

Personal **BLESSING**

A publication of
BLESSING HEALTH SYSTEM

OUR PATIENTS. THEIR STORIES.

SPRING/SUMMER 2022



Meet
a man
at the
heart
of a
miracle

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Published by the Marketing, Communications & Community Relations staff of Blessing Hospital, *Personal Blessing* provides general information on health-related topics. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, which should always be obtained from your physician.

The Blessing Health System Mission Statement:

To improve the health of our communities

The Blessing Health System Vision Statement:

Blessing Health System will be exceptional

- in providing a safe, high-quality healthcare experience;
- in being the best place for providers to practice;
- in being a place where employees want to work and students want to learn; and
- in partnering with our communities.

For more information, contact:

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Health care quality: Choose your color

By Maureen Kahn, RN, MHA, MSN, president/chief executive officer, Blessing Health System and Blessing Hospital

We have quality in the colors of green and gold for you. Blessing Hospital recently earned national "Get With The Guidelines"® Gold Plus" quality recognition for stroke care and a grade "A" in overall patient safety from The Leapfrog Group (whose signature color is green).

The stroke recognition comes from the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association for Blessing's demonstrated ability, over 24 consecutive months, to provide stroke patients with the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized guidelines based on the latest scientific evidence. This included meeting or exceeding guidelines for the administration of blood-clot-busting medication.

In addition, Blessing is a nationally certified Primary Stroke Center by DNV, an internationally recognized accrediting and certification organization.

With stroke being the Number 5 cause of death in America and a leading cause of adult disability, Blessing caregivers—led by our Stroke

Team—are committed to making the very best care available to residents of the region.

Who doesn't love getting a grade of "A"? In fall 2021, for the third consecutive survey period, The Leapfrog Group rated Blessing Hospital's delivery of safe care as grade "A", based on outcomes in more than 30 publicly reported health care safety measures. Of the 2,700 hospitals participating in the Leapfrog safety program, typically around one-third receive a grade of "A."

Health care providers are humans and humans are not perfect. Likewise, no process or procedure is foolproof. But the residents of the communities Blessing serves can know that independent, third-party experts feel Blessing is delivering health care on par with the highest quality and safest available in the country today.

I hope you enjoy the inspiring stories on the following pages, featuring several of our amazing patients and how their lives changed with the care of Blessing's heart and orthopedic teams. ■



AT BLESSING WE'RE ALL HEART, ALL THE TIME

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Cardiothoracic Surgery



**JEFFREY COOK,
MD, FACC, FSCAI**
Interventional Cardiology



**UMUT GOMCELI, MD,
FACC**
Non-Invasive Cardiology



MICHAEL HART, DO
Cardiothoracic Surgery



**JOHN HAMMOCK,
MD, FACC, FHRS**
Invasive Cardiology
Electrophysiology



IMTIAZ ISMAIL, MD
Interventional Cardiology



FAROOQ JUNAID, DO
Non-Invasive Cardiology



**STEVEN KRAUSE,
DO, MHA, FACOI**
Interventional Cardiology



**ELIOT NISSENBAUM,
DO, FACC, FCCP**
Invasive Cardiology



**IRVING SCHWARTZ,
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Invasive Cardiology



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Structural Heart Coordinator



**SHANNA DIERKER,
APRN-FNP**
Cardiology



**RACHEL KILLAM,
APRN-AGPCNP**
Cardiology



**ANDREA LEONE,
DNP, AGACNP-BC,
FNP-C**
Cardiothoracic Surgery



**STACY LOWARY,
APRN-FNP**
Cardiology



DIANA WEATHERFORD, RN
Structural Heart Navigator

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Hannibal Clinic
A member of Blessing Health System

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B **BLESSING**
Health System

How teamwork, timing and treatment saved Jim's life

Jim Robinson calls himself a “common person.”

Pam Robinson describes her husband as “just the sweetest guy.”

Blessing nurse practitioner Diane Nutter says he is “a very strong man.”

Some might call Jim lucky.

“I was scared to death,” the 51-year-old LaGrange, Missouri, resident said. “I didn’t know if I was going to live or die.”

Jim and Pam’s story starts with a Blessing Be Well at Work Employer Clinic appointment in late July 2021. Jim’s employer, Titan Wheel, participates in the Blessing Be Well at Work program, providing employees and covered dependents with access to primary care and other services.

“His legs were swollen,” Pam said. “We didn’t think anything of it.”

Diane Nutter, APRN-FNP, took care of Jim. While his heart and lungs sounded normal, his symptoms pointed in different treatment directions. To narrow the options, Diane ordered blood work, including a test that indicates

congestive heart disease.

“It came back elevated at 3,387. Normal is 5 to 125,” she said. “That concerned me. It’s indicative of heart failure.”

Diane referred Jim to Blessing Cardiology for further evaluation.

Jim saw **Shanna Dierker, APRN-FNP**, in Blessing’s Heart Failure Clinic shortly after his visit with Diane. *US News & World Report* named Blessing a High Performing Hospital in heart failure care. The condition occurs when the heart isn’t pumping well, a condition affecting more than 6 million Americans. Jim was one of them. He just didn’t know it officially yet.

“When Jim came to the Heart Failure Clinic, he was in active and advanced heart failure. One test showed his

heart strength was around 15 percent,” Shanna stated. “Jim was also experiencing rapid Afib.”

Afib, short for atrial fibrillation, is an abnormal heart rhythm. Jim’s heart was beating at around 180 beats per minute. Normal is 70 to 90. He was also short of breath, could walk no more than 100 feet and was retaining fluid.



Pam Robinson is happy to have her husband of 11 years healthy and by her side.

Jim was admitted immediately to Blessing Hospital where his condition was stabilized under the care of **John Hammock, MD**, interventional cardiologist and electrophysiologist. Dr. Hammock and Shanna work together in the Heart Failure Clinic. Jim also received a stent from **Steven Krause, DO**, during his hospitalization to relieve a blocked artery discovered during his evaluation.

Over the next three weeks, as an outpatient under the care of Dr. Hammock and Shanna, Jim had three electrical shocks to his heart to return it to normal rhythm, and a cardiac electrophysiology procedure called ablation. Ablation blocks abnormal electrical signals to restore permanently a normal heart rhythm.

“We have Jim on a medication plan, and his heart function returned to normal,” Shanna reported. “He is living a normal life and back to work.”

The rapid deterioration of Jim’s condition was not surprising. His quick return to normal was surprising. It was a matter of getting the right care at the right time.

“If he did not present to the Heart Failure Clinic when he did, Jim would have been lucky to be here for Christmas,” Shanna said.

See? Lucky.

Jim’s doing a lot of work, too. He has made significant lifestyle changes to help his heart remain strong—a heart full of gratitude for all of his Blessing caregivers.

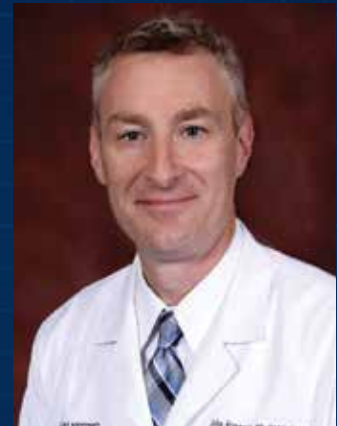
“They spoke to me like a person. I understood everything,” he said. “They were up front and honest.”

Pam’s glad to have her husband of 11 years healthy and by her side.

“I hug him a little tighter, hold his hand a little more and tell him I love him every chance I get,” she said.

For more information on the care of the Blessing Heart Failure Clinic, go to blessinghealth.org/heartfailure. ■

With his heart strength at 15 percent of normal, Jim Robinson said he was “scared to death.”



John Hammock, MD
Interventional cardiologist
and electrophysiologist



Shanna Dierker, APRN-FNP
Blessing Heart Failure Clinic



Meet a man at the heart of a miracle

Miracles can occur anywhere at any time. Ask Dean Woodruff. His miracle began in a cemetery three days before Christmas 2021.

“I remember when I went down I said, ‘God, if it’s my turn, go ahead and take me.’ I remember hearing something like, ‘I really don’t need you yet,’” Dean said with a chuckle.

A staff member of an area funeral home in his retirement, Dean was participating in a burial at a small cemetery on the northern edge of Quincy, on a blustery day last December, when he began to feel ill.

“I knew something was going wrong because my chest started to burn like crazy,” the 79-year-old recalled.

The funeral service was for the father of Blessing nurse **Kari Schmiedeskamp Luckhaupt**. She was one

of a number of people at the service who responded to Dean’s medical emergency.

“We called 9-1-1 immediately and were on the ground with Dean—holding his hand, trying to keep him warm, reassuring him that help was coming and monitoring his condition until first responders arrived,” Kari stated.

It was the first time the 21-year veteran of the Blessing nursing staff had responded to a heart attack outside the walls of the hospital.

“It’s a lot different being in that kind of situation versus being in the hospital,” she said.

Board-certified Blessing cardiologist **Jeffrey Cook, MD**, is Dean’s heart doctor. He says a blood clot that had developed inside of Dean’s heart, at the site of another heart attack he experienced in the 1990s, moved.

“Sometimes this happens immediately, but 30 years later, it is unheard of,” said Dr. Cook. “On December 22 that blood clot ejected out of his heart cavity and went into his left main heart artery causing a massive heart attack.”

Blockage of the left main artery is known as a “widowmaker” heart attack because, according to the American Heart Association, the survival rate following a widowmaker heart attack is only 12% when it occurs outside of a hospital or advanced care center.

unit were fantastic,” said Dean’s wife of 25 years, Sue. “He does not remember those first three days, but I do. They were very scary. The nurses, when they are sitting right in the room, controlling everything that is beeping and going, the things they do all at one time—it’s amazing.”

Dean is beloved and well known in the community, and across the country. He was a science teacher and basketball and football coach in the Mendon, IL, school district.



« Dean and Sue Woodruff

Survival rate following a widowmaker heart attack outside of a hospital or advanced care center

12%

Board-certified Blessing cardiologist
Jeffrey Cook, MD »



Miraculously Dean survived, in part due to complex and aggressive treatment of his blood clot at Blessing, requiring injections of different medications inside the artery to dissolve the clot.

“One in 500 cases do we have to do that,” Dr. Cook added. “It’s very rare.”

While Dean’s heart sustained damage, the doctor says Dean is fortunate the blood clot did not reach his brain and cause damage there.

Another part of this miracle.

“I don’t remember anything for three days, which was Christmas morning. I had a Merry Christmas. I woke up,” Dean said, again with a chuckle. He was hospitalized for a total of 14 days, some of those days on a ventilator.

“The people of the Blessing Hospital cardiovascular

“We heard from former players from all over who had moved away, talking about how Dean would never lose a ball game because he was so stubborn and always wanted to win every game,” Sue recalled. “They said, ‘Just tell him he needs to win this one. Take the ball to the hole and win the game,’ things he used to tell them when the game was on the line. I tell you, that’s what held us together, all those people in our community and beyond sending all those wishes and praying.”

Those people include several of his Blessing nurses, including Kari, who were students of Dean’s over the years.

“All that they did for me, I am greatly, greatly appreciative,” he stated.

For more information on the care provided by the Blessing Heart & Vascular Center, go to blessinghealth.org. ■

Blessing goes with the “flow” in diagnosing chest pain

A person feeling chest pain may have coronary artery disease, the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. That person needs answers to two questions from their provider:

- 1. Is there a blockage in any of my arteries?**
- 2. If yes, is blood flow from the heart being restricted?**

Answers to those questions determine the treatment needed: either medication, stents or by-pass surgery.

For years, to get answers to one or both of those questions, many patients had to undergo a heart catheterization, during which a cardiologist inserts a thin tube called a catheter into the heart.

Today, Blessing Heart & Vascular Center outpatients and their providers have another option to diagnose chest pain in certain situations, with no catheter needed. It's called HeartFlow Analysis.

“It's a very innovative technique,” said **Irving Schwartz, MD**, Blessing Health System board-certified invasive cardiologist.

Here's how it works. A patient experiencing chest pain undergoes a computed tomography angiogram (CTA), which is a 3D scan of the heart. If the CTA image shows a blockage, the image is sent to the HeartFlow company. Within hours, the HeartFlow team generates a computer model of the patient's heart, and, using automated intelligence, creates a color-coded map of the patient's coronary arteries showing the extent to which narrowing is interrupting blood flow, based on the scientific principles of fluid flow.

“The whole point of this technique is to be as

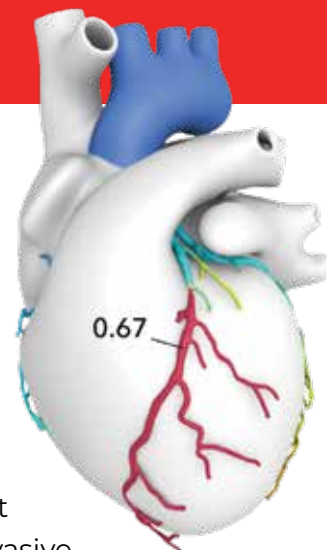
non-invasive as possible and get the results needed for treatment planning without having to do a diagnostic heart catheterization, which is an invasive procedure,” said **Farooq Junaid, DO**, Blessing Health System board-certified non-invasive cardiologist.

“If the CTA shows a blockage, HeartFlow Analysis helps us determine the severity. While the patient may still need a catheterization to treat the problem, they won't need two of them, one to diagnose and one to treat. And if HeartFlow Analysis shows no significant severity, the patient avoided an invasive procedure,” he added.

“Today we get more information from a CTA, a non-invasive test, than we do from a diagnostic catheterization—an invasive test,” Dr. Schwartz concluded. “When the CTA shows an abnormality, HeartFlow Analysis adds value to the CTA and the information we need to plan treatment.”

HeartFlow Analysis cannot be used on certain patients, including those who already have a heart stent or have had by-pass surgery.

For more information on HeartFlow Analysis, including a video, go to blessinghealth.org/heartflow. ■



Irving Schwartz, MD



Farooq Junaid, DO

What happens when two experts in body work meet

Tom Hilbing knows how to fix a body—a vehicle body. In 1967 he joined Hilbing Autobody in Quincy and spent over 50 years making people's vehicles look like new after an accident.

Barry Werries, MD, FAAOS, also knows how to fix a body—a human body. He is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon with Blessing Health System and helps people feel like new when their bones and joints need specialized care.

Is it any wonder these two crossed paths?

"I was really impressed with Dr. Werries," Tom said. "I heard he was good, but he was just super to deal with. He and his staff are very concerned and caring."

So how did these body work experts meet?

"At the end of 2020, I could hardly walk. I was in bad shape," the 72-year-old Tom said.

Over a half-century on his feet on the concrete floor of the autobody shop took its toll on Tom's knees and hips.

"Besides that I jogged for years," he stated. "There was a 10-year period during which I jogged more than 1,000 miles a year. I just wore out my body."

The final straw occurred as Tom was deer hunting in November 2020. A misstep in the woods caused him to twist his left hip in a way it was not made to twist. The hip did not break or fracture, but the pain was intense.

"It was really bad. The joint was just worn out," Tom admitted.

Word of mouth, including that of his personal physician, led Tom to the office of Dr. Werries in the Blessing Health Center 4800 Maine and to a hip replacement at Blessing Hospital in January 2021.

"It went really smooth. I was very impressed," he said.

The experience led Tom to also get both his worn-out knees replaced later in 2021 by Dr. Werries. The fact that Tom remained active into his retirement, working daily on his farm, and his commitment to carrying out the physical therapy plan he received after each procedure allowed him to have three joint replacements during the same year.

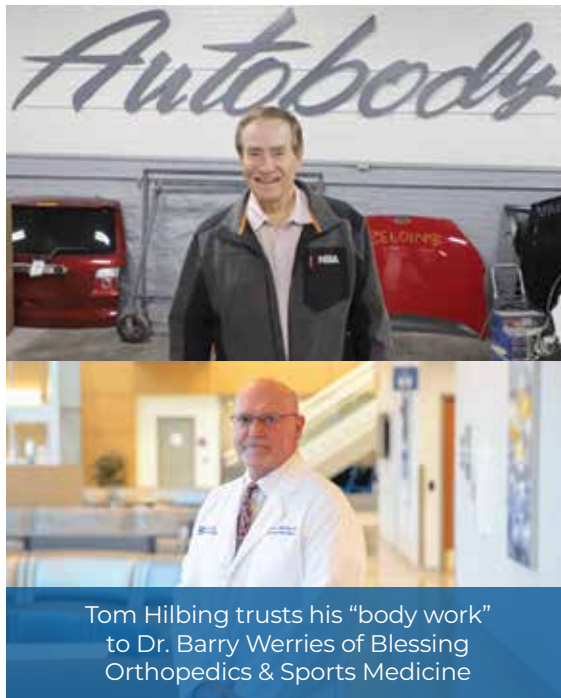
Tom knew what to expect. He had his right hip replaced in 2013 in a St. Louis hospital. He was pleased Blessing's development of an orthopedic program gave him

the choice to get quality care locally that exceeded his expectations.

"I am big on spending my money in this community. Why go out of town when you don't have to?" he asked.

"I was very, very impressed, not only with Dr. Werries, but the way Blessing Hospital treated me. They were just outstanding," Tom concluded. "It's been a long time since I could get around like this. It's really made a huge change in my life."

For more information on the care provided by Blessing Orthopedics & Sports Medicine go to blessinghealth.org/ortho. ■



Tom Hilbing trusts his "body work" to Dr. Barry Werries of Blessing Orthopedics & Sports Medicine

STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Andrea Leone, DNP, APRN, AGACNP-BC, FNP-C, cardiothoracic surgery, has earned adult-gerontology acute care nurse practitioner national certification from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. She is also a certified family nurse practitioner.



Sarah Andrew, BSN, RN, cardiothoracic and vascular surgery, has earned the status of cardiac vascular nurse-board certified (CV-BC) from the American Nurses Credentialing Center.



Ashley Chbeir, BSN, RN, clinical research coordinator, has earned certification in chemotherapy and immunotherapy administration from the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) and Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation (ONCC).



Blessing Heart & Vascular Center registered nurses **Jody Figge** and **Naomi Schenk** and registered radiologic technologist **Shannon Peters** have earned the status of registered cardiac electrophysiology specialist (RCES) from Cardiovascular Credentialing International. Electrophysiology (EP) involves the diagnosis and treatment of malfunctions in the heart's electrical activity that controls the timing of heartbeats.



Jordan Hahn, BSN, RN, cardiac catheterization lab, has earned the status of progressive care certified nurse (PCCN) from the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses.



Lisa Lake, BSN, RNC, non-invasive cardiology, has earned national certification in cardiac-vascular nursing from the American Nurses Credentialing Center.



WELCOME



Brian Canfield, MBA, MHA, FACHE, has joined Blessing Health System as chief operating officer (COO). He joins Blessing after 9 years as COO at Firsthealth of The Carolinas, Inc., Moore Regional Hospital, Pinehurst, North Carolina, where he had responsibility for three acute care hospitals totaling 509 beds, and a critical access hospital with a staff of 4,500 employees and 950 volunteers.

Canfield is a veteran, having served 28 years in the United States Army and Department of Defense. He served in Afghanistan where he was directly responsible for planning, coordination and synchronization of 12 hospitals, 32 clinics, 14 forward surgical teams and all ground and air medical evacuation resources for over a half-million U.S. military and partner nation forces.



Alex Coffey, MD, practices internal medicine. Certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and the American Board of Addiction Medicine, Dr. Coffey earned his medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, TN, and completed residency at East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN.



Senem Salar-Gomceli, MD, is an ophthalmologist, certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology.

She completed a fellowship in pediatric ophthalmology and adult strabismus (crossed eyes) at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and a general surgery internship at Bronx Lebanon Hospital Center, in affiliation with Montefiore Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, NY.

Dr. Salar-Gomceli completed two ophthalmology residencies, one at Bronxcare Health System with Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, Bronx, NY; and one in her native country of Turkey, where she also earned her medical degree.



Umut Gomceli, MD, is a cardiologist, certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine, The National Board of Echocardiography, the American Board of Nuclear Cardiology and the American Board of Internal Medicine Cardiovascular Disease.

Dr. Gomceli completed a fellowship in cardiovascular disease, and was chief cardiovascular disease fellow at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Morningside Hospital, NY.

He completed an internal medicine residency and served as chief resident at Bronx Care Health System in affiliation with Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, Bronx, NY and also a cardiovascular disease residency in Turkey. He also earned his medical degree in Turkey.



Ahmed Jouan, MD, is a neuro hospitalist. He completed a fellowship in neurophysiology at Michigan State University, department of neurology & ophthalmology, East Lansing, MI; and a residency in neurology at Sparrow Hospital/Michigan State University program, East Lansing, MI; after graduating with his medical degree in Libya.

Dr. Jouan also holds a master in public health degree from Benedictine University, Lisle, IL.



Julia Montejo, MD, is an allergist and immunologist. Board certified in allergy and immunology and internal medicine, Dr. Montejo completed a fellowship at the University of Kansas Medical Center and a residency at Charleston Area Medical Center, Charleston, WV, after earning her medical degree from the West Virginia School of Medicine, Morgantown, WV.

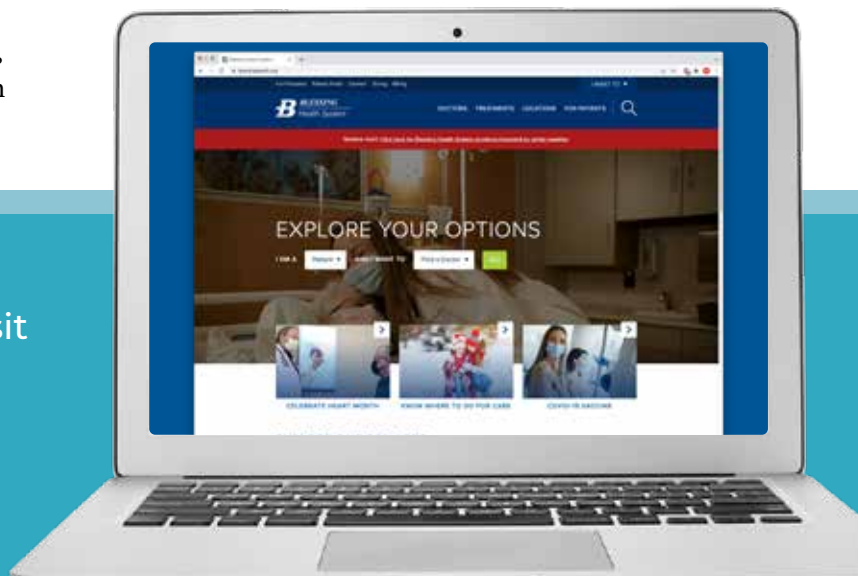


Arshad Muzaffar, MD, is a plastic and reconstructive surgeon. Certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery and the American Board of Plastic Surgery/ Hand Surgery, Dr. Muzaffar completed two fellowships: one in craniofacial surgery/pediatric plastic surgery at the University of Washington School of Medicine and Seattle Children's Hospital, Seattle, WA, and the other in hand/microsurgery at the University of Texas Southwestern and Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, Dallas, TX.

Upon graduation from Yale University School of Medicine, New Haven, CT, Dr. Muzaffar completed general and plastic surgery internships at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, TX.



Scan this code or visit **blessinghealth.org** to learn more about these and other Blessing Health System providers



Recognizing extraordinary care

Since the last issue of *Personal Blessing*, the following Blessing Hospital registered nurses joined the ranks of international DAISY Award winners for delivery of extraordinary care, based on nominations submitted by patients and their loved ones.



Kayla Hurt, Behavioral Medicine Services, was nominated by a patient.

"She did not just treat me as a patient, but as a real person. You can tell being a nurse is not just a job to Kayla. She really cares about her patients."



Ashley McCaughey, 6 North/Medical Oncology, was nominated by the daughter of a patient to whom she provided care after he received a terminal cancer diagnosis.

"She took care of my dad as if he was her own dad, and that meant the world to me to know that he was in good hands when I couldn't be there."



Matt Beaver, 5 North, was nominated by a man to whom he provided COVID care during his 17-day hospitalization.

"Conversing with Matt really aided me in the desire to shed this virus and think about what really matters. Matt, you are a true 'caregiver' in the greatest sense of the term and I thank you."



Jess Clark, Emergency Center, was nominated by a woman to whom she provided care after a vehicle accident. A ring the woman had on, but needed to remove for treatment, was misplaced.

"Jess went above and beyond, staying after her shift looking for my ring. She found it. I am so thankful for what Jess did for me. I would have been devastated if the ring was gone."



Keaton Dieker, Blessing Hospice & Palliative Care, was nominated by the wife of one of her patients.

"Before my husband passed, he told our daughter 'The sun will come up tomorrow.' Thank you, Keaton, for seeing us through our darkest hours."



Kenzie Blentlinger, 3 Surgical, was nominated by a patient to whom she provided care.

"Kenzie is a new RN and if she is the future of nursing, Blessing is truly blessed! She definitely demonstrated excellence through her clinical expertise and extraordinary compassionate care. I am blessed to have been her patient."

Programs, services and new technology featured in this issue of *Personal Blessing* are made possible in part by donations to Blessing Hospital and the Blessing Foundation. The Giving Society is an honor roll of those showing love through charitable giving of \$100 and above. Gifts below were received for the following services: 4th Floor Pediatrics, Behavioral Health Services Fund, Big Hearts TAPP, Blessed Beginnings, Blessing Employee Crisis Fund, Blessing Hospice—Hancock County, Blessing Hospice—Pike County, Blessing Hospice & Palliative Care, Blessing Lauretta M. Eno Early Learning Center, B-RCN General Endowment, B-RCN Other Grants Fund, B-RCN Unrestricted, Breast Services, Cancer Center & Radiation Services, Caring Club Fund, Chaplain Education, Diabetes Patient Care Fund, Emergency Center, Health Sciences Programs Crisis and Scholarship Fund, Heart & Vascular Center, Home Care, Hospice/Palliative Care HOPE Project, Illini – Unrestricted, Intensive Care Unit, Pharmacy, Quincy Hospitality House, Teresa Adams House Building Fund, Blessing Foundation Unrestricted Fund and Volunteer Services.

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 Adams Electric Cooperative
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 Sports Medicine
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 American Business
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Dental Staff
Blessing Hospital Tea Room
Blue Lotus Boutique
Callender Construction
Company, Inc.
Casino Lanes
Cason, Huff & Schlueter, Inc.
CNB Bank & Trust, N.A.
Community Foundation Serving
West Central IL and N.E. MO
Compass Financial Resources
Comtech Holdings, Inc. d/b/a
Xcell Mechanical Services
Custom Glass & Glazing, Inc.
Dale Koontz Builder, Inc.
Denman Services, Inc.
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Dot Foods, Inc.
Duker & Haugh Funeral Home
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Factory Direct Bedding & Furniture
First Bankers Trust Company, N.A.
First Baptist Church of Plainville
First Christian Church
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Engineering
Gully Transportation, Inc.
Happel Inc., Realtors
Haubrich Enterprises, Inc.
Holiday Inn Quincy/
Tony's Too Restaurant
HOMEBANK
Honey Creek Township
Hope Lutheran Church
Horton's Video
Illinois Health Information
Management Association
Illinois Electric Cooperative
Kohl Wholesale
Loos Tiling Service
Maas Construction

Marion County Ambulance District
McCartney Law Office, LLC
Mercantile Bank (UCB)
Michelmann Foundation
Moore's Floors, Inc.
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Niemann Foods, Inc.
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