



**HEART WARS.** New method to replace valve helps patients win against heart disease.

SEE PAGE 4 ►

# KEEPING WELL

METHODIST HEALTHCARE — SAN ANTONIO • WINTER 2016



## SAN ANTONIO'S NO.1 SOURCE FOR ALL YOUR CARDIOLOGY NEEDS

**A**t Methodist Heart, we put our hearts into caring for yours. For more than 50 years, we have strived to bring innovative heart and vascular care to men, women and children. Our Methodist heart doctors are known for delivering quality, compassionate cardiac care to patients of all ages.

We do this by bringing you some of the nation's most innovative cardiology services coupled with exceptional quality throughout our system of hospitals.

From the minute you enter one of our emergency rooms, we offer everything from accredited chest pain centers to cardiac cath procedures and treatment for heart arrhythmias, valve replacement, open-heart surgery, heart transplant and cardiac rehabilitation. We also are able to perform complex heart surgery on children.

Here are just a few examples of the way Methodist Healthcare cardiology stands out in San Antonio:

- In 1981, we were the first in San Antonio to use balloon angioplasty to open a blocked coronary artery.
- In 1986, San Antonio's first transplant of a human heart valve was performed.
- We have the largest heart transplant program in Central and South Texas, having performed nearly 400 heart transplants and implanted more than 160 cardiac assist devices.

- Methodist Heart Hospital and Methodist Stone Oak Hospital are the only private hospitals in San Antonio with hybrid operating rooms (hybrid ORs), which can be used by surgeons to perform complex heart procedures.

- Methodist Healthcare was the first private hospital to introduce the transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) procedure in 2012 as a therapeutic, less invasive treatment option for patients in their 70s, 80s and 90s who are not candidates for more invasive open-heart surgery.

- At Methodist Heart Hospital, we offer an award-winning program that features around-the-clock in-house cardiologists. Patients entering the emergency room with chest pain can be treated with a balloon angioplasty within 30 minutes of arrival.

- Methodist Texsan Hospital was the first hospital in San Antonio to receive The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Chest Pain Certification (see page 3).

Our system of hospitals at Methodist Heart also has some of the most recognized programs in the country, having received top honors by The Joint Commission, the American Heart Association, the Healthcare Colloquium and the National Cardiovascular Data Registry (NCDR).

If you or someone you love is in need of cardiac care, look up one of Methodist Heart's doctors by visiting DoctorSource, a physician referral service, at [www.sahealth.com/physicians](http://www.sahealth.com/physicians), or call the Methodist Healthcare HealthLine at 210-575-0355 or 800-333-7333.



**Methodist Healthcare's cardiologists are known for delivering quality, compassionate cardiac care to patients of all ages.**

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# Community Connections

## HEART EVENTS

### What's New in the Treatment of Cardiac Arrhythmia?

Friday, Feb. 12, 9 a.m.

Santikos Bijou Cinema at Wonderland of the Americas Mall, 4522 Fredericksburg Road  
Presented by Zalmen Blanck, MD

Cardiac arrhythmia, also referred to as irregular heart-beat, is when the electrical activity of the heart is irregular and the heart beats either faster or slower than normal. Join Blanck as he goes over the latest treatments of cardiac arrhythmia.

### Her Heart

Wednesday, Feb. 17, noon  
Methodist Texsan Hospital medical office building, 2nd Floor, 6800 IH-10 West  
Presented by Charles Machell, MD

Pamper yourself with red wine and dark chocolate as we discuss women and heart disease. Invite the women in your life to learn more about how heart disease affects women, while you dine on a delicious lunch, chocolate and wine. You won't want to miss Her Heart!

### Caring for Your Heart: What You Need to Know in 2016

Thursday, Feb. 18, 1 p.m.  
Northeast Methodist Hospital, Community Health Center, 12412 Judson Road, Live Oak  
Presented by John Canales, MD, and Adam Price, MD  
Heart disease remains the No. 1 killer in the United States. Although there are some risk factors we cannot control, there are still plenty we can. Canales will discuss



general heart health, followed by Price, who will explain the latest technology in medical devices, such as pacemakers.

### Ten Things You Should Know About Your Heart

Monday, Feb. 22, 6 p.m.  
Methodist Stone Oak Hospital, Classroom One, 1139 E. Sonterra Blvd.

Presented by Jean Liu, MD  
Everyone knows that the basic function of the heart is to pump blood throughout our bodies, making it one of our most vital organs. But what causes heart disease? What causes a heart attack? How can you protect yourself from the risk of both? Join Liu as he discusses 10 things you should know about your heart.

### Keeping Your Heart Healthy

Wednesday, Feb. 24, Noon  
Presented by Andrew MacKinnon, MD  
Metropolitan Methodist Gateway medical office building, Community Room, 1st floor, 1100 McCullough Ave.

What are the signs of heart disease? What should I ask my doctor? What are some lifestyle changes I can make? Join MacKinnon as he answers some of your most-asked questions when it comes to keeping your heart healthy.

### Red Dress 5K Fun Run & Walk

Saturday, Feb. 27  
Registration: 7 a.m.  
Start: 8 a.m.  
Methodist Stone Oak Hospital 1139 E. Sonterra Blvd.  
\$20 entry fee; all proceeds go to the American Heart Association

Wear red or your favorite red dress and participate in a 5K run or walk around the campus of Methodist Stone Oak Hospital in honor of those affected by heart disease. Enjoy refreshments and visit various tables with educational material. Pet-friendly.

## SOUL EVENTS

**Broadway Magic Series**  
If you are a member of 55PLUS® or WomanPlus®, you can purchase tickets directly by going to [sanantonio.broadway.com/groups/promo](http://sanantonio.broadway.com/groups/promo). The password is 55WOMANPLUS. The website will show you what the ticket price is through Ticketmaster as well as the discounted ticket price. Discounts range from 15 to 40 percent. Unless otherwise noted, everyone needs a ticket, regardless of age. Please visit the website for prices and the most up-to-date listing of shows.

### Josephine Theatre

The Josephine Theatre offers all shows at only \$14 per ticket for 55PLUS® and WomanPlus® members. Major credit cards, debit cards, checks or in-person cash are accepted. Margie, our ticket coordinator, is available to answer questions or assist with ticket purchases Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 210-734-4646 for more information. Present your WomanPlus® or 55PLUS® membership card to purchase tickets at a discount.

### Boot Scootin' to Good Health: Line Dancing

Line dancing is a great way to exercise while having fun! Call the Methodist Healthcare HealthLine at 210-575-0355 or 800-333-7333 for details and a list of classes and locations. You can find a complete list of line dancing classes sponsored by Methodist Healthcare at [www.SAHealth.com/community](http://www.SAHealth.com/community).

### Discounted Tai Chi Classes

Offered regularly with instructor Chiquita Picardo. For more information, call 210-653-1866.

### Yoga With Light Hand Weights

Regain youthful strength and flexibility. For details, call Gloria at 210-364-8859.

### Hand and Foot Cards

Hand and Foot Cards is played on Mondays from 1 to 4 p.m. at King of Kings Lutheran Church. Call Pauline Lizzote at 210-957-1038 for more information.

## WELLNESS EVENTS

All events are held at Santikos Bijou Cinema at Wonderland of the Americas Mall, 4522 Fredericksburg Road, unless otherwise noted.

### Walker Wellness Second Friday of every month, 9 a.m.



These seminars are free, but registration is required. Call the Methodist Healthcare HealthLine at 210-575-0355. Refreshments will be provided. Attendees are encouraged, but not required, to walk the mall before or after the seminar. Wonderland of the Americas encourages guests to exercise indoors in its safe, air-conditioned environment.

### Fall Prevention

Friday, March 11, 9 a.m.  
Presented by Gina Dawson, PT, DPT  
Falls are a major threat to the health and independence of older adults. Gina Dawson, PT, DPT, will discuss fall prevention and what steps you can take in your or a loved one's home to help lower the risk of falling.

### Peripheral Artery Disease

Friday, April 8, 9 a.m.  
Presented by Peripheral Vascular Associates (PVA)  
Blood vessels comprise the vascular system, and when they are narrowed it can affect your whole body. Learn from the surgeons at PVA about your vascular system and ways to keep it healthy.

### Keeping Seniors Safe

Friday, May 13, 9 a.m.  
Everyone should feel safe at home. Unfortunately, not everyone does, including seniors. Learn tips on keeping seniors safe in their homes.



Free community events are regularly added to the calendar section of our website, [www.SAHealth.com](http://www.SAHealth.com), and to our Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/MethodistHealthcareSanAntonio](http://www.facebook.com/MethodistHealthcareSanAntonio). Visit either for the most up-to-date list of classes and events!

Join us on our social media sites for all the latest news and events.



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## Dear 55PLUS<sup>®</sup> and WomanPlus<sup>®</sup> members,

Happy New Year! One of my favorite holiday traditions started about 28 years ago when my mom and stepdad first got married. Every New Year's Day, my stepdad makes our New Year's meal. Of course each food served has a significant meaning: pork (because poultry scratches



Carole Harris

backward, a cow stands still, but a pig roots forward, so we hope to move forward during the new year), sauerkraut (believed to bring blessings and wealth) and black-eyed peas (for luck). We also have mashed potatoes and corn bread; I don't think they have a significant meaning, but they sure go well with the meal and are delicious!

It sounds so simple, but to me it wouldn't be New Year's Day without these family delicacies. Now that I have a child, I hope she enjoys the tradition as much as I do. Yes, to some they are just silly superstitions, but to us, it's a tradition; a time for our family to set our goals and reflect on our blessings.

I hope that each of you moves forward and has blessings and wealth and good luck! Remember this quote from Helen Keller as you make your goals and resolutions: "Your success and happiness lies in you. Resolve to keep happy, and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties."

Thank you for your continued support,

*Carole*

Carole Harris  
Community Relations Specialist  
WomanPlus<sup>®</sup> and 55PLUS<sup>®</sup>

*Articles in Keeping Well do not necessarily represent the opinions of doctors practicing at Methodist Healthcare facilities.*



### METHODIST TEXSAN HOSPITAL

## Your heart's in good hands

Methodist Texsan Hospital, a campus of Methodist Hospital, has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval<sup>®</sup> for Chest Pain Certification. The Gold Seal of Approval<sup>®</sup> is a symbol of quality that reflects an organization's commitment to providing safe and effective patient care. Methodist Texsan Hospital is the **first** hospital in San Antonio to receive this award.

Methodist Texsan Hospital underwent a rigorous on-site review on Oct. 20, 2015. Joint Commission experts evaluated compliance with national disease-specific care standards as well as with acute coronary syndrome-specific requirements. Acute coronary syndrome includes chest pain or discomfort, which may involve pressure, shortness of breath, light-headedness, nausea and sweating.

"Methodist Texsan Hospital has thoroughly demonstrated a high level of care for patients with acute coronary syndrome," says Wendi J. Roberts, RN, Executive Director, Certification Programs, The Joint Commission. "We commend Methodist Texsan Hospital for becoming a leader in acute coronary syndrome care, potentially providing a higher standard of service for chest pain patients in its community."

"Methodist Texsan Hospital is pleased to receive Disease-Specific Care Certification from The Joint Commission, the premier health care quality improvement and accrediting body in the nation," adds Scott Davis, CEO for Methodist Texsan Hospital. "The certification provides us with the framework to create a culture of excellence for those in our community."

## For your heart's sake: Methodist Heart offers San Antonio's first cardio-hospitalists

Methodist Hospital is the only private hospital offering around-the-clock cardiologists in San Antonio. When patients arrive at Methodist Hospital and require cardiac care, they don't have to wait for a member of the emergency room staff to page an on-call cardiologist. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, Methodist Hospital has two cardiologists in the hospital.

In the event of a cardiac emergency, having cardiologists ready on-site can mean the difference between life or death. Nationally, the average time it takes between a patient's arrival at the hospital to having a cardiac intervention is 90 minutes. At Methodist Hospital, the average is well under 60 minutes and can get as low as only 30 minutes.

The cardio-hospitalist program has many advantages, including lower costs, shortened length of stay for patients and a lower readmission rate for patients. Most important, in-hospital deaths linked to heart attacks have dropped.

Because of this achievement, the Texas Hospital Association

has honored Methodist Healthcare with the 2012 Bill Aston Award for Quality for our cardiac surgeons and other doctors for their commitment to providing outstanding heart care for the San Antonio community. Established in 2010, the award recognizes a hospital's measurable success in improving quality and patient outcomes through the sustained implementation of

a national and/or state evidence-based patient care initiative.

**In the event of a cardiac emergency, having cardiologists ready on-site can mean the difference between life or death.**





**SITE OF A SUCCESSFUL PROCEDURE:** While on his visit to Methodist Heart Hospital, cardiac patient Juan Abrego, as well as his wife and two daughters, (center in white coveralls) were given the opportunity to tour the Hybrid OR in which his transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) procedure was conducted. While they were in the Hybrid OR, his physician, Jorge Alvarez, MD, pulled up a video of Abrego's case on the OR's monitors so he and his family could see his procedure being conducted. Also in the photo are other members of the physician team and members of the hospital's cardiovascular OR team.

**SOUTH TEXAS STRUCTURAL  
HEART VALVE CENTER**  
AT METHODIST HOSPITAL  
*"Serving Humanity to Honor God"*

# STRIKING BACK AT HEART DISEASE

## *Heart valve replacements save lives*

**T**he labored breathing of Star Wars villain Darth Vader has real-life meaning for Juan Abrego, 83, and his daughter, Sarah. ♦ "Because of his heart disease, Dad was so winded that many times he could not even make it to the bathroom by himself," explains Sarah. "I selected the sound of Darth Vader as the ring tone for him on my cell-phone so that I could respond quickly when he needed me.

"I tried to use it as a lighthearted way to let him know that his condition was serious, and we needed to get help"

**BACK FROM THE DARK SIDE** Help came when Abrego's cardiologist recommended transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), a new option for older, high-risk or

nonoperative patients with severe aortic stenosis, a narrowing of the aortic valve that restricts normal blood flow to the entire body. A resident of Del Rio, Abrego traveled to Methodist Hospital in San Antonio, the only private hospital in South Texas performing the procedure.

When he came in for a recent checkup, clinic staff surprised him and his family with a cake decorated with the image of Darth Vader to symbolize how the procedure had taken him from the dark side of heart disease to good health in just two months.

“He no longer has symptoms of feeling like he can’t walk or can’t sleep at night because he was so short of breath,” says **Jorge Alvarez, MD**, who performed the TAVR procedure on Abrego. “He no longer has chest pain. In fact, he’s now helping his grandson rebuild cars.”

**GENTLER OPTION HELPS MORE PEOPLE** The procedure is an important option for seniors. According to

the National Institutes of Health, severe aortic stenosis is a major cause of morbidity and mortality in elderly people. Approximately 290,000 elderly patients with severe aortic stenosis are TAVR candidates. Nearly 27,000 patients become eligible for TAVR annually. After the onset of symptoms of severe aortic stenosis, patients have a survival rate as low as 50 percent at two years without valve replacement.

Like many elderly people, Abrego was not a good candidate for conventional valve replacement surgery because his heart was weak. In the TAVR procedure, a diseased heart valve can be replaced without having to open the chest cavity, as in conventional replacement surgery. The new heart valve is deployed using a catheter through the femoral artery, through the apex of the heart or through the ascending aorta. A TAVR procedure lasts about two hours, compared to the conventional vascular access approach, which takes four to five hours.

## BREAKTHROUGH TECHNOLOGY REDUCES RISK OF STROKE

*Long-term blood thinner use no longer needed*

**METHODIST HEART** is the first private hospital in South Texas to offer heart disease patients a breakthrough option for reducing stroke risk and an alternative to long-term use of blood thinners. More than 2 million people in the U.S. are estimated to be on blood thinners. Not only is the new technology of the WATCHMAN™ Left Atrial Appendage Closure (LAAC) implant relieving patients of ongoing finger pricks and medication complications, but the constant fear of a stroke may be a thing of the past.

“For patients with nonvalvular atrial fibrillation (abnormal heartbeat) who are seeking an alternative to warfarin, the WATCHMAN™ implant offers a potentially life-changing stroke risk treatment option that could free them from the challenges of long-term warfarin therapy,” says Jorge Alvarez, MD, who performs the procedure at Methodist Heart.

**LIVING IN FEAR** Julia Poole, 75, has dealt with heart disease all her life. In 1996 she had open-heart surgery. Seven years ago she was diagnosed with atrial fibrillation, a type of irregular heartbeat that can lead to stroke.

“I think I have been on every blood-thinning medication that there is,” she says. “At this age, fear of a stroke is always there.”

“Atrial fibrillation (AFib) is a heart condition where the upper chambers of the heart (atrium) beat too fast and with irregular rhythm (fibrillation),” explains **Kiran Jayaram, MD**, cardiac electrophysiologist. “AFib is the most common cardiac arrhythmia, currently affecting more than 5 million Americans.”

AFib can cause blood to pool and form clots in the area of the heart called the LAAC. Twenty percent of all strokes occur in patients with AFib, and AFib-related

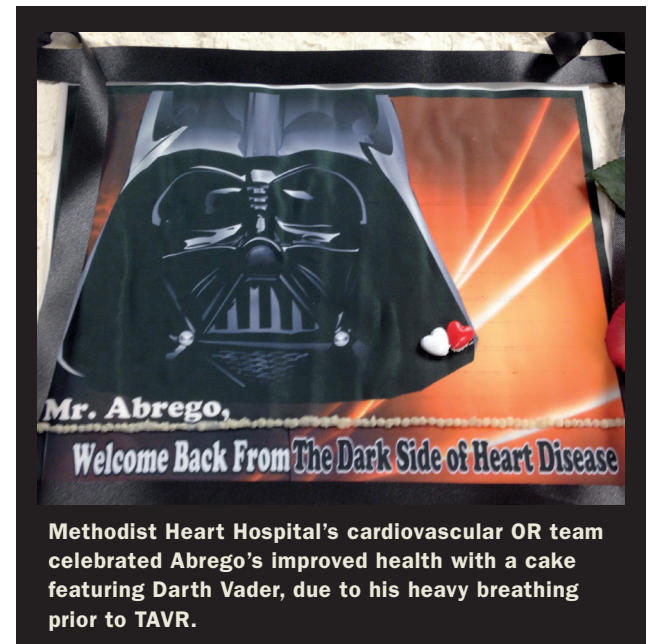
strokes are more frequently fatal and disabling.

The most common treatment to reduce stroke risk in patients with AFib is blood-thinning warfarin medication. Unfortunately for Poole, she began experiencing medication side effects, and when she fell last year, she lost so much blood that she needed four transfusions.

**PUTTING HEART AND MIND AT EASE** Her cardiologist suggested the WATCHMAN™ procedure, which she had a few months ago. The WATCHMAN™ implant closes off the left atrial appendage to keep harmful blood clots from the left atrial appendage from entering the blood stream and causing a stroke. The tiny umbrella-shaped device is inserted through a catheter in the groin area.

“It was over before I knew it, and I was only in the hospital overnight,” Poole says. “Now my heart is at ease because I don’t have to worry about having a stroke. The procedure is so new that I find myself educating nurses about it when I go in for checkups.”

Best of all, now that she is free from constant finger pricks and blood thinner complications, she has lots more time to go fishing with her grandson. She is an award-winning member of the San Antonio Bass Club.



**LEFT:** The WATCHMAN™—a tiny umbrella-shaped device—relieves the need for blood thinners. **ABOVE:** Julia Poole, cardiac patient from Northeast Methodist Hospital, a campus of Methodist Hospital, shows off her big catch of the day. She is happy to be able to confidently do the things she loves to do after receiving the WATCHMAN™ device so she no longer fears having a stroke. An award-winning member of the San Antonio Bass Club, Julia now has more time for fishing.



## Getting your heart back in rhythm

Millions of Americans experience arrhythmia, an abnormality of the heart's rhythm. Arrhythmia symptoms range from occasional skipped beats and sustained racing pulse to episodes of loss of consciousness (syncope). Atrial fibrillation (AFib) is the most common arrhythmia and often occurs in people over 65; however, patients as young as 13 years old are being treated.

**An electrical problem** Many arrhythmias are due to a “short circuit” in the heart’s electrical system, which can be treated with catheter or “radiofrequency” ablation. In this minimally invasive procedure, a series of catheters (thin, flexible wires) are put into a blood vessel in your arm, groin (upper thigh) or neck. The wires are guided into your heart through the blood vessel. A special machine sends energy to your heart through one of the catheters. The energy destroys small areas of heart tissue where abnormal heartbeats may cause an arrhythmia to start.

“Radiofrequency ablation for supraventricular tachycardia (SVT) and common (non-AFib) atrial arrhythmias has a greater than 95 percent success rate, has a low risk of complications and is done under mild sedation,” explains Roger Muse, MD, cardiac electrophysiologist for Methodist Heart. “AFib ablation, however, has a somewhat lower success rate and, with most of our providers, requires general anesthesia.”

**Keeping the beat** At Methodist Heart, we are helping people from throughout South Texas overcome arrhythmias every day. The department of Electrophysiology has physicians on the medical staff who are all board-certified in internal medicine, cardiology and electrophysiology, and who practice in our four full-time, advanced electrophysiology labs.

A team of specially-trained electrophysiology nurses and anesthesia providers will work with the electrophysiologist to provide quality care. We diagnose the full spectrum of heart rhythm abnormalities, including, but not limited to, AFib, atrial flutter, ventricular tachycardia and ventricular fibrillation. We offer proven diagnostic and treatment options for cardiac arrhythmias.

“Methodist Heart electrophysiologists are committed to providing excellent care for all types of arrhythmia patients,” says Muse. “We have office locations throughout San Antonio and surrounding areas, such as Kerrville, Boerne, Devine and Uvalde, to name a few, and are happy to begin the evaluation of any patient that has a rhythm concern.”

## Thankful for a new heart

### Methodist Heart Transplant Program

Andy Post is tuning up his musical skills to help others understand the importance of being an organ donor, because without a heart donor, Post would not be alive today.

Post, 44, was diagnosed with viral cardiomyopathy in 1999. This condition causes the heart and surrounding tissue to become enlarged, resulting in difficulty pumping blood. The condition can lead to heart failure.

After years of various therapies, including aggressive medication and an implanted pacemaker and defibrillator, Post’s heart health continued to decline. A band director for more than 20 years at Wood, Jackson and Lopez Middle Schools, Post had to leave his teaching position because of his health.

**A heart in crisis** On Aug. 15, 2014, Post’s heart condition worsened. He was admitted to Methodist Heart Hospital and given top status on the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) waiting list.

“Doctors told my wife that they did not know if I would survive,” he says. “I was basically down to just hours of life, and the transplant was my only option.”

On Aug. 18, a donor heart was accepted and surgery was performed. Leading the transplant team were **Michael D. Kwan, MD**, medical director of the Advanced Heart Failure and Cardiac Transplant Program at Texas Transplant Institute (TTI), a department of Methodist Hospital, and **Chandra Kunavarapu, MD**, TTI cardiologist.

“I was impressed with everything,” says Post. “It was a total team effort from the organ procurement representative to the medical team and financial advisor. They really care about their patients and work together as a unit to heal them.”

After the transplant, he was in cardiac rehabilitation for three months. “I really appreciated the rehabilitation team,” he says. “They got me back on my feet and gave me the confidence to reclaim my life. They pushed me at just the right pace. Now they are like family and friends that I will have for life.”

**Living in gratitude** In August 2015, Post learned that his donor was a 37-year-old male. He wrote a letter to his donor family thanking them and asking to meet them.

“It’s just hard to put down in words what the donation has meant to me, especially since their loss gave me a new life,” he says.

So to honor his donor and celebrate his new life, Post is dedicating himself to spreading the word about the importance of organ donation. He now volunteers with the Texas Organ Sharing Alliance, speaking to groups throughout the city. He has started a website—[www.andypostbaseball.wix.com/livingfortwo](http://www.andypostbaseball.wix.com/livingfortwo)—and communicates about organ donation and his transplant experience, as well as his intentions to take good care of his new heart.

Also in August, Post joined the Youth Orchestras of San Antonio on a part-time basis as conductor of the Symphonic Winds, a group of 45 to 50 young musicians.

“I accepted the position with the guidance of Dr. Kunavarapu and the transplant team,” he says. “It is the perfect opportunity for me. I am no longer handling equipment, which might impact my immune system, but I am working with my two passions—kids and music.”

“But best of all, as a successful heart transplant recipient, I am giving other people hope,” he says.



**GRATEFUL HEARTS:** Andy Post, together with his family. “As a successful heart transplant recipient, I am giving other people hope,” Post says.

## METHODIST HEALTHCARE NEWS, VIEWS &amp; TIPS

## First in safety

Two Methodist Healthcare hospitals awarded “A” grade for patient safety in Leapfrog’s fall 2015 Hospital Safety Score

Metropolitan Methodist Hospital, a Center City hospital, and Northeast Methodist Hospital, a Northeast San Antonio hospital, both campuses of Methodist Hospital, were the only ones in their areas to receive a top grade in safety.

Both were honored with an “A” grade in the fall 2015 update to the Hospital Safety Score, which rates how well hospitals protect patients from accidents, errors, injuries and infections. The Hospital Safety Score is compiled under the guidance of the nation’s leading experts on patient safety and is administered by The Leapfrog Group, an independent industry watchdog. The first and only hospital safety rating to be analyzed in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Patient Safety*, the score is designed to give the public information they can use to protect themselves and their families.

**A top priority** “Our caregivers work together to provide care in the safest manner,” says Jaime Wesolowski, president and CEO for Methodist Healthcare System. “The ‘A’ score earned by Northeast Methodist Hospital and Metropolitan Methodist Hospital represents our staff’s diligence in making safety a top priority in patient care.”

“As patients begin to take a more active role in selecting where to receive health care, it has never been more important to focus on hospital safety and transparency,” says Leah Binder, President and CEO of Leapfrog. “The ‘A’ hospitals, including Northeast Methodist Hospital and Metropolitan Methodist Hospital, are helping us to raise the standards of health care nationwide. We offer our congratulations and hope the hospitals will continue to strive for an ever-increasing level of excellence in patient safety.”

**How hospitals are graded** Developed under the guidance of Leapfrog’s Blue Ribbon Expert Panel, the Hospital Safety Score uses 28 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to produce a single A, B, C, D or F score, representing a hospital’s overall capacity to keep patients safe from preventable harm.



More than 2,500 U.S. general hospitals were assigned scores in October 2015, with 773 hospitals receiving an A grade.

The Hospital Safety Score is fully transparent, offering a full analysis of the data and methodology used in determining grades on the website. Patients can also review their hospital’s past safety performance alongside its current grade on the Hospital Safety Score site, allowing them to determine which local hospitals have the best track record in patient safety and which have demonstrated consistent improvement.

To see Methodist Healthcare’s scores as they compare nationally and locally, and to find safety tips for patients and their loved ones, visit the Hospital Safety Score website at [www.hospitalsafetyscore.org](http://www.hospitalsafetyscore.org). Local hospitals’ scores are also available on the free mobile app at [www.hospitalsafetyscore.org](http://www.hospitalsafetyscore.org).

## World’s smallest heart pump saves heart attack patients



The McCormick family, with Rick at center, with Nandish Thukral, MD, the cardiologist who helped save Rick’s life using the Impella Heart Pump.

Heart attack survivor Rick McCormick is alive today because of a tiny heart pump known as the Impella.

McCormick’s physician, **Nandish Thukral, MD**, performed a procedure using this catheter-based heart pump, which pulls blood from the left ventricle through an inlet area near the tip and expels blood from the catheter into the ascending aorta. The pump can be inserted via a standard catheterization procedure (in the cath lab) through the femoral artery in the leg, into the ascending aorta, across the valve and into the left ventricle.

“This minimally invasive procedure can be used on some of the sickest of patients without having to open up their chests,” explains Thukral. “The San Antonio community deserves the best therapies available.”

The Impella heart pump can be used during elective and urgent high-risk coronary interventions. The device moves 2.5 liters of blood per minute, assisting the left ventricle during procedures involving temporary coronary blockages that would otherwise be too taxing on the already weak heart. The tiny Impella is intended for up to six hours of use, but the indication allows the clinical team to decide to keep the patient on it for longer.



Alexandria Witherspoon helps her daughter, Persayus, hang special heart-shaped ornaments on the tree.

### METHODIST CHILDREN’S HEART INSTITUTE

## Healing little hearts

Four years ago, Persayus Adrianny Witherspoon was born with a hole in her heart, or patent ductus arteriosus (PDA). In addition, little Persayus has Down syndrome. At only a few months old, she had to undergo open-heart surgery, which her mother, Alexandria Witherspoon, says terrified her. The only thing that put her mind at ease was the fact that Persayus was going to have her surgery at the Methodist Children’s Heart Institute at Methodist Children’s Hospital.

**John P. Kupferschmid, MD**, a pediatric cardiothoracic surgeon, and his team went to work on repairing Persayus’ heart. Today, she is a rambunctious 4-year-old, and she and her mom thought it appropriate to formally thank Kupferschmid; **Jatin Patel, MD**, her pediatric cardiologist; and the operating room team at Methodist Children’s Hospital.

Persayus and her mom organized a thank-you party for their heart team, where they presented them with ornaments and framed thank-you letters.

The Methodist Children’s Heart Institute features a multidisciplinary team of experienced board-certified pediatric cardiologists and cardiovascular surgeons dedicated to complex congenital cardiac and thoracic diseases, from prenatal diagnosis through adulthood. Methodist Children’s Heart Institute performs a complete range of congenital cardiac surgical procedures, including neonatal and infant heart surgery, such as Persayus had; single ventricle and hypoplastic left heart syndrome repair; arrhythmia surgery; beating heart surgery; cardiac failure intervention; and mechanical support.

METHODIST HEALTHCARE

KEEPING WELL is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of METHODIST HEALTHCARE, 8109 Fredericksburg Road, San Antonio, TX 78229, telephone 210-575-0355, website www.SAHealth.com.

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**WINTER 2016**

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# HEALTHBUS AND WELL WALDO'S WHEELS FREE TRANSPORTATION OFFERED

Do you worry about how you will get to your next doctor's appointment? Do you use a wheelchair and need a little extra assistance getting to the hospital for outpatient testing? Do you have a child with special needs but lack a vehicle that can accommodate your child's

medical transportation needs? Methodist Healthcare has the answer to these questions.

Hop on board HealthBus for adults or Well Waldo's Wheels for children and expectant moms. In 2014, nearly 12,000 San Antonians and Bexar County residents turned to Methodist Healthcare's free bus service to get them on the road to recovery or to receive the medical care they needed. The bus will pick you up at your home, drop you off close to the entrance of your doctor's office or the hospital, and later pick you up and take you home. HealthBus serves people living in certain ZIP code areas who need help getting to appointments at Northeast Methodist Hospital and Metropolitan Methodist Hospital, both campuses of Methodist Hospital.

For Northeast Methodist Hospital, residents living in the following ZIP code areas can receive this free service:

78148 78233 78217 78247 78239

and parts of:

78109 78218 78154 78244

For Metropolitan Methodist Hospital, residents of the following ZIP codes are served:

78202 78203 78204 78205 78206

78207 78208 78210 78212 78215

78225 78226 78234 78237

Some areas of these ZIP codes are also covered:

78201 78209 78211 78213 78214

78216 78219 78220 78221 78222

78223

To schedule a ride on HealthBus, call 210-MHS-RIDE (210-647-7433) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, at least 48 hours in advance of your appointment or scheduled admission to the hospital.

For children and expectant moms, Well Waldo's Wheels provides free transportation to doctors' offices in these ZIP code areas or to doctors' offices in the South Texas Medical Center. Expectant moms who are preregistered to deliver their baby at Methodist Hospital; Metropolitan Methodist Hospital, a campus of Methodist Hospital; or Methodist Stone Oak Hospital and live in these ZIP codes can arrange for a ride to their prenatal doctors' appointments as well:

78202 78203 78204 78205 78206

78207 78208 78210 78212 78215

78225 78226 78237

and parts of:

78201 78211 78214

78219 78220 78221

78223 78224 78228

78241

**To schedule a ride on HealthBus or Well Waldo's Wheels, call 210-647-7433.**



## Call-A-Nurse from Methodist Children's Hospital

When your child has a medical need—you need immediate help.

In addition to your child's doctor, there is another resource for quick answers: Call-A-Nurse for Children from the Methodist Children's Hospital, a campus of Methodist Hospital. Specially-trained pediatric nurses will assist you with medical advice concerning your child.

Call 210-22-Nurse (210-226-8773) for Call-A-Nurse for Children:

■ 5 p.m.–8 a.m. Monday–Friday

■ Around the clock on weekends and major holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas

Ask for a free refrigerator magnet so you'll always have the number handy!



**REMEMBER: IF YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY, ALWAYS CALL 911!**