at what the Memorial/BJC team has accomplished.”

“Mark introduced numerous ideas to the hospital and has been successful implementing them,” said Thomas G. Barnett, who was chairman of the Memorial Group, Inc. board from 2000-2007 and served on the selection committee when Turner was hired in 2004.

One of those ideas was pursuing Magnet® designation, and under his leadership, Memorial Hospital Belleville and Memorial Care Center received their first Magnet designations for nursing excellence in 2008. They have had two subsequent re-designations as well as the initial Magnet designation of Memorial Hospital East in 2018. Only 6% of hospitals nationwide receive this designation. To learn more about Magnet recognition, see the story on page 9.
During his tenure at Memorial, Turner led significant growth including:

**A legacy that will be remembered**

Turner joined Memorial in 2004 as chief operating officer before being named president and CEO in 2006. He was just the third president in Memorial’s 62-year history. Before joining Memorial, Turner was vice president of operations for Catawba Valley Medical Center in Hickory, North Carolina.

“Memorial was a very attractive opportunity because it offered the ability to have greater influence on the health status of the community,” he said, reflecting on what attracted him to Memorial. “It was a natural progression in responsibility as well as career growth. I found the community very welcoming and I was inspired by the board members’ dedication to Belleville and to St. Clair County.”

Les Mehrtens, Protestant Memorial Medical Center honorary board member and former Memorial Group board chair, said he knew from the initial interview with the board that Turner was the right person to lead Memorial forward.

“I was totally impressed,” Mehrtens said. “His personality, leadership skills, and very important people skills were evident from the get go.”

Barnett, who also was part of the interview committee, echoed Mehrtens’ remarks, saying Turner exceeded his initial expectations and has done an excellent job managing change, especially through some difficult times.

“He had to manage a very challenging situation with physician recruitment while maintaining a profitable operation,” Barnett noted. “He has done an excellent job and has helped the hospital grow in reputation, size, and quality.”

Randy Ganim, past president of Memorial Group, Inc. and a current member of the Memorial Regional Health Services board, also served on the interview committee. He cited Turner’s physician relationships when reflecting on his career at Memorial.

“Things that come to mind to describe Mark’s career at Memorial are his organizational leadership, community involvement/participation, and physician relationships,” Ganim said. “I believe Mark developed strong physician relationships and trust.”

A highly respected community leader, Turner reinvested his precious time to a variety of local boards and organizations, including the boards of the Leadership Council of Southwestern Illinois, McKendree University, and Greater St. Louis Council of the Boy Scouts of America. He also served on the Belle-Scott Committee, Illinois Hospital Association Board, and the Regional Policy Board for the American Hospital Association.

He has been recognized for his community involvement and received the 2010 Distinguished Citizen Award from the Lewis and Clark Council and the 2011 Citizen of Character Award from the city of Belleville. This past January, Turner was named Citizen of the Year by the Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce.

“Mark’s legacy will long endure along with all the friendships he forged throughout the Metro East,” said Tom Holloway, a member of the Memorial Hospital East board of directors and former Memorial Foundation, Inc. · 5 CONTINUED ON PAGE 6
Group chair who also was on the selection committee.

When asked what he would miss most about Memorial and the community, Turner said, “This is an easy question to answer. I will miss the people and the relationships we’ve developed.”

He was inspired by seeing how the employees worked together every day to exceed the expectations of our patients and their families.

In addition to the people and friendships he developed here, Turner said he will definitely miss the Cardinals games, the MUNY, Blues games, and all that St. Louis and the Metro East have to offer.

“I will definitely remain a Cardinals fan,” he said. “We will follow the team, and we plan to come back on occasion and catch a game or two or three.”

Turner also was very proud of Memorial’s Auxiliary. He often talked about having the second largest hospital Auxiliary in Illinois and was so thankful for their generous support—whether it be their time or their financial contribution to the hospital.

**So, what now?**

“So many members of our family reside in the Southeast, and many of our hobbies and interests are available there,” said Turner, who plans to relocate to South Carolina at some point. He is originally from central Florida.

He and his wife, Mary Ann, enjoy hiking, cycling, and spending time on the beach. “Of course, anyone that knows us understands that we plan to spend as much time with our four wonderful grandchildren as is reasonably possible,” he said.

Turner always said that working in healthcare is a calling…a calling to help others and each other.

“I am and will always be forever thankful for the opportunity to serve Memorial and the community in this role for so many years,” Turner concluded. “It has been an honor, and I have not taken it lightly.”

When asked what he would miss most about Memorial and the community, Turner said, “This is an easy question to answer. I will miss the people and the relationships we’ve developed.”
Reflections from Auxiliary Past Presidents

“Mr. Turner’s career at Memorial has been one of almost constant change with the establishment of Memorial East, many building projects, affiliation with BJC, renovations, and Siteman Cancer Center. These necessitated changes and/or additions to personnel and some restructuring. This was further accelerated by changes and regulations in the medical and hospital fields plus the concern of financial stability. I am sure he will be remembered for the many ‘brick and mortar’ projects and the affiliation with BJC. He also worked to keep Memorial a first-class medical facility in the community. This is evidenced by things like being a Magnet® hospital and good ratings and evaluations of care provided in the community.”

“Following long-time CEOs can present a problem, so I think he tried to keep the traditions of Memorial in his mind as changes were happening. I always found him cooperative as I participated on state volunteer activities and committees. He served on the state board of the Illinois Health and Hospital Association for several years. He tried to keep the Auxiliary informed of the hospital’s growth, changes, and activities. He realized how much the Auxiliary had done for Memorial Hospital through the years. He was always complimentary at meetings.”

—Pearl Spies

“Mark Turner’s career at Memorial has been one of impeccable dedication to the highest standard of medical care in times of turbulent misconceptions of the medical realm. His legacy will be one of confidently implementing forward-thinking programs and projects—not the least of which will include Memorial Hospital East and the Siteman Cancer Center in Shiloh, Illinois. As the wife of a staff physician who worked side by side with my husband, I found Mr. Turner to be compassionate yet fair. Dealing more closely with Mark as the Auxiliary president, I learned that the person I had once thought to be intimidating (most probably due to his tall, imposing stature and starched white shirts), was actually a kind, caring, down-to-earth man always willing to listen to new ideas and offer honest opinions. He has been the Auxiliary’s most ardent cheerleader. He will be sorely missed.”

—Becky Olroyd

“I would say his career at Memorial has been very successful but challenging; however, he never lost sight that it took management plus all employees and Auxilians to accomplish our goals to be an outstanding hospital. He will be remembered for the construction of The Orthopedic and Neurosciences Center, Memorial East, and Siteman Cancer Center as well as cosmetic upgrades to Memorial Belleville, Memorial Care Center renovation, and, of course, joining BJC. He also will be remembered because he was friendly with the employees and always quick to greet them with a smile. He appreciated the Auxiliary. He supported the Auxiliary in its present and past activities and accomplishments, never passing an opportunity to thank them for what they mean and give to the hospital. When I think of Mark, many times I think of Mark and Mary Ann as one. They are a love-filled giving couple always thinking of others.”

“Just a side note: When I asked a former employee what she remembered about Mark and his time at Memorial she had a grin on her face and said, ‘I remember when he first came, many of the employees had four words to describe him—tall, dark, handsome, and well-dressed.’”

—Jean Joseph

Reflections from Board Members

“Mark has had a wonderful career at Memorial Hospital, leading the hospital and successfully dealing with the many challenges which face today’s healthcare industry. Mark is simply a great guy, and we have been blessed to have him as a leader at Memorial Hospital, as well as in our community. A doctor at Memorial told me that Mark is the type of person who will stop and speak with everyone at the hospital, and it does not matter to Mark whether you hold a scalpel or a broom in your hand—he treats everybody the same.”

—Kurt Schroeder, Memorial Hospital East board chairman

“You exceeded every expectation during your tenure as Memorial’s president and CEO. Your work ethic, positive spirit, and faith-based leadership produced an environment in which Memorial experienced historic gains in patient and employee satisfaction, not to mention the rapid growth of Memorial’s physical plant in both Belleville and Shiloh. You were approachable by all, caring deeply for the good health and well-being of Memorial’s patients and their families. The same is very true of your relationship with Memorial employees. You always approached your work with a spirit of fairness and a strong belief in the importance and meaningful contributions of each and every employee. Your legacy will long endure along with all the friendships you forged throughout the Metro East through your outstanding community involvement.”

—Tom Holloway, Memorial Hospital East board of directors and former Memorial Group chair

“Obviously, the transformation of Memorial from a one-hospital facility to a hospital with specialization in orthopedics and neurosciences to a two-hospital facilities provider to a relationship with the leading healthcare provider in our area certainly has to be a legacy that Mark and...
his leadership will be remembered for. I believe that Mark’s leadership at Memorial would be remembered as positioning and preparing Memorial to be able to provide exceptional healthcare into the next decade and beyond.”

—Randy Ganim, member Memorial Regional Health Services, Inc. and BJC HealthCare boards and past board chair of Memorial Group, Inc.

“He has accomplished all of the changes leading the hospital in a very professional manner and has built a very good reputation in the community building key relationships with a variety of people. Despite all the changes, he has continued to maintain a consistent approach to managing all the challenges facing the hospital. We were very fortunate to identify and hire a true professional to lead Memorial Hospital over 16 years ago, and I wish him and Mary Ann the best as they transition to the new chapter in their life.”

—Thomas G. Barnett, former Memorial Group board chairman

“Leading Memorial forward with Memorial East and the affiliation with BJC. Memorial would not exist as a stand-alone hospital today had it not been for the relationship developed with BJC. As a director and friend, I will miss our working relationship. I wish him and Mary Ann the best retirement a person could have with a long-lasting life to spend with their family, especially those grandchildren.”

—Les Mehrtens, past board chair Memorial Group and Protestant Memorial Medical Center (PMMC)

“Mark’s career at Memorial Hospital has been focused on building community. His leadership style was to solicit many opinions and ideas prior to pursuing a new initiative. This process was important in assuring everyone was invested in executing the plan. In particular, I think his roundtable discussions with employees and board retreats were critical in building the sense of community here at Memorial. For me, this reinforced the feeling of the Memorial team as a family. This sense of our Memorial community as a family is part of what makes working here special. I think Mark Turner was a critical influence in solidifying this sense, using his style to build on what had been started here years ago.”

—Kevin Baumer, MD, president of Memorial Hospital East Medical Staff and board member

“When Mark Turner became president of Memorial Hospital approximately 14 years ago, he was only the third person to hold that title in the 50-plus years of Memorial’s history. Memorial was, and is, a highly respected and proud community hospital, which arose from the vision and commitment of local business and community leaders to start and grow a local hospital in the 1950s.”

“As Mark assumed the leadership of Memorial, he was challenged with many changes as well as attacks on the medical industry, especially as it related to independent community hospitals. With Mark’s leadership, Memorial addressed the issues facing Memorial and the industry.”

“During his tenure as president of Memorial, Mark was able to accomplish many significant milestones. Mark not only built a new hospital but also managed the merger with one of the largest and most respected hospital networks in the region, BJC. That merger allows Memorial to better meet the current and future challenges of the medical industry and to continue to meet the needs of the communities it serves.”

“Mark has proven to be an effective leader, a visionary, a person who understands and addresses the challenges to the medical industry. He is respected by the Medical Staff and has proven to be a great ambassador for Memorial as he represents the hospital and its values with the highest degree of professionalism in the community.”

—Les Mehrtens, past board chair Memorial Group and Protestant Memorial Medical Center (PMMC)

“Even with all the demands for his time, Mark always made time to explain any issue or question I might have regarding Memorial and the medical industry.”

“I consider Mark a friend and wish him all the best as he moves into the next chapter of his life. (Hope he makes time to lower his golf handicap!)”

—Roland Thouvenot, board chair Memorial Group, Inc. and past board chair Memorial Foundation, Inc.

“Under his stewardship Memorial has had tremendous growth and success. Mark’s leadership will be greatly missed, but his positive impact on Memorial and our community will carry on for decades to come.”

—Ed Hoening, board member Memorial Group, PMMCI, and Memorial Foundation, past PMMCI board chair

Reflections from Elected Officials

“Mark has been a great leader for Memorial and for this region. His vision to advance healthcare has afforded area residents with greater access to high-quality services. He has been an active community partner over the past 16 years, and I certainly appreciate all that he’s done to improve the quality of life for this area. Under his leadership, Memorial has made significant investments in this region including the $25-million Orthopedic and Neurosciences Center on their Belleville campus, $124-million Memorial Hospital East, and almost $60 million for two medical office buildings on the Shiloh campus.”

—Mark Kern, St. Clair County board chairman
“Mark Turner began his career in Belleville in 2004, the same year in which I became mayor for the city of Belleville. We have always had good communication and a good relationship. As mayor of Belleville, I have the privilege of working with many CEOs of large businesses, and Mark Turner’s leadership in Belleville stands out because of his excellent communication! Mark and I have met on many occasions to discuss vision, growth, and concerns of both Memorial Hospital and the city of Belleville. Mark Turner has shown he cares and has been a great community partner. In the last several months as Mark Turner has been preparing for retirement, he has continued to meet with myself and others to develop programs that will help individuals advance their careers and strengthen working-class families in our community.”

—Mark Eckert, mayor of Belleville

“I think since Mark arrived at Memorial, he has been moving the hospital forward in a very positive way with all of the expansion projects he has managed to put forth. I believe Mark will be remembered most for aligning Memorial with highly recognized BJC HealthCare as well as the opening of Memorial East in Shiloh and the other expansion he has brought forth, namely Siteman Cancer Center. I, for one, will always appreciate this addition to our community. I have enjoyed meeting Mark through the years and hearing the exciting projects the hospital has been working on. He has always been a very pleasant individual, and I will miss seeing him. I wish Mark well in his next chapter of life, God speed.”

—Jim Vernier, mayor of Shiloh

What Is Magnet® Recognition?

Magnet recognition is part of the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s (ANCC) Recognition Program®. This voluntary credentialing program for hospitals recognizes excellence in nursing and is the highest honor an organization can receive for professional nursing practice.

Magnet recognition has become the gold standard for nursing excellence and is taken into consideration when the public judges healthcare organizations.

To achieve initial Magnet recognition, organizations must pass a rigorous and lengthy process that demands widespread participation from leadership and staff. The process begins with the submission of an electronic application, followed by written documentation demonstrating qualitative and quantitative evidence regarding patient care and outcomes. If scores from the written documentation fall within a range of excellence, an on-site visit will occur to thoroughly assess the applicant. After this rigorous on-site review process, the Commission on Magnet will review the completed appraisal report and vote to determine whether Magnet recognition will be granted.

An organization seeking to reapply for Magnet recognition must provide documented evidence of how Magnet concepts, performance, and quality were sustained and improved over the four-year period since the hospital received its initial recognition.

In particular, the Magnet model is designed to provide a framework for nursing practice, research, and measurement of outcomes. Through this framework, ANCC can assess applicants across a number of components and dimensions to gauge an organization’s nursing excellence.

The foundation of this model is composed of various elements deemed essential to delivering superior patient care. These include the quality of nursing leadership and coordination and collaboration across specialties, as well as processes for measuring and improving the quality and delivery of care.

Memorial has the only Magnet-designated hospitals in the Metro East.
Mike McManus Named President of Memorial Regional Health Services

Michael McManus, who served as chief operating officer at Memorial since 2012, was named president of Memorial Regional Health Services, Inc. on February 24.

“As only the fourth president of Memorial, it is such a great honor to join this elite group of those who held this position before me,” said McManus. “Memorial has a rich history and great reputation. I look forward to working with the team and the community to continue the tradition of excellence people have come to expect from Memorial.”

“I am excited about Memorial being BJC’s presence in Southern Illinois and our ability to offer convenient, close-to-home access to world-class medicine right here in our communities,” he added. “The addition of Siteman Cancer Center and having pediatricians from St. Louis Children’s Hospital in our emergency departments are just two examples.”

McManus succeeds Mark J. Turner, who announced his plans last fall to retire in the spring of 2020 after 16 years at Memorial and over 30 years working in the healthcare industry.

Prior to joining Memorial in 2012, McManus was chief operating officer at Touchette Regional Hospital in Centreville, Illinois. He also held positions with Kenneth Hall Regional Hospital in East St. Louis, Illinois; HBE Corporation in St. Louis, Missouri; Moses Cone Health System in Greensboro, North Carolina; Unity-St. Clement Health Services in Red Bud, Illinois; and ASC Health System in O’Fallon, Illinois. He began his career as assistant director of the Hospital Council of Western and Central Michigan.

McManus decided to pursue a career in healthcare at the encouragement of his older sister and brother-in-law. “They both worked in healthcare and told me to check it out,” he said. “I did and haven’t looked back.”

McManus earned both his master’s degree in public health and his bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Missouri – Columbia.

He currently serves on the boards of Midwest Stone Technologies, the Esquiline Center at the Shrine of our Lady of the Snows, and Belleville Chamber of Commerce, where he served as president in 2019 and is a member of the Chamber Executive Committee. He is a past board member of the Illinois Hospital Association and IHA PAC. McManus is past chair of the Saint Louis Metropolitan Hospital Council and has served on various Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church boards and committees, as well as past chair/member of the Gibault High School board. He is also a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

Undoubtedly, McManus has had an unusual start to his new role.

“Pandemic leadership was not something I expected to confront during my first 30 days as president,” he said. “But, like any other challenge, we worked the issue to ensure the safety of our staff and our patients.”

As we prepare to turn the page on 2020 and hopefully put COVID behind us, McManus looks to 2021 with optimism.

“Our team did a tremendous job navigating through these unprecedented times this past year,” he said. “I am excited about what 2021 holds for Memorial’s future and healthcare delivery in the communities we serve.”

While COVID-19 put some of McManus’ planned initiatives temporarily on hold, he and his team have still been able to accomplish some important tasks during his first eight plus months as Memorial’s president to pave the way for future growth, such as:

- Consolidating Memorial’s obstetrics program to Memorial Hospital East and creating a Center of Excellence for Women and Infants Services. In addition, adopting a laborist model of care (see related article on page 11).
- Obtaining a single license/provider under which to operate both hospitals. This affords greater operational efficiencies, streamlines policies, and improves ability to respond to patient volumes (more on page 11).
- Preparing for the implementation of Epic, a new electronic medical record (EMR) system, during the first quarter of 2021. Memorial then will be on the same EMR as other BJC hospitals and BJC Medical Group.
- Success in physician development with the recruitment of physician specialists in neurology, gastroenterology, nephrology, and pulmonology.
Obstetrics Services to Be Consolidated on Memorial Hospital East Campus

Creates a destination Center of Excellence for Women and Infants Services

Memorial has filed Certificates of Exemption with the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board (IHFSRB) to consolidate its obstetrics services to Memorial Hospital East as well as to consolidate the two hospital licenses to a single license.

The IHFSRB was expected to review the filings at its September meeting. If approved, these changes would become effective January 1, 2021.

Family Care Birthing Center

Earlier this year, The Family Care Birthing Center at Memorial Hospital Belleville consolidated with The Family Care Birthing Center at Memorial Hospital East to maximize staff as part of the COVID-19 response readiness plan. The consolidation has proven to be successful with patients, providers, and staff alike sharing consistently positive feedback and satisfaction.

This will provide Memorial with an opportunity to create a destination Center of Excellence for Women and Infants Services at Memorial Hospital East. In addition, our partnership with St. Louis Children’s Hospital and Washington University Physicians, who are already providing specialty services on the Memorial Hospital East campus, can be expanded.

Memorial also announced this summer its goal to implement laborist services at Memorial Hospital East beginning in 2021. A laborist is an obstetrician/gynecologist who specializes in caring for women in labor and delivering babies and provides on-site 24-hour Monday-Friday coverage in the labor and delivery department without any competing clinical or office duties. Studies have shown this model has been proven to improve patient safety as well as maternal and neonatal outcomes.

One license/single provider

Operating under one license creates operational efficiencies, streamlines policies, and improves ability to respond to patient volumes.

There are revenue cycle efficiencies and patient convenience in operating under one provider license. In addition, we will have just one Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program survey instead of independent surveys on each campus.

This change will result in a single board and Medical Staff. Each campus will continue to be referenced as Memorial and Memorial East.

Patients will benefit as well. Many times, patients receive insurance pre-authorizations for services at one facility or the other. Having a single provider number eliminates any confusion on where the pre-authorization is assigned, and the patient can have their services.
A grand opening celebration was held in January to mark the opening of Siteman Cancer Center’s newest location at Memorial Hospital East in Shiloh.

This region’s only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, Siteman opened its doors to patients on January 13. Siteman Cancer Center is based at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, and the new location is Siteman’s sixth in the region.

Three Siteman Cancer Center patients shared their personal and very moving stories about the care and treatment they received at Siteman Cancer Center in Swansea before moving to its new Shiloh location.

Medical oncologist William J. Popovic, MD, will continue as medical director. Susan Laduzinsky, MD, a radiation oncologist, will continue as director of radiation oncology. Other care providers are medical oncologists Alfred O. Greco, MD; Guillermo Rodriguez, Jr., MD; John L. Visconti, DO; Nishant Poddar, MD; Matt Opyrchal, MD; Camille Abboud, MD; Brett Herzog, MD, and nurse practitioners Alicia Carmack and Vanessa Pratt. In addition to Dr. Laduzinsky, the radiation oncology team includes Jason Lee, MD, PhD, and nurse practitioner Rhonda McCabe.

Siteman’s location at Memorial Hospital East enables Illinois patients to receive advanced cancer care closer to home. If patients require highly specialized cancer care, such as bone marrow transplants or proton therapy, Siteman will help facilitate care at its main location in St. Louis.

Siteman’s combined focus on cancer prevention, research, and clinical care makes the cancer center a perfect fit for Memorial Hospital East and the region’s residents, said Mark J. Turner, former president of Memorial Regional Health Services, Inc.

“We are very excited to bring Siteman Cancer Center to the Memorial East campus,” Turner said. “Our collaboration provides world-class cancer care to residents throughout the region in a more convenient setting closer to home.”

“What a privilege it is to be in Southern Illinois,” Timothy Eberlein, MD, Siteman Cancer Center director said. “Siteman at Memorial East will offer a welcoming, calming environment where patients will receive the most advanced cancer care.”

Everyone is reminded, however, to look beyond the means and modalities of treatment to the larger context of the ongoing attention to the patient and the patient’s family, which is at the heart of all efforts at Siteman Cancer Center. The quality of life of the patient is the touchstone of what matters in the cancer journey.

A New technology available at Siteman at Memorial Hospital East includes:

• A linear accelerator, a machine that creates high-energy radiation to treat cancer.

• A computed-tomography scanner, which combines multiple X-ray images so tumors and their positions in the body can be easily seen.

What a privilege it is to be in Southern Illinois.

– Timothy Eberlein, MD, Siteman Cancer Center director
Siteman Cancer Center at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Washington University School of Medicine has been recognized as a top U.S. cancer institution by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), part of the National Institutes of Health, and by U.S. News & World Report.

NCI rates Siteman as “exceptional” Siteman earned its latest exceptional rating from NCI based on a January site visit by 22 researchers and administrators from academic cancer centers across the U.S. During the visit, Washington University researchers and physicians presented their innovative research programs in genomics, cancer imaging, cancer prevention and disparities, immunology and immunotherapy, and early-phase clinical trials.

“We are pleased with the work that has earned Siteman its national and international reputation,” said Timothy Eberlein, MD, Siteman’s director and the Spencer T. and Ann W. Olin Distinguished Professor and head of the Department of Surgery at the School of Medicine. “This is recognition of the impact we have had on our patients, helping to develop innovative treatments that are making a difference in their lives. We are here to provide hope for them.”

As an NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, Siteman is expected to be a major researcher into the causes, prevention and early detection of, and treatments for cancer, and to share these findings so other healthcare institutions also might implement them to improve the overall health of the population. These efforts include a focus on basic science, which is the search for foundational knowledge about cancer risk and therapies, and on clinical research such as clinical trials designed to evaluate the effectiveness of innovative cancer therapies.

“Our Washington University researchers have been at the forefront of discoveries that have advanced the understanding or changed the course of treatment for a variety of cancers,” said John F. DiPersio, MD, PhD, Siteman’s deputy director and the Virginia E. and Samuel J. Golman Endowed Professor of Oncology and director of the Division of Oncology at the School of Medicine. “Along with our commitment to basic, translational, and clinical research, we have trained countless scientists, physicians, and fellows who have gone on to become leaders in their fields of interest and leaders of research here and at other major cancer centers around the world.”

“Our focus is forward as we lead the charge for better health,” Dr. Eberlein said. “That’s true whether our work is in the laboratory, clinic, or community. Consecutive exceptional ratings are a validation of our extraordinary efforts to prevent, better diagnose, and treat cancer throughout our region.”

U.S. News & World Report ranks Siteman No. 1 in St. Louis region and in Missouri Siteman Cancer Center at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Washington University School of Medicine has also been named among the top cancer centers nationally by U.S. News & World Report. The recognition is part of the overall ranking of Barnes-Jewish and Washington University, which are No. 18 on the news magazine’s 2020-21 “Best Hospitals” list.

Siteman was named No. 11 in adult cancer care, based on a review of 899 hospitals. Healthcare facilities are chosen largely on patient outcomes and other data and a national survey of physicians.

In addition to their national rankings, Siteman and Barnes-Jewish each were ranked No. 1 in the St. Louis region and No. 1 in Missouri in their respective categories.

“Being recognized as one of the nation’s top cancer programs is an honor,” said Dr. Eberlein. “More importantly, it speaks to the extraordinary care we provide to our patients, care that’s built on one of the top cancer research programs anywhere.”

Barnes-Jewish Hospital and its Washington University physician partners also are part of U.S. News & World Report’s top 20 honor roll of hospitals that excel in complex specialty care.
From newborns to teens, children have ever-changing medical needs. Memorial has dedicated teams to meet those needs.

At The Family Care Birthing Center at Memorial Hospital East, we offer family-centered care—meaning you get the birthing experience you want. And for our most fragile patients, we have Washington University Physicians in Illinois, Inc. neonatologists and a Level II E Nursery to take care of babies as early as 30 weeks and as small as 2.75 pounds.

Washington University physicians are known for providing trusted pediatric care for children and adolescents. Washington University Physicians in Illinois, Inc. offer the following specialties in its multispecialty center in Shiloh:

- Adolescent Medicine
- Allergy and Pulmonology
- Cardiology
- Endocrinology
- Gastroenterology
- Nephrology
- Urology

In our emergency departments at Memorial Hospital Belleville and Memorial Hospital East, we are pleased to offer experienced pediatric nurses and physicians who know children—inside and out—with Children’s at Memorial. Their kid-friendly amenities also help make your child’s experience a little less scary. memhosp.com/kids

Memorial Hospital East
Medical Office Building 1
1414 Cross Street, Suite 140A, Shiloh

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (314) 454-KIDS (5437) or visit physicians.wustl.edu/memorialkids
Extraordinary breadth and depth of expertise places St. Louis Children’s Hospital among the nation’s best.

U.S. News & World Report has again ranked St. Louis Children’s Hospital-Washington University School of Medicine among America’s Best Children’s Hospitals. The publication ranked St. Louis Children’s Hospital No. 1 in the state of Missouri and among the top 10% nationally.

The report evaluated 193 children’s hospitals in 10 pediatric specialties. St. Louis Children’s Hospital is one of only eight children’s hospitals in the nation to rank in the top 25 in all 10 specialties, exemplifying its depth and breadth of expertise. It is the 12th consecutive year St. Louis Children’s Hospital has ranked in all 10 specialties, and it is the only children’s hospital within a 250-mile radius to do so this year.

“We are honored to be recognized as one of the very best children’s hospitals in the United States,” said Trish Lollo, St. Louis Children’s Hospital president. “It’s a testament to our team of nurses, caregivers, and Washington University physicians for whom this work is both a passion and a calling. During these most extraordinary times—and every day—they are the most powerful and talented advocates for child health, and I am so very proud of this continued national recognition.”

The full rankings and methodology are available at USnews.com. The rankings will also be published in the U.S. News Best Hospitals 2020 guidebook.

The 10 pediatric specialties and St. Louis Children’s Hospital’s rankings

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Thank You
to Our Community for the Outpouring of Support

Organizations, businesses, and individuals throughout the community generously supported our staff with food, snacks, gift cards, masks, and words of encouragement during the beginning of COVID-19. We hope we were able to capture a complete list of all those who provided support; however, please accept our apologies in advance if you donated and are not listed. We are grateful to all of you!

Acertus
Afton Christian Church
Angels of St. Clair County
Apria Healthcare
Auffenberg
Bank of Belleville
Belleville Police Department
Big Papa G
Bitglass Guidepoint Security, LLC
Breakthru Beverage
Bria of Belleville
Buffalo Wild Wings
Capitol Group, Inc.
Catholic Holy Family Society
Cedars of Lebanon Apartments
Chamberlain University
Circle K
Conservative Women’s Coalition of Madison County
Corina Mettlin
Country Club Place Neighbors
Cusumano & Sons, Inc.
CVS Pharmacy
Dairy Queen
Dave and Kathy Matzka
Dave Stuart Family
Don Cummings
Feed the Need
Flatten the Curve
Generation Church
GKN Aerospace
Global Brew
Greg and Renee St. Clair
Hattie’s Helping Hands
Healing Food for Healing Hands
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Home Instead
Hop House
Hubbard Radio
Integrity of Columbia
Intech Anchoring Systems
Itchn’ to be Stitchn’
Jack In The Box
Jama Myers
Kaskaskia Engineering
Kentucky Fried Chicken
Lakenan Insurance
LHC Illinois Home Health Care
Little Caesars
Marie Schaefer School
Mascoutah Neighbors
Helping Neighbors
Memorial Hospital Gift Shop
Ministry of the Sick and Aged
MLS4THELOU
Morningside Shiloh Assisted Living
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Green
Mr. and Mrs. Mike Louth
Nelson & Nelson Attorneys at Law
Newbold Toyota
North Bay Produce
Nothing Bundt Cakes
O’Town Proud
Panda Express
Parkview Dental
Patty Molina
Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church
Rockwood School
Russell Stover
Schnucks
Scott AFB MOPS
Scout Troop 599 – O’Fallon
Sean Hall
Shriners
SIVNA-Southern Illinois Visiting Nurses Association
Spud Shack
St. Clair County ETSA
St. Clair County State’s Attorney
St. Louis Screw & Bolt
State Farm
Sunrise Rotary Club of O’Fallon
SW Illinois Central Labor Council
Tailor Made Alteration
The Shrine of the Lady of the Snows
Thips Tai
Truckeria Del Valle
Whitfield Schools
Wolf Branch School 3rd and 4th Graders
World Wide Technology
World’s Finest Chocolate
Zion Lutheran
We all can attest that 2020 has been a very different year. While there’s been much uncertainty and change over the past several months, there has been and continues to be one thing that you can count on—Memorial’s Healthcare Heroes—to care for you, your family, and our community.

We had to make some modifications to ensure the safety of our community and our team since COVID-19 began earlier this year, but Memorial’s dedicated healthcare professionals have remained steadfast in treating all patients who have come to us for care. While these continue to be challenging times, we are learning how to live in what is now becoming our “new normal.” Now, more than ever, our community needs us. And we need you!

COVID-19 placed some restrictions on our ability to perform elective procedures and routine tests and treatments. However, Memorial’s Healthcare Heroes continued providing services in our emergency departments; caring for some of the area’s sickest patients on our nursing units; bringing new lives into the world; and treating those with chronic illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

If you are able, please donate to Memorial Foundation’s year-end campaign to celebrate and honor our Healthcare Heroes and their tireless 365/24/7 efforts in providing exceptional healthcare and compassionate service to those we serve. We know our staff will appreciate knowing how much the community recognizes their efforts and honors their sacrifices by supporting the community hospitals in which they work.

As this year ends, we wish you good health and peace on earth.

For your convenience, a postage-paid business reply envelope is included in this magazine for you to return your contribution. You also may donate online at memhosp.com/donate.
STEPHANIE HEMKER, a physical therapist at Memorial Rehabilitation Services, can help women who have pelvic floor dysfunction.

“Sometimes patients can come to me with issues where their pelvic floor is weak, so these patients may complain of leakage of their urine when they cough, laugh, sneeze, jump, or exercise,” Hemker said. “Some other people have a more upregulated pelvic floor that is overactive, and those people may be complaining of issues with pain. So they may have pain in the pelvic region or pain with intercourse or even pain with just sitting too long, standing too long, or any activity that they do throughout their day.”

**Making patients comfortable**

An important part of what Hemker does is put her patients at ease.

“My first goal with any patient is to make them feel comfortable,” she said. “I know that we’re going to be talking about things that may be a little embarrassing for them, but I always let them know that there are a lot of people out there that have these problems. And that’s a common misconception, that they’re the only person dealing with this. So I try to make sure that they know that they’re not alone and that I’m not embarrassed about what they’re talking about. I hear it all the time, and I’m here to help them. So my first goal is always that my patient is comfortable and that we’ve established a relationship of trust.”

And while some patients think they are the only ones experiencing incontinence (the loss of control over urinating) or pain, others think it’s normal because they’ve had kids or because there are so many commercials for incontinence medications and products on television. Although not everyone has pelvic floor dysfunction, Hemker can provide relief for many women who do.
Patient assessments
“The first thing I’ll do would be very similar to anybody that comes in with, say, low back pain,” Hemker explained. “Because the pelvic floor muscles sit within the pelvis, I’m going to look at the alignment of their pelvis; I’m going to look at the alignment of their spine; and I’m also going to look at the strength of their core, their hip girdle muscles, and also how they breathe. Because there’s a close relationship to the pelvic floor and the muscles that you use to breathe.”

After the initial assessment, Hemker asks to perform a pelvic exam. “The reason for that is that the pelvic floor muscles are located within the pelvis, and that’s the best way for me to find out what’s going on with them,” she said. “However, if the patient does not want me to perform an internal exam, that’s not a problem. I have other techniques I can utilize as well.”

Treatment options
Hemker creates a program individualized to each patient’s particular needs. “I may do some soft tissue work or massage-type techniques to those muscles,” she said. “I may also work on some strengthening, so I may have the patient do exercises where they are coordinating their pelvic floor muscles with their core muscles and with their breathing patterns. Then there’s also something called biofeedback, in which an electrode is inserted into the vagina or rectum, and that gives a readout onto a computer as to what the muscles are doing. Then I can use that to help the patient either strengthen or learn how to relax those muscles.”

Other women’s therapy services
In addition to pelvic floor physical therapy, Memorial Rehabilitation Services provides post-operative breast rehabilitation screenings and lymphedema (the accumulation of fluids in the arms or legs) rehab. Talk to your doctor for a physician’s referral if you’re interested in pelvic floor or other physical therapies available for women at Memorial.

A Passion for Helping Patients
“I just love that I get the opportunity to make a difference in people’s lives,” Hemker said. “These issues that people come to me with are issues that they’re afraid to talk about. So to be a listening ear and to be a guiding voice to let them know that they’re not alone and they don’t have to live with these problems is incredibly rewarding. To be able to impact their life on such a personal level makes it even more rewarding, because you know that you’re not just taking away pain, you’re changing their life.”
Maria Matthews, a certified occupational therapist assistant at Memorial Hospital Belleville, and a committed team of volunteers are helping improve lives with the help of horses. Hope Ranch is a non-profit organization providing physical, speech, and occupational therapy using horses for therapeutic riding and hippotherapy, which means treatment with the help of a horse.

At Hope Ranch, children and adults with special needs can have therapy in an environment outside of the hospital or clinic setting. It has been proven that horses create a three-dimensional movement that cannot be produced in a traditional clinic setting. And hippotherapy engages sensory, neuromotor, and cognitive systems to achieve functional outcomes including arousal and attention, belief in one’s functional capabilities, bilateral integration, body awareness, coordination, dynamic postural stability and endurance, expressive and receptive language skills, and increased functional mobility.
Hope Ranch can help patients with a number of conditions, including:

- Asperger’s syndrome
- Autism
- Cerebral palsy
- Developmental delay
- Down syndrome
- Genetic disorders
- Muscular dystrophy
- Spinal cord injury
- Stroke
- Traumatic brain injury

Powered by volunteers

According to Matthews, it takes a team of four volunteers to provide hippotherapy to one patient. Each therapy session with a horse requires two side walkers, one lead person to control the horse, and a lead therapist.

The Memorial Hospital rehabilitation therapists who volunteer their time and talents to offer hippotherapy are Matthews, Courtney Louveau, Katie Sistler, Tara Richards, Chelsea Rippelmeyer, Heidi Hoskins, Tim Reitz, Dana Bennett, Monica Carlson, and Lynette Sanko. These therapists volunteer after working a full week because they believe in the program. Volunteers also work behind the scenes doing paperwork, painting, building, and network event planning, all of which are necessary to the continued operation and success of Hope Ranch.

A new perspective

Richards says that hippotherapy gives patients who are usually in wheelchairs a different perspective because they are seated higher.

“This is a way for the child to mobilize as the legs of the horse are assisting with the mobility,” Richards explained. “The child’s confidence and motivation levels rise to try other activities as a result of riding the horse.”

In addition to hippotherapy, Richards and Rippelmeyer lead social skills classes for elementary school children and teens at Hope Ranch. These classes set aside time for families to support each other as well.

“The children learn how to interact to prepare them for the playground and other situations they will encounter at school,” Richards said.

“Our services are helping those with physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity,” Matthews said. “These challenges pose limitations to an individual’s happiness, achievement of potential, and social quality, which also impacts the family unit.”

The animal team of volunteers

Hope Ranch chooses horses in their later years who are well trained, kind, and gentle; this helps maintain the organization’s safety-first approach. The horses are trained and socialized in ways that benefit both the animals and the patients for enhanced relationship building.

Learn more about Hope Ranch

Visit hoperanchtrp.org to learn more about Hope Ranch, including how to become a volunteer!

I & O

A MESSAGE FROM A GRATEFUL PARENT

My son has a rare progressive, neuromuscular, terminal disease. He speaks very few words, can’t walk, crawl, or sit without assistance. He is at an increased risk for falling, seizures, and pain. It is very difficult to find things to do that he really enjoys. He gets so excited Friday night, because he knows Saturday morning he rides Chief. He looks forward to seeing his horse and all his friends at Hope Ranch. One of the few words he says is “Chief,” which is the name of his loyal hippotherapy horse. Maria and all the volunteers are so good with him. They genuinely care about my son, how he is feeling, and his well-being, which is very hard to find these days.

When he first started hippotherapy, he could barely sit up on the horse due to decreased trunk control. Not only does he sit up on the horse now but trots and actually runs with the horse with assistance. He sits up and enjoys the ride. My son also has tight hamstrings and is becoming a bit contracted. Some days he is so tight it is hard to get his pants on and get him dressed due to leg contractions. After a session with Chief, he gets a good stretch, and his legs are nice and relaxed for a couple of days. Physically he is stronger and more agile. They also work on hand-eye coordination, reaching, stretching, spelling, addition, and subtraction. He feeds his horse, combs his mane, and so much more.

He has a connection with his horse, and I believe it is emotionally good for him. It’s good for his spirit and mind. He smiles, and the therapy changes his mood and demeanor. Socially it’s good for him as well. He has made a lot of great friends at Hope Ranch. We are grateful for Maria, the volunteers, and everyone at Hope Ranch, especially for Chief.
The COVID-19 pandemic has completely changed the way we do everything from going to school and work to getting groceries to our social lives. And that’s for people who haven’t tested positive for the disease.

Two Memorial Hospital Belleville patients were diagnosed with COVID-19 in late March and are still on the road to recovery. JAY CATO, 49, OF CAHOKIA, and KEVIN ANDERSON, 61, OF FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS, were two of Memorial Hospital Belleville’s first patients to be diagnosed with COVID-19.

Thanks to the dedication and commitment of Memorial’s team and prayers from family and friends, both men survived and shared their stories with Insights & Outlooks.
"He seemed to improve some, then he seemed to get worse, so it was like a roller coaster ride. It was crazy, because you didn’t know how COVID was going to be.” And the ride was just starting for the Catos.

From celebration to hospitalization

Jay Cato doesn’t remember much of his time at Memorial, so his wife Jen helped fill in the blanks. Because Jay has end-stage renal disease, Jen keeps a close eye on his health. “We take vitals for Jay every 30 minutes when he does dialysis,” she said. “I noticed a change in his blood pressure and things like that, but we weren’t really sure what was going on. This was toward the end of February.”

At the time, Jay and Jen were planning for their 20th wedding anniversary, which they celebrated with a party on February 29. “That night, when it ended, he was doing pretty good, just tiring easily, which we thought would be just normal stuff,” Jen recalls. “So the 29th, he woke up at midnight not being able to breathe and just feeling really down and scared. We thought he was having a heart attack, so he got his first ambulance ride to Memorial.”

Jay was admitted and diagnosed with pericarditis. After he was discharged from the hospital, he continued to feel worse, so he was re-admitted on March 8. Following this hospitalization and discharge, the couple attended a wedding in mid-March. “He was not feeling good at reception,” Jen said. “We wrapped up whatever we were doing and drove to the hospital. He wasn’t admitted then; they said it was still pericarditis. But by then he had a low-grade fever and a cough.”

Jen kept an eye on him to make sure he didn’t get worse. “The cough was still there; it was more persistent,” she said. “I checked his vitals. I checked all of his stats just to see how things were, even how his vent settings were, because I wanted to make sure he was okay,” she said. “He seemed to improve some, then he seemed to get worse, so it was like a roller coaster ride. It was crazy, because you didn’t know how COVID was going to be.” And the ride was just starting for the Catos.

On Friday, April 3, Jay was in dialysis when his heart stopped. It was stopped for less than three minutes, and he was resuscitated with CPR, adrenaline, and calcium. Rev. Cari Frus, chaplain at Memorial Hospital Belleville, called Jen to let her know what happened. “I tried not to freak out,” Jen said.

Cari told Jen that she would call her in a couple hours to video Jay, so she could see him. “They called me later, and she handed the phone over to the nurse, and I got to see Jay,” she said. “He had color back, and he was in distress still. They were struggling to get him under control. He was there, it was just not a good day for him.”

Jen let family and friends know what was going on, and she prayed. “We were always praying,” she said. “We had everybody at church praying, my mom praying, all our friends and family. And I asked God, ‘We need a miracle. This isn’t looking really good.’ And just kept praying.”

Then about a week later, after being on the ventilator for 15 days, Jay woke up. “And then the fun begins,” Jen said. “Because delirium, they say with COVID and also if you go past a certain point of being on life support, when you wake up your brain just kind of gets scrambled, and delirium kicks in depending on the..."
Two Things that helped keep Jay’s spirits up

“At the rehab hospital, that poster got me through it a lot,” Jay said. “I knew somebody cared enough to do that and was praying for me, and then talking to my wife each night once I had regained my sanity, we talked all the time, and that’s what got me through it.”

Community Leader & COVID-19 survivor

Kevin Anderson went to an urgent care on March 27 after experiencing a high fever. “It was like 104, 105.2,” he said. “I was sweating bad. Then I started feeling the headache, the migraine. I knew something was wrong then, because I’d never had that before.”

“When I went to the urgent care, they said to me it was raging through the area at the time,” he recalls. Although staff at the urgent care wanted him to go by ambulance, Kevin drove himself to the Memorial Hospital Belleville emergency department.

Kevin works at a juvenile center in St. Louis, which is where he thinks he contracted COVID-19. After he was admitted to the hospital, he said, “My job, it exploded. About 20 kids got it. One kid had it first, and he just triggered it.”

Like Jay, Kevin only remembers bits and pieces of his stay at Memorial. “I remember when they told me they were going to put me in a coma,” he said. “They put me on a ventilator. I was real weak. My wife and daughter had to give them permission to put me on the ventilator.”

Although he has diabetes and high blood pressure, Kevin believes that COVID-19 triggered his bronchitis. “That’s what destroyed me, I think,” he said. “It triggered my bronchitis, and that’s why they put me on the ventilator. The underlying ailments are really what triggers it.”

Kevin spent 37 days in the ICU; he was on a ventilator for 15 days and in a medically induced coma for 14 days. He dealt with blood clots in his legs and muscle loss, not to mention losing 70 pounds. However, he has nothing but positive things to say about the Memorial Hospital Belleville staff: “I stayed there 37 days, and I didn’t get any bed sores, and I didn’t get any major complications,” he said. “They did a heck of a job in preparing me for any symptoms and keeping me in touch with my wife and my daughters. They Skyped me a couple times; they made sure I was on Facetime so they could say hey.”
Kevin said that Heather Hanna, his nurse; Denise Read, speech pathologist; and Dr. Charles Ampadu, his doctor, all played important roles during his stay at Memorial. He recalls that Heather “did a heck of a job.” While Denise taught him how to swallow again and made sure he didn’t aspirate. And Dr. Ampadu checked on Kevin every day and offered him encouragement. “They’re wonderful over there,” Kevin said of the entire Memorial team. “My wife and kids, they love them. They are a class act over there, seriously.”

“Like I told a lot of people, they did a heck of a job,” Kevin said. “They saved my life. It hurts for them to put their life on the line to save my life. Those people at Memorial, they’re A1. I can’t say anything bad about them.”

Even though he’s out of the hospital and Memorial Care Center, his recovery has been hard. Kevin has had surgery on his right hand and still needs to have his left hand operated on due to nerve damage. He is not sure if the nerve damage is a result of COVID-19. “You know, we’re working on that now,” he said. “I’ve never had any nerve damage in my life. I’ve been coaching 27 years with eight-year olds—I coached football and basketball—and I can’t do any of that now.”

He’s now on blood thinners to prevent clots from forming; he had to learn to walk and swallow again, and he suffered damage to his lungs. “I tell a lot of people I’m walking and rehabbing every day, but I thought it was going to be like two weeks, three weeks,” Kevin said. “It’s a long road. I thought it was going to be a short road.”

Kevin is known in his community for his volunteer work, and although he can’t volunteer like he used to, it’s not stopping him from making his community a better place. “I can’t do anything because of my hands,” he said. “I just started another project helping kids get into college. So I’ve got two football players I’ve raised money for. Then I started the program Stepping Into the Community, which is going to help the community a lot. Right now with COVID, we can’t do a lot. We’re trying to get books to kids at home, because some kids in St. Louis don’t have computers, don’t have access to the Internet. So what I’m trying to do is get a book drive started so we can get books to some of these kids. Those are my two concepts I’m working on right now.”

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Kevin and Jen know that they are Lucky to be alive, and there are a few things they want the public to know too. Guess what?

One of those things is to wear a mask.

“Well, for the ones that think it’s a hoax, it’s not,” Jay said. “It’s just a nasty bug, and if it gets the wrong person, it’s going to knock them out or take them out. And please, wear a mask in public.”

“Wear a mask,” Jen said. “Seriously, wear a mask. It is not that hard. Because you don’t know if anybody is dealing with other things internally, as far as their immune systems are concerned. Somebody out there could end up with COVID, and they don’t even know they can get really sick like Jay did and be gone because nobody is being safe or trying to be safe.”

“Some people just have to wake up,” Kevin said. “You have to social distance; you’ve got to wash your hands; you’ve got to wear a mask. It’s a for-real virus. We have to come together as a whole, you know. Some people don’t want to do certain things, but until we get this under control and do the right things to keep this virus down, these numbers are not going to come down.”

Memorial Hospital Belleville, Memorial Hospital East, and Memorial Care Center continue to put patient safety first by implementing new visitor policies, requiring masks, and increasing the already stringent cleaning protocols. And that doesn’t go unnoticed. “Not only are the doctors and the nurses and the techs and the radiologists and everybody there really good, but we have to think about the housekeepers there too,” Jen said. “They’re going in after patients like Jay leave, and they’re scrubbing down and then having to go in and keep doing that and go home and take care of themselves and make sure that they’re safe too. So I think they deserve some credit as well.”
Our Promise:

We will work to keep you safe

Patients and visitors MUST wear a mask while in the building.

Visitors are restricted.

Practice social distancing by keeping six feet apart whenever possible. Our volunteer team is on temporary hiatus to reduce crowding and promote social distancing.

Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer frequently.

We’ve disabled touch screens to reduce risk of surface contamination.

If you have a fever or are experiencing respiratory symptoms, please alert a screener.

Neurology at Memorial

Stephen Burger, MD, a board-certified neurology specialist with over 25 years of caring about and caring for patients with neurological disorders, has joined BJC Medical Group and is seeing patients in The Orthopedic and Neurosciences Center on the Memorial Hospital Belleville campus.

Dr. Burger returns to the Belleville area after practicing in Granite City for several years. He is passionate about providing local access to world-class treatment for the Southern Illinois region and understands firsthand how a condition can affect his patients’ quality of life.

“I chose to practice neurology because of my own personal history with migraines.”

– Dr. Stephen Burger

Dr. Burger treats patients for headaches, epilepsy, peripheral neuropathy, trigeminal neuralgia, spinal issues, and more. He also treats conditions such as Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease, and multiple sclerosis. His many years of experience have given him an in-depth understanding of the complex nature of neurology, and he enjoys developing unique treatment plans for each individual patient. He is committed to offering state-of-the-art neurological care and is accepting new patients over the age of 18.

Joining Dr. Burger is Maureen Dunajcik, ANP-BC, a certified nurse practitioner specializing in neurology. She collaborates with neurologists to treat conditions including dementia, epilepsy, migraines, Parkinson’s disease, stroke, neuropathy, and multiple sclerosis.

“As a nurse practitioner, I have the ability to expand and build on my previous nursing knowledge and experiences related to my patient care,” Dunajcik said. “Together, we will work to develop a comprehensive healthcare plan related to the patient’s neurological needs, values, and beliefs. I will work with patients and their families to keep...
them well informed and guide them through making decisions regarding their health.”

BJC Medical Group Neurology is located in Suite 250 at The Orthopedic and Neurosciences Center; call (618) 235-3378 for more information or to make an appointment.

Neuro-hospitalists part of the team

Neuro-hospitalists James Tanner, MD, and Aloka Amarakone, MD, joined Memorial’s Medical Staff earlier this year to provide neurology services and consultations to inpatients.

Dr. Tanner earned his medical degree from the University of Missouri – Kansas City in 2015 and served as chief neurology resident at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine.

Board certified in neurology, Dr. Amarakone completed his undergraduate work at Washington University in St. Louis and earned his medical degree from Ross University, Dominica.

Neuro-hospitalists are site-based subspecialists dedicated to providing and improving neurologic care to hospitalized patients. This contrasts with the traditional model of an office-based neurologist who concurrently delivers inpatient care along with seeing patients in the hospital.

The neuro-hospitalist does not operate an outpatient clinic but instead provides on-site availability for urgent evaluations and administration of time-sensitive therapies. Neuro-hospitalists evaluate and treat a multitude of conditions such as altered mental status, acute stroke, seizure disorders, headaches, and neuromuscular respiratory failure.

I want to write you concerning my son’s admission to Belleville Memorial Hospital April 18-21. He had developed Bell’s Palsy with complications. He lives in Des Moines, IA, and made the trip home thinking mom and dad could be there at his bedside.

This was not the case due to the new rules for visitation with COVID. I left him at the emergency room doors and prayed the staff would take care of my baby (he will be 29 in a few weeks). He was scared because his face looked like he had had a stroke and was at the clinic a week prior for the same affects to his face on the opposite side. He was admitted to 2 Center on 4/18/2020 around 2230.

He called to tell me he was in his room and things were good. He would call me in the morning. 4/19/2020, he called me and told me to guess his nurse’s name…of course it was Linda. (His mom’s name is Linda.) I called the desk to speak to the nurse for my son and I found out it was a former co-worker…Linda Fritsche, RN. She had not realized Alex was my son. She was with him for all three days of his stay. She took a huge weight off me knowing he was being cared for as if he was her own child. He also trusted her as if she was his mom.

We have also gotten compliments from the Washington University neurology staff on how thorough the physician ruled out things. Alex was diagnosed with Neurosarcoidosis of the facial nerve. Dr. Tanner did a wonderful workup and found the granulomas on a CT chest and Dr. Jamous did the bronchoscopy to confirm the results. Alex was healthy except for the facial dropping.

Alex is recovering well. He is back to work and we had follow-up visits with Neurology this past Monday. His face is basically back to normal and medications are being adjusted. Dr. Clifford at Washington University complimented the Memorial staff for being thorough with testing to make this discovery. He has an 85% of full recovery and we are seeing that. Dr. Tanner made the right call with doing a CT of chest to find the granulomas.

Thank you for taking such great care of him.
Auxiliary President Reflections on 2020

Susan Bowers, President

When I became Auxiliary president at the beginning of this year, I looked forward to continuing my service with the Memorial Hospital Auxiliary and was excited about what I could look forward to while serving in this capacity. Having served on the Auxiliary for many years now, I knew about conducting and attending board meetings and membership dinners as well as various fundraisers, social events, and events honoring hospital staff. Maybe, more importantly, I knew about the extensiveness of the Auxiliary’s contributions to the hospital and community. I was filled with a sense of pride at being a part of this amazing organization, full of passionate and dedicated volunteers!

I knew this year would be a challenge while volunteers continued to serve alongside staff members and in other various roles, helping in a variety of ways. But I also knew that the Auxiliary has a more than 60-plus year history of service—so I was confident because we knew our roles and performed them well.

And then there was COVID. Our volunteer realm quickly changed. Volunteer activities were suspended; the gift shops were closed, and fundraisers and meetings were canceled. We found ourselves on the outside looking in—a position none of us liked. We missed being in the hospital; we missed the patients and staff, especially knowing how busy everyone was trying to deal with this unprecedented and unpredictable time, and we missed being there to help others! Personally, I know I was disappointed.

But the response of my fellow Auxilians has turned my disappointment into hope. We came together virtually, which is quite an accomplishment considering our varying levels of technical expertise! We looked for ways to stay connected with each other and to continue to make a difference for the hospital. Volunteers quickly stepped up to sew cloth masks to donate them to the hospital to be used wherever needed. This was at a time when masks were hard to come by. The quilters group resumed their efforts to ensure quilts will be available when fundraising efforts can resume. And we collected inspirational messages that were shared on the Auxiliary bulletin board, in the Weekly Rounds, and on the monitors in the hospital. We wanted our Memorial teammates to know that we missed them and appreciated all they were doing for our community, neighbors, and family members.

While this year isn’t anything any of us could have predicted or planned, I want you to know that your Auxilians remain hopeful. We’ll continue our work behind the scenes, being ready to jump in when we’re able to return.

As I write this it’s been about five months since we’ve been able to volunteer in the hospital; I don’t know what tomorrow looks like, let alone the rest of the year. But I know that your Memorial Auxiliary remains as committed now as ever—and even though you don’t see us in the hospital, know that we look forward to our return. We’re here doing what we can to stay connected and will be ready again when we get the call! I&O

We looked for ways to stay connected with each other and to continue to make a difference for the hospital.”
Monica Heshmet named Auxiliary and Foundation manager

Monica Heshmet has joined Memorial as the Auxiliary and Foundation manager. Prior to joining Memorial, she served as director of Volunteer Services and Guest Relations at SSM Health in Mount Vernon.

In addition to managing all aspects of the Auxiliary, including overseeing gift shop operations, Heshmet also will work with Memorial Foundation Executive Director Anne Thomure assisting in fundraising initiatives.

She has 20 years of experience working with volunteers in both non-profit and private sectors, including hospice, healthcare, and education. Understanding leadership and volunteer perspectives comes from experience as she has been an active volunteer most of her life and continues to participate in both one-time and ongoing opportunities with various organizations.

Throughout her career, Heshmet has managed volunteers, their programs, and processes in addition to coordinating special fundraising events. Her career started in education, but her desire and commitment to raising funds to advance the needs for hospital employees, visitors, families, and those they care for validates her passion for working with volunteers in the healthcare industry. Heshmet also held positions with Celtic HealthCare (Hospice) in Centralia, Ball Chatham School District, Scholastic Book Fairs in Chatham, Butler Funeral Home, and the Regional Office of Education in Springfield.

She currently is a commissioner with the Preservation Committee for the City of Centralia and serves as a committee member for the Children’s Halloween Parade/Fall Festival and the Historical Locust Street Fair.

Heshmet holds a BA in health services administration from the University of Illinois at Springfield.

Heshmet grew up in Carrolton and raised her children in Chatham. Both her son and daughter are young professionals making their own mark on the world. She is relocating to the O’Fallon area and is excited to be a part of the community along with the Memorial/BJC family.

In her spare time, Heshmet enjoys being outside and loves live theater, musicales, the symphony, and spending time with family and friends.

Janell Closson joins Memorial as business development director

Janell Closson of O’Fallon has joined Memorial as its director of business development and will be responsible for developing, coordinating, and implementing physician growth strategies. In addition, her role includes integrating specific service line strategic and business development plans as well as physician engagement.

Closson brings more than 29 years of experience in the healthcare industry to Memorial through various roles in managed care, business development, pharmaceutical franchise support, and contract negotiations.

Most recently, Closson worked as managed care contract manager for BJC HealthCare. Before that she served as director of business development and practice management for TeamHealth.

Closson holds a BA in English and communications from Illinois State University and an MA in management from Webster University.

Reggie Farrar named human resources director

Reginald (Reggie) Farrar has been named human resources director for Memorial Hospital Belleville, Memorial Hospital East, and Memorial Care Center with primary responsibility and day-to-day operation of the human resources department. Farrar joined Memorial as human resources manager in 2019.

As director, he will be responsible for employee relations, organizational development, talent management, as well as represent Memorial on various BJC HR-related committees and work groups.

Prior to joining Memorial, Farrar was a senior human resource business partner for Southwest Airlines, where he worked for six years. He also served as senior manager of human resources for Express Scripts, Inc. in Fort Worth, Texas. Farrar has spent more than 33 years in human resources including time with BJC Behavioral Health, US Bank, AG Edwards, and Edison Brothers.

A past president of the Greater St. Louis Chapter of the National Association of African Americans in Human Resources, Farrar currently serves as the co-president of the Society of Multicultural Professionals in Human Resources. He is a member of the 2019-2020 Leadership Belleville class, graduate of the inaugural class of the St. Louis Business Diversity Initiative’s Fellows Program, and past mentor in the St. Louis Business Diversity Initiative’s Mentoring.
Memorial Hospital East has teamed up with St. Louis Children’s Hospital to offer audiology screenings on the hospital's Shiloh campus.

St. Louis Children’s Hospital provides convenient hearing and speech services on the first and third Tuesday of each month in its mobile unit parked adjacent to Medical Office Building 1, 1414 Cross Street in Shiloh.

Your physician will need to order services; you will be contacted to schedule the appointment. For more information about these services, call (314) 454-6171.

Memorial Foundation’s Golf Tournament, scheduled for June 8, 2020, was canceled this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee looked to reschedule for later in the year, but due to the uncertainty of how the “new normal” would impact events along with the economic impact of COVID-19 on many businesses relied upon for sponsorships and auction donations, the committee made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 tournament.

Memorial Foundation's Golf Tournament, scheduled for June 8, 2020, was canceled this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The safety of our participants, volunteers, and Country Club staff is our top priority,” said Anne Thomure, Memorial Foundation executive director. “We look forward to a successful event in 2021.”

For more information, call (618) 257-5659.

Staffed by audiologists and speech pathologists from St. Louis Children’s Hospital, the mobile clinic provides the same services as its traditional clinics:

- Hearing testing for children from birth to 21 years of age
- Follow up from newborn hearing screening
- Support for hearing aid, cochlear implant, and bone conduction systems
- Speech and communication support for children with hearing loss
Events

All upcoming events, programs, and support group information can be found on memhosp.com/events.

drives

Memorial Hospital East
Community Room
December 1, 2020
January 5, 2021
March 2, 2021
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Memorial Hospital Belleville
Auditorium
November 5, 2020 (mobile event)
February 2, 2021
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To save time, you can visit redcrossblood.org/rapidpass to fill out your Health History Questionnaire before attending the Red Cross Blood Drive.

Need a New Doctor?

Check out memhosp.com/find-a-doctor to find a primary care provider or specialist near you.

Memorial’s Find a Doc Line can help connect you with the appropriate physician or specialist on the Medical Staff at one of Memorial’s two hospitals—Memorial Hospital Belleville or Memorial Hospital East in Shiloh. Call Center specialists can even help you make your first appointment!

Just call:
(618) 767-DOCS (3627)
(833) 607-DOCS (3627)

CHECK IN TO GET CHECKED OUT

At Memorial Hospital East and Memorial Hospital Belleville, you can now check in to the emergency department online for non-life-threatening issues and wait at home instead of the waiting room. I&O

Checking in is the first step to getting checked out!

Just visit bjc.org/myonlineer