

# Pulse

BAXTER HEALTH

FALL 2024  
VOLUME 7 | ISSUE 4

## 50 YEARS IN MEDICINE

NO PLANS TO RETIRE, DR. TULLIS' INSATIABLE CURIOSITY AND COMPASSION FOR PATIENTS CONTINUE TO INSPIRE

*pg. 24*

*plus*  
**DONNA  
CARUTHERS  
CROCHETS  
LOVE**  
One beanie  
at a time  
*pg. 22*

**DR. HEATHER  
HAMMONDS' GOLDEN  
PARALYMPIC  
JOURNEY**  
*pg. 29*



baxterhealth.org





**Medicare  
Advantage &  
dental coverage  
that keeps you  
smiling.**

**Want more coverage & benefits you can use each day?**

Explore our Wellcare Medicare Advantage plans, including theWellcare No Premium (HMO) plan that offers you preventive dental coverage including \$2,000 every year for dental services,

- & procedures
- & exams
- & check-ups



**Learn more and enroll today.**

 **1-866-404-7247 (TTY: 711)**  
8 a.m.–8 p.m., 7 days a week

 **wellcareseminar.com**

*The coverage you need & more*

\*Ohana Health Plan, a plan offered by WellCare Health Insurance of Arizona, Inc. Wellcare is the Medicare brand for Centene Corporation, an HMO, PPO, PFFS, PDP plan with a Medicare contract and is an approved Part D Sponsor. Our D-SNP plans have a contract with the state Medicaid program. Enrollment in our plans depends on contract renewal. Washington residents: Health Net Life Insurance Company is contracted with Medicare for PPO plans. "Wellcare by Health Net" is issued by Health Net Life Insurance Company. Washington residents: "Wellcare" is issued by Wellcare of Washington, Inc. Washington residents: "Wellcare" is issued by Wellcare Health Insurance Company of Washington, Inc. Arizona D-SNP plans: Contract services are funded in part under contract with the State of Arizona. New Mexico (NM) Dual Eligible Special Needs Plan (DSNP) Members: As a Wellcare by Allwell D-SNP member, you have coverage from both Medicare and Medicaid. Medicaid services are funded in part by the state of New Mexico. NM Medicaid benefits may be limited to payment of Medicare premiums for some members. Louisiana D-SNP prospective enrollees: For detailed information about Louisiana Medicaid benefits, please visit the Medicaid website at <https://ldh.la.gov/medicaid> or <https://www.louisianahealthconnect.com>. To request a written copy of our Medicaid Provider Directory, please contact us. Notice: TennCare is not responsible for payment for these benefits, except for appropriate cost sharing amounts. TennCare is not responsible for guaranteeing the availability or quality of these benefits. Any benefits above and beyond traditional Medicare benefits are applicable to Wellcare Medicare Advantage only and do not indicate increased Medicaid benefits. For Indiana D-SNP prospective enrollees: For detailed information about Indiana Medicaid benefits, please visit the Medicaid website at <https://www.in.gov/medicaid> Wellcare by Allwell (HMO and HMO SNP) includes products that are underwritten by Superior HealthPlan, Inc. and Superior HealthPlan Community Solutions, Inc. Wellcare (HMO and HMO SNP) includes products that are underwritten by WellCare of Texas, Inc., WellCare National Health Insurance Company, and SelectCare of Texas, Inc. By calling this number you agree to speak with a licensed insurance agent about Medicare Products. Not affiliated with any government agency including Medicare.



**Healthcare For Women, By Women**  
Specializing in Primary Care and Gynecology



Tiffany Saric, FNP-C      Jamie Willett, RN      Lara May, DNP, NP-C      Kate Smith, FNP-C

**MEDICAL SERVICES:** Pap Smear, Breast Exams, Annual Screenings, Diabetes Management, Weight Management, Infertility Treatment, Hormone Therapy, Treatment for High Blood Pressure, and High Cholesterol

**AESTHETIC SERVICES:** Botox, Fillers, Laser Hair Removal, Skin Rejuvenation, Hair Restoration, IV Vitamin Therapy, and Medical Grade Skin Care

**870-232-0900 | womenswellnessinc.com**  
330 Highway 5N Suite 10, | Mountain Home, AR 72653



# CONTENTS

FALL 2024



## FROM TEXAS TO TRIUMPH IN PARIS

Discover how Dr. Hammonds' passion for sports medicine and dedication to her craft led her from local high school games to the heart of the Paralympic Games.

29

## FEATURES

### 15 | The Power of Giving

Discover how the Baxter Health Foundation doubles your impact on Giving Tuesday

### 20 | Beyond Birth

Baxter Health Women & Newborn Care Center, catering to women's health at every stage, from pregnancy to postpartum

### 26 | Heartfelt Creations

Meet the woman behind the cherished baby caps at Baxter Health

### 29 | A Journey to Gold

Dr. Heather Hammonds shares her experiences as a key member of the medical team supporting elite athletes on their quest for glory in Paris



On the cover: Dr. Joe Tullis  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES MOORE

### 33 | The Hagaman Legacy

Three decades of dedication in Mountain Home, passing the torch from father to son

### 37 | Behind the Sirens

Exploring the essential work and growing shortages in emergency medical services

## IN EVERY ISSUE

- 06 Letter from the President & CEO
- 08 News & Briefs
- 10 Calendar
- 40 Last Word

**FSIS**  
FINANCIAL SERVICES &  
INVESTMENT STRATEGIES  
GROUP

**RAYMOND JAMES®**

We manage money for a living and offer financial advice for life.

1216 Hwy 62 East  
Mountain Home, AR 72653  
Office: 870.701.5160 | Fax: 870.520.7531  
www.fsisgroup.com | team@fsisgroup.com



Jackson Rhoades, CFP®  
President & CEO  
Registered Principal  
Financial Advisor



Donna Kaczmar  
Registered Principal  
Financial Advisor



Cindy Mowry  
Client Advocate



Jan Schmeski  
Financial Advisor



Sandy Rehak  
Financial Advisor



Logan Stone, CFP®  
Registered Principal  
Financial Advisor



Kim Pace, CFP®  
Registered Principal  
Financial Advisor



Brock Bettenhausen  
Financial Advisor



Becca Martin  
Client Relationship  
Consultant



Kyrie Stewart, CPA  
Client Relationship  
Consultant



Bruce Rhoades, JD  
Client Relationship  
Consultant



Ronda Kohl  
Financial Advisor



Melissa Powell  
Client Advocate

## Your Financial Planning Team

Investment  
Management



Your All-Inclusive  
Financial Solutions



Estate  
Plans & Review

Tax  
Planning



401K & Retirement  
Plan Management

Charitable Gift  
Planning



Life Insurance

Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., member FINRA/SIPC.  
Investment advisory services are offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc. Raymond James does not provide tax or legal advice.  
Financial Services & Investment Strategies Group is not a registered broker/dealer and is independent of Raymond James Financial Services.







**LINCOLN PADÉN**  
MEDICAL GROUP

**Your Health, Our Priority**  
Comprehensive Family & Internal Medicine Care

405 Buttercup Drive, Mountain Home, AR  
(870) 425-3030 | [lincolnpadenmedicalgroup.com](http://lincolnpadenmedicalgroup.com)  
For after hours and weekends, call the main number to contact on call.



**Edward Haddock**  
SVP, Small Business Lending

**Small business funding  
tailored to your needs**



**FNBC**  
COMMUNITY BANKERS



**SBA**  
LENDER

[fnbc.us](http://fnbc.us)



MEMBER  
FDIC

FALL 2024

# Pulse

VOLUME 7 | ISSUE 4

A PUBLICATION OF  
**BAXTER HEALTH**

624 Hospital Drive, Mtn. Home, AR 72653  
(870) 508-1000  
[BAXTERHEALTH.ORG](http://BAXTERHEALTH.ORG)

**BAXTER HEALTH  
SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM**

**President/Chief Executive Officer**  
Ron Peterson

**VP/Human Resources**  
Natalie Amato

**VP/Physician Enterprise & Business Development**  
Brian Barnett

**Foundation Executive Director**  
Sarah Edwards

**VP/Chief Nursing Officer**  
Rachel Gilbert, MSN, RN

**VP/Chief Financial Officer**  
Debbie Henry

**VP/Marketing & Communications**  
Tobias Pugsley

**VP/Ancillary Services**  
Anthony Reed

**VP/General Counsel**  
Nicole Vaccarella

**PULSE EDITORIAL**

**Executive Editor**  
Tobias Pugsley

**Associate Editors**  
Adrienne Koehn and Kinley Prichard

**Project Manager**  
Darlene Hebda

**Contributing Writers**  
Dwain Hebda

**Contributing Copy Editor**  
Melinda Lanigan

**Contributing Photographers**  
James Moore

PUBLISHED BY  
**WHEELHOUSE PUBLISHING**  
(501) 766-0859  
[WheelhousePublishing.com](http://WheelhousePublishing.com)

The Baxter Health Pulse magazine is distributed quarterly to Baxter Health Foundation donors with the remaining copies distributed in the hospital's 19 clinics, community support houses and locations within our two-state, 11-county service area. **To advertise call (501) 766-0859 or email [sarah@wheelhousepublishing.com](mailto:sarah@wheelhousepublishing.com).**

Baxter Health complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-870-508-7770.

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-1-870-508-7770.

# EXPERIENCE MATTERS.





**BONE & JOINT CLINIC**

**870-424-4710**  
639 BROADMOOR CIRCLE  
MOUNTAIN HOME, ARKANSAS

[www.baxterhealth.org](http://www.baxterhealth.org) WIN MOORE, MD | THOMAS KNOX, MD | ED ROEDER, MD

# Great Smiles Start Here

Irvin DeAtley, DDS  
Christina DeAtley, DDS



**DeATLEY**  
DENTAL CARE

870-425-1441 | [deatleydental.com](http://deatleydental.com)





The Baxter Bulletin  
**BEST OF THE TWIN LAKES '19**



The Baxter Bulletin  
**BEST OF THE TWIN LAKES '18**



The Baxter Bulletin  
**BEST OF THE TWIN LAKES '17**



**BEST of the TWIN LAKES**  
The Baxter Bulletin  
2023



# THE PULSE OF OUR COMMUNITY

This issue highlights the legacies of two cherished physicians, the compassionate work at the Women's and Newborn Center, and the inspiring international journey of a physician on the medical staff at the Paralympic Games.

Thank you for picking up this issue of Baxter Health's magazine, *Pulse*, chock full of news and interesting features about the many things going on in our healthcare family.

This issue visits two longtime physicians who have spent decades serving the community through their various practices. Dr. Joe Tullis, radiology, and Dr. Mike Hagaman, family medicine, are cornerstones of our commitment to the health and wellness of the area, and each has an interesting story to tell. Dr. Hagaman is retiring to enjoy time with his grandchildren, but his legacy will be carried on by his son, Dr. Alex Hagaman, whose career with Baxter Health is just beginning.

Also in this edition, we drop in on the Women and Newborn Center to learn about some of the services provided to expectant and new mothers. While we're there, we also meet Donna Caruthers, grandmother of Baxter Health nurse practitioner Amorie Smith, APRN, and learn about her unique hobby of knitting newborn caps for babies in the nursery.

Finally, we bring you some international flair this issue as we catch up to Dr. Heather Hammonds who is fresh off her experience as part of the medical staff at the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris, France. Her journey of treating elite paralympic athletes on the world stage is both interesting and inspiring.

At Baxter Health, we see ourselves as more than simply a collection of medical providers; we are an integral part of the counties and communities we serve. It is our unique honor to play a role in the lives of our patients, contributing to the quality of life throughout our service area. We thank everyone who has entrusted their health and the health of their family to our care.

With gratitude,



**RON PETERSON**  
President/Chief Executive Officer  
Baxter Health



PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES MOORE






**TWIN LAKES**  
ORTHOPAEDICS &  
SPORTS MEDICINE

# LIFE IN MOTION

**RUSS RAULS, M.D.**  
**JASON MCCONNELL, M.D.**  
**NICK SOUDER, M.D.**

**(870) 424-3400**  
3 MEDICAL PLAZA  
MOUNTAIN HOME  
TWINLAKESORTHO.COM



# Don't settle for average.


Unless you're in the market for it.

**Multi-Million Dollar Producer Since 2002**  
2023, 2022, 2016 National Masters Award - Diamond  
2021, 2020, 2015 National Masters Award - Centurion  
2018 National Masters Award - Ruby  
2013, 2014, 2017, 2019 National Masters Award - Emerald

2008, 2011 CENTURY 21 LeMac Realty's Top Listing Agent  
2007, 2009 Top Produced for CENTURY 21 LeMac Realty  
2007, 2010, 2013-2020 Top 21 Sales Associate Award  
2006 No. 1 CENTURY 21 Agent in Arkansas

century21.com

© 2018 Century 21 Real Estate LLC. All rights reserved. CENTURY 21®, the CENTURY 21 Logo and C21® are registered service marks owned by Century 21 Real Estate LLC. Century 21 Real Estate LLC fully supports the principles of the Fair Housing Act and the Equal Opportunity Act. Each office is independently owned and operated.



## RELENTLESS MOVES.

**Danny Porter**, Sales Associate  
Cell Phone **870-421-7978**  
**realtordp@centurytel.net • www.DannyPorter.com**  
Serving Buyers and Sellers Since 1983.

# CENTURY 21

LeMac Realty





# BAXTER HEALTH AMONG ARKANSAS' TOP 8 HOSPITALS

Baxter Health has been named one of Arkansas' top 8 hospitals in the 2025 rankings by Newsweek and Statista, underscoring its dedication to high-quality healthcare. With over 700 hospitals nationwide facing potential closure, access to reliable, local care is crucial. This honor reflects Baxter Health's commitment to clinical excellence and patient-centered service. Rankings considered data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, American Hospital Association surveys, and patient feedback. Baxter Health extends sincere gratitude to its team, whose unwavering dedication has made this achievement possible, ensuring exemplary care for its community.

## + COMMUNITY WELLNESS IN ACTION

The 43rd annual Health Fair and Expo presented by Baxter Health and KTLO, Classic Hits and The Boot was a huge success! We appreciate the vendors, community partners, attendees, and the communities we serve for making this such a great event in both Mountain Home and Harrison.



# JOY PICKENS RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF THE GREAT 100 NURSES OF ARKANSAS



Baxter Health is proud to announce that Joy Pickens, ADN, RN, has been named one of the Great 100 Nurses of Arkansas. This recognition honors and celebrates exceptional nurses who have made significant contributions to the lives of their patients and communities.


The Great 100 Nurses of Arkansas award is an annual award sponsored by the Great 100 Nurses Foundation. This prestigious honor is awarded to nurses who demonstrate exceptional concern for humanity, contribute significantly to the nursing profession, and excel in mentoring others. Recipients are selected by an anonymous panel from a pool of nominations, underscoring the rigorous standards and competitive nature of this recognition.

Joy, a nurse of 17 years, joined the Baxter Health Family in 2007, serving patients as a nurse on 4 South. She transitioned to work in the cath lab, and then moved into her current role 6 years ago working as a float nurse. Joy also works as a clinical coordinator and house supervisor as needed.

Founded 38 years ago by PK Scheerle, an RN from New Orleans, Louisiana, the Great 100 Nurses Foundation not only honors outstanding nurses but also supports nursing advocacy, scholarships, and research. The funds raised through the award celebrations are instrumental in advancing nursing research and the implementation of groundbreaking discoveries.


"We are so proud of Joy Pickens' nomination as one of the Great 100 Nurses of Arkansas," said Rachel Gilbert, VP/Chief Nursing Officer. "Joy is the ultimate example of a servant's heart and an excellent role model of compassionate nursing. She is highly approachable, always kind, and she has a profound passion for the nursing profession, which shows in the care that she provides to her patients. This well-deserved recognition is a testament to the positive impact she has made on Baxter Health, her patients, and everyone she meets."

Baxter Health congratulates Joy on this well-deserved honor. For more information about the Great 100 Nurses of Arkansas award and nomination process, visit [www.g100nurses.org/arkansas.html](http://www.g100nurses.org/arkansas.html).



## A Family Banking Tradition in Mountain Home

Discover personalized banking at Anstaff Bank with two convenient Mountain Home locations. We offer exceptional service, local expertise, and comprehensive financial solutions.

 MEMBER FDIC

150 West End Way & 777 Highway 412/62 E • [Anstaff.bank](http://Anstaff.bank)



## YOUR VISION. OUR CRAFTSMANSHIP.

(870) 421-3701  
[DACUSCONSTRUCTION.COM](http://DACUSCONSTRUCTION.COM)

 **DCC**  
DACUS CONSTRUCTION COMPANY



MOVERS AND NEWCOMERS



**ALEX HAGAMAN, DO**  
REGIONAL FAMILY MEDICINE  
(870) 492-5995



**ANDREW "BLAKE" THRONE, APRN**  
BAXTER HEALTH HEART AND VASCULAR CLINIC  
(870) 508-3200



**JACOB CARTER, MD**  
FIRST IN SERVICE HOSPITALISTS



**MEAGAN THITOFF, APRN**  
BAXTER HEALTH NEPHROLOGY CLINIC  
(870) 508-1950



**ALEX KILGORE, MD**  
KILGORE VISION CENTER  
(870) 424-4900



**BRYAN SLEPICKA, DO**  
BAXTER HEALTH SCHOOL-BASED CLINIC  
(870) 508-5900



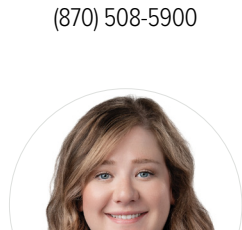
**JEANNE MAROTTA, APRN**  
BAXTER HEALTH HEART AND VASCULAR CLINIC  
(870) 508-3200



**MIGUEL PLAZA-LLORET, MD**  
ANESTHESIOLOGY AT BAXTER HEALTH OUTPATIENT SURGERY CENTER



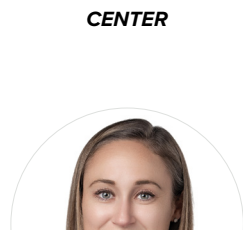
**AMANDA WHITAKER, APRN**  
BAXTER HEALTH COLLEGE STREET FAMILY CLINIC  
(870) 508-6790



**HANNAH MCCARTHY, MD**  
REGIONAL FAMILY MEDICINE  
(870) 492-5995



**JOHN CHINCHEN, MD**  
BAXTER HEALTH CLINE EMERGENCY CENTER



**NATALIE OSTRO, MD**  
BAXTER HEALTH HEART AND VASCULAR CLINIC  
(870) 508-3200



**AMORIE SMITH, APRN**  
BAXTER HEALTH BONE AND JOINT CLINIC  
(870) 424-4710



**ISABELLA GUAJARDO, MD**  
OZARK SURGICAL GROUP  
(870) 425-9120



**MARIA "MASHA" LYUKSYUTOVA-PRICE, MD**  
INTERVENTIONAL PAIN MANAGEMENT  
(870) 508-5900



**NESTOR ARITA, MD**  
BAXTER HEALTH HEART AND VASCULAR CLINIC  
(870) 508-3200



**NICK SOUDER, MD**  
TWIN LAKES ORTHOPAEDICS AND SPORTS MEDICINE  
(870) 424-3400



**ROSA LOPEZ-RINCON, MD**  
ANESTHESIOLOGY AT BAXTER HEALTH OUTPATIENT SURGERY CENTER



**ZAID ALIRHAYIM, MD**  
BAXTER HEALTH CARDIOVASCULAR CLINIC  
(870) 425-8288



**ZANE CANNON, DO**  
BAXTER HEALTH INTERNAL MEDICINE AND INFECTIOUS DISEASE CLINIC  
(870) 508-7450



**NINA DENTON-HOWELL, APRN**  
BAXTER HEALTH UROLOGY CLINIC  
(870) 701-0490



**SALLY HAMBELTON, APRN**  
BAXTER HEALTH SCHOOL-BASED CLINIC  
Bakersfield 417-284-7333  
Gainesville 417-679-4200



For more information about these new Baxter Health providers, scan the QR code with your smartphone's camera, or visit [baxterhealth.org/news](https://baxterhealth.org/news)

**BRYAN BELL**  
CONSTRUCTION, INC.  
CUSTOM HOMES/COMMERCIAL/REMODELING  
LICENSED CONTRACTOR  
"For those who demand Quality"  
870-424-6969

**SERVING THE TWIN LAKES AREA FOR OVER 30 YEARS...**

3938 E. Arkansas Ave.  
Mountain Home, AR 72653

**BryanBellConstruction.com**

## Caring for Arkansas Kids One Breath at a Time

At Advanced Respiratory Supplies, we provide exceptional pediatric home respiratory care across Arkansas. Our licensed therapists, advanced medical equipment, and 24/7 support help families navigate challenges to enjoy a full, happy life at home.

**Advanced Respiratory Supplies, INC.**  
870-706-7601 | [AdvancedRespiratorySupplies.com](https://AdvancedRespiratorySupplies.com)



# CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 2024-  
JANUARY 2025

## GIVING TUESDAY

3

**of December**  
**Baxter Health**  
**Foundation,**  
**GIVING TUESDAY,**  
will be Tuesday,  
Dec. 3. All  
GivingTuesday  
donations will  
benefit our  
community houses:  
Mruk Family  
Center on Aging,  
Peitz Cancer  
Support House,  
and Schliemann  
Center for Women's  
Health. Learn more  
at [baxterhealth.org/givingtuesday](http://baxterhealth.org/givingtuesday).

### REOCCURRING

**Mruk Family Center on Aging**  
**Fit & Fab for Women,** Wellness Education Center, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:15 a.m. or 10:15 a.m.

**Fitness for Men,** Mondays and Wednesdays at MFCOA, 9:15 a.m.

**Rock Steady Boxing for Parkinson's,** Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, times vary.

**Seated or Standing Exercise for Seniors,** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.

**Parkinson's Carepartner Support** Monthly, 2nd Thursday, 10 a.m. Please call for specific location.

**Dementia Care Partner Support,** Monthly, 4th Thursday 1-2 p.m.

**Schliemann Center for Women's Health**  
**Childbirth,** Monthly, 2nd Saturday, 9 a.m.

**Mommy & Me Support,** Monthly, 3rd Thursday, 10 a.m.

**Breastfeeding,** Monthly, 3rd Tuesday, 3 p.m.

**Heart Healthy Women,** Monthly, 2nd Thursday, 1 p.m.

**Infant Loss & Support,** Facilitated by Deanna Howarth-Reynolds, LMFT, Lighthouse Counseling of the Ozarks, Monthly, 1st Thursday, 5:30 p.m.

**Novel Women's Book Club,** Monthly, 3rd Wednesday, 1 p.m.

**Ladies Exercise,** Wednesdays, 10 a.m.

**Line Dancing,** Tuesdays, Wellness Education Center, Pre-beginner steps at 11:15 a.m., Beginners at 12 p.m., Advanced at 1 p.m.

**Dance!** Mondays and Wednesdays, Wellness Education Center, 4:15 p.m.

**Cardio Kickboxing & Strength Training,** Mondays and Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m.

**Peitz Cancer Support House**  
**Cancer Support Connections,** 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 10 a.m.

**Men's Cancer Discussions,** Monthly, 2nd Thursday, 9 a.m.

**Ostomy Wellness,** Monthly, 1st Tuesday, 10 a.m.

**Threads of Hope: Creating Gifts for Cancer Patients,** Mondays, 1 p.m.

**Knock Out Cancer Boxing,** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30 p.m.

**Beginner & Intermediate Yoga,** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8 a.m.

**Chair Yoga,** Mondays and Wednesdays, 10 a.m.

**Services & Resources for Cancer Patients and Loved Ones,** Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

**BAXTER HEALTH WELLNESS EDUCATION CENTER**  
2545 Hwy. 5 North  
(870) 232-0040  
By Appointment Only

**MRUK FAMILY CENTER ON AGING**  
618 Broadmoor Drive  
(870) 508-3880

**PEITZ CANCER SUPPORT HOUSE**  
315 Powers St.  
(870) 508-2273

**SCHLIEMANN CENTER FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH**  
606 Broadmoor Drive  
(870) 508-2345

## A Strategic Partner In Your Corner



**Tracey Adams**  
Commercial Loan Officer  
NMLS #711124



**Farmers & Merchants Bank**

502 S. Hickory St. | Mountain Home, AR



**GoFM.bank**

### Looking to Grow Your Business?

Meet Tracey Adams, your dedicated Commercial Loan Officer for North Central Arkansas.

With deep roots in our community, she is an ideal partner with the expertise to guide you toward financial solutions tailored to your goals.

Contact Tracey today @ 870.425.1803 or scan the code to visit our website and get started.



**King Dermatology**  
correct • protect • maintain



Correct your skin today, protect your skin tomorrow,  
**maintain your skin for life.**

Our team uses the latest technology and treatments for diseases of the skin, skin cancers, and other dermatological situations. We offer state-of-the-art equipment and techniques to offer patients the best care solution to their issues and skin care needs.

**Restore**  
by King Dermatology

DR. MARK KING • DR. MARK HAMMONDS  
2062 HWY 62 WEST, MOUNTAIN HOME, AR 72653  
870-425-5464  
[KINGDERMATOLOGY.COM](http://KINGDERMATOLOGY.COM)



# ENHANCE YOUR CONFIDENCE

Newman, MD Plastic Surgery offers surgical services, as well as, IV injectables, CoolSculpting® and HydraFacial®. In-office procedures of Facelift, Fat Transfer, Temporal Lift, Frost Peels, and SkinPen with PRP.

**Newman, MD**  
PLASTIC SURGERY  
Adam G. Newman, M.D.  
BOARD CERTIFIED AMERICAN BOARD OF PLASTIC SURGERY

130 East 9th St., Mtn. Home, AR 72653  
3733 N Business Drive, Suite 102 Fayetteville, AR 72703

Office: (870) 425-NEWU (6398)  
NewmanMDPlasticSurgery.com



# GET READY FOR GIVING TUESDAY

## How Baxter Health Foundation leverages Giving Tuesday and year-round donations to support the community

Thanksgiving gives many people the opportunity to pause and ponder their many blessings and reflect on helping those that are less fortunate. Unfortunately, the holiday is preceded by Black Friday and, more recently, Cyber Monday, which of course focuses on holiday shopping and consumerism.

Into this maelstrom, Giving Tuesday was created in 2012 as a simple idea for taking people’s focus off of material goods and putting it back on the needs of others through charitable giving. Now a worldwide movement, Giving Tuesday is an important day for many nonprofits, including the Baxter Health Foundation.

“Giving Tuesday got started simply as a day to celebrate and encourage people to do good in their communities, whether it was to share kindness, volunteer one’s time or give to a cause,” said Cindy Costa, CFRE,

the foundation’s director of development. “As it has grown, it has become a way for people to remember their favorite charities, and nonprofits have promoted that day as a result.”

The Baxter Health Foundation has leveraged Giving Tuesday in a number of different ways over the past five years, one of the most effective of which is a matching program funded by the Baxter Health Auxiliary.

“The Baxter Health Auxiliary matches Giving Tuesday gifts up to a cumulative

total of \$50,000,” Costa said. “People love the idea that they can give \$25, \$100 or whatever, and it will be matched to make twice the impact. It’s something people have really come to look forward to; we get calls starting in October with people asking, ‘Now, when is that program where the donations get doubled?’”

Costa said the generosity of the community, combined with the matching program supported by the auxiliary, has meant big things for the organization’s coffers.

“Every year we have reached \$50,000 in

**“The Baxter Health Auxiliary matches Giving Tuesday gifts up to a cumulative total of \$50,000, ... Every year we have reached \$50,000 in total donations that day and even gone a little over that.”**  
– Cindy Costa, Baxter Health Foundation’s Director of Development



John Conner, Jackie Conner, Rachel Collier and Phillip Collier.

## Bridging the Gap between Mountain Home and Harrison

**Serving both communities to meet your family’s needs.**

With over 70 years of combined funeral service experience, the Conners and the Colliers are dedicated to providing caring, compassionate services to the families of Mountain Home and Harrison.



**870-425-3353**  
2833 Hwy. 62 West  
Mountain Home, AR 72653

ConnerFamilyFuneralHome.com

**870-741-3481**  
1904 Capps Road  
Harrison, AR 72601

HoltChapel.com





Join Kim & European-Trained Chef Richard, for a culinary experience you'll remember.







**THE GRILL**  
at  
**WHISPERING WOODS**

Beer & Wine • Patio Dining with Fire Pit  
Live Music Outdoors Thursday & Sunday Nights at 6:30pm (weather permitting)

**Catering Available**



**Private Party Room**  
available for your special events



**Completely Renovated Cabins**  
all the amenities you will need



Purchase a Burger of the Month each month & your 12th one is FREE!



Open for Lunch & Dinner  
11am - 9pm Tues - Sun  
Reservations Recommended  
**870-499-5531**

15 Min. from Mountain Home • Hwy 177 Between Norfolk Dam & Jordan, Overlooking the Lake

total donations that day and even gone a little over that, knock on wood,” she said. “So that means that one day of giving ends up being worth over \$100,000 to the foundation.”

Money raised helps support the hospital’s mission by purchasing equipment, funding the construction or renovation facilities, and supporting programs.

“Some of the money goes toward things in the hospital, departments that are in need of a smaller piece of equipment that’s not in their budget,” Costa said. “Part of it goes toward our community houses that serve so many people. We enable these outreach locations to offer a lot of health programming free of charge, and people recognize that and are often willing to give back to support it.”

Of course, as important as Giving Tuesday is, it’s not the only time the foundation accepts donations. Adrienne Blackwell, deferred gift officer, said the organization supports a number of different giving programs to suit almost every donor.

“Every single dollar matters. We are tickled pink to receive anything,” she said. “As we like to say, ‘There’s absolutely no minimum and absolutely no maximum’ when it comes to donations. Every dollar is impactful.”

One easy way for people to support the hospital is by remembering the foundation in their estate planning. Life insurance policies, property and cash gifts left after passing are all gladly accepted, Blackwell said. Such arrangements can be easily set up, and the gift can even be designated for a specific purpose.

“If someone is super passionate about a particular area or a location within the hospital, our goal is to help them fulfill their legacy,” she said. “We can craft that gift the way that they would like to see that money used. That’s one of the reasons we really like to get to know and develop relationships with donors now. If we just receive a check after they’re gone with no guidance, it’s really hard to know how to fulfill their exact wishes.”

Another often overlooked way to give is by directing one’s required minimum distributions from IRAs directly to the organization.

“Baxter Health Foundation is actually a qualified charitable entity, and so people can do a qualified charitable distribution or QCD,” she said. “They can easily set that up through their financial advisor so their RMD check goes straight to Baxter Health Foundation. It makes it pretty simple, and it may have some favorable tax implications that they should discuss with their accountant.”

Blackwell said whatever the format, people can feel good that their donations are improving the quality of life both locally and throughout Baxter Health’s service area even after they are gone.

“As a foundation, we don’t see this as our hospital. We see it as their hospital,” she said. “Baxter Health exists for the community. When people donate, they are playing a critical role in helping our hospital grow and add new equipment, new machinery and innovative technology. We always want people to know that there’s no way the hospital could do all that it does without their generous support.” ■

870-508-1771 | (800) 711-9596 | HospiceoftheOzarks.org



*Hospice of the Ozarks*

We focus on quality of life,  
so you can focus on  
making every  
moment count.

AFFILIATED WITH  
**BAXTER HEALTH**

Administrative Office | 811 Burnett Dr., Mtn. Home, AR 72653 | (870) 508-1771 | (800) 711-9596  
Hospice House | 774 Long Street, Mtn. Home, AR 72653 | (870) 508-1200

- Hernia Repair
- Gallbladder Surgery
- Robotic Surgery
- Breast Surgery
- Vascular Surgery



**OZARK SURGICAL GROUP**  
GENERAL AND VASCULAR SURGERY

- Colorectal Surgery
- Vein Treatments
- GI Procedures
- Skin Procedures
- Wound Care

901 Burnett Drive, Mountain Home, AR • 870-425-9120 • www.ozarksurgicalgroup.com





# A HEALTHY START

## How Baxter Health Women & Newborn Care Center promotes lifelong health for mothers and babies

WRITTEN BY DWAIN HEBDA

Getting new mothers and their babies off to a great start is the goal of Baxter Health Women & Newborn Care Center. The department takes the subject of healthcare among expectant mothers beyond reproductive issues to address a far wider spectrum of health and wellness, including developing the kind of healthy habits that benefit both mother and baby.

The renovated center, which opened in December 2013, offers the latest technology focusing on patient-centered care. The unit features 10 state-of-the-art labor and delivery rooms, renovated postpartum rooms, two new triage exam rooms as well as a larger, completely renovated nursery, a new nurse call system and a fetal monitoring system.

Amy Myers, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, worked for the Women & Newborn Care Center for 23 years as a staff nurse, patient and staff educator, and charge nurse before moving into the director's position last year. She said the level of expertise and medical technology on hand for patients goes well

beyond what's usually offered by hospitals of comparable size.

"Many smaller hospitals across the nation have closed maternity departments. We are here to serve the women of this area and provide services for families throughout our 12-county service area. We want to provide these services close to home, so women don't have to travel as far to have their healthcare needs met.

With more than 700 deliveries per year, the center delivers top-quality care year-round, thanks to the expertise of three delivery doctors — Dr. Harley Barrow, Dr. Maureen Flowers and Dr. Ken Holt — and three staff pediatricians, including Dr. Michael Adkins, Dr. Samantha Shipman and Dr. Shayna Wood.

"Our Level 2 nursey provides care to well newborns, as well as moderately ill babies with an anticipated rapid recovery. Critically ill newborns requiring multiple subspecialty care, have an anticipated lengthy recovery, or are less than 34 weeks gestation are usually transferred to a Level 3 NICU in Little Rock or Springfield.

**“We really strive to serve the women of the community and provide services that reach women throughout our multi-county area. We want to provide these services close to home, so women don't have to travel as far to have their healthcare needs met.”**

— Amy Myers, MSN, RN, NPD-BC

If they're past 34 weeks, we can provide comprehensive care with treatments and procedures including respiratory care, fluid and nutritional support, and treatments for hyperbilirubinemia and infection. We provide high-quality, compassionate care locally, so our families do not have to travel long distances for these services.”

The center plays a key role in women's health in an era of changing philosophies in healthcare. Until recently, women's healthcare research predominantly focused on a very narrow segment of pregnancy, labor and delivery, and reproductive issues while largely ignoring other critical areas. As this thinking has changed, much more attention is being placed on specific health issues affecting women, such as cardiovascular disease, cancer and osteoporosis.

In addition, women are taking more

responsibility for their own health and health education and becoming active managers of their own wellness in partnership with their physicians. This heightened awareness of disease prevention and healthy lifestyle choices has led to women living longer, healthier and more fulfilling lives.

Baxter Health Women & Newborn Care Center reflects this more comprehensive service model to include more services affecting women's health.

"We're a very versatile unit," Myers said. "We provide care to pregnant women and to laboring and postpartum women as well as newborns. We do gynecologic care also, but our real focus is maternity, labor and delivery and then taking care of the mother and baby afterward."

The center also enjoys the support of

a number of volunteers, such as Donna Caruthers, a retired school secretary who crochets hats for all the newborns (see related story on page 21). Myers said small added touches such as this help contribute to the center's overall environment and commitment to serving the whole person — mind, body and spirit.

"Donna, our Hat Lady, is just one of the people who donate their time and energy to support our families," Myers said. "The hats are crucial to keeping the newborns warm, and they're also adorable. The look on new parents' faces when they see that handmade hat that they can take home with them is priceless. It's really a special feeling to know a volunteer put that kind of love and effort into a total stranger's family." ■

### MEET THE DELIVERY EXPERTS

The dedicated physicians behind Baxter Health's exceptional women's health care



**DR. HARLEY BARROW**  
THE CENTER FOR WOMEN



**DR. MAUREEN FLOWERS**  
BAXTER HEALTH COMPREHENSIVE WOMEN'S CLINIC



**DR. KEN HOLT**  
BAXTER HEALTH COMPREHENSIVE WOMEN'S CLINIC





*Meet Our Committed  
Care Pro Support Team!*



**Home Instead.**

Call (870)425-0700 or  
visit [HomeInstead.com/661](https://www.HomeInstead.com/661)

Each Home Instead® office is an independently owned and operated franchise of Home Instead, Inc., an Honor Company. © 2023 Home Instead, Inc.

### *Services We Provide*

- Personal Care
- Companionship
- Meal Prep
- Transportation
- Hospice Support
- Memory Care
- Arthritis Care
- Diabetes Care
- Chronic Conditions Support

Pain Medication, Drug  
or Alcohol Problems?  
**WE CAN HELP.**



**FIRST  
STEP**

(870) 508-7590  
[BAXTERHEALTH.ORG](https://www.BAXTERHEALTH.ORG)  
624 HOSPITAL DRIVE  
MTN. HOME, AR 72653

## **YELCOT** MANAGED SERVICES

“Their Managed IT Services are  
**Complete  
IT Support**  
for businesses on a budget!”

#### INCLUDING:

- Guaranteed Response Time
- Software Patch & License Management
- Managed Anti-Virus/Malware Software
- Moves & Hardware Upgrades
- Cloud Asset Management

Call **TODAY** For Your Free Quote!  
**(870) 435-2202**



# BABY LOVE

DONNA CARUTHERS  
CROCHETS WARMTH AND  
COMFORT FOR NEWBORNS  
AT BAXTER HEALTH





Donna Caruthers has been making and donating baby hats to Baxter Health Women and Newborn Care Center for almost seven years. When she first started, she was making about 25 hats per month, but has recently increased her work efforts to make around 100 hats per month! She does this primarily using donated yarn from friends and the community, such as our very own “Gentle Giant,” Security Officer Josh Fletcher (left middle). (Left top) Donna Caruthers with Rhonda Anderson, health unit coordinator for the Baxter Health Women and Newborn Care Center. (Left bottom and above) Donna’s granddaughter, Amorie Smith, APRN, makes regular trips to pick up Donna’s creations and deliver them to the Baxter Health nursery.



Crocheting is a time-honored art form that has enjoyed recent popularity. For Donna Caruthers, crocheting is a love language, a means of communicating through the sharing of artistic talent.

Caruthers first learned to crochet when her husband, Don, asked her for some warm socks to wear on the job. Wanting to learn to knit, Donna sought out a local woman who was giving lessons, only to find out that the course also included the basics of quilting and crocheting. Once learned, the domestic skills came in handy on both a practical and artistic level as well as being a good way to wind down after a day as an elementary school secretary, a career to which Donna devoted 30 working years.

“I just enjoy it, and it’s good therapy for me too,” she said. “I’m retired, and I don’t want to clean the house all the time.”

One of the fringe benefits of a long life is being afforded the opportunity to shepherd succeeding generations, which Donna has done through her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. One of those granddaughters, Amorie Smith, made her grandmother

proud by becoming a nurse and coming to work at Baxter Health eight years ago.

Although Mountain Home is about 90 minutes from Donna’s hometown of Alton, Missouri, Smith makes regular trips to visit as the two share a special ministry together. For the past seven years, Donna has been the official beanie maker for the Baxter Health nursery, with Smith transporting the tiny creations as needed.

“For a while, I tried making hats for the cancer patients, you know, who lose their

hair,” Donna said. “That made me so sad all the time, but this is always uplifting. Everybody’s always happy with a new baby. I like doing it because I’m giving them away to people who really need them. It blesses a lot of people, myself included.”

Donna said it takes about two hours to crochet one of the tiny stocking caps from start to finish, and while she’s the only one producing them, she’s prodigious enough to churn out a surprising number of them in time for Amorie’s regular cap run.

“I started out doing 25 a month, and that just wasn’t enough,” Donna said. “I’ve got up to where I’ve done 100 a month for the past couple of years.

“When things started picking up a little, ladies Bible groups and different clubs wanted to help. They’d donate yarn, and so when I got the supplies, naturally, I crocheted more.”

Donna’s productivity even outstripped the nursery’s storage capabilities, which prompts Amorie to make the trip as needed. She said even though she doesn’t work in labor and delivery — she’s assigned to the emergency department — she gets a great sense of pride in seeing the little caps on patients and knowing where they came from.

“I just enjoy seeing that,” Amorie said. “In the emergency department, we actually keep a stock of her hats down there as well for any sick newborns who come in.

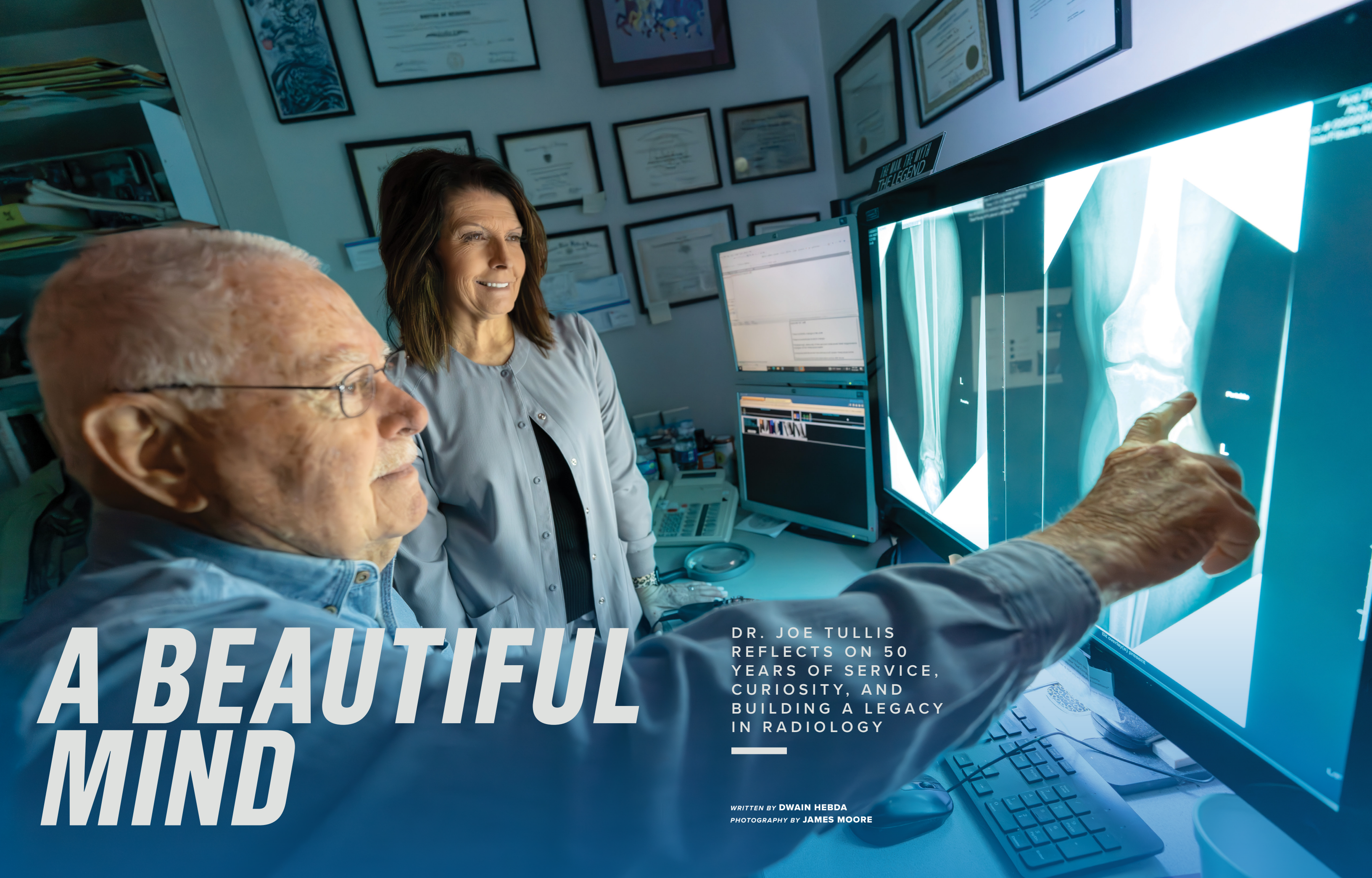
“I know how much (Donna) enjoys making hats. She’s always made things, all kinds of things besides baby hats, and she is very much a gift giver.”

Amorie tried her hand at crocheting to help shoulder some of the load but said she quickly discovered she didn’t have the patience for the craft. However, her daughter, 7-year-old Kennedy, has gravitated to it under Donna’s expert tutelage and may one day chip in with some hats of her own.

In the meantime, Donna is content to contribute at her own considerable pace for as long as there’s a need.

“I just make ’em when I want to,” she said. “Even when they told me they’d run out of storage space, I just decided I was going to go ahead and make them and keep them here at home. Then Amorie can just take them as they need them at the hospital. I hope the families that receive one get as much enjoyment out of it as I have.” ■





# A BEAUTIFUL MIND

DR. JOE TULLIS  
REFLECTS ON 50  
YEARS OF SERVICE,  
CURIOSITY, AND  
BUILDING A LEGACY  
IN RADIOLOGY

WRITTEN BY DWAIN HEBDA  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES MOORE



**“If I had one piece of advice for young doctors looking to build a long and successful career, it would be to work hard at your job and don’t worry about making money. You’ll still make plenty of money and you’ll do a heck of a lot better job.”**

— Dr. Joe Tullis

It is almost unheard of today to find someone who has been in a career for 50 years, let alone spend it with the same organization. Dr. Joe Tullis of the Baxter Health radiology department is one such individual.

“I have an inquisitive mind,” said Tullis, 82, to explain still being on the job with no plans to retire. “I’m very healthy, and my brain still works very well.”

In fact, Tullis’ mind is voracious in its appetite for learning and not just in his chosen profession. In addition to a fascination for medicine, Tullis professes interest in a wide range of subject matter.

“I tell my kids, and my friends know this, I plan on learning something every day of my life. Something new every day — that’s my goal,” he said. “I love archeology, ancient history and American Indians since I’ve got a little bit of American Indian ancestry. My fifth great-grandfather was listed in the 1837 Republic of Texas census as a Choctaw or Cherokee. They weren’t sure. He was probably both.”

For all of his career longevity, one might think Tullis’ initial foray into medicine was the result of a carefully orchestrated grand design on his part. It wasn’t. In fact, he insists it was quite the opposite, especially as it pertains to his medical specialty.

“I read an autobiography of Alfred Schweitzer when I was probably 14 years old,” he said. “I had the opportunity to live with an uncle by marriage for a year, who was a doctor. He was an orthopedist, and I saw what he did.”

True to his nature, his educational background revealed a mosaic of interests. After earning a Bachelor of Arts degree from Texas A&M Corpus Christi, he went back to college to finish pre-med studies while simultaneously completing master’s level work on Spanish literature.

“I was in the Navy reserve and they asked, ‘What do you want to do?’” he said. “I planned on going back to the University of Texas to do surgery; that was my goal. But just for a lark I put down, oh, how about radiology at San Diego? I got it by some fluke — just luck, I guess.

“I also had been scheduled to go to Vietnam with a Marines unit. I’d gotten married, and my wife demanded that when they offered me this residency in San Diego that I take it. So, you never know how your life’s going to turn out. A lot of what we wind up doing is completely accidental.”

While the military offered what was considered state-of-the-art imaging technology at the time, it was still a long way from what Tullis and his department deal with today.

“State of the art back then was pretty primitive,” he said. “We had fluoroscopy, we had nuclear medicine, we had beginning of ultrasound CT, but MRI was only a research program at that time. I did have a federally funded research grant in ultrasound and nuclear medicine studying injuries to SEAL team members, but I gave up because I wanted to transfer it over to MRIs. It was coming on the scene. I was probably a fool for doing that.”

In 1974, Tullis started moonlighting with then-Baxter Regional Hospital, and when his Navy hitch was up two years later, he moved from Texas to Arkansas. If he thought the military was just finding its way into the latest radiology fields, what he found in Baxter County was truly starting from scratch.

“One of my fellow doctors at Corpus Christi was from Marshall (Arkansas). He told me, ‘Hey, there’s a little hospital that’s growing and developing up there. You wanna look at it?’ I said, ‘Sure,’” he said. “One of my grandfathers was originally

from Missouri and the Ozarks and my stepfather was from Chicago but always loved the Ozarks, and he had bought 40 acres up here when I was a little kid. I knew the area, coming here all my life.

“When I got here, it was very primitive, and I thought, ‘What the heck have I got myself into?’ I thought, ‘Well, I’ll just stay here, and I’ll build a good-quality radiology department,’ and with the help of several other doctors over the years, that’s exactly what we did.”

In the 1980s and 1990s, Tullis spearheaded efforts that made good on that goal, creating a department that rivaled healthcare systems several times its size. During his tenure, the hospital added MRI and CT and built a reputation for medical and operational excellence unheard of for a small hospital.

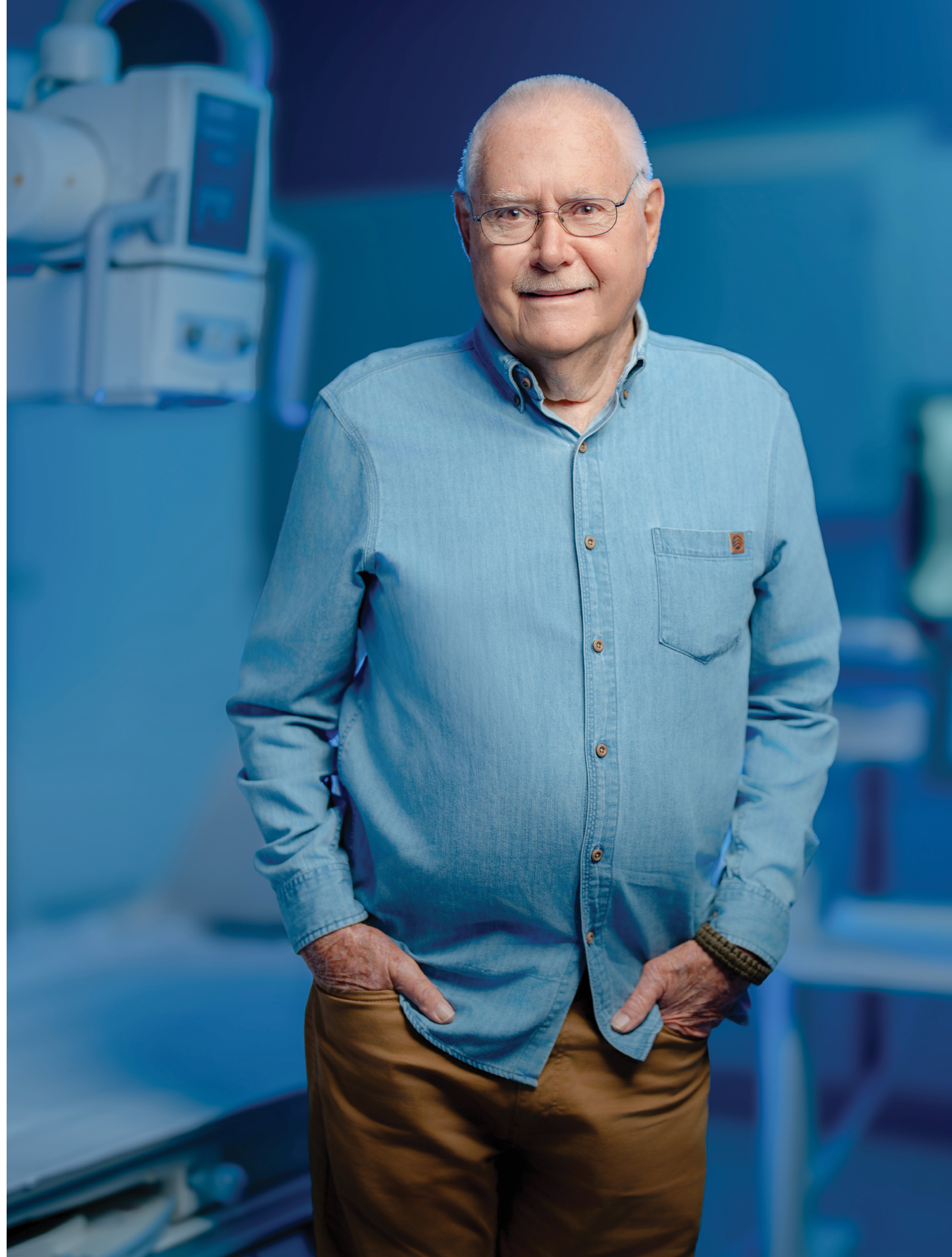
“We’ve been so short of staff the last three years that the field has kind of caught up to us, but five or 10 years ago, there wasn’t another small town in the country that had a better X-ray department than this one did — period,” he said.

Along the way, Tullis has operated under many titles, but said he prefers “worker” to them all, much preferring mentoring young physicians and serving patients than handling administrative responsibilities. He’s equally generous with his time in the community, serving as an auxiliary deputy with the local sheriff’s department and a physician consultant for the county’s inmate population.

As he begins his second half-century in medicine, he still enjoys feeding his curiosity and sharing what he’s learned with others, particularly when it comes to the commitment that comes with a medical license.

“I’m proud of the fact I have never taken anybody to small claims court for collections, never made anybody pay a bill in the 50 years I’ve practiced,” he said. “I was poor when I was a kid, and I swore that I would never harass any patient that needed my care.

“If I had one piece of advice for young doctors looking to build a long and successful career, it would be to work hard at your job and don’t worry about making money. You’ll still make plenty of money, and you’ll do a heck of a lot better job.” ■







Don't Let Pain  
Prevent Progress  
**Get Back  
to Movement**



**870-425-5464 • RestoreSportsMed.com**  
Heather Hammonds, MD • Located at King Dermatology

**Kirby & Family**  
Funeral & Cremation Services

*~Since 1976~*  
*There Is A Difference*

Serving families throughout the region for generations.

*"We are proud to be our area's original family funeral home."*  
*Jason & Jessica Kirby*

Cemetery Sections	Types of Services	Funeral Options
Traditional & Green Burial Scattering Garden Mausoleum, Crypts & Niches Personalized Benches Veteran's Garden Catholic & Masonic	Design Your Own Funeral Service at the Location You Select Gathering of Friends Traditional Church Service Catering For Visitations Life Celebrations & Tributes	Cremation or Burial Companion Creature (Pet) Options Eco-Friendly Burial Urns for Water or Land Green Options

**Mountain Home**  
600 Hospital Drive • 870.425.6978

**Bull Shoals**  
717 Central Blvd. • 870.445.4227

**KirbyAndFamily.com**

## CHANGING LIVES

» Achieve High Job Placement Rates Upon Graduation

» Real-life and Simulated Scenarios for Practical Learning

» Develop Skills to Fuel Your Passion in Every Phase of Life



Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)  
Practical Nursing (LPN)  
Registered Nursing (RN)  
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)  
Paramedic Technology  
Phlebotomy  
Professional Medical Coding



# ON A WORLD STAGE

Dr. Heather Hammonds shares her inspiring journey supporting Team USA at the 2024 Paralympic Games

WRITTEN BY DWAIN HEBDA

Heather Hammonds is tired. Reached in Paris where she was serving on the United States Paralympic Team medical staff, Dr. Hammonds was on a break between her responsibilities in the athlete's village and the wheelchair rugby team, which had adopted her as its own team physician/good-luck charm on its run to the gold medal game.

"Murder Ball — wheelchair rugby — is our nickname for it," she said with a laugh, "and is very exciting to watch and even more exciting live because you definitely get all the sounds and the energy. They've won when I've been there, so they're like, 'You're going to be there tonight, right?' I hope that my luck continues for them."

The Murder Ball team would go on to claim the silver medal, but Dr. Hammonds' experience at the 2024 Paralympic Games was solid gold. Despite the grueling schedule across several time zones, the native Texan described the experience as nothing short of a dream come true.





Dr. Heather Hammonds realized a dream when she was tapped to be part of the medical team working the Paris Paralympic Games this summer. Among her favorite memories was being "adopted" by the silver medal-winning wheelchair rugby team.



"I have actually been to Paris before, in 2017, when I came here with the family," she said. "It was actually part of the story because they had already had all the signs up for the Olympics and Paralympics in the airport that said '2024 Paris.' At the time, I remember thinking it would be awesome to get to go. And now, here I am."

Three years ago, just as Hammonds was getting her Mountain Home clinic, Restore Sports Medicine, off the ground, she did a rotation at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, a training facility for U.S. Olympic and Paralympic elite athletes.

"Once you are a board-certified sports medicine specialist, you can apply for what we call a rotation," she said. "You go up to Colorado Springs and spend a few weeks there working with the athletes, and you're working with the athletic trainers, with the massage therapists,

chiropractors, everyone. You're one big team."

The quality of her work as well as the networking got her name in the running for the USOPC medical team bound for Paris.

"Just like with the athletes, medical personnel have to work up and make a reputation for themselves," she said. "Working domestic competitions, you make those connections until you're invited to go internationally traveling with specific sports teams or the USOPC itself."

A lifelong athlete, Hammonds was inspired to go into sports medicine by her runner father and after a tragedy involving a high school friend.

"My dad was running marathons in

my early years, so I used to kind of jump in with him when I was anywhere from 4 or 5 years old, running a mile with him," she said. "That dovetailed into my own running and playing soccer growing up."

"I also had a close friend who was in a bad car accident who I kind of followed along in the rehab process. That fed my passion for movement and keeping people in the game."

After earning her undergraduate degree from Texas A&M, she graduated from the University of Texas Medical School in Houston, then completed a residency at St. Vincent's Family Medicine Program in Jacksonville, Florida, and a fellowship at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. She cut



**“** I had the honor of marching in the opening ceremony. Knowing a lot of the athletes' stories, and what it took for them to be there and what they have overcome, to hear the crowd clapping and chanting 'USA!' definitely brought tears to my eyes.” – Dr. Heather Hammonds

her professional teeth working the local sidelines.

"When I was in Texas, there were definitely lots of Friday night lights," she said. "I worked lots of sidelines, including some of the smaller colleges there and when I was doing my fellowship at Baylor, and I worked with their athletes, too. I still work part time as needed with the University of Texas; I've traveled with their teams both domestically as well as some internationally. Did some basketball, swimming, baseball and softball, so a lot with UT."

Hammonds' multifaceted experience has come in handy with her USOPC assignment as she handled whatever walked through the door of the medical facility in the athlete's village. Not to mention, she said, the expectation for the team to pitch in on any task that might crop up, medical or otherwise.

"Medically speaking, we're running tests on the spot. Athletes can get MRIs here, they can get X-rays, we have ultrasound in clinic," she said. "A number of us are trained in musculoskeletal ultrasound, and we can use that on the spot to assess someone's injury and

determine how to keep them in the game as long as possible. Then we have the services we were doing that were more preventative in nature.

"You know, as staff, we're concierge medicine to a full extent, but whatever needs to be done we do it. It's wearing a lot of different hats; I've delivered stuff up to athletes' rooms; I've jumped in to help load and unload equipment. Whatever is needed, we do it."

Asked for a highlight of her experience, Hammonds said the wheelchair rugby team's march to the silver medal offered several memorable moments, including knocking out Great Britain, which beat Team USA for the gold last time out. However, nothing really compared to experiencing the event's opening ceremonies.

"That was pretty surreal," she said. "I had the honor of marching in the opening ceremony. Knowing a lot of the athletes' stories, and what it took for them to be there and what they have overcome, to hear the crowd clapping and chanting 'USA!' definitely brought tears to my eyes. There have been lots of golden moments that have been pretty priceless." ■





# Healing power with a human touch.

We do whatever it takes for healing to occur. We're equipped with Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy and staffed to make it happen. We are experts at caring for people whose wounds have resisted traditional treatment. Call us or come by to schedule an appointment.



**WOUND  
HEALING  
CENTER**

**870.424.4935**

907 Burnett Drive | Mountain Home, AR 72653



## WEALTH MANAGEMENT YOU CAN TRUST.



**Brandon Brewer**  
SVP | Director of Trust  
& Wealth Management  
**870.376.7140**

**Sandy Irby**  
Trust & Wealth  
Management Advisor  
**870.425.1507**

**FIRST COMMUNITY BANK**  
**Trust & Wealth Management**

**Amy Hite**  
Trust & Wealth  
Management Admin.  
**870.425.1507**

**Craig Boone**  
SVP | Trust & Wealth  
Management Officer  
**870.932.5600**

**MOUNTAIN HOME** 310 Highway 62 East **870.425.1507**

Non-deposit investment products are: NOT A DEPOSIT, NOT GUARANTEED BY THE BANK OR ITS AFFILIATES, NOT FDIC INSURED, NOT INSURED BY ANY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY, MAY GO DOWN IN VALUE. FIRST COMMUNITY BANK DOES NOT OFFER TAX OR LEGAL ADVICE.



(Left) Dr. Alex and Mike Hagaman (Below) Hank, Dr. Alex, Brittany and Teddy Hagaman. Brittany is pregnant with Shep.

## LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

Dr. Mike Hagaman passes the torch to his son, Dr. Alex Hagaman, continuing the family tradition

WRITTEN BY DWAIN HEBDA

For nearly three decades, there has been a Dr. Hagaman on duty in Mountain Home — Mike Hagaman, to be precise. In 1995, the family practitioner and transplanted Arkansan completed his family practice residency in Texas then promptly skedaddled

to what was then Baxter Regional Hospital.

The move was predicated on two things: one, getting the chance to work with Dr. Bob Kerr, and two, that it wouldn't be for long.

"The only reason I ever came to Mountain Home was to get a chance to

work with Dr. Kerr," Hagaman said. "He was doing everything that I envisioned doing as far as some surgical obstetrics, you know, full care from age zero unto death. That's what I wanted to do, and that's what I did.

"Honestly, I told my wife, Kelly we'd come here for about three years, and I would treat this as a fellowship. We loved the community so much that we never left."

Like most new physicians, the opportunity to put down roots was a coveted one following the well-traveled years of undergrad and medical training. Mike started his journey at Baylor University in Texas, followed by medical school at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock, then back to Texas for his family practice residency at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth. By the time the Hagamans landed in Mountain Home, they were toting their eldest son, Alex, who would soon be joined by two little brothers, Ben and Christian.

Mike made sure that he achieved a balance between his professional career and his responsibilities as a dad. He spent ample time with each of the boys, attending their sporting events and activities, as well as letting them tag along to work when necessary and appropriate. Of the three, Alex was most captivated by what his father did as he nipped along at his dad's heels.



(Below) Dr. Alex and Brittany Hagaman with sons Hank (oldest) and Teddy. (Right) Dr. Mike Hagaman with Alex, Ben, Kelly and Christain Hagaman. (Bottom) Dr. Alex Hagaman with sons Hank (left) and Teddy.



“I remember going up to the hospital with him, you know, if mom was gone,” Alex said. “We’d go up there while he delivered a baby or something like that. He’d stick us in the physician’s lounge for a little while. I think I was about 5 or 6 when I decided this is what I wanted to do.”

Mike insists he never pushed any of the boys to follow in his footsteps but admitted he could see elements of Alex’s nature growing up that told him he would be well-suited for a medical career should he choose to go that route.

“(Alex) may have said, ‘Hey Dad, I wanna do what you do,’ but kids sometimes say that, and then they discover other things and change their mind,” Mike said. “I was extremely careful not to put expectations on any of my kids. I let them know early on that they didn’t have to do things the way I did as far as career choice.”

“I saw a lot of things in Alex growing up

that let me know that he was going to be very successful in whatever career he chose. He was very smart and almost effortlessly made good grades in high school and college. I guess the one thing that really stood out was he always had compassion for people, and that told me if he wanted to be a physician, he would make a great one.”

Alex did, in fact, follow in his father’s footsteps, right down to focusing on family medicine. After graduating from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, Alex completed medical school at NYIT in Jonesboro and his residency at CoxHealth in Springfield. During this time, he gained a new perspective on all that went into his father’s life’s work.

“I always knew what my dad did, but I don’t feel like I had a true appreciation for what he did until I started residency,” Alex said. “When I actually started doing those things, you know, have days when I’d do

rounds in the hospital, then deliver a baby, then go to clinic, and think about how long Dad had done that and how well, too, it was really eye-opening.”

Contrary to most people’s assumptions, Alex said the two physicians don’t talk shop all that much. However, when they do, he said it’s great to have someone like his dad from whom to gain wisdom.

“There really are some hard days, you know?” Alex said. “When I was in residency, maybe a test didn’t go well or a procedure didn’t go well, and I could just call him and talk to him about it. A lot of times, you just need some reassurance and it weighs a lot more coming from somebody who’s actually done it.”

Alex landed in Mountain Home earlier this year, and it would be something of a Hollywood ending to write that the two physicians were settling in to work together side by side. However, Mike had already



**“I always knew what my dad did, but I don’t feel like I had a true appreciation for what he did until I started residency. When I actually started doing those things, ... and think about how long Dad had done that and how well, too, it was really eye-opening.”**

— Dr. Alex Hagaman

set his sights on retirement years before, his last day on the job coming at the end of October. Ironically, Alex’s return reinforced Mike’s decision to slow down and be a full-time grandpa to five grandsons.

“It really lets me have peace of mind that when I leave here, I’m not only leaving my practice in good hands, I’m going to make my practice better,” he said. “I truly believe, as I told my patients, I did the best I could, and I think I did well. I took it to a certain level, but then I probably leveled off the past five or 10 years. It needs to be taken to the next level, and I think Alex and Dr. (Hannah) McCarthy are going to do that.”

Thus will a Dr. Hagaman continue to be on duty in Mountain Home, just as it has been for the past three decades. Asked to describe his feelings about the shoes he has to fill, Alex struggled to get the words out.

“The only thing that I’ve ever cared about is growing up to be half the dad that he is and being a good husband,” said Alex, the father of three. “I saw how he was able to do it, and I thought I would be doing a disservice to my future family if I didn’t pursue that. The way he’s taught me to live with this job is, if you’re giving it your best and you always have the patient’s best interest in mind, then you’re doing things for the right reasons. That gives me great peace of mind, even when I have bad days.”

“I did not choose to be a doctor because of medicine at all; I did this because I wanted to be him. Luckily, I fell in love with the medicine side of it, and that makes everything feel right about this for me.” ■



NORTH CENTRAL ARKANSAS

NGA

Medical Associates, P.A.



HEALTHCARE FOR A LIFETIME

Since 1991

Edward L. White, M.D. | Michael E. Hodges, M.D. | Cathy J. Clary, M.D.  
Timothy McNamara, M.D. | Deborah Leach, APRN | Debra Schulte, APRN  
Tanner Brannon, APRN | Amanda Carson, APRN

614 NORTH TOWN, MTN. HOME, AR 72653-3105 | (870) 425-3131 | NCAMEDICAL.COM

Our jewelry department staff features a GIA-certified award-winning jewelry designer with over 40 years of experience in custom jewelry creation and jewelry repair.



PORTER'S JEWELRY

CUSTOM • PREMIUM • ELEGANT



PortersPawnAndJewelry.com     
625 E. 9th St., Mountain Home, AR • 870-424-7296  
102 W. Commercial St., Harrison, AR • 870-741-5626

What if insurance was easy?



Ashley Havens, Agent  
2183 Hwy 62 W  
Mountain Home, AR 72653  
Bus: 870-492-2450  
240 E Main St.  
Flippin, AR 72634  
Bus: 870-453-2287  
ashley@ashleywhavens.com



State Farm  
Bloomington, IL  
2209502





# Welcome to your Best Life.

New to the community? We're so glad to have you! With us, you get much more than banking. First Security is your home for financial strength, stability and longevity, a friendly team and more. We even have a Gold Club group that enjoys traveling and sharing fun events together! **First Security is here to take care of you in Mountain Home. Come see us soon!**



**Bank Better.**  
fsbank.com | onlyinark.com

Member FDIC

**CONVENIENT LOCATIONS**

Main Banking Center 105 E. 9th St. 870.425.2166	North Banking Center 520 Hwy. 5 N. 870.424.8092	Northeast Banking Center 940 Hwy. 62 N.E. 870.424.8054	Walmart Banking Center 65 Walmart Dr. 870.492.7040	Gassville Banking Center 7447 Hwy. 62 W. 870.435.7447	Bull Shoals Banking Center 907 Central Blvd. 870.445.4505
---	---	--	--	---	---

## Schedule your evaluation today with Eric A. Arp, D.P.M.

- Board Certified in Foot Surgery
- Diplomate, American Board of Podiatric Surgery
- Fellow, American College of Foot & Ankle Surgeons
- On Staff at Baxter Health



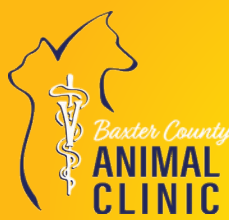
**ARP  
FOOT & ANKLE  
CLINIC, PA**  
Medical & Surgical  
Podiatric Care  
SINCE 1996




Toll Free: 1-888-425-7363  
**870-425-7363**  
ArpFootAndAnkle.com


Treat your feet with the most effective, state-of-the-art, quality foot and ankle care. Now serving the area with two convenient clinic locations.

<b>Mountain Home</b> <b>870-425-7363</b> 801 South College St.	<b>Harrison</b> <b>870-365-3668</b> 3108 Meadowmere Lane
--	--



## TAILORED CARE FOR ALL TAIL WAGGERS.





**Dr. Sarah Shedenhelm, DVM**  
**Dr. Erin Cranfill, DVM**  
200 Bomber Blvd., Mtn., AR 72653  
**870-425-4525**  
BaxterCountyAnimalClinic.com



**NATIONAL STAFFING CRISIS**

# HELP WANTED

Positions unfilled due to EMS  
labor shortage

WRITTEN BY DWAIN HEBDA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES MOORE

There are several critical elements that determine medical outcomes during an emergency. A well-equipped emergency department at the local hospital, a capable team of physicians and nurses on duty and a ready supply of life-saving drugs all combine to treat serious health cases at a moment's notice.

One healthcare component is even more important than these critical services — the EMS personnel that are first on the scene of an accident, house fire or other catastrophic event. These highly skilled individuals, providing crucial medical triage and expediting the transport of patients to medical facilities, are often the difference between life and death.

Buddy Bodenhamer, EMT/ EMS Coordinator, has been providing critical EMS medical services to the community for 19 of his 23 years in health care. For the past 18 years, he's been on staff at Baxter Health; 15 of them have been spent in EMS roles. His services have never been more crucial than today as the hospital finds itself in the middle of a shortage of people looking to enter this life-saving field.





“The shortage is a national shortage,” he said. “In Arkansas last year, when they recertified, we lost a total of 743 licensed personnel, and a total of 478 of them were EMTs. Some of them just retired, and some of them may have moved on to nursing and just let their licenses go.

“I love what I do, and it troubles me that other people get into the profession and find a reason they don’t like it, for whatever reason. Sometimes it’s the hours that we work, sometimes a certain call can haunt them and get them out of this profession.”

James Pinkston, RN/NREMTP, Baxter Health EMS director, is quick to point out that the department has enough two-person crews to staff its trucks but admitted that hasn’t always been the case during his 25 years in the profession. He also said he’d jump at the chance to hire more people if they were available.

“Right now, I could hire five paramedics and at least six EMTs if I had the availability to do it,” he said. “It’s not just a local

shortage, it’s a state shortage; it’s a national shortage. It’s all across the U.S.

“I don’t know if there’s one thing that you could point your finger at. I know when I first got into it, the culture seemed a little different. EMS has really only been around since the Vietnam era; it just hasn’t been around that long. I don’t know if it was maybe more TV shows or movies or something that really led me to it as an adrenaline-type thing, but I feel like that’s been maybe a little subdued over the years.”

Emergency medical services is an umbrella term that covers a number of roles by which a healthcare entity provides medical treatment on-scene. Per the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians, the entry-level patient-facing role in EMS is the emergency medical responder, trained to provide on-scene interventions while awaiting additional resources. These licensed professionals may also serve as part of a transport crew.

With additional training, a person can

graduate to emergency medical technician and advanced emergency medical technician, which are licensed medical professionals that conduct different levels of basic, noninvasive interventions on-site and on the truck to reduce the morbidity and mortality of acute, out-of-hospital emergencies.

The highest level of EMS positions, paramedic, is an allied health professional who possesses all of the skills of EMR/EMT, as well as training to conduct a broader range of treatments, including invasive and pharmacological interventions.

Working in the EMS field is as stressful as health care gets. Paramedics and EMTs work long hours — Pinkston said Baxter crews typically work 24 hours on/48 hours off to start, with some working 48-hour shifts followed by five days off — during which they are often faced with the most graphic of medical emergencies.

Despite these facts, most experts point to COVID-19 as the true source of the current shortage. NBC News reported as

**“ Right now, I could hire five paramedics and at least six EMTs if I had the availability to do it. It’s not just a local shortage, it’s a state shortage, it’s a national shortage. It’s all across the U.S.”**

— James Pinkston, EMS Director at Baxter Health

many as one-third of all on-truck EMS personnel left the profession in 2020, an exodus the medical community has struggled to recoup ever since.

Doug Wintle, director of EMS education at Arkansas State University–Mountain Home, said enrollment in the school’s programs is ticking upward, but it still pales in comparison to the need.

“Right now, we will finish 11 EMTs in December, and another class has started with eight people in it that will finish in May,” he said. “I’ll start another course in January, so over the academic year, we will conceivably put about 25 EMTs out there. Our pass rate is 88%, so roughly nine out of 10 students who study here get their license.”

Wintle said the numbers are diluted somewhat by the fact that some students are already employed by or connected to other emergency entities, such as fire stations, and thus are not looking to take their newfound training to other employers.

“Most of the EMTs we graduate want to work here locally, and many of them are employed by Baxter,” he said. “At the same time, I have a recognizable number of students that take the course who work in local volunteer fire departments.”

Training in EMS jobs can take anywhere from a few weeks to a couple of years depending on the level, and gender parity is improving as more women enter the field. The college has stepped up its efforts to recruit new students into its training programs, Wintle said, including reaching down into local high schools.

“This is about our third year now where we’ve been enrolling high school seniors,” he said. “We reach out to students at the high school level that might want to enter into the medical



field — a lot go from EMS jobs into nursing — and let them know emergency medical responder and EMT training are good places to start.”

Meanwhile, Baxter Health continues to invest in the 70 or so EMS personnel it has on staff, offering programs and scheduling flexibility to help frontline employees deal with the stressors of the job or balance other obligations in an effort to boost retention.

“According to our HR department, we are paying near the top of the scale, and we try to accommodate as many scheduling requests as we can,” Pinkston said. “We also offer counseling services and other opportunities like that to help people talk about things that they might encounter on the job. We are like a family here and we’re very close-knit, so we’re always trying to find ways of looking out for our people.” ■



# FLYING WITH FAITH

HEARTFELT TALES OF COURAGE,  
FRIENDSHIP, AND UNWAVERING  
FAITH WITH DR. MICHAEL HAGAMAN  
AT THE HELM.

For this issue of *Pulse*, I'm going to take a moment of personal privilege and tell a couple of stories about a man who has been my doctor for 25 years and someone whom I am honored to call my good friend ... Dr. Michael Hagaman.

To those who know Mike, you know what a special person he is and how respected he is not only by his patients and colleagues, but by this community as a whole. We know him by his personal and professional ethic, his love of family and his devotion to being a quality healthcare provider. What I would like to share with you is what is deep within his heart and soul.

I was the Hagaman's pastor for many years; in fact, I was their pastor back when I was just starting out in the ministry and attending Memphis Theological Seminary.

For those who don't know, Mike is a licensed airplane pilot and owns his own plane in partnership with one of his colleagues.

Out of the goodness of his own heart, Mike flew me to seminary in Memphis. We would meet at Baxter Regional Airport at 5:30 a.m. every Tuesday, fly to the West Memphis airport where I kept a

car; and then every Thursday night at 9 p.m., he would be waiting to pick me up and bring me home. He did this for three years, never taking a penny for his efforts.

One night flying home, we had to divert around a thunderstorm. We could see the spectacular lightning show out of the cockpit window. Breaking the silence in the stillness of the night, Mike's voice came over the radio. He said, "Isn't God's power a beautiful and magnificent thing? Just think, He loves us with the same amount of force that is in that storm."

The second story — this too happened one night coming home. As we neared the Baxter airport, Mike pulled the lever that was to lower the landing gear. To his surprise (and my terror!), a red light and alarm went off indicating that the landing gear locking mechanism had not engaged. Several attempts were made with the same red-light warning. So Mike called his airplane mechanic and local authorities to assess the situation. We make several passes over the airstrip just a few feet off the pavement so that spotlights and binoculars could inspect the mechanism. They reported that by all indications, the wheels were locked in place but couldn't be 100% sure.

Once again, Mike's calm voice comes over my headset, "Well buddy, are you ready to say a little prayer and try to land this thing?" I answered, "I guess we don't have a choice, do we? We are going to come down one way or another, either by choice or by necessity."

As we made our final approach, Mike's voice came over the headset one last time. He says, "Regardless of how this turns out, we're going to be okay, you know that, right?" It was in that final second before touching down that I found what Mike had all along ... true faith.

With a seminary education and a Master of Divinity degree, taught by some of the most renowned theologians of the time, my understanding of what it means to truly trust in God came from just an ordinary man with an extraordinary faith.

Life is like that; we can find our most treasured blessings in the most unique places, with the most common of people.

Michael Hagaman, thank you. Thank you for impacting my life in a most profound way. And for the many, many others you have blessed over the years that you may never be aware of. Enjoy retirement my friend, and may the wind always be at your back. ■



## COMMERCIAL INSURANCE

- Property
- General Liability
- Commercial Auto
- Workers Compensation
- Medical Malpractice
- Bonds



## PERSONAL INSURANCE

- Home
- Auto
- Watercraft
- Personal Articles
- Health
- Life



## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- Group Medical
- Group Dental
- Group Disability
- Group Life

**TG** Todd Gilbert  
**INSURANCE**

*Large Enough to Serve —  
— Small Enough to Care*

Give Us A Call **TODAY!**

**870.425.4040**

**713 South College Street • Mountain Home, AR 72653**  
**todd@toddgilbertinsurance.com**





**Twin Lakes  
Top Female Producer**

2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023

**Sold over  
25 million in 2023  
and 20 million in 2024!**

*Peglar*  
**REAL ESTATE**  
*Group*

[PeglarRealEstate.com](https://PeglarRealEstate.com)

**Dauna Powell**

**870-656-3500**

[dauna@peglarrealestate.com](mailto:dauna@peglarrealestate.com)