

Your LIFE

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SPRING 2013

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IN SOUTH CAROLINA FOR
CARDIAC SURGERY - 2010-2013
HEALTHGRADES



Grand Strand
Regional Medical Center

▶ *Page 3*
Annual report to
the community

▶ *Page 4*
Comprehensive care
for neck and back pain

▶ *Page 7*
Meet our new
physicians

DEAR FELLOW RESIDENTS,



It is gratifying to hear patient success stories like those you will read in this issue of *Your Life*. We receive many letters from patients thanking physicians and staff members for their care, and it reminds us of how grateful we are to have the talented medical and hospital staff that helps patients return to a healthier and more active lifestyle.

The Grand Strand Regional Spine & Neuro Center brings together neurology and neurosurgery experts in one location with state-of-the-art technology, close to home. These physicians and support staff work together to provide comprehensive care and create individual care plans with the goal of helping patients return to normal activities with less pain.

Close to 1,900 visitors and residents participated in our Panel 30 blood profile at the annual health fair in February, and thousands more visited over 50 booths. This is one of the many ways we provide education to the community.

We hope that through *Your Life* magazine, speaking engagements, community screenings, seminars and special events, you learn more about your health and how Grand Strand Regional Medical Center can partner with you for continued good health. A calendar on page 8 lists some of these activities—and more are listed at grandstrandmed.com.

The community impact report on page 3 is part of the larger *2012 Community Report* that we publish annually. Please call (843) 692-4444 to have a copy mailed or stop by the hospital. The report highlights 2012 hospital accomplishments and the importance of our hospital in the community, beyond healthcare, as one of the county's largest employers.

Please enjoy this issue and send us your comments. Thank you for your support of Grand Strand Regional and for making us the hospital of choice for this region.

Sincerely,

Doug White
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

NEWS BRIEFS

Board officers elected

► **JOHN MOLNAR, MD, HAS BEEN ELECTED CHAIR OF THE GRAND STRAND REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER BOARD OF TRUSTEES.** He has served on the board since 2009. Dr. Molnar is medical director of the emergency department.

Don Leonard has been elected vice chair of the hospital board of trustees. Leonard, who joined the board in 2008, is president of Leonard, Call & Associates.



John Molnar, MD

Diabetes/asthma camps scheduled for June

► **GRAND STRAND REGIONAL WILL SPONSOR ITS ANNUAL CAMPS JUNE 11-14, FOR CHILDREN AGES 7-11 WHO HAVE ASTHMA OR DIABETES.** Campers enjoy one week of education, field trips, arts and crafts and other camp activities at the day camps held at *HealthFinders* at the Coastal Grand Mall. Preregistration and medical forms are required for the camps; the fee is \$25 and includes all activities. Call (843) 692-4444 for registration information and dates.

NEWS BRIEFS continued on page 7 ►►

CONTEST



Find the starfish and win!

► **LOCATE THE STARFISH HIDDEN SOMEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE!** Once you have found it, send us your name, contact information and the location of the starfish, either by mail (Marketing Department, Grand Strand Regional Medical Center, 809 82nd Parkway, Myrtle Beach, SC 29572) or by visiting our website at grandstrandmed.com. Click on "Contact Us," complete the information and select "General Questions/Comments" in the subject box. You will be entered for a chance to win a \$100 gas card!

The deadline to enter is May 1, 2013. Grand Strand Regional employees and their family members are not eligible for the drawing. Congratulations to **Clara Chilton of Myrtle Beach**, who won a \$100 gas card for finding the starfish in the winter issue.

On the cover: Kim Hardee, a former Grand Strand Regional Medical Center neurosurgical patient

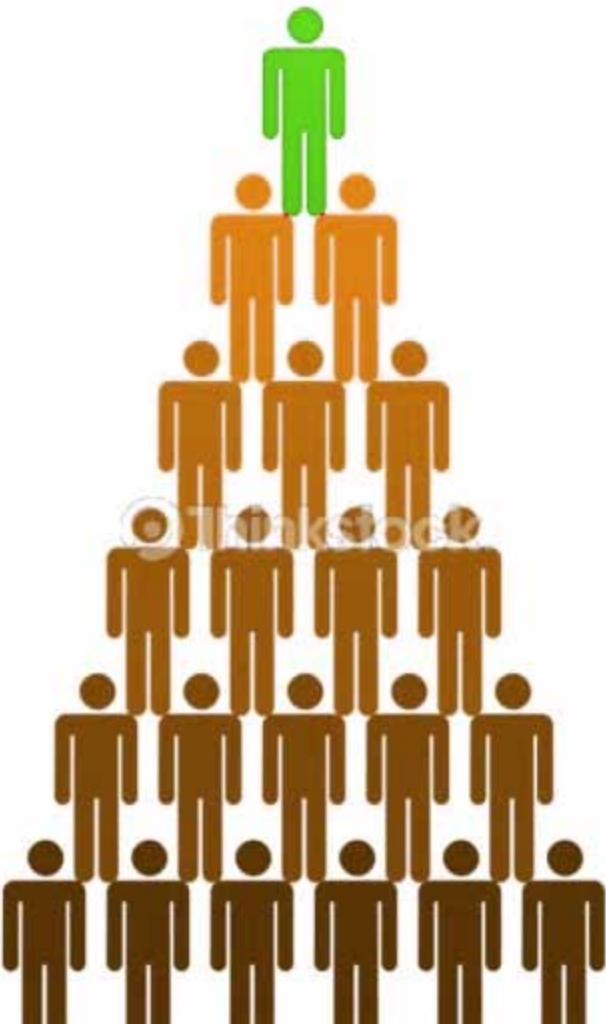
Report to the community 2012

► IN 2012, GRAND STRAND REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER EMPLOYED MORE THAN 1,400 PEOPLE AND WAS ONE OF THE LARGEST EMPLOYERS IN THE COUNTY. Grand Strand Regional provides healthcare to thousands of residents and visitors annually, but the importance of our hospital extends beyond healthcare.

Grand Strand Regional is a major contributor to the local economy through the number of employees we hire and our payroll, the taxes we pay and the goods and services we purchase from other businesses.

In addition, Grand Strand Regional is proud to partner with many local organizations through sponsorships, screenings and contributions to improve the lives of those in our community.

Please call (843) 692-4444 if you would like a copy of our 2012 Community Report, or view the report at grandstrandmed.com.



► 2012 Community Impact

STATISTICS

Total patients treated	174,973
Annual hospital admissions	16,064
Annual emergency visits	79,165
Total Medicaid patients treated	38,115
Total uninsured patients treated	45,889

OUR FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Hospital	1
Surgical center	1
Diagnostic/imaging centers	3
Freestanding emergency department	1
Senior health centers	2
Number of licensed beds	269

OUR HOSPITAL FAMILY

Total employees	1,448
Total physicians	275
Total volunteers	180
Hours donated	33,000

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC IMPACT

Total salaries and benefits	\$103,376,862
Cost of charity and uncompensated care	\$41,976,732
Taxes paid	
Federal/state income tax	\$7,027,121
Indigent care tax	\$4,909,755
Property tax	\$985,481
Sales tax	\$5,822,196
Other local tax	\$277,233
Total taxes	\$19,021,786
Capital investment	\$12,702,229
Local vendor support	\$21,963,101
Minority business support	\$1,580,747
Physician specialty coverage	\$9,076,844
Total economic impact	\$209,698,301





Find relief from
your pain

Grand Strand Spine & Neuro Center is located at 8170 Rourk St., Myrtle Beach, and a satellite office is open at 4367 Riverwood Drive, Suite 120, Murrells Inlet. To make an appointment for an evaluation, call (843) 449-2336 or visit spineandneurocenter.com for more information.

Back or neck pain?

Grand Strand Spine & Neuro Center can help

► **IF YOU HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO A NEUROSURGEON FOR YOUR NECK OR BACK PAIN, CHANCES ARE YOU'RE FEELING A BIT NERVOUS.** Does it mean that you'll need surgery?

In many cases, the answer to that question is "No." A minority of patients are actually surgical candidates.

When noninvasive treatments do not provide relief ...

Neurosurgeons Thomas Anderson, MD, and Eugene Giddens, MD, help steer patients to appropriate, oftentimes more conservative treatments, most of which are available on-site at the Grand Strand Spine & Neuro Center. These include pain medications (over-the-counter and stronger prescription options), steroid injections (epidural, facet joint and trigger point injections)



Thomas Anderson, MD, consults with Trish Jennings, RN.



and physical therapy, as well as referrals for chiropractic treatment and, in some cases, acupuncture.

Still, some patients may not find relief with these measures and surgery could be the best option. Using imaging such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and X-rays—also available at the center—Dr. Anderson and his colleagues are able to diagnose what disease processes may be present, assess the extent of damage and determine the best course of treatment.

Conditions treated with surgery include sciatica, radiculopathy, herniated disks, spinal stenosis, degenerative disk disease and “slipped spine”—just to name a few. “People come to us at various stages,” Dr. Anderson says. “They may have been suffering from injury for a week or for years before asking for help.”

Know your options

Many neck and back surgical procedures are performed routinely and have good success rates. A specialist, such as a neurosurgeon, can help patients determine which surgical option best suits them. Common neck and back surgeries include:

- **DISK REPLACEMENT SURGERY.** When a disk becomes diseased and begins pressing on the spinal cord or surrounding nerves (causing pain, numbness or weakness), it may need to be replaced with an artificial disk. Disks act as shock absorbers and lie between vertebrae in the spine. This

Continued on page 6 ▶▶



An end to years of pain

“Who gets excited about having surgery?” Kim Hardee says. “Well, I did.”

As she saw it, Feb. 1, 2012—the day of her procedure—was the beginning of the end of the 47-year-old’s decades of pain. Since the age of 25, Kim had been plagued with discomfort and numbness that eventually worked its way down her left arm. She had torn her rotator cuff falling down stairs back in the 1990s, and her work in the catering and restaurant business often entailed carrying heavy trays and other physical demands. Her discomfort became progressively worse as the years passed.

On Dec. 26, 2011, things came to a head. “I went to lie down and when I woke up two hours later, I couldn’t move. I was in excruciating pain,” Kim says. Her pain would come on suddenly, leaving the area under her shoulder blade feeling as though it was on fire. “I could never sleep on my left side, and getting dressed took an hour and a half,” she says.

The days that followed were spent trying to find someone who could help. A visit to a chiropractor offered no answers or relief, and more conservative measures, such as prednisone shots and applying heat and ice to the area, had no effect. She found Dr. Anderson while doing online research on area neurosurgeons.

Kim’s MRI told the tale: arthritis, bone spurs, severe degenerative spondylosis (a form of arthritis that causes abnormal wearing of the cartilage and bone in the neck) and severe left-sided foraminal stenosis, which causes a narrowing of the spinal canal and puts pressure on, or pinches, surrounding nerves. Her surgery—an anterior cervical discectomy and fusion—was a multilevel repair that would tackle disks and nerves in both the cervical and thoracic portions of her spine, removing the affected disks and fusing together vertebrae to stabilize the spine.

The other aspect of her care that impressed Kim was the efforts of Trish Jennings, Dr. Anderson’s nurse. “She works harder than anyone I know,” Kim says. She made sure appointments were always set up and was available—even during evenings—to answer any questions Kim had.

“I feel so much better. My neck is still sore in the mornings, but I’m not 25 anymore,” Kim says. The surgery alleviated her pain, and she was back in full catering swing at her Conway business, Dilly Beans Catering & Cafe, in less than eight weeks.

“Would I do the surgery again? Absolutely. Would I recommend it? Absolutely,” says Kim. “You have to think about your quality of life. Living with the pain wasn’t even an option for me.”



procedure may be an alternative to spinal fusion.

- **DISCECTOMY.** This procedure involves removing part or all of a herniated disk to relieve pain or irritation of a nerve.
- **LAMINECTOMY.** To widen the spinal canal and relieve nerve pressure, surgeons remove the bone over the spinal canal. Because this procedure can cause instability in the spine, a spinal fusion may also be needed.
- **FORAMINOTOMY.** Another way to relieve pressure on spinal nerves, a foraminotomy involves removal of bone on the sides of vertebrae to widen the spinal canal and reduce pain. It may also reduce stability in the spine, and a fusion may be performed as well.
- **FUSION.** During a spinal fusion, two or more bones are permanently connected. This can serve two purposes: lend stability to the spine or stop or restrict painful movement between bones of the spine (usually the result of a damaged disk).

Some people may put off seeing a doctor because they are afraid of complicated surgeries and long “downtimes.” The good news is that many procedures can be done minimally invasively, with smaller incisions, quicker recoveries, less overall pain and a lower risk of

Back on his feet



The simple act of walking was enough to bring pain to Roland Dumont’s days. “I felt it all the way down my legs, and I would have to stop walking,” the 74-year-old says. It was pain long in the making.

In 1995, Roland was working in construction when he fell off scaffolding. The damage was done but did not rear its ugly head until 2012. After chiropractic care and laser treatments failed to help, Roland was referred to Dr. Anderson by his primary care physician. Imaging tests revealed damage to his lower back, with surgery being the only real viable option.

“I was a little nervous (about surgery), but I couldn’t live like that,” Roland says. “I couldn’t do anything. I was born in Canada and always go back to visit, but with the pain, I couldn’t travel.”

On Nov. 1, 2012, Roland underwent decompression surgery, or a laminectomy—a procedure that removes a portion of vertebra and widens the spinal canal to relieve pressure on spinal nerves.

The relief was immediate. “I had no pain afterward, and I was ready to leave after the first day,” he says. He did not need a walker, nor did he require physical therapy. “I was expecting to be in pain for months, but I wasn’t.”

Now he is able to take walks on the beach, go to the mall and travel to places like Montreal. He speaks highly of Dr. Anderson’s skills and the procedure. “I’m glad I went through with it. The only thing I’m sorry about is that I didn’t do it sooner.”

infection, Dr. Anderson says. It marks a trend toward more restorative measures, where the focus is on returning function as well as alleviating symptoms, he says.

The experienced healthcare providers at Grand Strand Spine & Neuro Center offer patients the latest treatments for back and neck pain.

Front row (l-r): Neurologists, Barbara Sarb, DO, and Jeff Benjamin, MD; Physician Assistant Aimi Dlaness, PA-C. **Back row (l-r):** Neurosurgeon Thomas Anderson, MD; Neurologists George Sandoz, MD, and Michael McCaffrey, MD; Neurosurgeon Eugene Giddens, MD.



welcome new physicians



ROBERT H. MESSIER JR., MD, PHD
Cardiothoracic Surgery

BOARD CERTIFIED: cardiothoracic surgery

RESIDENCY: Georgetown University School of Medicine, Washington,

D.C.; Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, Ga.

FELLOWSHIP: Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, Ga. (cardiothoracic surgery); Duke University Medical Center, Durham, N.C. (cardiothoracic transplantation); Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas (thoracic aortic surgery); Eastern Virginia School of Medicine Sentara Hospitals, Norfolk, Va. (endovascular surgery)

Grand Strand Heart & Vascular Surgery • (843) 497-7772



DANA POURNARAS, MD
Hospitalist

RESIDENCY: SUNY Downstate at Long Island College Hospital, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Carolina Health Specialists • (843) 497-5929



DAVID SASSER, MD
Emergency Medicine

BOARD CERTIFIED: emergency medicine

INTERNSHIP: David Grant USAF Medical Center, Travis AFB, Calif.

RESIDENCY: Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich.; University of Washington, Seattle, Wash.

Carolina Health Specialists • (843) 497-5929



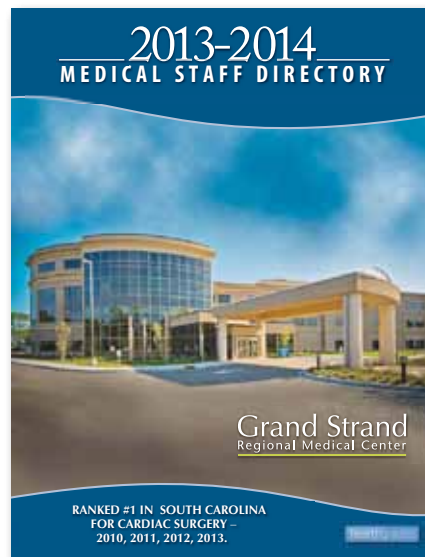
EMILY TOULOUKIAN, DO
Hematology/Oncology

INTERNSHIP/RESIDENCY: Advocate Lutheran General Hospital, Park Ridge, Ill.

FELLOWSHIP: Providence Hospital, Southfield, Mich.

Coastal Cancer Center • (843) 756-0932

NEWS BRIEFS Continued from page 2



Medical staff directory/ community report available

▶ **A 2013 GRAND STRAND REGIONAL MEDICAL STAFF DIRECTORY HAS BEEN PUBLISHED.** The directory includes hospital department and service information as well as a pictorial directory of all physicians, their practice addresses, education/training and board certification.

The *2012 Community Report* highlights the hospital's quality, safety and patient care accomplishments as well as an overview of the hospital's impact on the community.

Please call **(843) 692-4444** or stop by the hospital for a free copy.

Blue Distinction for Spine, Knee and Hip


▶ **GRAND STRAND REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS A BLUE DISTINCTION CENTER FOR SPINE SURGERY® AND A BLUE DISTINCTION CENTER FOR KNEE/HIP REPLACEMENT®.** The hospital is on the Blue Distinction Center Finder and the Blue National Doctor and Hospital Finder on the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association's website at **www.BCBS.com**.

These designations signify that Grand Strand Regional has met nationally established quality care and outcomes criteria developed with input from the medical community.

grandstrandmed.com

This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.

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classes and more ▼●●

PLEASE VISIT **GRANDSTRANDMED.COM** EACH MONTH FOR A COMPLETE LISTING.
CALL **(843) 692-4444** TO REGISTER FOR ALL SEMINARS AND CLASSES.

► SCREENINGS

• Cholesterol Screenings



Fingerstick total cholesterol screening, \$7; lipid profile

(requires a 12-hour fast), \$20.

When: Wednesday, April 10, 9–10 a.m.

Where: Grand Strand Regional Medical Center

When: Wednesday, April 17, 8:30–9:30 a.m.

Where: YMCA Classroom, Myrtle Beach

• PAD Screenings



Registration is required. Free.

When: Tuesday, May 7, and

Thursday, May 9, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.

Where: HealthFinders*

Call: (843) 692-4444

► CLASSES & SEMINARS

• CPR Classes

A variety of CPR classes are available for the public and groups/organizations.

Call: (843) 839-9933 for a list of classes.

• Safe Sitter Class

A seven-hour class for children ages 11–13. Participants learn childcare techniques, behavior management skills, how to respond to medical emergencies and ethics. A \$35 fee includes materials and a book bag. Registration and prepayment are required.

When: Wednesday, June 19; Thursday, July 11; Wednesday, July 24; and Thursday, Aug. 8.

Where: HealthFinders* and YMCA (call for specific date/location)

Call: (843) 692-4444



• Infant/Child CPR and First Aid Class

Learn the proper administration of cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid for choking infants and children. Fee: \$15. Registration is required.

When: Saturday, April 27, 1–4 p.m.

Where: HealthFinders*

Call: (843) 692-4444

• Are You at Risk for Stroke?

Cindy Kane, NP, cardiovascular navigator, will discuss risk factors, symptoms and how to respond.

When: Wednesday, May 22, 3 p.m.

Where: HealthFinders*

Call: (843) 692-4444 to register



• American Red Cross Blood Drive

When: Tuesday, June 4, 11 a.m.–7 p.m.

Where: Grand Strand Regional Medical Center

When: Thursday, June 20, 11 a.m.–7 p.m.

Where: HealthFinders*

*HealthFinders is located inside the Coastal Grand Mall, next to Dillard's.

WAIT TIMES AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

For emergency department wait times for Grand Strand Regional Medical Center and South Strand Medical Center, text ER to 23000 (charges may apply) or visit grandstrandmed.com or itriagehealth.com.