

Cheerio Chats

A Quarterly Publication of the Memorial Auxiliary



Message from Auxiliary President Jim O'Connell

Dear Fellow Volunteers,

This year's PINK was a huge success as you will be able to read about in this issue. (See pages 3, 6, and 13) The CHI Memorial Foundation raised \$1.2 million dollars, the most money raised for this event in its history.

This was also the first year I have been able to participate in the preparations along with our vice-president, Debbie McClanahan (who is sadly having to retire from this position due to health-related issues) and her husband, Jerry. Sue Culpepper, who has graciously accepted my appointment to fill this vacancy, was also helping to set up tables for *Pink!* We are grateful to her for agreeing to serve as Vice President for Debbie's unexpired term.

Our previous president, Judy Hall, joined us along with many others, and we had a great time putting together programs, auction lists, and voting paddles, and then putting all of this around on the tables. Jennifer Nicely, the Foundation staff, and their many assistants had done a huge amount of work getting everything organized. I am so impressed with how all these Memorial employees, Foundation staff and Volunteers work together for such a great cause.

Once again I am profoundly grateful to Jean Payne, our director, and her team - Julie Touché and Tessa Long - for all the great work they do to support our Volunteers and make my task of representing you so easy.

Next month we will celebrate Volunteer Week, and I was reminded how important that is when a fellow I worked with this past week at my post told me he decided to join when he saw Jean and me talking about volunteering on TV last year. So do not be shy about talking up the value of volunteerism. You may inspire someone to join us!

Have a great Spring and a Happy and Blessed Easter!

Auxiliary Board President
Jim O'Connell



Meet our current Vice President Sue Culpepper

1	President Jim O'Connell's Message: Introducing the new Vice President
2	NEW Gift Shop Coming Soon! Fund-raising Report; Comfort Closet Concern
3	Pink! Raised \$1.2 Million! 100% Goes to Enhance MEL Breast Services
4	Jean's Jazz - Volunteer Services Director Jean Payne's Message
5	Dotty Manis Began Volunteering When CHI Memorial Was Seven
6	Wendy's and Chattanooga Went All Out for Color Chattanooga Pink!
7	Give Blood if You Possibly Can! Blood Banks Are Running Short; It's Lifesaving
8	Let's Tell the World About CHI Memorial's Cancer Resource Center! Free Services Benefit Cancer Patients
9	Richard Michaelis Grew Up Going to Mardi Gras Parades. He Still Goes.
10	O'Dell Tiller Worked at Orange Grove 37 Years. Crossed the Street to Volunteer
11	Kevin Hopkins Is Our New VP of Cardiovascular Services
12	Black History Remembered with Documentary "How to Sue the Klan"
13	From the Foundation: Thanks to a Great Staff and Volunteers; River City Ribbon Run Coming Up Soon
14	Arts Therapy: You Are Invited to the Unveiling of Tribute to Pet Therapy; Look for New Exhibits
15	Debbie Kerr Inspired by Volunteer to Join CHI Memorial Auxiliary
16	Community Outreach: Go Red for Women, Volunteers in Medicine
17	Hixson Update: Partnership between Hixson High Helps Nutrition Services
18	Georgia Hospital Groundbreaking - Much Excitement and Anticipation
19	News Briefs: What's a Smart Hospital? How AI Is Hastening Stroke Care
20	Announcements: Sister Judy Raley Celebrate on 85th; Bundt Cake Sale



Auxiliary President Jim O'Connell, Debbie and Jerry McClanahan were among the many volunteers helping to transform the Trade Center into an Italian Villa for Pink!



New Gift Shop Coming in April; Fund Raising Report

We are thrilled to announce that Cloverkey will open a new gift shop at CHI Memorial Hospital Chattanooga Entrance B on or around April 15, 2024. Cloverkey leadership has specialized in tailoring its gift shops to the needs and missions of hospitals for more than 40 years.

Cloverkey currently has hospitals in 25 locations in eight states, embracing the role of volunteers, encouraging them to continue serving in the shops. It uses local florists and other vendors to supplement the core merchandise.

We are excited to share that branded CHI Memorial merchandise will be sold in the new gift shop. Cloverkey also offers employee payroll deduction as well as free same-day delivery of gifts and other items to patients. Employees, families, and visitors will be able to shop for get well gifts, candies and snacks, personal care items, floral arrangements and more!

Auxiliary Funding Gets Boost

In a settlement with the former gift shop, the Auxiliary will receive about \$113,000 in overdue rent payments, which gives us more opportunities to benefit patient services at CHI Memorial.

Fundraising Co-Chair Linda Thompson reports that the Auxiliary has had several successful sales, and she and Co-Chair Beverly Sanders greatly appreciate the help of volunteers at the sales.



Fundraising CoChair Linda Thompson at a recent sale on the Glenwood campus

The on-line sale by Southern Comfort Linens at the end of December 2023 had net sales of \$5,329.45. The Auxiliary rebate was \$1,065.89.

In February, Sterling, Purses & More brought in a total net sales of \$17,260.70. The total rebate from sales at both campuses for the Auxiliary came to \$3,452.14.

In March, the Tri-State Book and Gift Fair brought in a total net sale of \$14,343.71. The Auxiliary rebate from both campuses was \$2,151.56.

Comfort Closet Serving More; Your Donations Are Greatly Appreciated

Rich and Barb Kramer, who take care of the Auxiliary Comfort Closet project providing new appropriate attire for patients in need, report that nearly 27 people are now being served every month.

“We are definitely filling a need at the hospital,” Rich says. “But that means we are going through supplies more quickly, and restocking has gotten more costly.”

You may send your donation to Julie Touché at Volunteer Services or to Stacy Lee at the Foundation. No gift is too small, and all the money goes to purchase clothing for someone in need. Thank you!

CHI Memorial Auxiliary Board

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The pink sky of the Tuscan landscape set the scene for a Gala dinner and celebration in a Spanish villa. "The Big Beyond" band is silhouetted on the countryside. They lived up to their promise of lively dancing and fun.

Pink! Raised \$1.2 Million for MEL

"Pink! 2024 was one for the books with \$1.2 million raised for the MaryEllen Locher Breast Center (MEL) at CHI Memorial. The outpouring of support and donations from so many generous people in our community was incredible!" said Ronelle Sellers, Marketing Director.

"We can't say enough about the CHI Memorial Foundation team led by Jennifer Nicely. (See p. 13) Few groups care as much or work as hard as they do! The sponsorship committee truly gave everything they had to achieve this tremendous result! The Color Chattanooga Pink and decorations committees delivered beautifully! (See p. 6) And, our four fabulous co-chairs added much energy and passion!"



On the Pink Carpet, Sierra Waggoner interviewed attendees including Kim Chapman, who loved MaryEllen and became a TV9 anchor. Kim met her husband at Pink!



CEO Janelle Reilly with Alex (MaryEllen's son) and Lacy Burd. Now an attorney, Alex is involved in continuing his mother's legacy of scholarships and breast cancer services through CHI Memorial Foundation and Pink! He and Lacy will chair Pink! 2025.

Foundation Chair and Partner in HHM (the event's title sponsor), Will Clegg and Pink! co-chairs Brittany and Tyler Carman and Beaumont and Jabo Covert, spent hours working with the committees and sponsors.

This annual event was begun in 2006 to celebrate the lives of breast cancer patients and survivors, and all the money raised stays local to benefit the MaryEllen Locher Breast Center. MaryEllen, a beloved NewsChannel 9 anchor, helped plan the Center named for her. She lost her battle with breast cancer in 2005.

Funds from Pink! are used to expand services and technology, to cover services for the uninsured, and to provide scholarships for the children of cancer patients. This year funds will go to relocate and expand breast services at CHI Memorial Hixson.



David and Diane McDonald enjoyed looking at silent auction items. David published CHI Memorial's 'Chicken Soup/Inspire' magazines years ago.



Nicole Brown was co-emcee with James Howard, host of "This N That" on TV9.



Sister Judy Raley gave the invocation and blessing.



Co-chairs Tyler and Brittany Carman and Beaumont and Jabo Covert gave countless hours to making Pink! A phenomenal success.

Gabby Sanders (right) was among many breast cancer survivors attending Pink! In 2019 at age 39, she was diagnosed with breast cancer and had aggressive treatment. In 2023, she and her husband Jim were Pink! co-chairs. A week after the gala, she received news her breast cancer had returned. "I knew where to go. The Center is a one-stop shop. My doctors and my treatment were there. My nurse navigator was a lifeline to me. She explained everything in layman's terms."



Volunteer Barb Kramer (center above), a six-year breast cancer survivor, was surrounded by her husband Rich, family and friends.

Jean's Jazz

"The giving of love is an education in itself." — Eleanor Roosevelt

I have learned so much from our amazing CHI Memorial Volunteers! What I see is that you are always putting love in action - giving and sharing your love with all those you encounter. It is a beautiful blessing to see unfold, and we can't thank you enough. Your love shared is powerful, uplifting and far reaching. Just the other day, I interviewed someone interested in volunteering with us, and the reason he wants to be a part of the team is because of the love he received from our volunteers when he walked through the doors and the love he received as a patient from his caregivers.

I'd like to take a moment to highlight one of our volunteers whose entire life has been dedicated to sharing love with and for others. That is our very own Sister Judy Raley. She recently received special and well-deserved recognition on her 85th Birthday. She was quite overwhelmed with her "gift!" Sister Judy learned our conference room near the Outpatient Entrance is being renamed in her honor - the Sister Judy Raley, SCN Board Room. (see page 20)

There is also a great "giving of love" and excitement in our North Georgia community with the Groundbreaking for our new Georgia Hospital. It is scheduled to be completed in September 2025. It was a great celebration and well attended! (see page 18) We are in the process of recruiting volunteers to join our team to serve in various roles in our new hospital, so if you know anyone who is interested, please send them my way.

We were grateful to be able to attend our national education conference by the Society for Healthcare Volunteer Leaders (SHVL) in Nashville. We learned so much and made connections with many peers. We were excited that Auxiliary Vice President Sue Culpepper joined us. She was delighted to be able to participate and learned a great deal.

These next few months we have a lot of great things happening that you won't want to miss. . .

- ▶ **The Blessing and Ribbon Cutting for our new Gift Shop will be Thursday, April 18 from 11am to 11:30am.** We are thrilled to welcome Cloverkey Gifts as our vendor partner and believe they will provide a wonderful gift shop experience, including a 10% discount on all non-sale items to all CHI Memorial Volunteers. Just make sure to have your badge with you and Happy Shopping!
- ▶ **National Volunteer Week is April 21-27.** Attention all volunteers!!! Get ready to be celebrated and plan to have fun during this week as we make rounds on all our campuses!
- ▶ **Therapy Dog Sculpture Blessing is on April 30 at noon in the Entrance B Lobby near the cafeteria.** Pet Therapy Volunteer Wayne Gratigny has been working with our Arts Therapy Department and Volunteer Services and has made a donation to commission a local artist to create a bronze sculpture of Sadie, his Golden Retriever, who helped start our Pet Therapy Program. The sculpture honors Sadie and all other CHI Memorial pet therapy dogs who have and continue to bring and share love with patients, visitors, staff and volunteers at the hospital. (see page 14)
- ▶ **CHI Memorial Auxiliary Service Awards Banquet is set for Tuesday, May 14.** We are looking forward to celebrating our active volunteers for all your amazing service with a nice dinner event at Brainerd Crossroads. You and a guest will be invited to attend and you will receive your invitation in the mail very soon.
- ▶ **Student Volunteers Begin Service in May.** We have gotten a good response with lots of interest from many students for this summer. We thank you in advance for the great job you always do in mentoring our students and helping to provide a great volunteer experience for them.



Celebrating volunteer Sister Judy's birthday: Jean Payne, Sister Judy, Julie Touché and Tessa Long



Julie, Jean, Auxiliary Vice President Sue Culpepper, and Tessa attended the SHVL conference in Nashville in March.

She Volunteered When Memorial Hospital Was Young

Dotty Manis started volunteering at Memorial Hospital in 1959 – just seven years after the hospital opened.

“I was going to Edmondson Business College, and I joined the Red Cross so I could volunteer,” Dotty says. “We wore gray uniforms and worked at the entrance, which then faced where the Heart Institute is now. The Emergency Room was next to us, and patients were wheeled by our desk.”

“Sister Marie Victoria and the other Sisters wore the long white habits. They all lived on the fifth floor of the hospital. Father Johnson also lived in the hospital. He wore a long black Cossack and visited every patient every day. He was a classical pianist, and we could sometimes hear him playing a grand piano in his apartment.”

Dotty also played the piano and had accompanied the Glee Club at Red Bank High.

In 1961, Dotty married Jim Manis and quit volunteering, but made more memories at the hospital.

“Our daughter Sherri was born at Memorial Hospital in the Maternity Ward on the third floor. Mothers then stayed with our babies at least five days. The care was wonderful, but you had to go down the hall to the bathroom.”

When Sherri started Kindergarten, Dotty came back to an expanded Memorial as a Red Cross Volunteer. Again, she worked at the entrance, which had been moved to the opposite side of the hospital, where the B entrance is now.

“The Information Desk was in the middle of the lobby, near the gift shop. We split our time between the desk and the flower room, delivering flowers and mail to patient rooms. In the afternoon, took a cart filled with juice, fruit, and snacks by all the rooms. We also took books from a little library in back of the gift shop. I really enjoyed it. I even wrote letters for patients to relatives.”

In 1980, Jim, who worked in Human Resources at TVA, was transferred to Knoxville for 10 years, but Dotty continued as a Red Cross volunteer at Park West Hospital.



Dotty still plays the piano - sometimes in the lobby of the B Entrance and at Silverdale Cumberland Presbyterian Church. She married Jim Manis in 1961. They feel blessed to be celebrating 63 years together in March.



“When we moved back to Chattanooga, I worked a few years in an office at Erlanger and then for Coca Cola. When I retired in 2001, I started volunteering again at CHI Memorial – at the B Entrance. I really enjoy it.”

Blessed by Memorial’s Excellent Care Team

Three years ago, Jim was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Dr. Hunter Jennings performed the complex Whipple procedure, the only potential cure for pancreatic cancer.

“Jim was in the hospital for 59 days – at Memorial and Siskin,” Dotty says. “We feel extremely blessed, and grateful to the hospital, Dr. Jennings, and our Nurse Navigator Sheri Johnston. We can call her any time, and she checks on us. She texted the day it snowed to be sure we were all right. Dr. Jennings is so humble. We made contributions to honor both of them, and he told the Foundation, ‘I just can’t believe they would do this for me.’”

Six months after Jim’s surgery, their first great grandson was born and named for his great grandfather – Ezra James. “He is the light of Jim’s life! And now he has an adorable baby brother Luca.”

“Our daughter Sherri lives in Hixson near her son Matt Crawford and his wife Brittany. Matt calls us every evening to see how we are doing, and we get together often.”



(Left) Dotty and Jim enjoyed the Festival of Trees in Miller Park with their daughter Sherri, granddaughter-in-law Brittany, baby Luca, and great grandson Ezra James. (Right) Grandson Matt and family enjoyed the snow in January.



Wendy's Helps Color Chattanooga Pink and Raise Awareness



Jennifer Nicely

“I am so grateful to all those who volunteered time, talent, enthusiasm, and funds to *Pink!*”

Foundation President, Jennifer Nicely (left) is still ecstatic about the overwhelming success of the 2024 gala and Color Chattanooga Pink events.

“Our sponsors and co-chairs were energetically involved, and reached out to hundreds of businesses that responded in like manner.”

“Zach DeBord, owner of the area Wendy’s franchise, went all out with t-shirts for staff, distributing breast cancer awareness information, having our Mammography vans at eight locations. Many on their staff were very appreciative of getting mammograms at work. Together with the community, we are making a difference in early detection, technology, treatment and resources.”

“We have loved seeing pictures of many people who wore pink for a day or week and gave their support. You can see some of these on Facebook Color Chattanooga Pink. They include Splash Smile, Flawless Aesthetics, SBK Insurance, Hearth Hospice, 4-Bridges Dermatology, Stone Cup, Envision, Big Chill and Grill, Simply Beautiful, Spill the Beans, Sophie’s, gift shops around the city, and so many more. Be sure to check out the pictures on Facebook.”

“Thank you to everyone who participated with a special thanks to the Auxiliary members who helped set up.” For more on the Foundation, *Pink!* and those who gave immeasurable help, see page 13.



Kick-off at Wendy's with Co-Chairs - Tyler and Brittany Carman and Jabo and Beaumont Covert.



(Above left) Rich Kramer and Karen Carden helped with auction paddles; (above right) Marketing Director Ronelle Sellers with Pink Co-Chair Brittany Carman and HHM Partner and Foundation Chair Will Clegg at Wendy's.



(Above left) Barbara Kramer and Judy Hall helped with programs and auction booklets for gala; (Above right) Chattanooga Red Wolves were happy to get their Pink! Packet. They found creative ways to support Pink!



Breast Center Staff Thanks the Community!



MaryEllen Locher Breast Center Staff went all out for Color Chattanooga Pink to thank the community for its tremendous support. “We are an all-inclusive center, allowing women to go from a screening mammogram to a complete diagnostic work up in one appointment,” says Director Brittany Hennessee (above in pink cowboy hat). “We couldn’t do all we do without community support.”



Many gifts shops sold Pink! T-shirts (right) and staff in many places wore them. The coffee cup sleeves (left) were a hit in dozens of coffee shops.



Volunteers Sue Culpepper and her daughter Angie Supan delivered Color Chattanooga Pink packets to participating companies and got in the spirit by going pink with their dogs! Angie has volunteered on the Pink! Committee for the past two years.





You Could Be a Life Saver! Give Blood

*Every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood!
Blood cannot be manufactured. Someone needs to donate it.**

“We have a critical need for blood products in Chattanooga,” says Lecia Guill, Supervisor of the Blood Bank at CHI Memorial Glenwood and Hixson.

“Hospitals are being asked to postpone elective surgeries because of the blood shortage. We encourage everyone who can to donate blood. There is no age limit in this area for healthy people to donate, and if you donate regularly, your body more readily adjusts. I love that your editor is still donating blood at age 88 and has given over 50 units at Blood Assurance.”

“A blood transfusion saved my life following the birth of my first daughter,” Editor Joyce Dick says. “I was bleeding internally, and no one noticed until I became so weak I couldn’t lift my hands out of a basin of water. As soon as the transfusion began, I could feel strength coming back into my body. Because of that experience, I began donating and continue to do so whenever I can.”



Blood Bank Supervisor and Medical Laboratory Scientist Lecia Guill. The ability to bank blood and use it safely revolutionized health care.

CHI Memorial’s Blood Bank Is Best in CommonSpirit Health at Avoiding Product Waste

“We are super aggressive to avoid wasting blood products and were thrilled to receive recognition by CommonSpirit’s Division Vice President for Performance and Organizational Excellence,” Lecia says. “We watch expiration dates with excruciating care. If Hixson notes an approaching expiration, they send the product to Glenwood, where we have more need. Every day we print a list of products that will expire in 10 days. Our goal is to get them transfused before that date.”

“Blood products are a precious community resource and we have a responsibility to manage that resource and our hospital’s finances with utmost care. We manage the blood product inventory like we manage our own wallets.”

Lecia wants to encourage everyone to support Blood Assurance as they provide outstanding service to the community. “We depend on them for our blood supply, and their Lab folks are incredible blood bankers!”

Blood products stored at CHI Memorial include red blood cells, plasma, platelets, and a product called cryoprecipitate, which is the portion of plasma that contains the clotting factor and is important for massively bleeding patients. The platelets, which are only good for five days, are ordered only when needed and used primarily for oncology patients, who often need infusion during chemotherapy treatments.

Lecia grew up in Cleveland, where she and her husband Philip now live, and began her training as a Medical Laboratory Scientist at UTC. She finished in Virginia, at a hospital just outside D.C., and has been in the industry for 37 years at several different hospitals. Philip works for Southwestern Communications and is a regular blood donor. Together they have four children from previous marriages and seven grandchildren, ages three months to ten years.

“Memorial’s laboratory has an outstanding reputation for quality, and when I learned that the Transfusion Service Supervisor Position was open in 2016, I applied and have been here ever since. I like that the hospital is very responsive to patient needs and willing to adopt new practices that have proven to be beneficial. We continue to grow.”



Judi Knellinger stands in front of the blood product refrigerator at CHI Memorial Hixson.



Blood Bank Supervisor Lecia Guill is extremely proud of her team in the Lab which ensures blood is available when needed. Pictured are: Lecia., Nicole Wilkins, Tammy Lockhart (Clinical Lab Assistant), Sandy Derryberry, Iris Pagarigan - all highly trained Medical Laboratory Scientists and Technologists.

*****To be someone’s hero today, schedule an appointment with Blood Assurance to give whole blood or plasma at 800.962.0628.***

Tell the World about Our Cancer Resource Center - It's Wonderful!



Kim Shank, Director of the Joe and Virginia Schmissrauter Center for Cancer Support, sits in the comfortable area open to cancer patients and/or family members. Tea is also provided.

Anyone with a cancer diagnosis can benefit from coming to the Schmissrauter Center For Cancer Support hidden away in CHI Memorial Plaza Building. Families can benefit, too. But very few people know where it is or what services are offered there to support them on every step of their journey with cancer. They don't know that nearly all services are offered free to any cancer patients, regardless of where they are getting treatment.

The Center is located on the third floor of the Plaza Building (two floors above the MaryEllen Locher Breast Center and the Rees Skillern Cancer Institute), Suite 307. Director Kim Shank is spreading the word, but she needs help. When Kim spoke to the Foundation Board a few years ago, Sue Culpepper (then chair of Friends of CHI Memorial and now a volunteer in the MaryEllen Locher Breast Center) went to the Resource Center and found information for her brother in Huntsville who had colon cancer.

Recently, Sue was reminded again of this hidden treasure while even many employees and volunteers are not aware of its existence. She and her daughter Angie Supan met with Kim and learned more about the Center.

“Volunteers could be a big help in telling people about the Resource Center. It is something we can all be proud that CHI Memorial does to support those with cancer and their families.” - Sue Culpepper

Nurse Navigators at the Cancer Resource Center are invaluable to cancer patients in treatment at CHI Memorial. “Jim’s Nurse Navigator was a blessing to us through the entire process, and she still keeps in touch with us – two years after Jim’s treatment for pancreatic cancer,” says Volunteer Dotty Manis (see page 5). “A nurse navigator is an angel on Earth,” wrote Karen Nazor Hill in a *TFP* column 2/11/24. After Karen was diagnosed with breast cancer, she met her nurse navigator. “She told me the results of the test and explained what would happen next. More important, she offered compassion, support, education, encouragement and a true friendship.”

Many services are available to patients from any cancer treatment program.

Registered dietitians will help patients who have lost their appetite or have nausea or swallowing difficulty discover ways to get the nourishment they need.

Social workers are able to discuss family concerns, give financial advisement and possible assistance from emergency funds.

Spiritual Care Counselors are available to provide comfort and guidance.

The Wig and Hat Room (very private) offers free wigs and hats or scarves. Patients can also look at post-surgical bras and breast forms offered by the ACA.

Multiple support groups meet at the Schmissrauter Center for Cancer Support and are available online. These include: support for breast cancer, colon cancer, general cancer, leukemia and lymphoma, multiple myeloma, prostate cancer, oral and head and neck cancer. A smoking cessation program is also offered.

Cancer Connect is a direct line to answers to any cancer-related questions. Call 423-495-2222. Staff is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Resource Library offers books and pamphlets on countless topics. Patients can learn about genetic testing, physical therapy and other programs.

Art Therapy is now offered for cancer patients twice a month on the second and fourth Thursday from 12:30 until 2 p.m.

A comfortable, quiet space is open for patients and caregivers to read or talk and have a hot drink. Family members often use this place to wait while a loved one is receiving treatment in the Rees Skillern Cancer Institute or Infusion Center.

To learn more, call 423.495.7825 or drop in at CHI Memorial Plaza Suite 307.

*Watch Healthbreaks at <https://youtu.be/pKn5pHpaBBw?si=2m9uawUAHePcyQxr>
<https://youtu.be/zAhw6kzgrRs?si=3-xNySZZUp7ByrXJ>
https://youtu.be/YUFSno95LeA?si=Xo_ZKU26HTaozhqk



Pam Rogers, receptionist at the Center, stands in front of an armoire filled with wigs. More are on shelves and in drawers, along with “Hats on the Heart,” which MaryEllen Locher founded after experiencing hair loss. Colorful, comfortable hats and scarves are donated by people who want to help. All are free to cancer patients.



Support groups often meet in the room behind Kim. Shelves hold an extensive resource library available for research.

Volunteer Grew Up at Mardi Gras Parades; Now He Participates in One

You can take the man out of New Orleans, but you can't take New Orleans out of the man. Richard Michaelis grew up in New Orleans and was entertained by Mardi Gras parades every year. He moved some 17 years ago, but still goes back "home" nearly every year for Mardi Gras. Now, he is a member of Le Krewe D'Etat, which plans a parade. His three sisters also still live there.

"It's fun!" Richard says. "D'Etat means revolution – we revolt against some of princess traditions of other Krewes. We have social functions, but the parade on the Friday before Fat Tuesday is our big purpose."

"We have nearly a thousand members from all over the country, though most have lived in New Orleans and the majority still do. It's an expensive business with no paid members. Officers take responsibility for a large budget to buy throws – socks, footballs, trinkets, light up crowns, beads, etc. We hire bands and people in costume to walk between 25 or so floats with 30 Krewe members on each. Everything is done to entertain the people on the streets. New Orleans loves parades."

Richard met his wife Nancy in college in Mobile, AL, and she went to Medical School in New Orleans. A few years after their first son was born, their hectic lifestyle called for a change. "The insanity of her schedule and my jobs, daycare,



Richard and Nancy celebrated 40 years of marriage on a glacier in Alaska. A Hospitalist "Nocturnist," (working nights) at CHI Memorial, she has more time with Richard than when she worked days.



Charlotte and her dog Sophie



The family with their first grandchild - Caitlin with Charlotte, Trey, Richard, Christopher, Bonnie, Matthew, and Nancy.



"A Mardi Gras Dress-up" party with Richard in disguise - as Krewe members should be - his wife Nancy in center. Nancy is a hospitalist at CHI Memorial. Matthew, Christopher, Nancy, Richard, Trey and wife Caitlin

appointments, household chores – it was too much. We decided it made sense for me to stay at home. Some say I am a 'house husband.' I changed the title to 'domestic god.' It worked."

After Nancy's residency in Virginia, they went back to New Orleans - now with three sons. She established a private internal medicine practice.

"As the boys started school, I had more time and discovered I had a knack for remodeling. I developed skills in plumbing, electrical, woodworking, painting. I took on an old mansion that had been reshaped

into 12 apartments. I tore down built-on structures, tore out bathrooms and kitchens and put in new ones to try to restore it to the original one-family dwelling with five bedrooms, five bathrooms. I enjoyed it."*

When Katrina hit, the world changed. "Our house in the Lower Garden District was fine, but it hit the homes of Nancy's patient base. We had to relocate, and since she had a license to practice in Virginia, she walked straight into a job and was introduced to the idea of being a hospitalist. It fit."

Reluctant to move back to hurricane country, but wanting to relocate, Nancy began looking around the country.

"I was shocked when she called one day and said, "I've found the place I want to live – Chattanooga." I remembered reports on Chattanooga being a dirty city, but we went on a road trip one weekend, and met with a realtor the next. Our youngest attended Notre Dame; we went to OLPH church; and Nancy worked at CHI Memorial, so we chose to live on Missionary Ridge and avoid traffic."

The house and yard give him many projects - renovating, landscaping, and volunteering.

Their oldest son Trey, an aerospace engineer working remotely for Plexus, and his wife Caitlin live in Chattanooga. She works at Unum. "They have Charlotte, my first grand-child, with a second due in July. So I can continue taking care of children."

Son Christopher, a CPA who loves sports, and wife Bonnie, an audiologist, live in Houston, a huge sports town.

Matthew is finishing up a degree at Old Miss in finance and marketing.

*To see the house now on the market 13 years after Richard and Nancy sold it, go to Zillow.com, 1425 Josephine Street, New Orleans,

New Volunteer Worked Across the Street from Hospital 37 Years

O'Dell Tiller had been working full-time and taking classes at UTC for 12 years before he decided he really wanted to work with people with disabilities and applied at Orange Grove Center. When he retired 37.5 years later, he came across the street to CHI Memorial to volunteer.

"I come from a single parent home and learned early to work for what I needed and to help the family," O'Dell says. "In 11th grade, I worked as a pot washer at Erlanger with two gentlemen who couldn't hear or speak. They signed or wrote, and I learned sign language in order to talk to them."

O'Dell graduated from Riverside High and kept working at different jobs to pay his way at UTC. "I only took one or two classes a semester so I didn't have an advisor. After getting basic subjects, I signed up for classes I wanted – like 'Orientation to Teaching' and 'Sociology of the Family' – a lot of upper-level classes. I was probably a sophomore, when I got a job as a substitute teacher at Orange Grove Center. I liked working with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)."

His passion for helping people and his abilities soon led him to becoming a full-time assistant teacher, teacher, job coach, supervisor, and finally Coordinator of Employment Services and liaison with Tennessee Human Services.

Established in 1953, Orange Grove Center* has been at the forefront pioneering services for individuals with IDD. Children from 7-22 learn in classrooms, adults live in 64 or more group homes and work in the community.

As Coordinator of Employment Services, O'Dell identified individuals with IDD who wanted to work and helped them find employment in the community. He also hired and trained a team of professionals to implement programs.



(Left) Claudette's daughter Roesha with her son Rashaun



Claudette's Son Kedrick with his son Eli and four-year old daughter Milly



O'Dell Tiller and his wife Claudette

"O'Dell taught me everything I know about Orange Grove," says Chief Operating Officer Wayne Collins, who joined the team in 2018. "I'm glad to be able to tell what a great job he did here."

CHI Memorial benefitted when O'Dell began working with the Center's on-going partnership. "Following the Enclave model, I identified individuals who were willing to work washing pots and pans. An Orange Grove staff member went along to teach them to do a good job, work together, follow rules, end break on time, etc."

"People trained at CHI Memorial have gone on to work independently at places like Wendy's, Taziki's, and Pizza Hut. We have placed hundreds of people, helping employers realize the working potential of those with IDD."

O'Dell was also very active in the community. He was President of the Chattanooga Employment Consortium, served on the Mayor's Council on Disability, was a Loaned Executive to United Way, and more.

Married 18 years ago, O'Dell and his wife Claudette have a combined family of three children and five grandchildren, who celebrate together on weekends and holidays - whenever they can. The couple attend ballgames, graduations, and birthday parties and look forward to Taylor's ballet performances. They also care for their mothers - 88 and 93.

"We love to entertain. I have a game room - pool table, ping-pong, darts, dominoes, television. And Claudette is a great cook. We like staying busy and being with people. I also volunteer at the Chatt Foundation (formerly Community Kitchen) and am active in the Orchard Knob Baptist Church. I enjoy every day that I volunteer."

Watch for O'Dell's new children's book to be published by Amazon - *Junior's New Boots*.



O'Dell's son Taurus and family - wife Irish, daughter Taylor and son Tyree



O'Dell on duty at Surgery Waiting

*Orange Grove is named for Osage orange trees still on campus.

New VP of Our Award Winning Cardiovascular Program



Kevin Hopkins worked with Diona Brown for a seamless transition.

Kevin Hopkins, new Vice President of Cardiovascular and Respiratory Care Services, is extremely proud of CHI Memorial recently being named one of the nation's 50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals by Fortune and PIN AI.

"This is the sixth year for us to make that exclusive list, and that is amazing," Kevin says.

"We have a tremendous team of cardiologists, surgeons, nurses, technologists, and therapists, who work collaboratively to provide exceptional heart care to our

community. I am humbled and privileged to work with these specialists since the retirement of Diona Brown following her 40 years. She has been an outstanding player and leader since the beginning of the heart program at CHI Memorial."

Kevin came to work at CHI Memorial Glenwood three+ years ago during the pandemic as Market Director of Respiratory Care for all three campuses.

"COVID kind of popped me back into the hospital environment in respiratory care," Kevin says. "I had been doing consulting for several years, but my wife Beth was working here, and I knew the need for therapists was critical. I renewed my license to help with that crisis."

"We came up with a five-year plan to rebuild the program in a way to improve the lung health of our communities. Then in late 2022, I was named Vice President of the Cardiovascular Service Line (CVSL). It was great to work with Diona, with all her knowledge and experience, in her new role as interim COO as I was able learn the intricacies of CVLS at CHI Memorial."

The responsibilities are huge!

"We work with the cardiologists and surgeons at The Chattanooga Heart Institute. We seek to provide everything the specialists there need for diagnosis, treatment, and recovery of their patients. That includes cardiac catheterization, electrocardiograms, stress tests, advanced cardiac imaging, cardiac short stay, cardiac and vascular sonography and more. We work very closely with Jeannie Smith in Surgery."

"One of our primary responsibilities is to ensure patients have good outcomes. A major focus right now is adding the latest technology in a CT scanner, which will develop a 3-D model of the coronary vasculature, map blockages, and identify which patients can have interventions or surgeries."

"We have a lot to brag about in Cardiac Rehab. It's a phenomenal program, with great outcomes. I am especially proud of their "Pre-hab" program. Matt's team has had great success with patients who are simply too sick to have surgery, building them up, and - most of the time - qualifying them for the procedure they need."

Born and raised in Morristown, Kevin started college as a pre-pharmacy major. "I really didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. I was working as a Tech when I got to know a respiratory therapist and learned what he did. That's when I registered for the program at Chattanooga State."

He later got a Bachelors in Respiratory Care and Masters in Business Administration at Independence University.

He started practicing in Respiratory Care in 1996 at Hutcheson where Angie Stiggins, now CHI Memorial Georgia Administrator, also got her start in the same department. Both rose quickly in leadership. He was serving as Chief Operating Officer when he left in 2016.

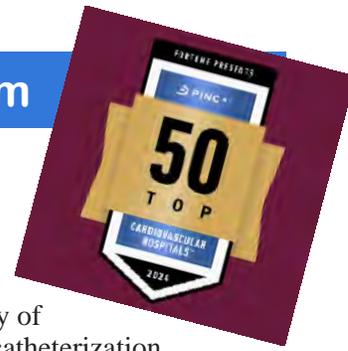
Kevin and his wife Beth have been married 15 years. "Beth Black (now Hopkins) worked as a respiratory therapist at CHI Memorial for years. Because of state laws, I can't be her boss, so she now works in the ER at Erlanger North."

"We love scenic Tennessee and do a lot of hiking in different areas. We are also amateur woodworkers and are building some cabinets. We just bought a lathe and will be making candlesticks and other small items. Beth likes refinishing, too, and is working on an antique secretary."

Kevin has three daughters and nine grandchildren. He just learned from his youngest that a 10th is on the way. They were all together at Christmas for the first time in 12 years.



Kevin's family including his dad and mom, sister, brother-in-law, niece, and nephew were together at Christmas. Brittany is married to a career Coast Guard officer in Corpus Christi, TX; Cara, a nurse, and her husband, Chief of Facilities at a resort, live in Newport, TN, and Alysa is a stay-at-home mom in Cosby, TN. Her husband is a truck driver.



"Use me, God. Show me how to take who I am, who I want to be, and what I can do, and use it for a purpose greater than myself."

Martin Luther King Jr.

Hello Humankindness - Black History Highlighted

Three unique events highlighted Black History for CHI Memorial this quarter.

First: The 31st annual Peace, Love, and Unity program honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. with the theme "Be the peace you wish to see in the world" was cancelled because of inclement weather. This tradition highlights local pastors, employees, and music. For many years, only those who could attend in person benefited. Last year's service was online, and more than 7,000 people made contact.

That service featured the Choral Society for the Preservation of African American song. You can watch their performance and the presentation by Dr. Jeffery Wilson at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Igw-6-DuYWo&t=106sN> The theme was "Out of a Mountain of Despair, A Stone of Hope."

Mountain of Despair, A Stone of Hope."

Second: The official announcement to Chattanooga of the More in Common Alliance between Morehouse School of Medicine and CommonSpirit Health. This historic \$100 million partnership was created to help diversify the healthcare workforce by creating medical education training sites for Morehouse in hospitals in the CommonSpirit Health System.

At a special community-building breakfast at Bessie Smith Cultural Center, executives from Morehouse and CommonSpirit explained the goals of the More in Common Alliance and the success already felt from this program.

CHI Memorial asked to be one of the first hospitals to welcome these students. Nearly 100 medical and physician assistant students have competed elective rotations at CHI Memorial since August 2021. Having more Black and minority doctors and Advanced Practice Providers can help reduce the disparities in healthcare.

Chattanooga Dr. Leroy Keith was also honored. A 1961 Morehouse graduate and the eighth president of Morehouse College, Keith helped double Morehouse's endowment from \$27 million in 1987 to \$60 million in 1993. His visionary leadership led to the completion of Nabrit, Mapp, McBay Hall.



Memorial Leadership working with the More in Common Alliance include Director of Development Jake Johnson, Director of Mission Integration Betsy Kammerdiener, Medical Director Dr. Lee Jackson, Community Benefits and Diversity Manager Nicole Brown, Foundation President Jennifer Nicely, Marketing Director Ronelle Sellers, Physician Liaison Chris Chastain, and Neuroscience Medical Director Dr. Tom Devlin.

Third: An Official Screening of the Documentary "How to Sue the Klan" Was Held at CHI Memorial

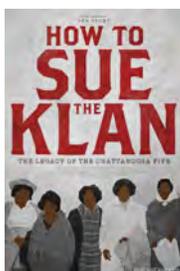
One of the co-producers of the documentary, Nicole Brown (Manager of Community Benefits and Diversity at CHI Memorial) arranged a screening at the hospital. "Our showing was before the one at Harvard and Cambridge," Nicole says. "This production has been entered in four film festivals and will be in more." Renowned Civil Rights Attorney Ben Crump is a producer.

The film documents the case of four black women who had just left the Whole Note on Ninth Street on April 19, 1980, when a car driven by a local Ku Klux Klan leader drove by. His passengers, also Klansmen, fired shotgun blasts at the women wounding all of them. A fifth woman was struck by glass.

In criminal court, an all-white jury acquitted two of the Klansman, and the third served only six months. A Center for Constitutional Rights attorney Randolph McLaughlin took the case to Civil Court and successfully argued that the women were entitled to compensation based on the 1871 Ku Klux Klan Enforcement Act, designed to curb racial violence.

The women won a \$535,000 settlement which included an injunction against all Klan activities in the city of Chattanooga. Though the women never received the money, this case set a nationwide legal precedent that allowed more cases to be tried in civil courts with the same statute, and violence by the Klan has ended.

The women are featured on a mural on EPB's 10th Street Power Station.



Nicole Brown (right), Community Benefits and Diversity Manager, had a conversation with Johnny Holloway (center), who was Chattanooga Vice President of the NAACP at the time of the shooting. Special guest Rev. Jeffrey Wilson, former hospital board member, is on the left.

From The Foundation

by Jennifer Nicely, Foundation President

We at the Foundation are overjoyed and humbled by the fantastic success of *Pink!* The community support was truly overwhelming, and our hearts are full of gratitude for our outstanding co-chairs Brittany and Tyler Carman and Beaumont and Jabo Covert, the committees, the sponsors, the volunteers. I personally want to thank the entire Foundation staff and our exceptional Marketing team, who were everywhere working with everyone to create awareness in the community and to make the event so memorable. (See pages 3 and 6 for more on *Pink!*)

We are already planning for *Pink!* 2025, the 20th anniversary of the gala, and are pleased to announce that MaryEllen Locher's son Alex Burd and his wife Lacy will chair this special occasion.



Foundation Staff: Karen Sloan, Madison Ralston, Jeremy Riley, Jennifer Nicely, Jamy Beal, and Stacy Lee.



Karen Sloan Earns "Philanthropy Values Award" from CommonSpirit

Our very own Karen Sloan, Annual Fund Coordinator, was honored at the CommonSpirit Health Philanthropy Phillie Awards with the Philanthropy Values Award. This esteemed award honors a philanthropy team member who demonstrates the values of compassion, inclusion, integrity, excellence, and collaboration in their daily interactions and in life.

Karen Sloan

Karen is known for going out of her way to make sure everyone she interacts with feels the comfort and warmth she naturally exudes, for her professionalism and expertise, and for her commitment to CHI Memorial's mission. She was chosen from among the 300 philanthropy professionals who work in CommonSpirit's 80+ fundraising entities.

The Foundation also earned "Philanthropy Impact Video of the Year" for "Memorial Georgia," showcasing our plans to build a leading community hospital. You can read more about the new hospital on Page 18.



Marketing Staff: Anna Hobbs, Herman Wilhelm, Sonia Moss, Karen Long, and Ronelle Sellers

Annual River City Ribbon Run Is Saturday, April 13 at 9am Volunteers Can Help Celebrate the Cancer Community

Anyone who has been impacted by any type of cancer will find support at this event which raises funds to support treatment options at the Rees Skillern Cancer Institute. You can participate and honor a loved one by wearing the ribbon color you choose. You can volunteer to help by contacting madison.ralston@commonspirit.org or calling 423.495.7465.

Or you can join a team and run or do the fun walk. Or simply come and enjoy the morning on the campus of Chattanooga State Community College and cheer for the runners.



Bring your grandchildren to the Kid's Zone and check out the food trucks and the health fair which are open till 11am.

Register at: unite.chiphilanthropy.org/rivercityribbonrun2024

Tickets are: Adults - \$30; Children \$15 (with t-shirt).

Employees/volunteers get \$5 off registration with code CHI124.

The Rees Skillern Cancer Institute at CHI Memorial is the leading provider of adult cancer services in Chattanooga, North Georgia and the surrounding communities. Our comprehensive cancer program meets the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of people facing cancer and their families.

You Are Invited to Pet Therapy Sculpture Unveiling, New Exhibits



Wayne Gratigny started the Pet Therapy Program 12 years ago. He is now bringing Omar, a Golden Retriever rescued from Istanbul. "He's a good height to lay his head on a bed for a patient to pet."

Wayne Gratigny restarted the Pet Therapy Program at CHI Memorial in 2012 with Sadie, one of the first Golden Retrievers he and his wife rescued.

"I had seen how my grandson reacted to therapy dogs when he was in another hospital and thought it would be great to have dogs visit patients here," Wayne says. "I had five golden retrievers at the time, but Sadie was the most gentle and attentive to people. Jean Payne, Director Volunteer Services, liked the idea and even had badges made for the dogs."

When the pandemic shut the program down in 2020, many pet therapy dogs were bringing joy and smiles to patients at the hospital. As soon as he could, Wayne came back with another of his Golden Retrievers – Omar, a rescue from Istanbul. Wanting to encourage more pet owners to join the program and to honor the sweet work of the pets who partner with their human companions to bring comfort and healing, Wayne decided to have a statue made of Sadie.

With support from Volunteer Services and Arts Therapy, Wayne commissioned local artist Marie Willison to create a bronze sculpture of Sadie. Badges of CHI Memorial

therapy dogs will be in a drawer in the pedestal. Other work by Marie at the hospital: a bas relief of Martin Luther King, Jr. and a cross of bas relief scenes in Jesus' life.

The sculpture of Sadie honoring all pet therapy dogs at CHI Memorial will be located in the lobby at Entrance B near the Gift Shop and Cafeteria.

You Are Invited to the
Therapy Dog Sculpture Blessing
April 30, at Noon
National Pet Therapy Day

SPLASH Exhibit Features Youth Arts Workshop



SPLASH artist Harmony, age 12, with her art featured on the poster introducing the exhibit.

The SPLASH Exhibit called "A Place of Healing" features art by SPLASH students on 4th floor near Entrance F. Works by the founders and instructors of SPLASH are exhibited in the B Entrance lobby near the Foundation office.

Local artists Charlie and Iantha Newton are committed to working with kids from under-served, high-crime areas to sow seeds of positivity by offering free art classes. This program, made possible by a grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission, has already touched the lives of more than 150 Chattanooga young people ages 10–17.

Proceeds from any art sold from this exhibit will support continuation of the free art classes for youth.



Charlie Newton's piece "Crescendo" is near the cafeteria. "Art lifted me above my environment and gave me opportunities I want to give to others."

Arts, Health, and Social Justice Program Focuses on Climate

CHI Memorial partnered with the Hunter and local artists in February to explore the intersection of art and climate the way it impacts communities of color. This program used visual art poetry, music, and dance - to look at current issues. It was inspired by the Hunter exhibit "Networked Nature" that uses groundbreaking technologies to examine the impact of human-made systems on the environment. People left wanting to protect the environment.

Featured artists included composer Carl Caldwell of Summer Dregs, poet Erika Roberts, and dancer Novak New.

The first program in 2021 built on the voices and words of nurses facing the stress of frontline workers during the pandemic. In 2022, the program on the issue of African American artists and dancers won a national award. A powerful program in 2023 focused on teen mental health, identity, and sexuality. All seek to create greater understanding and respect.

To view the 2023 program: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ut8Pivtwqyg>

To view the 2022 program: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-HgQ52U8RY&t=1003s>

To learn more about the current exhibit at the Hunter: <https://www.huntermuseum.org/exhibition/networked-nature-from-the-carl-marilynn-thoma-foundation>

A Memorial Volunteer Helped Debbie Kerr Find Her Volunteer Job

Becoming friends and church pew buddies with Volunteer Mary Ortwein and her husband Butch led Debbie Kerr into volunteering at Hospital Georgia.

She moved from Ooltewah to a townhouse community in North Georgia in 2013 and began attending East Ridge United Methodist Church. That's where she met the Ortweins.

"When I told Maryella (my name for Mary) I thought I would like to volunteer at a hospital, she told me how much she enjoyed her volunteer work at CHI Memorial Imaging Center on Battlefield Parkway," Debbie says. "I applied and am now volunteering one morning a week. I love it."

"By the time patients finish treatment, I've heard their stories and been inspired by their lovely spirit. Some have been called back for a scan or test, and they are fearful – but so brave. Some are going through heartbreaking times in their lives and talk openly about their faith. That opens the door so I can share and provide a little comfort."

Debbie grew up in the Highway 58 area, went to Central High School, and earned a two-year degree in office



Avery (far left) plays volleyball for her high school, and Debbie loves to see her play. Son Drew works for the Walt Disney World Resort.



Debbie Kerr's family celebrated her retirement from Chattanooga Center for Creative Arts with her two years ago. She is pictured with David, Avery, Drew, Jill, and Josh.

administration from UTC. She then went to work for General Motors Acceptance Corp. (now Ally Financial).

She has two boys 13 years apart in age. "They are as different as night and day," she says. "Josh, my oldest, was into sports, and we were continually going to games. Drew, the youngest, started dancing when he was four, and attended Chattanooga Center for Creative Arts (CCA) from 6th grade through high school. It is so important for them to be able to do what they love. I was grateful that the schools offered opportunities for both of them."

When Drew started kindergarten, Debbie started substitute teaching in Hamilton County Schools. "I kind of worked my way through to the job I wanted. I was fortunate to be able to work for many years as secretary at the Center for Creative Arts. I retired from there two years ago when I was 68. The teachers and the programs are great. I still enjoy many of the productions."

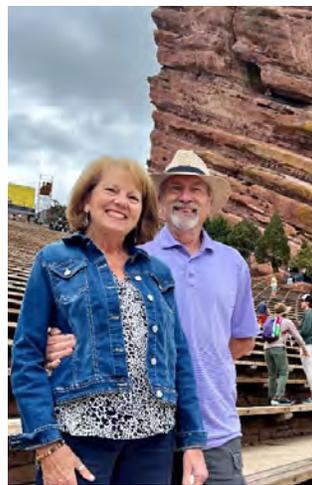
Debbie met her good friend David Wright 11 years ago through a mother. "She knew both of us pretty well and set us up on a blind date. He had lost his wife to pancreatic cancer, and I was single. We have become companions, part of each other's families. We travel together, go out to eat, and enjoy attending local events. He lives in Tunnel Hill."

Their children give them many opportunities for travel and family activities. David has two daughters. Jennifer lives in Boston, and Becky in Tunnel Hill. His granddaughter Elizabeth lives in England, and he has a great grandson Peter.

Josh graduated from UTC and now works for PPG in Louisville, Kentucky. "He and his wife Jill live in Indiana, and they cross the Ohio River every day to go to work. My granddaughter Avery plays volleyball at Indiana Christian Academy, and we go to watch her tournaments. Every year we enjoy Thanksgiving in Indiana."

Drew is now a choreographer for Walt Disney World Resort. He started there as a dancer after he earned his undergraduate degree from ETSU.

"We visit them all and get together often. With a clear love for family, I am grateful that CHI Memorial gives me the opportunity to volunteer while allowing me the flexibility to travel and spend time with loved ones."



Debbie and David enjoy traveling - often to see family, but also to places like Alaska for a helicopter adventure and to the Red Rocks Amphitheater in Colorado.

CHI Memorial Fulfilling Mission: Improving the Health of the People We Serve

American Heart Association



CHI Memorial went all out for Go Red for Women Day February 2 to raise awareness of cardiovascular Disease as the Number 1 killer of women and provide education for prevention.

As Co-Chair of Go Red For Women’s Circle of Red in Chattanooga, Nicole Brown, Manager of Community Benefits and Diversity, says, “Heart disease causes one in every three deaths among women. That’s a third of the women we love, and it affects women from age 20 and up.”



“Women wait too long to call because they don’t recognize the symptoms, and they are less likely to receive help from a bystander, which decreases their odds of surviving. People are afraid to touch women. Immediate CPR can double or triple the victim’s chance of survival from cardiac arrest.”

“Another reason this cause is very important to me is because statistics show that black people are 41% less likely to received CPR if they go into cardiac arrest. We need to learn CPR and we need to learn to recognize the symptoms and act.”

The most common symptoms for men and women is chest pain that may affect the jaw, neck and upper back and cause shortness of breath. Women may experience less obvious symptoms like indigestion, fainting, or extreme fatigue.

The Women’s Circle of Red is a giving society of passionate individuals who are in the fight against heart disease and stroke in women to win. The American Heart Association celebrated its Centennial in 2024 during Heart Month with the theme “Bold Hearts” and a vision for advancing health and hope for everyone.

Nicole Brown appreciated great support for Go Red at CHI Memorial. Pictured are Nicole, Betsy Kammerdiener, Jennifer Patterson, Callie Burnett, and Latonya Lyons Co-Chair with Nicole for Circle of Red.

Grants Awarded to Non-Profit Organizations Partnering for a Healthier Community

CHI Memorial proudly awarded \$278,000 in grants to five local non-profit organizations. These grants support initiatives that assist with access to medical care, mental health services and youth programs, along with combating homelessness.

We are happy to support Catholic Charities of East Tennessee, HopeSpur for Mental Health, LIFT Youth Center, Medical Foundation of Chattanooga, and Welcome Home of Chattanooga in their vital work. Together, we are making strides toward a healthier, happier community.

Community Benefits also presented a \$5,000 check to Volunteers in Medicine, a private, non-profit primary care clinic in Chattanooga. Volunteer physicians and nurses provide free medical services to financially eligible adults who are uninsured.



Community Benefits and Diversity Manager Nicole Brown with representatives from Volunteers in Medicine, Chattanooga: Board Chair Roger Davis, Vice Chair Rev. Clark Taylor Jr., and Executive Director Joel Henderson.

SHARE YOUR MISSION MOMENTS

A Mission Moment occurs when you see in action the compassion and commitment of CHI Memorial and feel blessed to be a part of this healing place.

After I (Joyce Dick) suffered numbness and all-too-frequent burning pain in the fingers of my right hand, Dr. Chris Pankiw explained how surgery to open the carpal tunnel would relieve the pain and hopefully the numbness. I asked to have the surgery at CHI Memorial Hixson.

The attentiveness began immediately with calls to confirm, to pre-register, to verify what I needed to do. I felt the caring spirit of all who called. Pre-surgery testing with Debbie Ferguson was accomplished all in one place with pleasant conversation and reassurance.

The surgery was equally pleasant with comforting, encouraging words from all involved. Clearly, this team cared about the patient and worked together beautifully.

The team: Pre-Op Nurses Kimberly Rogers and Nick Carell; CRNA Terry Moss, Circulating Nurse Tiffany Seyfried, Scrub Tech Chad Owen, First Assistant Tony Turner, Surgery Coordinator Tara Short. Dr. Pankiw and anesthesiologist Dr. Balsler reassured me before surgery, and next thing I knew, Patti Yarnell was checking me out.

Surgery Director Brandon Martenn, who has been with CHI Memorial 15 years - 7 at Hixson, is justifiably proud. “The smaller environment encourages close team work and a family atmosphere between Surgery, Pre-Op and PACU.”

Hixson Partners with Work-Based Learning Program

When she became Supervisor of Nutrition Services at CHI Memorial Hixson in December, Rebecca Brannon was surprised - and pleased - to find that two young students from Hixson High School and another young man were coming each week to help in the kitchen as volunteers.

“It was amazing to see how much help they were and how friendly,” Rebecca says.

“These young people have special needs and are happy to be learning work skills that can help them find paying jobs in the work force.”

Robin Layne in Special Education at Hixson High helps coordinate the Work-Based Learning Program implemented in all Hamilton County Schools with different businesses and industries.

“The students coming to the hospital are working toward an occupational diploma as they transition into adulthood. They really want to be able to work and be independent, and this experience helps toward that goal.”

Stacey, an Assistant Teacher, comes with Bella and Derrick to show them what to do and be sure they follow through. Zeke, a young man with complex needs, volunteers with help from Darla, his caregiver.

“Some days they wash pots and pans and utensils and put them away in the right place which has to be done by hand. Zeke, who has autism, is very organized and is very careful about putting everything in the right place. He doesn’t allow anyone to put dirty items where the clean should be,” Rebecca says.

“They also break down cardboard boxes for recycling and help with cleaning tables in the cafeteria. Bella helps with stocking the refrigerators on each floor with snacks for patients between meals. She checks dates and arranges things for first in, first out use.”

“Their work relieves pressure on the staff who would otherwise have to do those jobs. We all love them and celebrate birthdays or special things with them. They are very task oriented, and their chaperones are good about making sure they finish their jobs acceptably.”



Bella, Stacy, and Barrett, volunteers from the Hixson High School Work-Based Learning Program help in Nutrition Services at CHI Memorial Hixson.



Zeke, a young man with complex needs, volunteers with Darla, his caregiver.

Rebecca, who has worked in food service jobs all her life, came to work at CHI Memorial Chattanooga in mid-2023, to get experience in hospital food service while she was finishing up her bachelor’s degree in Nutrition and Dietetics at UTC. She hopes to continue her education to be a dietitian.

“I was working on the tray line on the Chattanooga campus when they asked me if I would be a supervisor at Hixson. It was new to me, but the staff at Hixson is wonderful. Many have been here for years and know the operation inside and out. We are working together to amp up our supplies, order what we need, and plan schedules for the coverage we need.”

“We want patients to get their meals in a timely manner and while the food is still hot. We try hard to make the food as tasty as it can be with salt and carb restrictions. We enjoy serving the employees in the cafeteria, changing the menu around and having fun. I love the family atmosphere here.”

Ingrid Wright, Director of Nutrition Services for all three campuses, says, “This program for students supports our mission to reach out to diverse groups in the community and give on-the-job training. We do something

similar on the Glenwood campus with our Orange Grove partnership,* except we pay their students to clean pots and pans. A staff member comes to supervise them. This program has been ongoing for several years..”



Nutrition Services Supervisor Rebecca Brannon (back row second from right) is proud of her staff. Pictured are: Back row: Darla, Zeke, Debbie, Cat, Shaquita, Rebecca, Andrea. Front row: Zella, Henra, Beth, and Minly.

*See Page 10 for more information on the Orange Grove partnership championed by Volunteer O’Dell Tiller



Joy, Gratitude, Excitement Mark Georgia Hospital Groundbreaking



CHI Memorial Georgia Hospital employees were one of proud groups happily symbolizing the start of construction of the new hospital.

“It’s been a long time coming,” says Angie Stiggins, who has been on the roller coaster ride with the Georgia Hospital for 36 years. “I worked cardiac arrests under the canopy of a closed hospital. This community deserves better than that.”

“When CHI Memorial acquired the hospital, we again provided compassionate care. We promised to build a new hospital, and we keep our promises!”

“We have so many people to thank from the bottom of our hearts. We owe so much to Janelle Reilly, CEO,” Angie told a huge audience including many VIPs.

“This is a monumental occasion, a testament to the perseverance and undying dedication of Angie and Andrew McGill, VP of Building Development,” Janelle said. “The architects, engineers, the Board, CommonSpirit, the community committees.”

Sister Judy Raley, representing the hospital board, told of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth bringing their dedication to excellence and compassionate care to Chattanooga in 1952. “This signals a perpetuation of their ministry, their legacy.”

Andrew thanked officials from Dade, Walker, and Catoosa counties, who all spoke. They watched the announcement three years ago and stood behind the hospital faced with many challenges, appreciative of the leadership and perseverance.

Andrew said, “We were on life support, and they said, ‘We can do it.’ They never gave up on this project.” They described Andrew as a bulldog. “He has unbelievable tenacity.”

Georgia Senator Jon Ossoff spoke via video. Federal assistance for the hospital was approved in the latest appropriations bill, a great example of what the government can do to help people, Andrew said.

The ground was blessed as a place of faith and healing by Father Mike Creson assisted by Father Brian Bufford of St. Gerard in Fort Oglethorpe.

In closing, Betsy Kammerdiener prayed that God will be faithful to the good work He has begun. “Partnerships accomplish what no one person can do. May we be motivated by love that makes no exceptions.”

Then several groups of people wearing hard hats posed with the row of shovels on newly turned soil – elected officials, major donors, Georgia employees, Chattanooga employees, the builders, and more.”

“In September 2025, we will be handed the keys to a new hospital,” Angie says. “What a gift that will be to our community. This hospital and this community mean everything to me. They are my legacy, too.”



CEO Janelle Reilly



VP Andrew McGill



Judy Raley, SCN



Angie Stiggins, Administrator



Hospital leadership with lead donors: the Frank Pierce Foundation and Rich and Barbara Kramer

CHI Memorial News Briefs



Best of the Best North Georgia

CHI Memorial was voted for three Best of the Best awards in North Georgia through the *Times Free Press*! CHI Memorial Hospital Georgia was voted "Best Hospital" and "Best Healthcare Employer." Pediatric Diagnostic Associates was voted "Best Pediatrician."

"We are excited about receiving this recognition of the great team we have in place in North Georgia," says Administrator Angie Stiggins. "They are phenomenal, and they will be moving to the new hospital in a carefully planned transition to ensure patient care is not interrupted."

We are Building a Smart Hospital

"Groundbreaking took us one step closer to a new hospital to replace the 70-year-old hospital in Fort Oglethorpe," says Administrator Angie Stiggins. "We plan to be in the new hospital by December 2025, one of only three in Georgia ranked a 'Smart' Hospital."



64 spacious Patient Rooms, 28-bed Emergency Department, 8-bed ICU, Chapel, Bistro Dining, 15 Operating Rooms, and more

"The new hospital will leverage the latest in Artificial Intelligence, automation, and virtual care technology to provide personalized care. The smarter the hospital, the more efficient the hospital and the safer the patient care. We will use data-informed information to help make the best clinical decisions for each patient."

For the Community, By the Community

"People in this community have fought for this hospital, standing by us every step of the way. They need it, and they deserve it. We are keeping our promise."

"I am proud to say 80% of the labor used on the hospital will be from local sources. We are excited to provide jobs and stimulate the economy in the community. That is one of the things we insisted on when choosing a general contractor."

"McCarthy, out of Atlanta, has worked on several projects with CommonSpirit, and we made it clear to them that we want labor to come from this community."

"People in the community are donating to the 'Care Closer to Home' campaign. Nearly 4.3 million has been raised already. This will be their hospital!"



Neurologists Dr. Tom Devlin and Dr. Richer Shah, who led development of VIZ.ai, a smartphone app that speeds stroke care, stand with Neurosurgeon Dr. Mayshan Ghiassi in the procedure room where they perform life-saving surgeries for stroke patients at CHI Memorial. (from TFP 3/10/24 by Jennifer McNally)

CHI Memorial Neurologists Use AI in Phone App to Hasten Stroke Care

Dr. Tom Devlin and Dr. Ruchir Shah were involved in developing a groundbreaking smartphone app that can hasten stroke care, and it is making news worldwide, putting Chattanooga and CHI Memorial on the map.

Using the VIZ.ai app, members of a stroke team can view three-dimensional brain scans of a patient miles away to determine if a stroke is happening and give instructions for the care needed to stop the stroke. Every minute blood flow is blocked from the brain by a stroke, an estimated 1.9 million brain cells are lost. VIC.ai has been shown to knock 39.5 minutes off the time between detection of a stroke and medical intervention.

Dr. Shah was the first doctor to use this phone app to detect a stroke on a patient in a Dalton hospital. Dr. Shah was able to see the clot within minutes of the CT scan, and the patient was transported to CHI Memorial Chattanooga for life-saving surgery.



Cardiologist Dr. Vimal Ramjee with AI generated heart image.

AI technology is also used as part of coronary CT scans by cardiologists at the Chattanooga Heart Institute. Dr. Vimal Ramjee says, "AI allows us to look at vessels in great detail to see if someone has blockage or not and whether they may need medications or something bigger, like surgery."

Dr. Ramjee also relies on AI for detection of aortic tears, pulmonary embolisms, or calcium deposits in blood vessels. AI quickly identifies these abnormalities and helps him with making a confident diagnosis.

Announcements and Important Dates

Conference Room Renamed; Honors Sister Judy Raley, SCN

Guests from as far away as Nevada (Bob Scheri, former mission director, and his wife Jane Franz), SCNs from Nazareth, leaders, employees, and friends gathered outside the chapel in March to celebrate Sister Judy Raley on her 85th birthday. A poster announcing that the SCN Conference Room would be renamed the Sr. Judy Raley, SCN Board Room was unveiled. A plaque with the new name will soon be mounted.

"I am so thrilled Sister Judy was honored and celebrated in such a special way," says Jean Payne. "Sister Judy means the world to me on so many levels! She has always been there for me and all of us here at CHI Memorial. To me, she is the face and hands of Jesus here on earth always doing His amazing work."

"I will never forget how she helped me share tragic news with my best friend that her mother, one of our volunteers, had been tragically killed on her way home from volunteer service. Sister Judy immediately left a meeting to be present for me and even went with me to the Emergency Room. I will be forever grateful for her presence and guidance."

Mission Director Betsy Kammerdiener says, "Sister Judy is the face of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth for many people in Chattanooga as well as for us at CHI Memorial. She has graciously given decades of service and dedication to CHI Memorial and the community we serve."

Sister Judy came here first as a chaplain and was then tapped to be Vice President of Mission. After several years in that role, she was called to be Provincial for the Western Province of the SCNs. When her five year term was over, she returned as a Volunteer and Board Member."

Guests at the celebration spontaneously spoke from the heart as they shared stories and appreciation of all Sister Judy means to them. "It was touching," says Annual Fund Coordinator Karen Sloan

Betsy sang "You Raise Me Up," one of Sr. Judy's favorite songs, which may say what people feel.

*You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains.
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas.
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders.
You raise me up to more than I can be.
You raise me up to more than I can be.*



Sister Alice O'Connell, Sister Teresa Kotturan, Sister Mary Elizabeth Miller, Sister Marian Stenken came to honor Sister Judy (center).



Dr. John Boxell, Father Mike Creson, Mission Director Betsy Kammerdiener, Sister Judy Raley, Division VP Brad Pope, Retired Senior Executive Larry Schumacher, and VP of Business Development Andrew McGill were among those celebrating.

Events and Dates to Remember

- **Blessing and Ribbon Cutting for New Gift Shop: April 18, 11am to 11:30am.**
- **National Volunteer Week: April 21-27**
- **Therapy Dog Sculpture Blessing: April 30 at Noon, Entrance B Lobby**
- **Auxiliary Service Awards Banquet: Tuesday, May 14, at Brainerd Crossroads. You will receive an invitation.**

Remember to Shop These Sales

- **Masquerade \$5 Sale - April 25 and 26 at Hospital Chattanooga**
- **Southern Comfort Linens - May 13 - 26 ONLINE**