

THE GOOD LIVING MAGAZINE FROM MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER

MONMOUTH

health & life

NOVEMBER 2018 | \$3.95
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THE HOME ISSUE

- » COLORFUL COLONIAL IN ASBURY PARK
- » HOT TOPIC: COOL FIRE PITS
- » FOUND! BEST GLOBAL STYLE



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WELCOME LETTER

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS, AS THE SAYING GOES

WHEN YOU ARE FACED WITH A HEALTH CRISIS, THE thought of traveling far from home to a major city for care can be daunting. Home is the theme of this issue of *Monmouth Health & Life*, and in the pages of "In Good Health," we spotlight key Monmouth Medical Center services that provide the most cutting-edge, lifesaving care, close to home for those in our neighboring communities.

For the Durnien family, Monmouth Medical Center's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit became their home away from home over the course of the 115 days their youngest son, Brian, spent in the hospital. Fourteen years later, Brian's mother, Lori, recalls how the NICU staff kept her entire family going through a very difficult time, and made each and every Sunday a special "Big Brother Day" for her two older sons.

The story of Oceanport resident Mattie Thigpen underscores the importance of lung cancer screening for people with a history of smoking and of having convenient access to this crucial screening. After her cancer diagnosis, Monmouth Medical Center was able to offer the advanced robotic surgical treatment option that allowed her to recover quickly, with less pain, and without the need for any further treatment.

We are so grateful to these patients for sharing their stories of the lifesaving role Monmouth Medical Center played in their lives. Where you get your health care matters, and when you are dealing with life-threatening situations such as these, choosing the very best care close to home is a choice that is also close to our hearts.

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IN GOOD HEALTH

MEDICINE + TECHNOLOGY + PATIENT CARE AT MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER

NEW TREATMENTS FOR SKIN AND BREAST CANCER

ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY AT MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER MAKE RADIATION SAFER AND MORE EFFECTIVE.

CANCER TREATMENT OFTEN INCLUDES RADIATION AND/OR chemotherapy, but one of the most successful and pioneering methods to treat cancer is known as brachytherapy. This treatment, which has been around in its modern form since the 1950s, involves placing radioactive seeds into the body; the radiation inside the seeds targets and eliminates the cancer cells without damaging surrounding healthy cells.

For more than two decades, Monmouth Medical Center (MMC) has provided New Jersey with award-winning brachytherapy in treating prostate cancer. But just recently, radiologists at the hospital began using the same approach to treat early non-melanoma skin cancer (NMSC). Brachytherapy for early NMSC delivers a non-invasive, high dose of radiation directly to the affected area while saving surrounding tissues, and it has fewer side effects than surgery, which was the previous option for this type of cancer.

"This targeted therapy provides exceptional cure rates close to 100 percent, with no scarring," says radiation oncologist Sang Sim, M.D. "It ensures first-rate cosmetic outcomes with an increased quality of life. It is designed to give patients successful results in less time, so you can continue living a full and active life during treatment."

MMC's dedicated radiation oncologists work alongside Barnabas Health Medical Group physicians to offer brachytherapy and other radiation treatments for safe, long-term access to skin cancer care. According to Dr. Sim, brachytherapy, which is administered as outpatient treatment, could be considered the best choice for patients with diabetes, those taking blood thinners, those whose tumor is in a highly visible or uncomfortable area like the nose or lip, or those for whom surgery poses risks of nerve damage or risky reconstruction.

Radiation therapy is also highly effective in treating breast cancer. But because the left breast is close to the heart, this vital organ is vulnerable to radiation exposure. MMC has recently introduced two new techniques to deliver radiation treatment for breast cancer

that minimizes radiation exposure to the surrounding organs and tissues like the heart and lungs.

The first is prone breast radiation therapy. This unique approach to treating breast cancer has the patient lying comfortably on his or her stomach atop a specially designed table with a breast board that keeps the breast hanging away from the body. The healthy breast is kept close to the body, minimizing radiation exposure.

Additionally, deep inspiration breath hold (DIBH) technology allows radiation oncologists to ensure that radiation is only delivered when the patient is in the intended position. As the name implies, patients take a deep breath and hold it. When the lungs fill with air, the heart naturally moves away from the chest. DIBH can be useful in situations where radiation therapy is necessary in the chest region, and when it is desired to avoid radiation dosages to the heart.

"Each of these new technologies offers women better options for breast cancer treatment with less risk of side effects," says Mitchell Weiss, M.D., chair of Radiation Oncology at MMC.



Monmouth Medical Center radiation oncologists Sang Sim, M.D., third from left, and Mitchell Weiss, chair of Radiation Oncology, fifth from left, with members of the Radiation Oncology team

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BRACHYTHERAPY AT MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER, VISIT WWW.RWJBH.ORG.

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GIVING THANKS FOR THEIR ‘MIRACLE BOY’

AFTER REPEATED UNSUCCESSFUL FERTILITY TREATMENTS, A FREEHOLD COUPLE DELIVERS THEIR SECOND CHILD AT MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER.



NEARLY 5,500 BABIES ARE BORN EACH year at Monmouth Medical Center, more than any hospital in the region. And the parents of one of those babies, Michael Dilworth, have nothing but praise for the doctors, nurses and staff who helped bring their second child into the world on March 12, 2018.

Mike and Laura Dilworth of Freehold had delivered their first child, daughter Amelia, five years prior at another hospital. They had trouble conceiving again, and underwent fertility treatment that was, for a long time, unsuccessful. Several pregnancies ended in miscarriage, and they were down to the last embryo they had created via in vitro fertilization. “We went through a lot to have him,” says Laura, a kindergarten teacher at Freehold Learning Center. “It took us a long time.”

By then they had relocated to be closer to Monmouth County. “We had heard great things about Monmouth Medical Center,” says Laura.

Mike, a first grade special education teacher at West Freehold School, was working his summer job on a boat when he met some folks who happened to work at the hospital. “I said we were delivering there, and they told us to give them a call when it comes time,” he says.

The couple planned a cesarean section because the baby was measuring too large for a natural delivery, and called a week before the date of surgery. “We just walked in, were greeted by security, got our ID bracelets,” Mike

recalls. “It was absolutely terrific from start to finish. Everything from security to the nurses to the delivery, we couldn’t have been happier with our experience there.”

Even though Michael is the couple’s second child, having a C-section made the experience brand new. “We had no idea what we were doing,” Laura laughs. “But the nursing staff answered any questions, with no judgment on anything.” They also made sure to make “a big fuss” over big sister Amelia. “That was a big deal to us,” she says. “That was my favorite part.”

The Dilworths were the first birth on the schedule that day, and the delivery went off seamlessly. “They took us in [to the operating room] three minutes after the hour and in the blink of an eye he was here. We were like, ‘That’s it?’” Mike laughs. “The first birth took a lot longer.”

Little Michael wasn’t so little, tipping the scales at 10 pounds, 5 ounces. Six months later, “he’s the happiest baby I have ever seen,” his proud mom says. “It doesn’t matter if he has diaper rash, he’s tired, he’s hungry—he is always smiling.” Even Amelia is happy. “She definitely wanted a younger brother, and if it wasn’t a boy we were going to have issues,” Mike says. “So it worked out best for everyone.”

And they credit everyone at the Medical Center for their good fortune. “We are so grateful to the staff for giving us our miracle boy,” Laura says.



EISENBERG FAMILY CENTER EXPANDS

Monmouth Medical Center has been a Level III Regional Perinatal Center since the designation was initiated more than 40 years ago. The center recently expanded its labor and delivery unit at the Eisenberg Family Center. The unit features newly renovated labor and delivery suites and was expanded to include additional triage rooms and an expansive, centrally located nurses station. “We continue to expand and upgrade our facility to match our commitment to quality care and patient safety,” says Robert Graebe, M.D., chairman and program director, Obstetrics and Gynecology.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE EISENBERG FAMILY CENTER, CALL 732.923.5577.

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WHERE EVERYONE IS FAMILY

THE DURNIENS OF LONG BRANCH HELP CELEBRATE MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER NICU'S GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY.

THE HIRAIR AND ANNA HOVNANIAN

Foundation Regional Newborn Center (RNC) at The Unterberg Children's Hospital at Monmouth Medical Center (MMC) opened in 1968, making this year its 50th anniversary. It might be difficult to find someone who celebrated the milestone more than 14-year-old Brian Durnien and his family.

Brian was due to be born in August 2004 but he had other plans, says his mother, Lori, a preschool teacher and Long Branch resident. She and her husband, Paul, a building code enforcer, already had two sons (Matthew, now 19, and Christopher, now 17) when in April of that year, Lori felt ill and drove herself to the hospital. Little did she know at the time that she was, in fact, in full labor. She still has the parking ticket from that day, which shows she pulled her car into the lot at 7:14 a.m. Brian was born exactly

four hours later at just 24 weeks' gestation. He weighed only 1 pound, 13 ounces, and was rushed to the RNC, MMC's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

As the first Level III NICU in New Jersey and one of the nation's best in terms of survival rates, the RNC provides specialized care for more than 500 babies annually, even those weighing less than a pound and born as premature as Brian. Staff members include board-certified neonatologists, specially trained nurse practitioners and neonatal nurses, therapists, social workers, technologists and a broad-range of subspecialists, including pediatric surgeons and radiologists.

Brian had multiple health problems—the most significant was a heart valve that hadn't closed, which caused bleeding on his brain. At 4 days old he had his first surgery to close the valve with a titanium clip. Over 115 days in the hospital, he had numerous transfusions, multiple infections, eating problems and breathing issues. When he finally left the hospital, Brian weighed 7 pounds and was still on oxygen. But his family brought him back a few months later, when Brian developed swelling in the brain

and needed emergency surgery to put a shunt in to drain the fluid.

At every step of the journey, the doctors and nurses were nothing but supportive, Lori recalls. "They always encouraged us," she says. "They never gave up on him no matter what happened. It was the most terrifying time of my life, but those nurses kept our entire family going, including his two older brothers. Every Sunday was big brother day, and they were ready. If Brian had a bad day, they never let it get us down. They were always positive."

Brian had more health problems over the years and developed cerebral palsy as a result of the bleeding that happened at birth. But today, he is a freshman at Red Bank Catholic High School.

"His physical limitations aggravate him," his mom admits. But he's also stubborn and willing to try anything, she adds. "The nurses and doctors, particularly Dr. Carlos Alemany, at Monmouth said, 'Whatever you expect from him he will do. If you work with him he will do it.' Dr. Alemany saw great things in our son."

They were right, she says, and she thanks them for that. "Everything they did was done because they loved him so much and treated him like their own," Lori says. "They were his mothers when I couldn't be there."



The annual Big Steps for Little Feet Walk raised more than \$60,700 for the Hirair and Anna Hovnanian Foundation Regional Newborn Center at The Unterberg Children's Hospital at Monmouth Medical Center.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE HIRAIR AND ANNA HOVNANIAN FOUNDATION REGIONAL NEWBORN CENTER, CALL 732.923.7250. TO SHARE THIS ARTICLE ON YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE, VISIT MONMOUTHHEALTHANDLIFE.COM.



A LASTING LEGACY

JUDITH W. DAWKINS IS HONORED FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES OF ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP.

MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER (MMC) RECENTLY HELD A dedication ceremony to honor and memorialize the leadership and legacy of long-time benefactor, the late Judith W. Dawkins. The dedication of The Judith W. Dawkins Executive Board Room commemorates her legacy as a tireless advocate and leader in promoting and advancing women's health services.

"Judi spent over two decades, and countless hours—many of which took place in that board room—making decisions that helped lead the path to success for Monmouth Medical Center," says Pete Dawkins, Judi's husband. "It's only fitting, therefore, that the executive board room should bear her name. Our hope is that Judi's spirit of advocacy and leadership will live on. And that it will continue to inspire others to share that vision, and make decisions which truly help those in our communities."

The new executive board room will feature a striking portrait of Judi, a memorial plaque that celebrates her service and increased seating.

"Judi always wanted to make sure that everyone could have a seat at the table," Pete adds. "She encouraged a spirit where ideas were openly exchanged so that the needs of the community would be met in the best way possible."

During Judi's more than 20 years of service at MMC, she was dedicated to doing everything possible to make sure the community's health care needs were being met and advancing women's health care services overall. To ensure that this focus would live on, the Dawkins family made a \$4 million transformational leadership gift to support the medical center's Women's Services program. In honor of Judi, MMC named the program The Judith W. Dawkins Women's Health Program.

Services offered through the Women's Health Program include: primary care and health maintenance for women, obstetrics, breast health, cancer prevention, autoimmune disease care, nutrition and sports medicine, gynecology, cardiovascular health, mental health, radiology, as well as assembling leading researchers, educators and clinicians.

"Judi was passionate about helping others and addressing all of the unique challenges women commonly deal with," said Bill Arnold, president and CEO of Monmouth Medical Center. "Through the Dawkins family's generous donation, we are able to

honor Judi's vision and legacy in the best possible way by being able to grow our women's health services and further our commitment to women and the community."

The Women's Health Program in Judi's name will expand the current array of highly specialized services, providing comprehensive community-based services to women at any age. "By building on the shared insights and synergies of MMC's medical staff and administration," Pete says, "the program will look to continually expand the frontier of women's care."

Judi had a lasting influence on MMC during her more than 20 years of service as a trustee, board chair, nominating chair and leader. Her legacy at MMC extends to almost every area of the institution. Especially noteworthy was her time as chair of the MMC Foundation's board from 2000 to 2003, where she helped launch the "Redefining Health Care Capital Campaign." The campaign included oversight of \$15 million in upgrades for the Leon Hess Cancer Center and the expansion of the Jacqueline M. Wilentz Comprehensive Breast Center.

"This gift celebrates Judi's quest to empower women to lead stronger, healthier lives," Pete says. "I can't think of a more fitting way to honor my wonderful wife, and her incredible legacy of leadership and helping others."

Barry H. Ostrowsky, president and chief executive officer of RWJBarnabas Health, says he got to know Judi well during her board tenure and praised her as a "thoughtful leader" whose service was characterized by boundless energy, dedication and innovation.

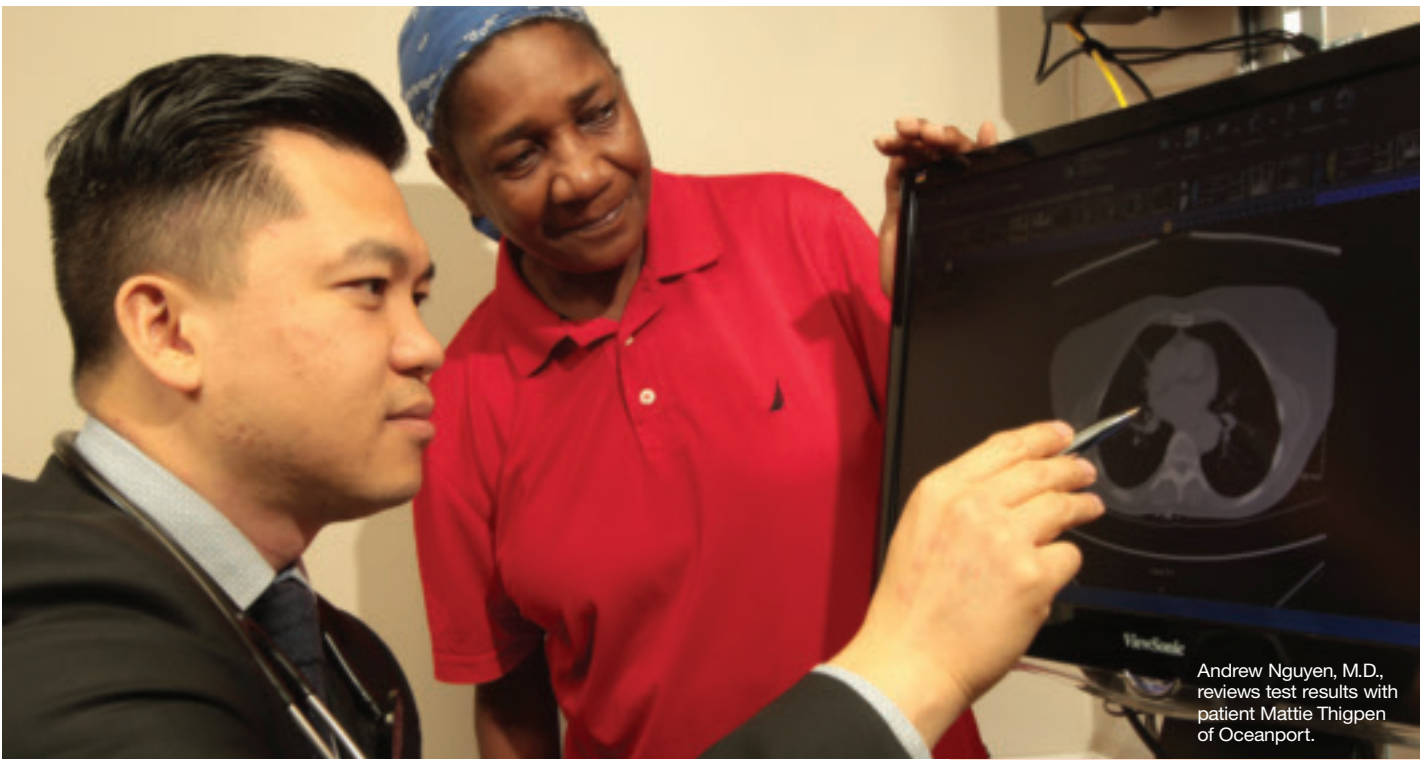


Brigadier Gen. Pete Dawkins, center, gathers with, from left, Frank J. Vozos, M.D., FACS, chief executive of Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus and executive vice president, RWJBarnabas Health; Eric Burkett, M.D., immediate past chief medical officer at Monmouth Medical Center and family physician to Judi Dawkins; Bill Arnold, president and chief executive officer at Monmouth Medical Center; and Barry H. Ostrowsky, president and chief executive officer of RWJBarnabas Health.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WOMEN'S HEALTH PROGRAMS AT MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER, CALL 732.923.5577.

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Andrew Nguyen, M.D., reviews test results with patient Mattie Thigpen of Oceanport.

BREATH OF FRESH AIR

DOCTORS DISCOVERED MATTIE THIGPEN'S LUNG CANCER AT AN EARLY STAGE. AFTER SURGERY AND TREATMENT, THE OCEANPORT RESIDENT IS NOW BREATHING EASY.

AFTER SMOKING FOR MORE THAN HALF of her life, 65-year-old Mattie Thigpen of Oceanport quit cold turkey—but her decision didn't come without the care and assistance of Monmouth Medical Center (MMC) and its Lung Cancer Screening Program.

A smoker for 35 years, Thigpen was referred to MMC last year, and a low-dose CT scan revealed a nodule on one of her lungs. She continued through the screening program—which includes everything from smoking cessation services and access to comprehensive cancer care—but by January the nodule had increased in size. That's when she was referred to Andrew Nguyen, M.D., thoracic surgeon. A series of diagnostic tests revealed Thigpen had very early stage lung cancer, and on May 2, Dr. Nguyen successfully performed a robotic lobectomy. With robotic

surgery offering the benefits of small incisions, less postoperative pain and a quicker recovery, she was able to go home after only a few days in the hospital.

A local FoodBank volunteer, Thigpen says she felt completely well in about three weeks, after the procedure. Follow-up tests on Thigpen's lymph nodes confirmed that the cancer had not spread and no further treatment would be needed. (But she will continue to be monitored regularly.)

According to Dr. Nguyen, Thigpen's story underscores the importance of lung cancer screening for people with a history of smoking. (Tobacco is associated with 87 percent of the incidences of cancer of the lung, trachea and bronchus). She is grateful for the screening and that doctors treated her cancer immediately: Lung cancer survival rates exceed 70 percent when treatment begins

WHO QUALIFIES FOR LUNG CANCER SCREENINGS?

- » Ages 55 to 80 years
- » A tobacco smoking history of at least 30 pack years (Pack years = packs per day X years smoked)
- » A current or former smoker who has quit within the past 15 years, has no symptoms of lung cancer and has not had a chest CT scan in the past 12 months

at an early stage, and oftentimes symptoms do not occur until advanced stages.

During Lung Cancer Awareness Month in November, MMC is encouraging others to learn from Thigpen's experience and reach out to the program for care. Offered in partnership with the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, the screening program offers low-dose CT scans, a dedicated advanced practice nurse (APN) who provides individualized care, centralized scheduling and insurance preauthorization support, and an expert team of radiologists, pulmonologists, thoracic surgeons, medical and radiation oncologists and other clinicians.

For those interested in lung cancer screening, the cost is now covered by Medicare and Medicaid for individuals at high risk meeting these criteria based on age and smoking history.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE LUNG CANCER SCREENING PROGRAM AT MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER, CALL **732.923.7966**. TO SHARE THIS ARTICLE ON YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE, VISIT **MONMOUTHHEALTHANDLIFE.COM**.

