

WINTER
2017-18

SAINT LUKE'S

Health

For patients & friends of Saint Luke's Health System

The Missing **LINX**[™]

**New procedure gets rid
of GERD for good**

**Steering Toward
a Healthy Future**

Classic cars benefit Saint Luke's

**UNCOVERING
ANCIENT HISTORY**

CT scans unwrap mummified secrets



Even after 750 transplants,
we know that some hearts
we save never get touched
by a doctor.



 **Saint Luke's**
MID AMERICA HEART INSTITUTE

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Health

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Saint Luke's Health System has a financial assistance policy for which you may qualify.

saintlukeskc.org | Concierge: ☎ 816-932-5100



Does a Baby Good

Saint Luke's Heart of America Mothers' Milk Bank provides breast milk for infants who need it most

When Kaitlyn Bunch and her twin daughters needed them, a team of moms from around the country stepped up. And now Kaitlyn is doing the same.

The twins, Vivian and Helen, now a year old, were born six weeks early in December 2016. They spent 32 days in Saint Luke's Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. One thing they needed most was nourishing breast milk to help build their immune systems and protect them from infection and respiratory illnesses. But Kaitlyn's body hadn't quite caught up to the fact that her girls had arrived so early. **That's where the Saint Luke's Heart of America Mothers' Milk Bank came in.**

The bank relies on breast milk donations from moms around the U.S. to help fulfill needs just like the one experienced by Kaitlyn, says neonatologist Barbara Carr, MD. "The donor milk acts as a bridge until moms can produce their own breast milk," says Dr. Carr.

The donor milk goes through an extensive screening and testing process to make sure it is safe for babies before it is dispensed around the country. Saint Luke's was the twelfth milk bank established in the U.S., and is one of 26 similar banks found throughout the nation.

Kaitlyn was so thankful for the moms who rallied behind her daughters—and when she was sure she was producing enough milk for Vivian and Helen—she decided to become a donor as well.

"It makes me feel really good," Kaitlyn says. "Being in the NICU was such a trying time, and I felt such gratitude for the women who kept my girls healthy. Now I get to keep other babies fed, too." 🧩

▶ LEARN MORE

📞 816-932-4888

🌐 saintlukeskc.org/milkbank



1,000 Prayers for Good Health

It is said that those who fold 1,000 paper cranes will be granted their most desired wish. Thanks to 15-year-old Girl Scout Lauren Szala, a wish for the sick to be healed has been made for the patients and families at Saint Luke's North Hospital—Barry Road.

She'd heard from her mother, Saint Luke's nurse Kelly Szala, about a study done at Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute. It found an interesting correlation between prayer and healing. So for her Gold Award Project, Lauren combined the legend of origami with the power of prayer.

She chose the butterfly because it's a symbol of transformation and a simpler fold, then recruited volunteers to say a small prayer for the ill as they folded.

Once she reached 1,000, she mounted them all into the shape of a cross and **donated the kaleidoscope of prayers to Saint Luke's North Hospital.**

▶ MAKE YOUR OWN PRAYER

Stop by our chapel at Saint Luke's North Hospital

Faster, Closer Emergency Care

The quality you expect from Saint Luke's care is about to get closer and faster in the Kansas City metro area. Two convenient neighborhood Saint Luke's Community Hospitals opened in early 2018, each with an average wait time of less than 10 minutes.

These streamlined, state-of-the-art acute care hospitals will be staffed by board-certified emergency physicians and experienced registered nurses. This new hospital concept is part of Saint Luke's goal to provide convenient, accessible emergency and inpatient care closer to where people live and work.

See how we are transforming emergency care in your neighborhood.

Now open

13200 State Line Road, Leawood, KS 66209
10544 Parallel Parkway, Kansas City, KS 66109

Coming soon

7246 W 75th St., Overland Park, KS 66204

LEARN MORE

saintlukesch.org

Saint Luke's Newest Radiation Center

Saint Luke's Cancer Institute is expanding care in Johnson County. Advanced Radiation Center of Kansas City is now Saint Luke's South Radiation Therapy Center. Whether patients are under the care of a Saint Luke's Cancer Institute oncologist or another provider, those who require radiation treatment can get the service they need closer to where they work and live.

Cancer patients can see a Saint Luke's radiation oncologist at four convenient metro area locations.

In Missouri

Saint Luke's Radiation Oncology, Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City

Saint Luke's East Hospital, Lee's Summit

Liberty Radiation Therapy Center, Saint Luke's Cancer Specialists at Liberty Hospital

In Kansas

Saint Luke's South Radiation Therapy Center, Overland Park

SCHEDULE A CONSULTATION

📞 855-ONE SLCI (855-663-7524)

LEARN MORE

saintlukeskc.org/cancer



Saint Luke's
BISHOP SPENCER PLACE

► LEARN MORE

bishopspencerplace.org

Saint Luke's Distinctive Senior Living

Bishop Spencer Place is now officially Saint Luke's Bishop Spencer Place

The affiliation agreement and rebranding formalizes a long-standing relationship between two organizations deeply committed to providing the highest quality care for Kansas City's senior community.

Bishop Spencer Place has offered upscale retirement living in the heart of Kansas City for more than 20 years, providing residents with both independent and assisted living as well as skilled nursing, rehabilitation, and private-duty care.

Bishop Spencer Place residents will now have increased access to Saint Luke's services and better coordination of care between physicians and caregivers.

Saint Luke's and Bishop Spencer Place share a common heritage and mission as ministries of the Episcopal Diocese of West Missouri.



Stopping Seizures at the Source

Epilepsy patients now have a new tool to fight seizures from within the brain

The team at the Level 4 Comprehensive Epilepsy Center at Saint Luke's Marion Bloch Neuroscience Institute experienced a first—implanting a **Responsive Neurostimulator (RNS®)** into a patient's skull. The FDA-approved RNS System consists of electrodes implanted on the surface and deep within the brain, and a cranially implanted neurostimulator. It works much like a defibrillator, continuously listening for seizure activity and working to disrupt seizures before the patient is even aware a seizure is starting. The treatment is for adults with partial onset seizures who haven't responded well to medications.

"RNS treatment has the ability to normalize brain activity and enable those with refractory complex partial epilepsy to experience life with fewer seizures," says Stephen Griffith, MD, the neurosurgeon who performed the initial surgery at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City.

With RNS, patients periodically download information from their devices onto a computer. Epileptologists, or epilepsy specialists, use the information to refine the device settings to stop seizure activity before it starts.

"This is a unique, personalized treatment with clear benefits for our patients," said John Croom, MD, medical director and epileptologist at Saint Luke's Comprehensive Epilepsy Center. "Those treated with the RNS System have experienced a substantial reduction in seizures during the first year and continue to improve over time."

Saint Luke's Hospital is a Level 4 Epilepsy Center, the most advanced certification available and a requirement to offer the RNS surgical treatment.

► LEARN MORE

saintlukeskc.org/epilepsy

Stopping Recurrent Breast Cancer

Triple negative breast cancer is a triple threat. It's aggressive. It doesn't respond to hormone-based therapies. And it often returns within a few years of initial diagnosis.

Earlier detection of recurrent cancer means a better chance of slowing its growth. That's why our breast cancer experts are **seeking better ways to detect recurrent breast cancer earlier** in patients who are at high risk of relapse after chemotherapy.

We've partnered with Cynvenio Biosystems, Inc., a leader in liquid biopsy technology, in a pilot study to evaluate the potential for early detection of recurrent breast cancer using blood samples. The multi-phase study will analyze cell-free DNA and circulating tumor cells before and after chemotherapy treatment to determine if tracking these cells can predict relapse.



► LEARN ABOUT CURRENT CLINICAL TRIALS

☎ 816-932-2677

🌐 saintlukeskc.org/cancertrials

SCHEDULE A CONSULTATION

☎ 816-932-7900

Saint Luke's High-Risk Breast Clinic



Destination for Rehabilitation

Kansas City will soon be a **destination for state-of-the-art rehabilitation treatment and technology** on par with the nation's best facilities.

On Dec. 13, 2017, Saint Luke's broke ground for the new Saint Luke's Rehabilitation Institute.

This visionary facility, located on the Saint Luke's South Hospital campus, will help more than 1,200 patients reclaim function and independence each year. It will offer multidisciplinary, personalized treatment and leading-edge neurorobotic equipment unique to the region, plus the latest clinical trials for technologies and therapies.

When it opens its doors mid-2019, the Rehabilitation Institute will help patients and their families recover from stroke, brain and spinal injuries, trauma, and other debilitating conditions requiring inpatient rehabilitation.

LEARN MORE

saintlukeskc.org/rehabinstitute



The Right Tool for the Job

Our Saint Luke's heart experts continue to innovate cardiovascular care. A heart health questionnaire developed at Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute **now qualifies as an FDA Medical Device Development Tool (MDDT).**

The Kansas City Cardiomyopathy Questionnaire (KCCQ) features 12 to 23 questions that can help measure patients' perceptions of their own health during a two-week period, including heart failure symptoms, how those symptoms impact their physical and social function, and how their heart failure affects their quality of life.

The MDDT program was launched by the FDA to provide manufacturers access to tools that accurately and efficiently measure a device's performance at all points in the development process. The FDA evaluates a tool's effectiveness and qualifies only those it deems will provide reliable results. Such tools can streamline device development, eliminate animal use, reduce testing duration or sample size, and optimize patient selection—all win-win outcomes for patients and the world. The KCCQ is the first tool to ever be approved by the FDA as a Certified Outcome Assessment.

LEARN MORE

saintlukeskc.org/heart



Saint Luke's Community Hospital

See the Transformation

Now open

13200 State Line Road
Leawood, KS 66209

10544 Parallel Parkway
Kansas City, KS 66109

Coming soon

7246 W 75th St.
Overland Park, KS 66204

**We offer wait times of
less than 10 minutes.
Experience the
difference.**

Saint Luke's Supportive Oncology and Rehabilitation Services

Saint Luke's Cancer Institute is proud to partner with Gilda's Club Kansas City to provide programming and support for patients who are living with cancer, as well as support for their caregivers.



Support Groups

Multiple days, times, and locations are available at Gilda's Club Kansas City and Saint Luke's metro area hospitals.

Find a group

📞 Saint Luke's Concierge

816-932-5100

Cost: Free

Community Table

Pick up a take-out dish or whip up your favorite recipe, and join us for our weekly community potluck dinner.

Every Wednesday, 5:45 – 6:15 p.m.

Cost: Free

Gilda's Club Kansas City

Various topics related to health, wellness, and education. Multiple dates and times. RSVP required.

Learn more

📞 816-932-4676

🌐 gildasclubkc.org

Saint Luke's Foundation Events

Learn more about these upcoming events at saintlukesgiving.org.



Once Upon a Time for The Children's SPOT

March 25, 3 – 6 p.m.

InterContinental Kansas City at the Plaza



11th Annual Books & Boutiques

April 6, 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Overland Park Convention Center

Benefiting the Saint Luke's Rehabilitation Institute located on the Saint Luke's South Hospital campus

Learn more

🌐 booksandboutiques.org

Saint Luke's Food as Medicine Everyday (FAME)



Interested in learning about nutrition and cooking with whole foods?

Register for the Saint Luke's Food as Medicine Everyday (FAME) 12-week series to improve your diet and lifestyle.

Tuesdays, Feb. 13 – May 1

6 – 7:30 p.m.

Saint Luke's Muriel I. Kauffman Women's Heart Center
4401 Wornall Road
Kansas City, MO 64111

For class information and to register:

📞 816-932-5784



Cardio Health and Wellness Cooking Demos

Learn to cook nutritious, tasty recipes that help you lead a healthy lifestyle at Saint Luke's Charles & Barbara Duboc Cardio Health & Wellness Center. Cooking demonstrations start at 5:30 p.m.

Make Ahead Breakfasts

March 7

Mediterranean Cooking

April 4

Digestive Health

May 2

Register

📞 816-751-8388

🌐 saintlukeskc.org/events

Cost: \$15 per class

The Missing LINX

Those who suffer from acid reflux have been searching for relief, and a new surgical procedure just might be the answer



GERD is the word Christy Meisner suffered almost 40 years from symptoms of acid reflux before she was properly diagnosed with GERD at Saint Luke's. In April 2017, she underwent LINX surgery and has since reported that her life has improved dramatically.

So maybe that jumbo plate of chile rellenos or that super-spicy Thai curry wasn't the best idea. Especially at 9 p.m.

A late-night chow down is great while it lasts, but we pay the price a couple of hours later with a bad case of heartburn. For most of us, we endure a little suffering—or take an over-the-counter pink pill—and feel better by the next morning.

But for some people, acid reflux is far more uncomfortable and potentially more serious. About 20 percent of U.S. adults suffer from gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), a condition that can cause chest

pain and involuntary food regurgitation, as well as chronic symptoms like a cough or sore throat.

Finding relief

"Reflux can be a very intrusive thing into your life, depending on how bad your symptoms are," says Todd Moore, MD, a surgical specialist at Saint Luke's. As the medical director of Saint Luke's Heartburn and Acid Reflux Center, he's hoping to offer patients a different menu—one of treatment options.

"I knew Dr. Moore was one of the best at this surgery, and I knew it would be the answer to my prayers."

— Christy Meisner

"The advantage to having a dedicated center is that you bring together clinicians from different specialties who are all interested in reflux and can focus on the patient from different angles throughout the process," he explains. "So, that might be gastroenterology, it might be surgery, it might be pulmonology, it might be ear, nose, and throat. It's whatever comes into play for that particular patient."

Oral medications can control the condition in some patients, but they only address the symptoms, not the disease itself.

"You're still going to continue to reflux, you're just not going to feel it as much. But the long-term effects are still there," says Dr. Moore. "Patients with severe cases may opt for a more permanent solution through minimally invasive, laparoscopic surgery. The goal there is to nip reflux in the bud. With surgery, we actually keep you from refluxing."

Not only does surgery relieve the symptoms of GERD, it may also help prevent long-term problems associated with the condition. Esophageal cancer, for example, while rare, can result from prolonged reflux.

The gold standard for surgery, called Nissen fundoplication, was developed in the 1950s. Essentially, the procedure involves looping the top part of the stomach around the part of the esophagus that connects to the stomach. This reinforces the closing function of the esophageal sphincter so the stomach's contents cannot travel back up the esophagus.

Another option, only developed in the last decade, is a procedure called LINX. Its underlying strategy is similar to fundoplication. Rather than using the stomach, however, the surgery involves fixing a small ring of titanium beads, roughly half an inch in diameter, around the esophageal opening. Magnets in the ring pull together to keep the opening closed except during the act of

swallowing, when the muscles are strong enough to force it open. Dr. Moore was the first surgeon in the Kansas City region to perform the LINX surgery, and is one of only three in the area who are qualified to do it.

No more tears

As a former art teacher, Christy Meisner used the full power of her voice to quiet down roomfuls of rowdy schoolchildren. But sometimes her throat would tighten to the point where she couldn't speak. She would sneeze and her eyes would stream tears. The sneezing would turn to deep coughing. Sometimes it got so bad she would vomit.

She had no idea it was acid reflux.

She had experienced these painful symptoms for nearly 40 years but because they weren't typical of reflux, her physicians had prescribed treatments such as asthma inhalers. They didn't help.

She and her husband moved from Minnesota to Kansas City and she met with Wendell Clarkston, MD, at Saint Luke's GI Specialists. Dr. Clarkston diagnosed the acid reflux and prescribed Protonix, a treatment for GERD. Christy was relieved to finally have some answers but her problems never fully went away.

"I treated it that way for about five years, but the dosage just went higher and higher," Christy says. "I just kept hoping that there would be a better way."

Turns out, there was. Christy's doctors thought she was the ideal candidate for LINX. And since she had the surgery in April 2017, her life has improved dramatically.

"I knew Dr. Moore was one of the best at this surgery, and I knew it would be the answer to my prayers," Christy says. "I don't even think about acid reflux anymore. I don't have to take any medications. I eat what I like, and I feel wonderful."

For people like Christy, **LINX** can be life-changing.

Roughly **85%** of patients report that they can stop taking medication.

More options than ever before

For people like Christy, LINX can be life-changing. Roughly 85 percent of patients report that they can stop taking medication. And although the long-term report for the surgery is still out, the data available so far indicate side effects are reduced. In addition, patients are able to resume a normal diet the day after surgery, rather than easing into regular eating patterns over the course of a few weeks.

Dr. Moore emphasizes that patients are encouraged to continue working with their own primary care physicians and use the Heartburn and Acid Reflux Center as an additional resource.

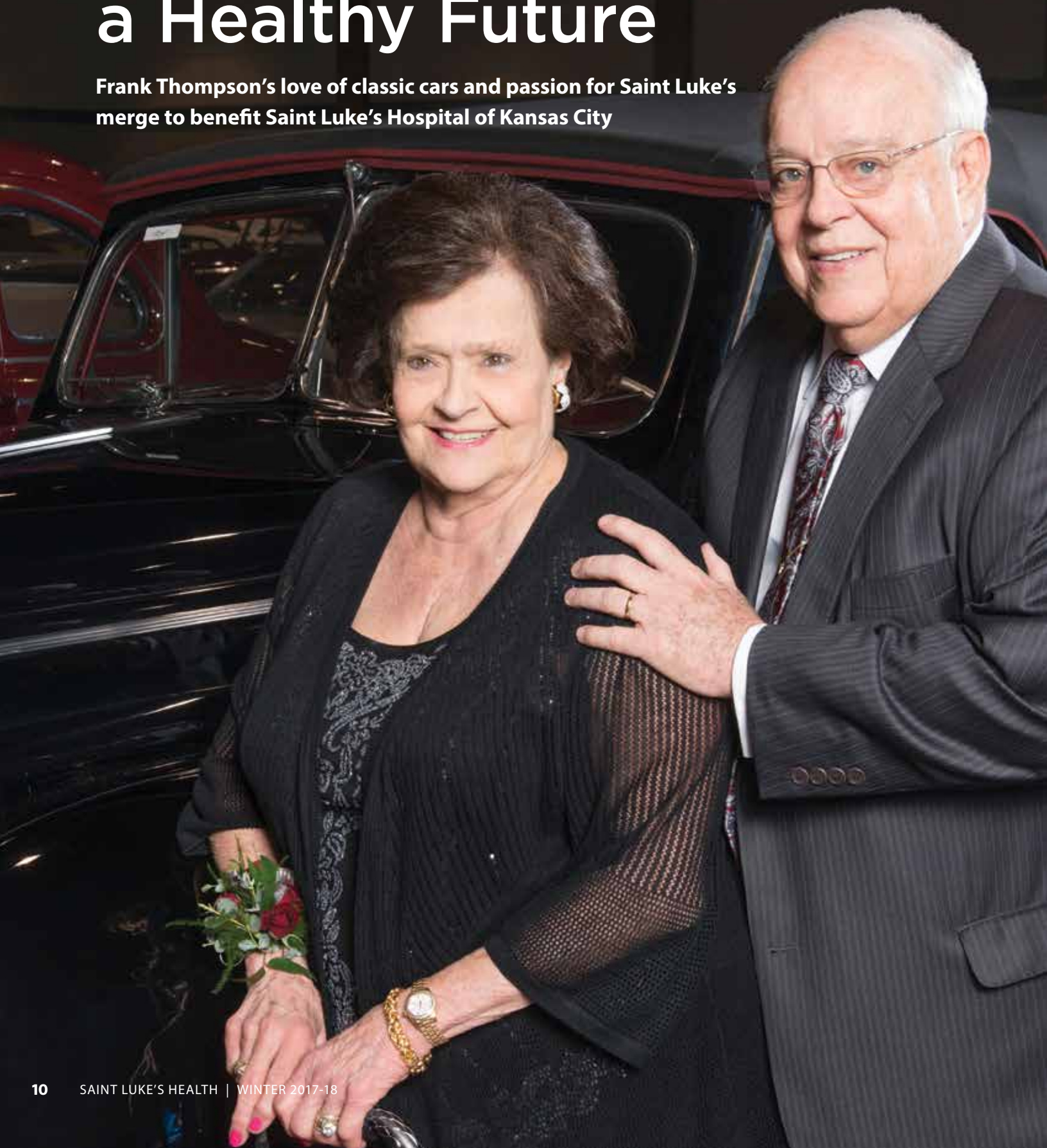
"We don't want to take over their care," he stresses. "We want to give them options. This gives them just one number to call."

Well, one number for their heartburn care. It's a different one for pizza delivery. 🍕

▶ **LEARN MORE**
🌐 saintlukeskc.org/GERD

Steering Toward a Healthy Future

Frank Thompson's love of classic cars and passion for Saint Luke's merge to benefit Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City





Overdrive Frank and Evangeline Thompson have made it their mission to give back to the Saint Luke's physicians they feel so connected to. They knew that by selling some of Frank's prestigious classic car collection and donating the funds to Saint Luke's, they could help save lives.

At 85, Frank Thompson has been buying and selling cars for well over half his life. Cars are part of who he is.

When he decided this year it was time to sell some of his prestigious—and personal—classic car collection, he wanted the proceeds to make a true difference. He knew that by donating the funds from the Oct. 21 auction at the Overland Park Convention Center to Saint Luke's, his contribution could help save lives.

Frank and his wife, Evangeline, are longtime supporters of Saint Luke's. Years ago, after visits to numerous hospitals across the country, they finally landed on a perfect fit with a physician for Evangeline at Saint Luke's.

"This doctor was helping her with her atrial fibrillation and was really good to her," Frank says.

The Thompsons have since made it their mission to give back to the Saint Luke's physicians they feel so connected to, purchasing equipment and fulfilling other needs that ultimately benefit patients.

"It's being able to talk with them and knowing what they're going to do—and is it going to help patients," Frank says.

The Thompsons have made generous contributions to Saint Luke's over the years. They established endowed chairs in electrophysiology research in 2006 and in cardiovascular surgery and transplantation in 2015. They funded the Frank L. and Evangeline A. Thompson Cardiovascular Interventional & Surgical Center, which includes six catheterization labs and four operating suites. They have also provided generous support to the Saint Luke's Marion Bloch Neuroscience Institute and the pulmonology department at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City.

"I'm really interested in results, and I want to know that we did some good," Frank says.

"I have never met donors who are so caring and compassionate about helping others. Frank and Evangeline are always seeking opportunities to help those in need. Their generosity is inspiring," says Vincent Lem, MD, a pulmonologist at Saint Luke's.

"I have never met donors who are so caring and compassionate about helping others. Frank and Evangeline are always seeking opportunities to help those in need. Their generosity is inspiring."

—Vincent Lem, MD

And it's not about recognition. Frank noted that he doesn't care if patients ever know his name. It's about getting people the care they deserve.

Frank once bought a piece of equipment to help physicians treat patients who've had strokes. In a conversation with a physician, he learned the true difference the donation was making.



A Classic Legacy Support from Frank and Evangeline Thompson helps Saint Luke's provide exceptional care for patients with leading-edge technology on a daily basis.

"He said, 'The timing couldn't be better,'" Frank recalls. "'That equipment saved a life today.'"

"Frank and Evangeline's support of the Saint Luke's mission continues to help us provide exceptional care for our patients through new technologies, expanded research, and new innovation in health care that will undoubtedly result in better outcomes," says Jani Johnson, CEO of Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City.

In addition to devoting time to cars and real estate, Frank cherishes the opportunity to share his business expertise with young people in the community.

"That is a lot of fun because for years after you're gone, these people will be doing things and being very productive

"Everybody's got somebody who loves them."

—Frank Thompson

because of one little thing you taught them," Frank says.

And he hopes to leave a similar legacy when it comes to the community's health—providing results for many people for years to come.

From where Saint Luke's stands, he's already doing exactly that.

"Saint Luke's Hospital, Saint Luke's Health System, the Saint Luke's Foundation, and all of our physicians, leaders, and staff are incredibly grateful to Frank and Evangeline for their support, past, present, and in the future," Jani says.

"Everybody's got somebody who loves them," Frank says.

Helping them become healthier and stronger drives his continued support. 🏥



Lifesaving Support The proceeds from Frank Thompson's section of the auction will be used to save the lives of countless Saint Luke's patients for years to come.

LEARN MORE

Saint Luke's Foundation
saintlukesgiving.org

UNCOVERING ANCIENT HISTORY

Saint Luke's researchers use 21st century technology to unwrap secrets of two mummies



Don't Move Randall Thompson, MD, a cardiologist who has worked extensively with mummies around the world, worked with teams within Saint Luke's, Union Station, and the Kansas City Museum to scan the mummy bundles using CT imaging at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City.

Well before sunrise on Sept. 6, 2017, two very special patients arrived at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City.

Greeted by reporters wielding microphones and video cameras, the staff at Saint Luke's wheeled their patients down the halls and into the computed tomography room, where cardiologist Randall Thompson, MD, and a crew of imaging experts were waiting.

News crews crowded eagerly into the imaging rooms to observe the process of the full-body CT scans, and cheers rose when the first images appeared on screen.

These special patients were two ancient Peruvian mummies who lived between A.D. 1310 – 1360 near Lake Titicaca in the high Andes of South America. And with our 21st century technology, these mummies are giving our modern world a closer look into the past. 📺





◀ Saint Luke's sponsored the *Mummies of the World* exhibit, displayed at Union Station from August 2017 to January 2018. The exhibition featured mummies collected from South America, Europe, and ancient Egypt. Two of the mummies were on loan from the Kansas City Museum, where they had been in storage since the 1960s.



◀ Very little was known about the Kansas City-based mummies, later named Warmi and Runa, other than they originated in Peru and were thought to be at least 500 years old. Dr. Thompson, who has studied mummies, hoped that by scanning the mummies he could learn more about their health, culture, and lifestyle.

WARMI & RUNA

❖ Warmi and Runa means woman and man in Aymara, the native language of the area where they were discovered near Lake Titicaca.

❖ Runa was between 20 and 25 years old when he died. The scan shows a tooth infection invaded the jaw bone, causing erosion. Dental problems can lead to systemic infection and heart disease.

❖ Warmi was also in her 20s when she died. Scans show Warmi had advanced osteoporosis, which may have been brought on by multiple births combined with inadequate dietary calcium.

New Year NEW YOU

Saint Luke's has all the resources to help make 2018 your healthiest year yet.

Life gets busy. Don't forget to take care of yourself.

Get a checkup at any of our Primary Care Physician offices or 14 Saint Luke's Convenient Care clinics.

saintlukeskc.org/convenient-care

GET A PHYSICAL



It's time to get physical.

Northlanders can join the SHAPE Fitness Center at Saint Luke's North Hospital-Smithville.

816-532-7174

MOVE MORE



Make this year transformative.

Weight-loss surgery: **saintlukesweightloss.com**

Joint replacement (knee, hip, etc.):

816-932-5100

Sleep studies: **816-932-3207**

TAKE A BIG STEP



EAT BETTER



If food is fuel, go premium!

Saint Luke's Charles & Barbara Duboc Cardio Health & Wellness Center offers monthly cooking classes with a registered dietitian.

816-751-8388 or saintlukeskc.org/events

SCHEDULE A SCREENING



Early detection just got a whole lot easier.

Women can take advantage of the latest 3-D mammography technology at Saint Luke's. Why wait?

saintlukeskc.org/3D

Considering a Move to Senior Living?

Take control of how and where
you spend your retirement years

Q: What are unexpected benefits of senior living communities?

People often overlook the benefit of connecting with others. Senior living communities provide opportunities to create new friendships and build peer support. Plus, they provide new experiences and positive stimulation through activities and outings. Another unexpected benefit is the improved energy level and overall health that comes from access to planned meals that are both nutritious and appetizing.

Q: When is the right time to move to a senior living community?

Many people think that waiting until they “feel old” or have a major health obstacle might be the right time to move. However, acclimating to a new environment and routines is much easier when you are on the younger side of aging. It’s harder on older adults to move and can be extra challenging once a physical or mental decline occurs. Moving earlier can also prevent future moves to assisted living or long-term care. Making the move before health declines helps you avoid the strain caregiving puts on the parent/child relationship and gives the senior adult power over the decision-making process.

Q: What are some early signs that a person needs additional help?

It’s important to look at the whole person, not just physical health. Watch for changes in emotional, social, spiritual, and physical well-being. Some signs we look for include unpaid bills, mood-swings, neglected housekeeping, withdrawing from social contact, and expired or inadequate food. The move to a community is more successful before mental or physical decline, so it’s important to begin discussing future plans before these signs appear.

Q: How can I best approach the subject with my loved ones?

It’s never too early to talk about what you or your loved ones want out of the aging journey. Realistic conversations about the future are difficult but necessary to begin real life changes. Reach out and do your homework. Visit different retirement communities to learn what is available. Don’t rely on preconceived notions of senior living communities. Contact a social worker or other professional who works with the aging population to discuss options. Always positively reframe and present information from an empathetic and caring position.



TWO MINUTES WITH...

Chrissie Diehl, LBSW

Social Worker, Saint Luke’s Bishop Spencer Place

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