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# Insight

**Your FHN Primary  
Care Provider  
Opens the Door  
to Good Health**

**FHN Podiatry Team  
Keeps You on Your Feet**

**No Need to Travel -  
Our Cancer Center is  
Close to Home**

**Paul Fosler's COVID-19  
Success Story**



*We're here, for you.*

**FHN**

## Welcome 2021!



A new year has begun and with it, many new challenges and opportunities. Throughout all of these new developments, we will continue to be here for you. The COVID-19 pandemic is still a major focus both locally and

around the world, and we will continue to keep you current with the latest information available, including updates on vaccinations in our area as we continue to collaborate closely with our public health partners. Please watch for news from us in both traditional and social media as well as through our website, and continue to help us all stay safer by washing your hands, wearing a mask, and watching your distance. I have confidence that the end is in sight, and that will be a great accomplishment and relief for 2021.

In this issue we are featuring our many wonderful primary care providers throughout northwest Illinois. As your family's partner in staying healthy and well, they provide care for all ages and can connect you to any of our specialty services whenever needed. These dedicated providers look forward to seeing you and being an active participant in your wellbeing. In regards to our tiniest and newest patients, we have included some interesting data on the Birthing Center at FHN Memorial Hospital and we welcome a new Ob/Gyn hospitalist.

We're also highlighting our expert podiatry team and the many services they offer. Your feet are two of the hardest working parts of your body and as anyone who's ever had a painful blister can attest, even a little discomfort can become very bothersome very quickly. From surgeries to toenail disorders to issues with diabetes, we can help you get comfortably back on your feet— literally!

We have another COVID-19 recovery story that began at our Acute Respiratory Clinic (ARC) and resulted in a hospitalization, but ended with the patient getting back to normal after quite a struggle. Our hospital team provides excellent care for COVID-19 patients as well as all of our other patients, and we continue to practice the highest level of protection and treatment in the battle against the virus. Please visit our website for more details, and know that we are safe for you and your family.

Elsewhere in the issue, you'll hear from talented providers and caring staff at the Leonard C. Ferguson Cancer Center at FHN Memorial Hospital and meet our Director of Clinical Quality and learn about her important role at FHN.

We look forward to another year of being grateful for the privilege of serving as your healthcare provider for all your healthcare needs. ***Please continue to stay safe, and thank you for choosing FHN, your locally focused and governed healthcare system!***



***FHN is staying safe*** (and not scheduling community events) for now, but keep an eye on our calendar at [www.fhn.org](http://www.fhn.org) – we hope to see you soon!



## Get Fit ... Yourself!

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, FHN is skipping our Get FiTeam Challenge this year in order to avoid the need for group check-ins and activities. Instead, just after Valentine's Day we'll be launching **a free 12-week online fitness program** that you can do all by yourself. We'll provide tips and videos on healthy eating, movement and exercise, and other topics of interest tailored especially for staying healthy during the pandemic, including information on vaccines and other health topics related to COVID-19.

So enjoy that Valentine's Day candy and then get ready for a Spring of getting fit ... on your own!



**TO OUR TEAM OF TALENTED STAFF  
COMMITTED TO DELIVERING HEALTHCARE  
EXCELLENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY**

FHN is an award-winning regional healthcare system committed to the health and well-being of the people of northwest Illinois and southern Wisconsin. Organized in 1995, non-profit FHN is comprised of FHN Memorial Hospital, the Leonard C. Ferguson Cancer Center at FHN Memorial Hospital, and 13 family healthcare centers in 5 counties spanning northwest Illinois offering primary and specialty medical care, hospice, and outpatient mental health services. For more information about us please visit [www.fhn.org](http://www.fhn.org).

Note: Photographs taken during the pandemic have followed proper safety protocols.

# Cancer Doesn't Wait

## Caring for Cancer Patients through COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit “pause” on many things, from family gatherings to basketball games, weddings, trips, and even holidays. It hasn't, however, given people with cancer a break.

**“** *People who are fighting cancer don't have the time to take a break from treatment, even during a worldwide pandemic,”*

says Cancer Center Director Julie Nampel.

In fact, the overall number of treatments at the Center was up in 2020, and our caring staff administered more chemotherapy treatments than ever last year. “It's gratifying to be here, close by and convenient, when people in our community need us,” Nampel says.

### Expert Care, Close to Home

The Leonard C. Ferguson Cancer Center at FHN Memorial Hospital has offered university-level cancer care in our community since 1995.

Board-certified hematologist and medical oncologist Arshad Shaikh, MD, has provided leading-edge chemotherapy to FHN patients for more than a decade, and is seeing promising results from immunotherapy treatments. A revolutionary approach for treating certain types of cancer, immunotherapy boosts the body's natural defenses to fight cancer, allowing one's immune system to do the heavy lifting in battling the cancer cells.

FHN's alliance with Paramount Oncology Group (POG), an innovative cancer care organization based in Dubuque, Iowa, allows us to provide state-of-the-art stereotactic radiosurgery that precisely targets radiation in fewer high-dose treatments than traditional



therapy, which can help preserve healthy surrounding tissue, greatly improving patient outcomes.

Generous community gifts facilitated a recent upgrade to the Cancer Center's external beam radiation machine (linear accelerator). This state-of-the-art technology performs Image Guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT) along with Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy and Volumetric Arc Therapy that can deliver the dose to the entire tumor in a 360-degree rotation, typically in less than two minutes.

### Avoid the Risk of Travel

“We're proud to be open and caring for our patients through COVID-19,” Nampel says. “Traveling for treatment these days isn't just inconvenient; it means increased exposure to the risk of infection.”

Nampel and the Cancer Center team are following strict safety and cleaning protocols to safeguard their patients and prevent the spread of COVID-19, including social distancing, masking, and stricter visitor restrictions.

To keep vulnerable Cancer Center patients safe, visitors aren't allowed in the chemotherapy or radiation therapy rooms with just a few exceptions: Patients may be accompanied by one support person for provider appointments or for their first chemotherapy treatment.



“Meeting with your provider and starting chemotherapy treatment both can be ‘information-dense’ appointments, and can be very emotional. Your support person needs to be there, not only for you to lean on, but to help make sure you understand and remember all of the details and instructions you may be getting.”

For the safety of Cancer Center staff and patients, provider visits and first-time chemotherapy treatments with a support person present are carried out in self-contained rooms. After your first chemotherapy treatment, if you are scheduled for treatment after a provider visit, your support person must wait outside the facility.

“We have to be very mindful about the spread of germs,” Nampel says. “We've tightened the visitor rules to help keep our patients safe.”

**Learn more about state-of-the-art cancer care close to home at [www.fhn.org/cancercenter](http://www.fhn.org/cancercenter) or call 815-599-7000.**

# Working Toward Your Best Health You Need a Primary Care Provider



Daniel Woods, MD

in the few years after his or her birth. Those appointments helped you and your child's provider make sure your baby's development and health were going well, and were a good time to ask questions. Many new parents want to know if their baby is getting enough to eat, whether he or she is sleeping enough, and what may seem like a thousand other things that all add up to "how can I help my baby be as healthy as possible?"

When you grow up, the questions you have may be different, but the reason to see your healthcare provider regularly is the same: "How can I be as healthy as possible?"

## JOIN THE TEAM

Think of your regular healthcare provider (also called a primary care provider or PCP) as a part of a team dedicated to keeping you healthy. Like an old-fashioned "family doc," call his or her office if you come down with a bad cold that just won't go away, a rash, or other minor illness or injury.

You should also call your PCP's office and schedule a "check-in" at least once a year, even if you're in great shape and in good health. We'll check your vital stats like height, weight, and blood pressure, and your provider will do a brief exam. This is your time to ask questions and bring up your concerns or questions – anything from trouble sleeping to whether you should be taking a certain vitamin or supplement.

Getting your "vitals" during this visit also gives your provider some important information about your general health. Is your blood pressure running higher than in the past? Having hypertension (high blood pressure) can put you at greater risk

of heart attack or stroke, and there are lifestyle changes you can make to help bring those numbers down.

Having a primary care provider also gives you quick access to FHN's specialty care providers, should you need them. If your PCP is concerned your twisted ankle could be badly sprained or broken, we'll work with FHN's orthopaedic team to get you in and seen by one of our specialists.

FHN has providers in more than 35 specialties, and we work with hospitals and health systems in Rockford, the Chicago suburbs, and the University of Wisconsin – Madison to make sure our patients have access to the specialty care they need.

Oh, and there's one last perk to having an FHN primary care provider – **MyFHN**. Our online patient portal lets you manage your healthcare online, from checking on appointments to getting test results. MyFHN also gives you a convenient way to ask your provider a non-emergency question – send a secure email to him or her through MyFHN and you'll hear back within a business day or two.

## FHN'S PRIMARY CARE TEAM

FHN has more than 30 primary care providers at offices throughout northwest Illinois. Many of these caring, talented professionals are welcoming new patients – see **Find a Primary Care Provider** at right.

You'll find a number of specialties and credentials among our primary healthcare provider team. Whether you choose a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, your PCP will be able to diagnose and manage acute illnesses and injuries and stabilize long-term chronic illnesses in collaboration with other members of your healthcare team. They prescribe medications and order and interpret laboratory tests, x-rays, and developmental and screening tests to identify their patients' health problems, risk factors, and strengths.

## FHN Primary Care Providers Currently Welcoming New Patients

### BURCHARD HILLS FAMILY HEALTHCARE CENTER



Adam Angelilli, MD

Tamisha Bonvillain,  
FNP-PCHeather Lutz,  
FNP-BC

Lucio Martinez, MD



Diana C. McNulty, MD

Timothy Rupnow,  
FNP-BC

**FHN's primary healthcare physicians** specialize in Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, and Pediatrics. Their credentials are **-MD**, for those who have earned a medical degree, and **-DO**, for those who have earned a doctor of osteopathy degree. The degrees are equal, and mean that your provider has graduated from medical school and completed an internship and residency. Visit any of our physicians' pages online to learn where he or she attended school.

**FHN's family nurse practitioners** are registered nurses (RNs) who have continued their education and clinical healthcare training and have earned a graduate degree in advanced practice nursing. A nurse practitioner can actually earn a doctorate in nursing! A number of the providers on FHN's primary healthcare provider team have earned DNP credentials, the highest level of certification.

Nurse practitioners take a special exam after training in their area of interest. The credentials after a nurse practitioner's name are his or her area of certification, followed by **-BC**, which stands for Board Certified. Common certifications include:

**FNP-BC** – board-certified family nurse practitioner

**GNP-BC** – board-certified geriatric nurse practitioner

**ANP-BC** – board-certified adult nurse practitioner

**CNM-BC** – board-certified nurse-midwife

**NPWH-BC** – board-certified nurse practitioner for women's health

**AGACNP-BC** – board-certified adult gerontology acute care nurse practitioner

FHN's nurse practitioners can serve as primary healthcare providers to people of all ages, including newborns. They focus on working with their patients and providing all the information necessary to make informed decisions about any treatments needed.

You'll find **physician assistants** (identified by the credential **-PA**) caring for patients throughout FHN, from primary healthcare to surgery. They can serve as primary healthcare providers, conducting physical exams, diagnose and treat patients' illnesses and injuries, and provide preventive healthcare counseling as well as write prescriptions.

Most physician assistants have earned a master's degree in an intensive medical program lasting two to three years. All physician assistants are licensed to practice medicine in cooperation with a physician.



April Moore, MD

## Find a Primary Care Provider

If you don't have a primary care provider, make it a New Year's resolution to find one. All of our FHN Family Healthcare Centers are open, safe, and as ready as ever to help you work toward your best possible health.

FHN's physician referral specialists are trained to help you find a provider who's right for you. **Call us toll-free Mondays – Thursdays from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Fridays from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 1-877-6000-FHN (1-877-600-0346) ext. 965, and you'll have an appointment before you hang up the phone!**

As we deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, we do ask that patients follow some precautions:

- Attend appointments alone if possible
- Clean and sanitize your hands
- Maintain social distancing
- Allow temperature taking when asked
- Wear a mask

### HIGHLAND VIEW DRIVE FAMILY HEALTHCARE CENTER



Kathleen Ehlbeck, DO



Tiffany Kuhlmeier,  
FNP-BC



Danny Isawi, MD

### FORRESTON FAMILY HEALTHCARE CENTER



April Moore, MD

### LANARK FAMILY HEALTHCARE CENTER



David Reese, MD

### LENA FAMILY HEALTHCARE CENTER



Amanda Veeder,  
DNP, FNP-BC

## Primary Care Provider Spotlight

Choosing a new primary care provider may seem a bit daunting. To help make your choice easier, FHN's staff includes a large group of primary care providers (PCPs) who have different backgrounds and diverse personalities, but who all share a dedicated commitment to caring for you. Here are profiles of just a few PCPs for your consideration. All are accepting new patients ... and one may be the perfect fit for you or your family!



### KATHLEEN EHLBECK, DO

**Board Certification:** Family Medicine and Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment

**Location:** FHN Family Healthcare Center – Highland View Drive



### MICHAEL J. MCFADDEN, MD

**Board Certification:** Family Medicine

**Location:** FHN Family Healthcare Center – Stockton, FHN Family Healthcare Center – Warren

#### What is your favorite or most rewarding part of your job?

“The thing that I love the most about being a family medicine physician is getting the privilege of forming relationships with whole families. It is such an honor to care for babies and children, their parents and grandparents, and sometimes even their extended families. Being there to support people through the phases and seasons of their lives is really important to me and is one of the reasons that I decided to return to my hometown when I completed my training. I also feel so blessed to be a part of the professional, talented, and experienced team at Highland View Drive.”

#### What is your favorite or most rewarding part of your job?

“I would have to say working with the staff and caring for my patients are my biggest rewards. I graduated from Warren High School and grew up on a dairy farm about 20 minutes from my office. We are very community-oriented and patient-centered, and feel passionate about our corner of northwest Illinois. Returning home after college and building my practice near home is definitely meaningful.”



#### What are some of your favorite hobbies or skills outside work?

“In my free time, I enjoy reading and watching movies. Canoeing, hiking, and camping with my family were all a big part of my childhood and are all things I really enjoy doing now. I also love to travel and had plans for a trip to Ireland last year which were unfortunately interrupted. I am looking forward to being able to do this safely in the future.”

#### What are some of your favorite hobbies or skills outside work?

“Spending time with my wife, children, and other family members is most important. I am also a sports fanatic and love supporting the Chicago Bears and the Chicago Cubs. My family goes to several games each year to root on our teams. We have a fun time together, win or lose – my sisters are especially great company on the bleachers. In 2016, I was lucky enough to take my dad to a Cubs World Series game. That is unforgettable! Another memorable event was being asked to be the Warren High School commencement speaker in 2017, after being valedictorian there when I graduated in 1991. Going full circle like that was pretty neat.”



## FHN Primary Care Providers Currently Welcoming New Patients

### MOUNT CARROLL FAMILY HEALTHCARE CENTER



Daniel Woods, MD



Angie Conklin, FNP-BC

### PECATONICA FAMILY HEALTHCARE CENTER



Callina Elgar, DO\*

### SAVANNA FAMILY HEALTHCARE CENTER



Marla Bagge, FNP-BC, CNM\*\*

### STOCKTON AND WARREN FAMILY HEALTHCARE CENTERS



Michael McFadden, MD



Terri Groezinger, PA-C



To find a primary care provider, call us toll-free Mondays – Thursdays from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Fridays from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 1-877-6000-FHN (1-877-600-0346) ext. 965, and you'll have an appointment before you hang up the phone!



**TAMISHA BONVILLAIN, FNP-BC, IBCLC**

**Board Certification:** Family Nurse Practitioner

**Location:** FHN Family Healthcare Center – Burchard Hills

**What is your favorite or most rewarding part of your job?**

"I love promoting wellness to my patients. Educating them about their health, listening to their needs, and developing a plan for their future is very rewarding. My background in labor and delivery is also essential to my practice. It taught me to consider the whole person, the whole family, and environmental factors when developing a health plan. Plus, I can confidently care for newborns as well as the entire family that loves that little baby! My experience as a lactation consultant helps new moms and babies too. ... I am dedicated to supporting breastfeeding mothers."

**What are some of your favorite hobbies or skills outside work?**

"One of my favorite things to do is spend time with friends and family. I really cherish all of my relationships, as this is what makes me happiest. I recently got married (many of you know me as Verner), which has broadened my circle. I am also a foodie, a travel fan (I love learning about different cultures), and an adventure junkie. My most recent experience was skydiving! I also enjoy giving back to the community that I grew up in by volunteering. I am a Freeport native and a Pretzel! Once a Pretzel, always a Pretzel!"



**FHN Receives IWP Award**

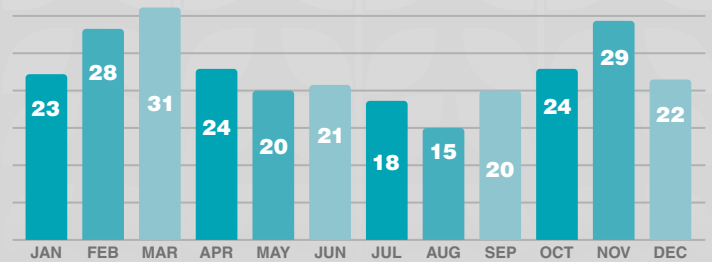
The Illinois Workforce Partnership (IWP) has named FHN as the recipient of its 2020 private-sector Business Leadership Award. The IWP selected FHN for our excellence in addressing workforce needs, especially during (and because of) the pandemic through incumbent worker training and the development of an apprenticeship model. Just 66 Illinois companies receive the honor each year; this is FHN's third IWP award.

You can learn more about the Business Leadership Award and FHN's efforts in workforce services and economic development online at [www.fhn.org/IWP2020](http://www.fhn.org/IWP2020).



**FHN Family Birthing Center Births in 2020**

*babies born each month*



**275 deliveries and 277 babies with 2 sets of twins**

**147 girls**



**130 boys**

**THREE most popular names by gender**

*girl names*

Olivia  
Jade  
Natalie

*boy names*

Jordan  
Ashton  
Jaxson



**HEIGHT**

**17 in.**  
*shortest*

**20½ in.**  
*tallest*



**WEIGHT**

**3 lbs. 11 oz.**  
*smallest*

**10 lbs. 10 oz.**  
*biggest*

# 'Don't Ignore Foot Pain!'

## FHN Podiatrists Keep You on Your Feet



If you've ever had an aching arch, a testy ingrown toenail, or any kind of foot pain, you know it can impede your mobility and make life miserable. That's why FHN Podiatrists Richard Bell, DPM, and Roland Tolliver, DPM, FACFAS, are ready to help local patients with all kinds of foot and ankle problems.

"Your feet are your foundation," explains Dr. Tolliver, "and although some minor aches and pains may go away on their own, we recommend that people with discomfort come for a consultation after three or four days – especially if they are diabetic. Don't ignore something that can be fixed and have it turn into a major medical issue."



**KAY WOODS** is a long-time patient of Dr. Tolliver who has been treated for many foot conditions and recurrent ulcers to her feet.

She was recently seen in the Emergency Department after she fell and nearly tore off her fifth toe at the base. Even though it was reattached, there was concern her toe may be lost. Kay was seen weekly until the wound had completely healed, and appreciates Dr. Tolliver's professionalism and compassion. "He has gotten me through many issues with my feet over the decades," she explains. "He never gives up. I truly admire him – he is a good listener, a great guy, and a thorough and dedicated physician."

His podiatric partner, Dr. Bell, agrees:

“We see a broad variety of conditions, and can usually tell pretty quickly if there is reason for concern. Often, a patient who comes in with a great deal of pain can leave our office with significant relief, or the promise of improvement in short order. That is a gratifying part of our practice.”

Some of the common problems the FHN Podiatry team treats every day include:

- Plantar fasciitis (heel pain)
- Diabetic wounds/ulcers
- Sprains, strains, and fractures
- Osteoarthritis
- Hammer toes
- Bunions
- Tendon disorders (flat feet)
- Nail disorders, such as ingrown toenails
- Corns and calluses
- Heel spurs
- Dermatologic issues, like fungus and warts



Hammer toes are a common structural deformity that can make toes rigid and curled, often causing corns,

calluses, and pain. **CARL ZULKE** recently had corrective surgery for this condition, which was impeding his daily routine. "I had trouble walking and ended up needing outpatient surgery on four toes. Dr. Tolliver did his job and did it well, providing good information and professional care. It is great to get back to my normal activities without painful toes slowing me down," confirms Carl.

"We see these problems frequently, and they have been causing grief since the dawn of mankind," explains Dr. Tolliver. "Even Abe Lincoln had a podiatrist for his corns and calluses, so if you struggle with these maladies, you are in good company. Thankfully, today we know a lot more about how to treat and prevent these common conditions."

More serious problems that are still fairly common include tendon ruptures and tears, along with fractures and dislocations. "Torn or ruptured tendons, like the Achilles, can be quite painful and may require surgery," stresses Dr. Bell, "but we have a lot of experience with these procedures and our patients usually do quite well. It takes time and patience, but getting people back to their normal routine is our top priority."

### Foot Problems Exacerbated by Diabetes

People with diabetes are one of the most important groups aided by podiatric care. They are more at risk of foot problems because of possible nerve damage due to decreased sensation and circulation issues caused by vascular disease.

According to Dr. Tolliver, "Diabetics should be seen four times a year for basic foot care and evaluation, with few exceptions. If problems arise between visits, we work diligently to get people in promptly to avoid infection. We are quite proud of our prevention protocol. And if problematic wounds don't heal quickly, we work at The Center for Wound Healing at FHN to treat our patients with innovative technology that is nationally regarded as leading-edge. We do great things there."

FHN also participates in a national diabetic shoe program that is supported by both Medicare and many private insurance companies. "This program



provides one pair of custom-designed shoes and three pairs of insoles to each patient per year,” explains Dr. Bell, “and it really minimizes wound development. Unfortunately, only about 15 percent of our patients take advantage of the program, but we strongly encourage participation. We measure, take impressions, and make casts of the feet to ensure proper fit.”

## Proper Fit Tips from the Experts

Properly fitting shoes are important for everybody, diabetic or not. Dr. Bell stresses, “If shoes don’t feel comfortable in the store, don’t get them! It is highly unlikely they will ‘break in.’”

Dr. Tolliver encourages everyone to get their feet measured, as well. “I worked at a shoe store for three years during podiatry school, and many people just don’t get the correct size or style for their feet. Children’s feet can grow quickly, and as we age, our feet get wider and our arches tend to collapse. Have a professional measure your feet and be sure there is a thumbnail’s length between your longest toe and the end of the shoe. It makes a big difference. And don’t go barefoot, especially if you have diabetes! Keep those feet protected.”

Foot problems escalate with age, such as the “fallen arches” Dr. Tolliver references above. “As we grow older, our chance for foot pain increases,” he shares. “We lose the fat padding on our feet and tend to plant ourselves differently when we move.”

“These slow changes can cause aching feet, but also impact our back, hips, and knees, as injuries tend to work their way ‘up.’” Dr. Tolliver says. “That’s why we stay well-connected to our neighboring departments in orthopaedics and physical therapy



Dr. Tolliver



Dr. Bell

at the FHN Family Healthcare Center - Burchard Hills, and why it is especially important to treat foot problems promptly. It ends up being an investment in your overall health.”

Indeed, keeping your feet in good working order is something you should not take for granted. “It’s the only pair of feet you’ll have, and you can’t trade them in for a new set,” muses Dr. Tolliver. “I have been in podiatry for 35 years, and I have always been gratified by the response I get from my patients. Now, working with Dr. Bell, I continue to marvel at the science of podiatry and all the ways we help people live better lives. Don’t ignore foot pain!”

**To make an appointment with Dr. Bell or Dr. Tolliver, call the FHN Podiatry Department at 815-599-7150.**



**CHRISTOPHER MULLEN** is an avid athlete and involved dad who tackles each day with energy and enthusiasm. A

chronic sore foot was slowing him down, so his nurse practitioner, Tracy Clay, referred him to FHN podiatry’s Dr. Richard Bell. He found out his toe was shifting and his pain was due to a bunion that required Lapiplasty® surgery. According to Chris, “I have never had such a smooth procedure and recovery. Dr. Bell and the entire surgery and support staff have been informative, reassuring, transparent, and professional. Plus, Dr. Bell has a great personality – we really hit it off. I am not done playing sports and being an active father, thanks to him!”



## High School Student Ready to **PUT BEST FOOT FORWARD** with Help from FHN Podiatry

When Mackenzie Biehl was in kindergarten, her mom, Stacy, noticed a bony bump on her feet below each big toe. She took note of it at the time, but figured it was “nothing to worry about.” As time passed, the ‘bumps’ didn’t go away. They became a source of insecurity – and eventually discomfort – for Mackenzie. Eventually, they realized she had a common foot condition called bunions.

Bunions occur when some of the bones in the front part of the foot move out of place. This causes the tip of the big toe

to get pulled toward the smaller toes. The joint at the base of the big toe then sticks out, often rubbing on shoes, causing pain, and making it difficult to wear many types of footwear.

As a young woman with a lot of interests and a sense of style, Mackenzie says, “I got frustrated at my limited shoe options – I wanted to wear flip-flops and sandals like other girls did without feeling self-conscious.” She also grew discouraged by the occasional pain caused by the bunions, which for some people can be downright disabling.



◀ PHOTO: Mackenzie Biehl shows off new shoes she wasn't able to wear before her foot surgery.

### Podiatry Makes a Prognosis

Stacy decided to ask her podiatrist, FHN’s Roland Tolliver, DPM, FACFAS, about Mackenzie’s problems. According to Stacy, “I explained to Dr. Tolliver that we had no luck with gel cushions and other OTC products – they just didn’t do the job. He encouraged me to bring Mackenzie in for a consultation and shared that the majority of bunions are not caused by ill-fitting shoes or aggravating activities, but are instead hereditary – they develop from a bone deformity. That made sense, because her aunt and grandparents had also suffered from the same condition.”

The Biehls made a podiatry appointment for Mackenzie, now age 14. She received a foot x-ray to ensure her growth plates were closed, an important piece of information for a patient so young. They were, which made surgery a viable option that Mackenzie decided to pursue.

“I was ready to take care of it,” she asserts, “and Dr. Tolliver helped me understand what it would be like to get the surgery and explained the steps to a full recovery.”



▲ PHOTO: Roland Tolliver, DPM, FACFAS and Richard Bell, DPM

## Surgery A Joint Effort

Mackenzie had outpatient surgery on one foot and was so pleased with the results, she was eager to get her other foot repaired. Recovery generally takes 6 to 8 weeks, with the first three weeks requiring no weight-bearing activities and then moving on to a protective boot for another three weeks.

Dr. Tolliver and Dr. Richard Bell, DPM, partnered on Mackenzie’s surgery. The pair work together frequently, trading off on who takes the surgical lead. In Mackenzie’s case, Dr. Tolliver performed the repair of the bunion deformities with Dr. Bell assisting. Dr. Bell explains,

“We used an innovative newer procedure called Lapiplasty®, which is a reproducible bunionectomy that utilizes a guide to create proper cuts in the bones required to correct the bunion. Two plates and four screws are used to stabilize the bones. The same procedure was later performed on the other foot.”

## At Last: Footloose and Fancy-Free

Now, Mackenzie is eager to take on new challenges, putting her best foot forward in everything she does. “My feet feel great and look normal. I am so happy I had this surgery done,” she says. “I can wear a variety of shoes and not have to worry about whether my feet will give me any problems.”

Stacy agrees. “Dr. Tolliver personally called us at home to check up on Mackenzie and has been so supportive,” she declares. “He has daughters and he really understood our situation. FHN podiatry was a great choice for our family.”



**AMANDA MILTON** had severe pain in her foot caused by a displaced fracture after picking up her grandson. She thought she had only “rolled her ankle,” but soon knew it was much worse. She required surgery, and Dr. Bell repaired her fifth metatarsal on her left foot. After six months, the plate and screws Dr. Bell put in her foot started to cause agitation. According to Amanda, “Dr. Bell was upfront in explaining what might happen, so I knew this was possible. He removed the hardware and has been impressed with my healing. Now I can do anything I want – run, jump, and play with my grandson without concern. That was Dr. Bell’s goal. He has a warm and caring bedside manner and he never looked at the clock. I appreciated his compassion and interest.”

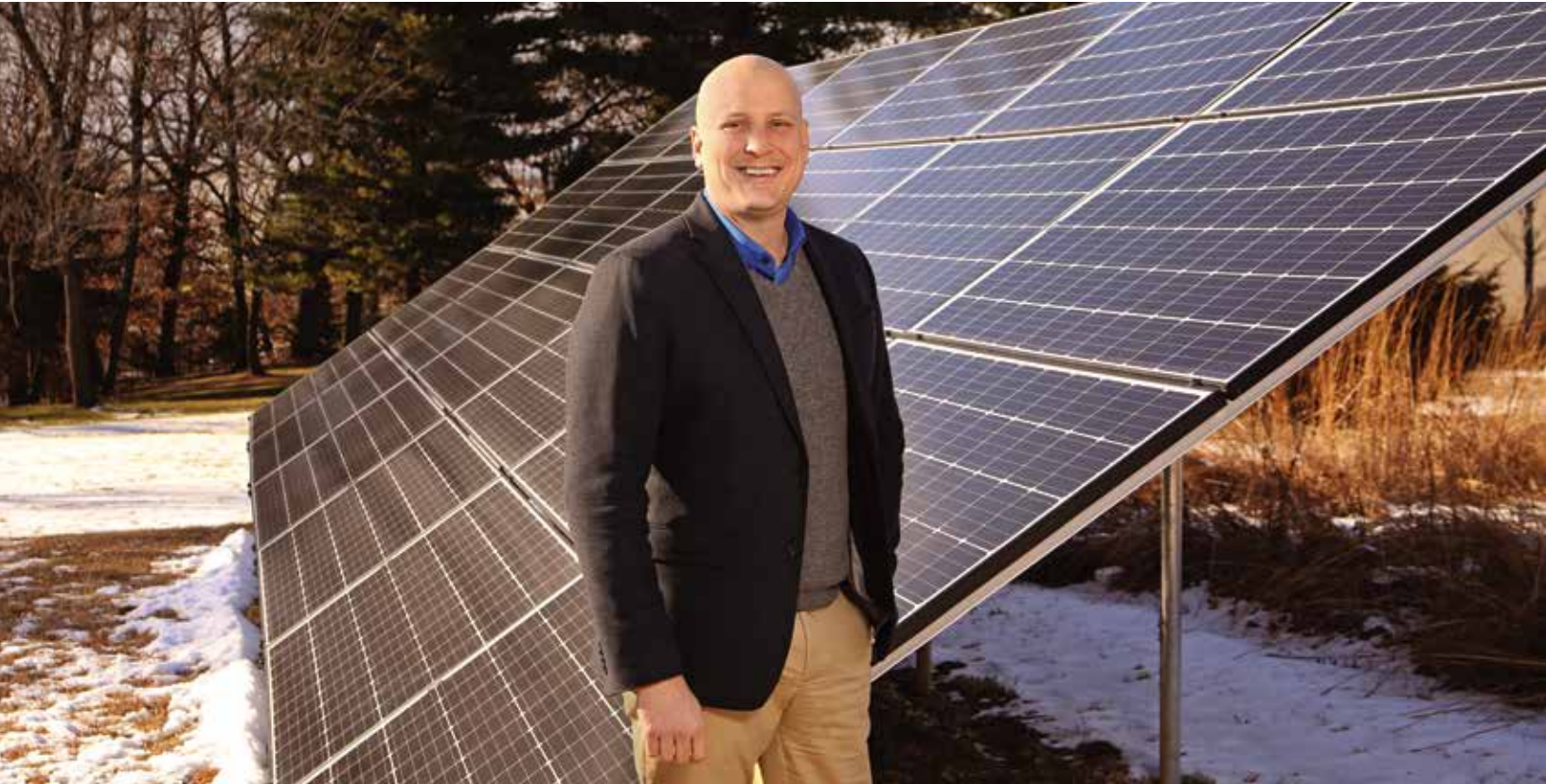


After **KIM SUTTON** experienced pain in the arch of her foot, x-rays revealed a broken accessory navicular bone, which was partially dislocated. Rest, ice, and anti-inflammatories did not resolve her pain, so Dr. Tolliver surgically removed the extra bone that was causing irritation. To help with pain and swelling, Kim opted for ASTYM therapy at FHN Rehabilitation Services. This procedure stimulates the body’s healing response and aids in the resorption of scar tissue and the regeneration of tendons. According to Kim, “Physical therapy with Whitney really helped my recovery, and Dr. Tolliver – well, he always goes above and beyond. His kindness and care is exceptional.”

◀ PHOTO: Dr. Roland Tolliver, Mackenzie Biehl, and Dr. Richard Bell pose following a post-op appointment six weeks after Mackenzie’s successful surgery.

'I Don't Usually Get Very Sick'

## From 'Tired and Off' to Intensive Care and Back Home Again – Paul's FHN COVID-19 Success Story



He didn't know he was exposed to COVID-19, so when Paul Fosler felt tired and "off" in late October, he dismissed it as a lack of rest and generally "too much to do."

For the next few days, his symptoms remained the same. By day four of his fatigue, Paul's wife Kristine urged him to get tested for COVID-19 and got a referral to FHN's Acute Respiratory Clinic. This new facility, located on the lower east side of FHN Specialty Care – Harlem Avenue in Freeport, is set up to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases while accelerating their diagnosis and treatment.

Paul's test came back positive. After fighting manageable symptoms at home for seven days, a bad cough and difficulty breathing set in. At age 42 with no underlying health conditions, he

was somewhat shocked his symptoms got so severe. "I got blood work and an x-ray, and Dr. Parks said my left lung looked a bit cloudy. He allowed me to head back home to recuperate, hoping I would get better with a little rest, a battery of vitamins, and medications for my symptoms. I was counting on not being down for too long, which seemed to be the case with many COVID patients in my age group."

### **Struggling to Inhale**

Unfortunately for Paul, a quick recovery was not in the cards. "I don't usually get very sick, but with each passing day, my symptoms became more miserable," he explains. "I felt horrible. I had a heavy cough, chills, and fever. My breathing became more labored, and I was really struggling to inhale. When I stood up, I felt heavy and weak. My wife checked my blood oxygen rate with a home oximeter, and it was in the 80s – way too

low. She took me to the hospital."

When Paul arrived at FHN Memorial Hospital, Clarence Parks, MD, an FHN hospitalist, ordered a CT scan to evaluate his condition. "He said the results were telling: My lungs looked worse than before and I likely had COVID-related pneumonia."

Paul was sent to FHN's COVID Intensive Care Unit (ICU), where he received an intravenous dose of convalescent plasma therapy, which contains antibodies from patients who have recovered from the virus along with prescription remdesivir and several other medications.

"I was covered in body sensors to constantly monitor my vitals, and my liver count escalated to unacceptable levels, which can be a side effect of the remdesivir. I didn't get to take the last dose of it," he says.

Dr. Parks



▲ PHOTO: Paul Fosler poses with Clarence Parks, MD, who helped him recover from the coronavirus. Dr. Parks and other FHN providers have treated hundreds of COVID-19 patients at FHN. (Paul Fosler at left.)

◀ PHOTO: As a busy contractor with an emphasis on solar energy projects, being hospitalized with COVID-19 was most definitely not on Paul Fosler's calendar. Despite the scare, he tried to keep a sunny disposition. "I stayed optimistic," he says.

Three-fourths of the Fosler family, pictured above, caught COVID-19 but Wyatt, Paul's son, did not. FHN hospitalist Clarence Parks, MD reminded Paul that this is a *novel* – meaning *new* – coronavirus, and experts don't yet know everything about how it spreads and how it impacts different populations.

## Fighting For Each Patient

Paul's careful monitoring was a priority of the FHN ICU staff, as it is for each patient. "The nurses were so nice and helpful, despite how hectic it was in the ICU; they were swamped," he observes. "Sarah and Kyla were excellent and Dr. Parks was wonderful – he came to see me every day and was outstanding with follow-up. They were a tremendous team."

After Paul's condition started to improve, he was moved to the telemetry department, which is currently used for COVID-positive patients. "Nurses from other departments came up to assist, which really made a difference," he elaborates. "RNs Krista and Jen were fantastic, and CNAs Isabelle and Colton were great, day and night. It took a couple more days, but then I started to feel much better."

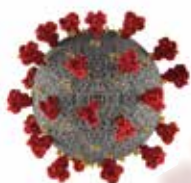
"I was really missing my family, especially knowing my wife and daughter had also tested positive and were dealing with minor symptoms of their own. I was thankful they didn't get too sick. My son Wyatt lucked out. He never got it. It is so bizarre. Dr. Parks explained that there is a lot we still need to learn about this specific type of coronavirus, and many questions remain." Dr. Parks and FHN's other providers have treated hundreds of COVID patients at FHN.

## Going Home Grateful

Ultimately, Paul was sent home with oxygen support, which he relied upon for another week. He has had one follow-up appointment with his family medicine provider, Tamisha Bonvillain, FNP-BC, IBCLC, who analyzed his bloodwork and breathing. All went well. He'll have more follow-up visits, since some COVID-19 patients may deal with long-term effects.

In the meantime, Paul is thankful to feel "back to normal." He shares,

“ I have lived in Freeport my whole life, and I could not have been happier with FHN. It was a scary experience, but the people and the processes made it bearable. I am so grateful for everybody who helped me get better. From my first day at Acute Respiratory Care to my time in the hospital to my after-care, everyone has been great – professional, compassionate, and just plain nice. ”



For the latest information about how to stay safe during the COVID-19 pandemic and updates regarding area vaccinations, visit [www.fhn.org/coronavirus](http://www.fhn.org/coronavirus).



Letter From Tonya Thayer,  
FHN Foundation Executive Director

fhn.org/foundation  
815-599-6900

## Follow Your Heart with Estate Planning



We survived it. We have tucked away 2020 and have embarked on 2021 with all of its opportunity and promise. We can implement the lessons learned last year and maybe learn a few more along the way.

In our nonprofit world, the end of each year tends to be the Season of Giving. We saw this in late December and even early January. Many people generously shared their gifts with organizations that will invest in something meaningful to them. Along with healthcare, this may have included feeding the hungry, encouraging the discouraged, or bringing the arts alive.

This year, I would like to challenge you to give some thought to how you can have a GREATER impact on a nonprofit that you support. Consider making an investment in a mission beyond that December check or online donation. Resolve to review, update, or create a will or estate plan that allows

you to support an organization that you value. We often think estate plans are for the wealthy; however, a fraction of your estate can make a tremendous difference to a mission that you hold dear.

Just 1 percent of an estate that is worth \$100,000 is an impactful gift to any local nonprofit. I would speculate that the heir who inherits \$99,000 would be happy to know that the other 1 percent went to support a mission close to your heart.

**February is Heart Month.** We think about those who we love. As you make your plan for your loved ones, consider organizations that you cherish. Clarify your wishes in writing with your Power of Attorney, speak with your provider to make sure your healthcare desires are understood, and meet with your attorney or financial planner to see how you can continue to support those missions that mean so much to you.

## Lee Joins FHN Ob/Gyn Hospitalist Team

**Board-certified Ob/Gyn D. James Lee, MD has joined the Ob/Gyn Hospitalist team at FHN Memorial Hospital in Freeport.**

Dr. Lee earned his medical degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine. His internship and residency were at Blodgett Memorial Medical Center. He earned a bachelor's degree from Seattle Pacific University in Seattle, Wash.

He has cared for patients, including obstetrics patients with high-risk pregnancies, for more than 29 years in the western suburbs of Chicago. He also has served as chairman of the Ob/Gyn department at Northwestern Medicine Delnor Community Hospital in Geneva, Ill.

As an Ob/Gyn Hospitalist, Dr. Lee cares for laboring mothers at the FHN Family Birthing Center in FHN Memorial Hospital. Once an Ob/Gyn patient leaves the hospital, Dr. Lee coordinates and returns their care to their regular FHN Ob/Gyn provider.



## Career Opportunities at FHN

FHN is continually seeking a variety of healthcare professionals and support staff that share our commitment to providing healthcare excellence for our communities.

Our staff members are a priority at FHN, as they are the key to providing quality healthcare for those we serve. We work hard to attract, develop and retain a talented and dedicated workforce. In return for your dedication, FHN is committed to providing an outstanding place to work, opportunities for professional growth, and the chance to work with excellent people who share your commitment to compassion and quality.

If you're interested in finding out more about career opportunities at FHN – or know of someone who is – visit [www.fhn.org/careers](http://www.fhn.org/careers) or contact Carol Boeke, talent acquisition specialist in Human Resources at 815-599-6706 or [cboeke@fhn.org](mailto:cboeke@fhn.org).



# Meet FHN's Director of Clinical Quality Doreen Timm!

While the fight against COVID-19 is making headlines around the world (and here at home), normal, everyday health goes on for everyone.

Some families are welcoming a new baby in the new year. Someone has broken a bone, sprained an ankle, developed an ear infection or needs help controlling their blood sugar levels.

**“** *FHN has committed to a focus on helping the people of our communities maintain their best health, a big part of which is receiving their preventive healthcare and testing,*”

says FHN Director of Clinical Quality Doreen Timm. That commitment doesn't go away, even when there's a pandemic.

As FHN's frontline heroes work to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus, Doreen and her team are working behind the scenes to keep improving how we care for our patients and our communities' health.

## Loving the Process

Doreen started her career as a pediatric nurse at Crusader Clinic in Rockford. She's a graduate of the Saint Anthony College of Nursing in Rockford, and has even cared for patients here at FHN Memorial Hospital.

She discovered early in her career she had a talent for patient and family education, so she went back to school to earn her advanced practice degree to become a Clinical Nurse Specialist. She took a job as pediatric educator at Mercyhealth Hospital (the former Rockford Memorial Hospital) and was promoted to Pediatrics/PICU

(Pediatric Intensive Care Unit) Clinical Nurse Specialist.

Doreen led the clinical implementation of electronic medical records at Rockford Memorial Hospital and was named the system's Director of Clinical Informatics and Special Projects.

Her leadership and process improvement skills gave her the opportunity to be the operational leader for the new Riverside hospital construction and led to her promotion to Chief Nursing Officer. After guiding MercyHealth through the arduous Magnet designation process, she became the System Director of Clinical Education, Informatics, and Special Projects.

Those skills serve her well at FHN, where she and her team strive to improve how we deliver care for our patients and work with the community to improve community health, as well.

“I believe that quality is the foundation of healthcare,” Doreen says. “When we deliver quality, value-added care, we provide an exceptional healthcare experience for our patients and families.”

## Family at the Heart of the Process

Healthy families mean a healthier community, Doreen says.

“I'm a pediatric nurse, so I believe that family-centered care is the gold standard,” Doreen says. “We want to embrace all of our families – our patients and families in the community – into working toward their best health at all phases of life, from birth to end-of-life.”

Her talents in communicating, educating, and improving the process of healthcare itself are a perfect match for her role at FHN.



**“** *I enjoy integrating technology into our process improvements to improve patient safety and communication, and I enjoy bringing new practices from other organizations into northern Illinois for early adoption of new ideas to improve quality.*”

When she's not at work, Doreen keeps family a priority, too – “I am a grandma of two fantastic children; a two-year-old and a 10-month-old! Spending time with them (outside, of course) is my favorite pastime.”

Her love of the process shows up, as well: “Watching things grow and thrive (or not) has helped me regain perspective on what is important in life,” Doreen says. “I am teaching myself to garden and preserve the results!”

# Five Reasons to Wear a Mask – Even After You’re Vaccinated

By Liz Szabo, Kaiser Health News

As an emergency physician, Dr. Eugenia South was in the first group of people to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. But she’s in no rush to throw away her face mask.

“I honestly don’t think I’ll ever go without a mask at work again,” says South, faculty director of the Urban Health Lab at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. “I don’t think I’ll ever feel safe doing that.”

South plans to continue wearing her mask outside the hospital as well. Health experts say there are good reasons to follow her example.

“Masks and social distancing will need to continue into the foreseeable future – until we have some level of herd immunity,” said Dr. Preeti Malani, chief health officer at the University of Michigan. “Masks and distancing are here to stay.”

## HERE ARE FIVE REASONS TO HOLD ON TO YOUR MASKS:

### 1. NO VACCINE IS 100 PERCENT EFFECTIVE

Even with a vaccine that’s 95 percent efficient, 1 in 20 people are left unprotected, says Dr. Tom Frieden, a former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Vaccines are tested in controlled clinical trials at top medical centers, under optimal conditions. In the real world, the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines can be affected by the way they’re handled. Even a small variation from the CDC’s strict guidance could influence how well the vaccines work.

### 2. VACCINES DON’T PROVIDE IMMEDIATE PROTECTION

No vaccine is effective right away. It takes about two weeks for the immune system to make the antibodies that

block viral infections. Plus, the COVID-19 vaccines in use require two doses, so that means full protection won’t arrive until five or six weeks after your first shot.

### 3. COVID VACCINES MAY NOT PREVENT YOU FROM SPREADING THE VIRUS

Vaccines can provide two levels of protection. The measles vaccine prevents viruses from causing infection, so vaccinated people don’t spread the infection or develop symptoms.

Most other vaccines – including flu shots – prevent people from becoming sick but not from becoming infected or passing the virus to others. While COVID-19 vaccines clearly prevent illness, researchers need more time to figure out whether they prevent transmission, too.

“We don’t yet know if the vaccine protects against infection, or only against illness,” said Frieden, now CEO of Resolve to Save Lives, a global public health initiative. “In other words, a vaccinated person might still be able to spread the virus, even if they don’t feel sick.”

Until researchers can answer that question, wearing masks is the safest way for vaccinated people to protect those around them.

### 4. MASKS PROTECT PEOPLE WITH COMPROMISED IMMUNE SYSTEMS

People with cancer are at particular risk from COVID-19. Studies show they’re more likely than others to become infected and die from the virus, but may not be protected by vaccines, said Dr. Gary Lyman, a professor at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

Doctors don’t know much about how people with cancer will respond to vaccines, because they were excluded

from randomized trials. Only a handful of study participants were diagnosed with cancer after enrolling. Among those people, vaccines protected only 76 percent.

In addition, some people aren’t able to be vaccinated. While most people with allergies can receive COVID-19 vaccines safely, the CDC advises those who have had severe allergic reactions to vaccine ingredients, including polyethylene glycol, to avoid vaccination.

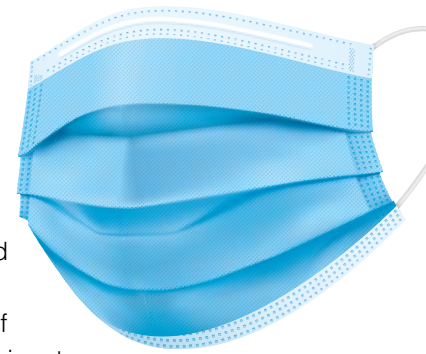
### 5. MASKS PROTECT AGAINST ANY STRAIN OF THE CORONAVIRUS, IN SPITE OF GENETIC MUTATIONS

Global health leaders are extremely concerned about new genetic variants of the coronavirus, which can be more contagious than the original. (So far, studies suggest vaccines will still work against these new strains.)

One thing is clear: Public health measures – such as avoiding crowds, physical distancing and masks – reduce the risk of contracting all strains of the coronavirus, as well as other respiratory diseases. For example, the number of flu cases worldwide has been dramatically lower since countries began asking citizens to stay home and wear masks.

The best hope for ending the pandemic isn’t to choose between masks, physical distancing and vaccines, but to combine them: The three approaches work best as a team.

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# Insight



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