

NORTHERN CONNECTION

February
2024

CONNECTING YOU TO THE COMMUNITY FOR 25 YEARS

UPMC HEART AND VASCULAR INSTITUTE

ADVANCED
HEART &
VASCULAR
CARE

Also in this issue...

2024 Summer Camp Guide

Shadow Trivia

Medication Basics

February Happenings

UPMC
HEART AND VASCULAR
INSTITUTE



UPMC Passavant has grown over the past 20 years to become a destination for advanced heart care and services.

Camps/Kids/Education

- 26 Katie's Clay Studio
- 30 School Movers & Shakers

Health/Wellness

- 8 Cover Story: As the Heart of the Community Grows, So Does UPMC Passavant's Heart and Vascular Care
- 10 Groundhog Day: When Every Day Feels the Same
Maura L. Johnson, LCSW, PMH-C
- 12 Medication Basics: Be Aware, Be Wise, Be Safe
Belinda Burchick, RPh, BPharm
- 14 Choosing the Right Rehabilitative Care *Richard Senelick, MD*
- 16 Heart of the Matter: Arterial Age—Top Indicator of Biological Age *Marla Turnbull*
- 22 Happy Leap Year from a "Leap Mom" *Paula Green*

NC Features

- 32 The Flip Side of Eggs *Ron Eichner*

Advertorials

- 5 The Doctors at Tri-State Neuropathy Centers Give Peripheral Neuropathy Suffers Hope *Dr. Shawn Richey*

In Every Issue...

- 4 Movers & Shakers
- 6 Mover & Shaker of the Month: Walter Payton Award *Paula Green*
- 23 From the Editor: Bad Romance *Janice Lane Palko*
- 24 Support Our Troops: United States Vice Presidents Who Served in the Military *Paula Green*
- 29 MOM2MOMS: Galentines & Valentines *Sofya Stearns*
- 34 February Happenings
- 36 Trivia Connection: Shadow Trivia *Paula Green*

NORTHERN CONNECTION

YOUR COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

P.O. Box 425

Mars, Pa. 16046

Phone: 724-940-2444

ncmagazine@northernconnectionmag.com

www.northernconnectionmag.com

President & Publisher

Laura Lyn Arnold

Publisher Emeritus & Contributor

Marion Swanson Piotrowski

Executive Editor

Janice Lane Palko

Janice@northernconnectionmag.com

**Managing Editor/Public Relations
Coordinator**

Paula M. Green

Paula@northernconnectionmag.com

Marketing & Account Executive

Mary L. Simpson

Design & Production

Kostilnik & Associates Graphics, Inc.

Web Master

Swanson Publishing, LLC

Core Writers

Maura Brown

Belinda Burchick

Ron Eichner

Paula Green

Janice Lane Palko

Sofya Stearns

Northern Connection is published twelve times a year by Swanson Publishing, LLC (P.O. Box 425, Mars, PA 16046, (724-940-2444) and is distributed free of charge to the northern suburbs of Pittsburgh. Subscription can be purchased from the publisher at \$25 for one year.

The mission of the Swanson Publishing, LLC is to connect the northern suburbs of Pittsburgh by publishing the area's finest community publication, **Northern Connection**. The publication is dedicated to the people, communities, educational, religious, travel, and recreational needs of the area.

The contents of **Northern Connection** magazine may not be reproduced or copied in whole or in part without written permission from the publisher. **Northern Connection** magazine reserves the right to refuse editorial or advertisements that do not meet the standards of this publication.

As the Heart of the Community Grows, So Does UPMC Passavant's Heart and Vascular Care

A Regional Center for Advanced Heart Care and Services

This content is sponsored by UPMC.

Over the past 20 years, UPMC Passavant has grown from providing essential cardiac care to becoming a destination for advanced heart care and services. The UPMC Passavant campuses in McCandless and Cranberry Township offer specialized services through the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute, one of the world's premier centers for comprehensive cardiovascular care. Many of the programs cater to specific populations with unique risk factors.



Sam A. Buffer, MD, is a cardiologist and chair of the Cardiovascular Department at UPMC Passavant.



Venmathi Indramohan, MD, a noninvasive cardiologist, is part of the UPMC Magee-Womens Heart Program of the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute at UPMC Passavant.

One such initiative, is the UPMC Magee-Womens Heart Program, a dedicated women's cardiology program and collaboration between UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital and the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute. The program provides complete care for women who have heart disease or are at risk for it.

Specialized Care for Women

"When people think of a heart attack, they picture a man clutching his chest," says **Venmathi Indramohan, MD**, a noninvasive cardiologist. "But heart disease does not only happen to men. It is equally present in women, who tend to have additional gender-related risk factors and present with atypical symptoms."

Women tend to wait longer than men before getting cardiac care — in part

because their symptoms can be different.

"Women do not have to experience textbook symptoms like crushing chest pain or pain going down the left arm," says Dr. Indramohan. "Sometimes, they just do not feel well, have excessive fatigue or may be out of breath, and they cannot climb steps without stopping to rest."

Other heart-related symptoms that are more common in women include pain mimicking acid reflux, nausea, and sweating.

"The key to combatting heart disease is early and accurate detection," says Dr. Indramohan. "That's why it's important for women to understand their risks and not ignore symptoms."

The UPMC Magee-Womens Heart Program at UPMC Passavant offers complete cardiovascular care for women in every stage of life. Services are offered to

women who have been diagnosed with heart disease or who have worrisome symptoms or risk factors. Initial evaluations are provided at UPMC Passavant–Cranberry.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States for both men and women. The UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute at UPMC Passavant provides adults of all ages with leading treatments and individualized care.

A Team Approach

“It’s more than just care, it’s the heart team approach,” says **Sam A. Buffer, MD**, chair of cardiology at UPMC Passavant, noting that the team includes physicians, cardiologists, cardiac and vascular surgeons, technologists, anesthesiologists, nurses, and other experts. “This collaboration leads to the great patient outcomes we have here.”

An example of this collaborative approach can be seen in the expanded transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) program at UPMC Passavant. This procedure is used to treat severe aortic stenosis – a condition that involves the narrowing of the heart’s aortic valve. The innovative, minimally invasive surgery replaces traditional open-heart surgery and provides many benefits including a shorter hospital stay, less pain, and faster recovery.

Dr. Buffer notes this service requires many experts to work together including the patient’s primary care doctor, cardiologists, surgeons, and radiologists.

“It takes that team approach to determine what the best care plan is for a particular patient; and to identify if this person is best suited for a TAVR procedure,” he adds.

Advanced Treatments

UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute at UPMC Passavant–McCandless is a tertiary care center — meaning the advanced, high-quality care and the resources of an academic medical center are available to residents in Pittsburgh’s northern suburbs, closer to home.

In addition to TAVR, advanced care includes mitral valve surgery, open heart surgery, and WATCHMAN™ implants for atrial fibrillation (AFib).

UPMC Passavant also employs resources of the UPMC Center for Inherited Heart Disease, which focuses on heart rhythm disorders, and partners with the UPMC

Center for Cardio-Oncology, a collaboration with the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center, that helps cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment avoid damage to their hearts.

Heart Wellness, Rehabilitation, and Education

UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute at UPMC Passavant also offers heart wellness, rehabilitation, and education programs. These initiatives include cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation, which brings together specialized teams including nurses, exercise physiologists, respiratory therapists, and dietitians, to help patients make lifestyle modifications through personalized diet and exercise plans. UPMC Passavant also offers community education programs on heart-healthy topics such as smoking cessation, nutrition, and stress management. Heart health and other screenings take place at outpatient centers, community locations, and the two UPMC Passavant campuses.

UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute recently received a new entrance at the UPMC Passavant–McCandless campus, making it more visible and accessible for patients.

The growth and expansion at both campuses reflect UPMC Passavant’s evolving role of providing more advanced care and services to residents of Allegheny, Beaver, and Butler Counties. ■

WATCHMAN™ is a trademark of Boston Scientific.

February is American Heart Month

The UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute at UPMC Passavant is dedicated to improving heart and vascular health. During American Heart Month in February, learn more about these general and preventative heart and vascular services available through UPMC Passavant and nearby UPMC outpatient centers.

General Cardiovascular Services

- Cardiac catheterization
- Cardiac rehabilitation
- Congenital heart disease management
- Heart imaging and diagnostic testing
- Women’s heart health program

Preventive Cardiovascular Services

- Medical management
- Cardiovascular screening events
- Screenings for vascular disease
- Community outreach programs
- Heart disease risk prevention programs

Treatments for Specialty Conditions

- Advanced heart failure
- Aortic diseases
- Atrial fibrillation (AFib)
- Heart muscle disease
- Mitral valve disease
- Vein conditions and diseases

To find comprehensive heart and vascular care here in the north, visit UPMCPassavant.com/HVI.

© UPMC 2024.

