Health First Specialist Restores Rhythm to Irregular Heartbeats  
See page 6

Health First Uses GPS Technology to Detect Lung Cancer  
See page 4

Golf Classic Raises $184K for Health First Aging Services  
See page 3

Life-Saving Training Fetches K-9s, Specialty Officers  
See page 8
Jessica Andre Named Chair of Health First Foundation Benefit Ball

Jessica Andre was named chairwoman of this year’s Health First Foundation Benefit Ball. The April 16 gala, “Walk in Wonderland,” is a whimsical affair based on the children’s classic, “Alice in Wonderland.” The ball is from 6 to 11 p.m. at the Clemente Center at Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne. In the past 33 years, the ball has raised more than $5 million.

Golf Classic Raises $184K for Health First Aging Services

More than 200 golfers teed up for the annual Health First Foundation Golf Classic on January 11 at Suntree Country Club. The event – an 18-hole, four-person scramble tournament – raised more than $184,000, thanks to the generous support of the community. This year’s proceeds benefit Health First Aging Services, which serves medical needs and treatments for older adults. Health First Aging Services provides older patients the best medical care possible and helps family members face challenges related to aging and memory disorders.

SAVING THE DATE – PLEASE RSVP
- WHAT: Health First Foundation Benefit Ball
- WHEN: Saturday, April 16, 6-11 p.m.
- WHERE: The Clemente Center at Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne, Florida
- INFORMATION: Contact Rachel Nave Hobgood at 434-7152 or Rachel.Hobgood@health-first.org

For more information on our member services, visit myPHF.org.
Health First has a new weapon in the fight against lung cancer. In December, Health First Medical Group’s Dr. Theodore Amgott completed the first two procedures in Brevard County using state-of-the-art Electromagnetic Navigation Bronchoscopy (ENB) at Health First’s Holmes Regional Medical Center in Melbourne. ENB is used to reach parts of the lung that previously were unreachable with traditional bronchoscopy.

According to Amgott, not only does it allow access to distant areas of the lung, but it helps identify the stage of the cancer and the genetic characteristics of the lesion. “With regular bronchoscopy, we really only had access to central parts of the lung. We really didn’t have any way to guide the (scope) to the smaller (bronchial tubes) and harder-to-reach areas,” said Amgott, who studied pulmonology at Duke University.

“There was no way to navigate it. With ENB, we have a guidance system with something called LungGPS technology that works very much like the GPS in your car. ... Basically, the patient is placed on a board that generates an electromagnetic field, and the result is like a high-resolution road map of the lung. This helps us direct the bronchoscope to where it is needed.”

LESSENS RISK, DISCOMFORT

The minimally invasive procedure helps lessen the risks and discomforts associated with more extensive surgeries and biopsies.

“It has its greatest effects in the detection of early-stage lung cancers and it also helps rule out lesions that may be benign,” said Dr. Lee Scheinbart, who practices internal medicine and oncology and is medical director of Health First Cancer Institute. “Previously, a patient may have had major surgery to see what was wrong. We are very pleased that in our first two cases, we were able to diagnose early-stage cancers we may not have been able to see otherwise, and therefore, it was easier to determine treatment.”

Funding for the specialized equipment was provided by the 2015 Health First Foundation Benefit Ball, which raised more than $451,000 for Health First Cancer Institute and the ENB.

For information call 321-434-3131 or visit myHFMG.org

Lung cancer screening, although not for everyone, is recommended for certain high-risk individuals who:

- Are ages 55 to 77 with a minimum 30 “pack year” history (meaning they smoked the equivalent of a pack a day for 30 years)
- Are current smokers or who have quit within the past 15 years

Individuals also must have:

- No symptoms of lung cancer (for example, no coughing up blood, no unintentional weight loss)
- No history of any cancer within the past five years
- Overall good health

Currently, most insurance carriers cover the cost of the LDCT screening if the individual is eligible. The cost of the exam is $99.

To find out if a lung screening might be right for you, call 321.434.6715 ext. 7182 or visit HFcancer.org

Is a Lung Cancer Screening Right for You?
Health First Specialist Restores Rhythm to Irregular Heartbeats

Premature Ventricular Contractions Are Life-Altering

Mike Perry will never forget the feeling of his heart constantly racing. “I would feel my pulse and know my heart was skipping a beat,” said the Merritt Island resident. “It was hard to concentrate. It would cause me great anxiety, but I learned to live with it. It’s amazing how you get used to not feeling well.”

When living in the Midwest a few years before, Perry was diagnosed with premature ventricular contractions, also known as heart palpitations. “I think I had it for several years before, but it wasn’t until two-and-half years ago that my cardiologist in Wisconsin officially diagnosed the condition,” Perry said. “My heart was structurally fine, except for the heartbeats. Not only would my heart race, but it affected my energy level. I would have full energy one minute and the next I would be feeling really tired.”

DANGEROUS CONDITION

Premature ventricular contractions are not only life-altering, but they can be life-threatening. “Premature ventricular contractions – or PVCs – are abnormal, extra heartbeats (arrhythmias) that arise from the bottom pumping chambers of the heart and cause the heart to contract in an inefficient and abnormal manner,” said Dr. Ajit Janardhan, a Health First specialist in cardiac electrophysiology. “PVCs can be benign, but if frequent enough, they can cause congestive heart failure, arrhythmias such as atrial fibrillation, and – in some cases – be the trigger for life-threatening heart rhythms such as ventricular tachycardia and ventricular fibrillation.”

While the precise cause of PVCs is unknown, a viral illness that causes scar tissue in the heart muscle is often the culprit. Symptoms include a fluttering in the chest, awareness of heartbeat (palpitations), chest discomfort and a feeling of fullness in the chest or throat. Chest pain also can occur, but it’s rare.

To control the symptoms, Perry’s Wisconsin cardiologist prescribed several medications, eventually settling on a calcium channel-blocking drug that stops irregular heartbeats. But its side effects left Perry in a semi-sedated stage most of the day. “I was feeling sleepy and very tired, and it was hard for me to get through the day,” he said.

MOVE TO BREvard

When Perry’s wife accepted a job in Brevard County last year, he became a patient of Health First cardiologist Dr. Ross Goodfellow, who felt Perry could be best helped through catheter ablation.

Perry’s symptoms presented themselves as classic for PVCs, Goodfellow said. “This patient had flushing with his palpitations, and his symptoms actually improved with exercise, which is not unusual,” he said.

Perry had noticed that he felt better when he would jog. When Goodfellow suggested catheter ablation, Perry was surprised that there were options beyond drugs. “I thought I would be on medications for the next 50 years,” he said.

Suppressing PVCs through medication is the most conservative approach, but some cases, such as Perry’s, warrant more. “Noninvasive heart monitoring is used to correlate symptoms to the PVCs and to monitor the amount of PVCs occurring and whether treatment with medications or catheter ablation is effective,” said Janardhan, the specialist Goodfellow referred Perry to for the procedure.

“If medication fails, an electrophysiology study with catheter ablation is usually the next step. This involves placing catheters in the heart, identifying the abnormal focus and the destroying the abnormal focus by heating the tissue with the tip of a catheter.”

THE PROCEDURE

During ablation, a series of catheters – thin, flexible wires – are inserted into the blood vessels of the groin and then guided into the heart. Using the catheter as the transport, a special machine creates radio waves to produce heat that destroys the small areas of heart tissue from where the abnormal heartbeats are emanating.

Although catheter ablation is not risk-free, it is generally considered a safe and effective procedure. “During catheter ablation, 3-D electroanatomic mapping is combined with sophisticated signal analysis to pinpoint the area that the PVC originates from in the heart,” Janardhan said.

“Before and after the ablation procedure, patients are monitored noninvasively by wearing a heart monitor that records normal and abnormal heartbeats.”

For Perry, Janardhan’s solution to his heart problems proved easy. “I had zero pain and I was in the hospital only one night for observation,” Perry said.

“All I had to avoid was running for the week after.”

Perry, 40, is now able to jog several times a week and has plenty of pep. His heart beats as it should, causing him no anxiety. He takes no medication. “If I had known it was that easy, I would have had it done sooner,” Perry said.

For more information about Health First Heart and vascular services log on to HFHeart.org
Health First Life-Saving Training Fetches K-9s, Specialty Officers

When there’s an emergency, law-enforcement officers are the first ones on the scene. While many walk on two legs, some walk on four, but their mission is the same — to protect and to serve.

At times, their jobs go beyond that, particularly in mass-casualty events. Officers often become a victim’s initial treatment team before emergency medical responders arrive. Making sure officers have the training they need to treat victims – even dogs – is key to increasing survival outcomes.

“As health care professionals, we are focused on teaching law enforcement how to improve life-threatening conditions, focusing especially on things like hemorrhage control kits and traumatic injury education,” said David Schmitt, supervisor and lead instructor of the Health First Training Center.

Schmitt and his team from the Training Center and Health First’s Holmes Regional Trauma Center worked with more than 80 canine and specialty law-enforcement units to share Bleeding Control for the Injured Protocol at the North American Police Work Dog Event held recently in Titusville.

“After the Boston Marathon bombing in April 2013, new disaster response policies began to take shape,” Schmitt said. “Experts in medicine and law enforcement recognized an opportunity to train officers to act as a stop-gap between when they arrive at the scene and when an Emergency Medical Technician can treat a victim, especially when you’re looking at a mass-casualty event.”

The “Stop the Bleed” training is just one part of a national effort to help build partnerships between public safety organizations and health care communities, a cause at the forefront of Health First’s work in Brevard County.

Health First associates, with help from the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians, developed training in Bleeding Control for the Injured Officer and Law Enforcement and First Response Tactical Casualty Care.

Volunteers have trained more than 1,000 Brevard County police officers through the program.

For more information call 321-434-1960 or e-mail Training@Health-First.org

Health First Donates Life-Saving AED to Suntree Viera Youth Football League

Thousands of participants and spectators lined the fields on any given weekend during the Suntree Viera Youth Football League seasons. Now thanks to the donation of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) from Health First, those fields are a little safer for players, coaches and fans alike.

The easy-to-use AEDs can be used to administer an electric shock to the heart in the event of sudden cardiac arrest. “Whether it’s an athlete on the field, a coach on the sidelines or a spectator in the stands, this AED can be used to deliver a life-saving shock to someone in sudden cardiac arrest and improve their chance of survival until first responders arrive,” said Paula Just, Chief Human Resources Officer for Health First. “Health First is committed to helping train the members of our community in life-saving CPR and the use of an AED.”

KEYS TO SURVIVAL

Health First plans to donate four of these life-saving devices a year, along with training, to area non-profit organizations in Brevard County with the goal of creating a healthier and safer community. Earlier this year, Health First also donated an AED to the Pineapple Cove Classical Academy in West Melbourne.

“Immediate bystander CPR and public access to these life-saving devices are the keys to survival of out of hospital Sudden Cardiac Arrest. In fact, combined they more than double the chances of survival for these victims,” said David Schmitt, Paramedic and Supervisor of the Health First Training Center. As part of the program, Health First’s Training & Education Center will provide instruction to the groups on how to use the device. Even without any training the device is easy to use. Simply turn it on and it provides step-by-step audio instructions.

To learn more about the program or how to apply to be considered, visit health-first.org

Dental Clinic Earns AHA Recognition

Health First’s Adult Dental Clinic – in a partnership with the Florida Department of Health – was one of two Sunshine State programs included in the American Hospital Association’s 2016 edition of “Community Connections: Ideas & Innovations for Hospital Leaders” publication.

In 2011, Health First identified a need for low-income Brevard County residents without dental insurance who would routinely arrive at its emergency departments with acute dental discomfort, seeking treatment with either pain medication or antibiotics. Without an appropriate referral for follow-ups, the patients’ dental problems were only temporarily resolved. Frequently, patients returned to the EDs with aggravated ailments – sometimes with a potentially life-threatening condition.

Since its inception, the weekly clinic has provided:

- 1,540 appointments
- 1,000 examinations
- 120 X-rays
- 1,100 extractions

The estimated savings to those treated was nearly $350,000.

AHA’s annual publication features case examples from across the country on how hospitals and health systems are improving community health. Only two programs from each state and Washington, D.C., are selected every year, qualifying in one of four categories: Access and Quality, Health Behaviors, Socioeconomic Factors or Physical Environment.

Health First’s Adult Dental Clinic qualified in the Access and Quality category. As part of the funding for the program comes from donations from the Health First Foundation’s Associate Giving Program.

In 2011, Health First identified a need for low-income Brevard County residents without dental insurance.

In 2011, Health First identified a need for low-income Brevard County residents without dental insurance.
You're not ready to hang it up, so why ride it out?
If joint pain is slowing you down, it's time to be seen by the Orthopedic Specialists at Health First. From Replacement to Rehab, they can diagnose, treat, and get you back to the real you.

It all starts here — Visit us online for more information and a listing of our Free Orthopedic Lecture Series. Call 321.434.4335 to RSVP today! Seating is limited. Call now!

Mary LIGAMENT REPAIR

Average Excess weight loss of 70%
**FEBRUARY IS HEART MONTH**

Upcoming Free Lunchtime Lectures

Join us for free information lectures across the county. Lectures will be on a variety of critical life-saving topics offered throughout the month of February.

**Tuesday, February 2**
Noon to 1 PM
“Diagnosed with Valve Disease? Latest Minimally Invasive Treatments including Brevard’s Only TAVR Program”
Matthew Campbell, MD, Cardiothoracic Surgeon with Health First Medical Group
Health First's Holmes Regional Medical Center – Auditorium
1350 South Hickory Street, Melbourne

**Wednesday, February 3**
Noon to 1 PM
“Leg Pain while Walking? Do You have PAD? An Overview of Peripheral Artery Disease”
Ross Goodfellow, MD, Interventional Cardiologist with Health First Medical Group
Health First’s Cape Canaveral Hospital – Medical Plaza Room A
701 West Cocoa Beach Causeway, Cocoa Beach

**Monday, February 8**
Noon to 1 PM
“Got AFIB? Catheter Ablation and Advanced Treatments for Atrial Fibrillation”
Ajit Janardhan, MD, Cardiac Electrophysiologist with Health First Medical Group
Hilton Melbourne Rialto Place
200 Rialto Place, Melbourne

**Thursday, February 11**
Noon to 1 PM
“Heart Failure: Causes, Prevention and Treatment”
James Ronaldson, MD, Cardiologist with Health First Medical Group
Holiday Inn - Viera
8398 North Wickham Road, Viera (I-95 & Wickham Road)

**Friday, February 12**
12:30 to 1 PM
“Hyperlipidemia: Effect of High Cholesterol and Triglycerides on your Heart”
Enrique Polanco, MD, Cardiologist with Health First Medical Group
Health First’s Palm Bay Hospital – Auditorium (West Entrance)
1425 Malabar Road, Southeast, Palm Bay

**Wednesday, February 17**
Noon to 1 PM
“Heart Disease in Women”
Khalid Sheikh, MD, Cardiologist with Health First Medical Group
Holiday Inn - Viera
8398 North Wickham Road, Viera (I-95 & Wickham Road)

**Friday, February 19**
Noon to 1 PM
“Venous Disease and Modern Treatment of Varicose Veins”
Fuad Ramadan, MD, Vascular Surgeon
Hilton Melbourne Rialto Place
200 Rialto Place, Melbourne

**Wednesday, February 24**
Noon to 1 PM
“Heart Attack: Early Treatment and Coronary Intervention”
Cesar Jara, MD, Cardiologist with Health First Medical Group
Hilton Melbourne Rialto Place
200 Rialto Place, Melbourne

**Thursday, February 25**
Noon to 1 PM
“Got AFIB? Catheter Ablation and Advanced Treatments for Atrial Fibrillation”
Ajit Janardhan, MD, Cardiac Electrophysiologist with Health First Medical Group
Space Coast Convention Center
301 Tucker Lane, Cocoa (I-95 & 520)

**Friday, February 26**
Noon to 1 PM
“Heart Can’t Keep Pace? Devices for Treating Arrhythmia”
Thomas Swain, MD, Cardiologist with Health First Medical Group
Hilton Melbourne Rialto Place
200 Rialto Place, Melbourne

**Monday, February 29**
Noon to 1 PM
“Hypertension: The Silent Killer - Do You Have It?”
Gobivenkata Balaji, MD, FACP
Hilton Melbourne Rialto Place
200 Rialto Place, Melbourne

Lectures or events may need to be canceled or changed without notice. Attendees may call the number listed at any time to confirm.

Call 321.434.4335 to reserve your seat — space is limited!
A light lunch will be provided.