

A PUBLICATION  
FOR THE FRIENDS OF  
MEMORIAL HERMANN

.....  
Memorial Hermann Foundation  
Fall 2019

ADVANCING THE

# VISION



HEART & VASCULAR CARE

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## DEAR FRIENDS,

One of our greatest pleasures in publishing Vision is sharing the stories of people who make Memorial Hermann Health System a pillar of world-class care. They include physicians, researchers, medical professionals and patients, along with a host of generous philanthropists who support the miracle-working.



This time, we want to introduce you to Dr. David Callender, who has taken the helm as President and CEO of Memorial Hermann Health System from Chuck Stokes. Chuck has forever earned a place in our hearts for his exceptional leadership on behalf of Memorial Hermann. We look forward to working with Dr. Callender and plan to present a more in-depth interview with him in the near future.

In this issue, we also talk with the teams behind the critical heart and vascular service line, designed to provide expert care at every level, from prevention and screening to complex surgery. It's no wonder Memorial Hermann draws patients from far and wide and, as in the case of former heart surgery patient Buzz Hurt inspires them to come back just to visit year after year.

All of us at the Foundation are privileged to know Bobetta Lindig. She and her husband, Bill, have provided extraordinary gifts over the years to support Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center, including the breast center that bears her name. We're proud to honor her as we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the much-loved Razzle Dazzle luncheon she helped launch and cultivate. In the pages ahead, we invite you to peek inside the Lindigs'

beautiful home and hear one of the humblest women on earth do something she rarely does: talk about herself.

I hope you enjoy discovering more about some of the special people who keep Memorial Hermann alive and well. As always, we sincerely thank you for your continued support.

**Anne E. Neeson**  
Executive Vice President & CEO  
Memorial Hermann Foundation

# ALL HEART

Self-proclaimed human “plumbers” and “electricians,” Memorial Hermann’s affiliated heart and vascular pros are world renowned for extraordinary advances in cardiac disease prevention and treatment.

**I**t is easy for many of us who live in Houston to take our good fortune for granted: Through a vast and preeminently equipped heart and vascular service line, Memorial Hermann has become a destination for people around the world seeking the highest level of care in treating the leading cause of death.

This international reputation is the result of some very deliberate efforts over the course of decades.

It began 20 years ago when the masterful aortic surgeon, Hazim J. Safi, MD, accepted the invitation to come and build the cardiothoracic and vascular program of his dreams at Memorial Hermann. Under his leadership, the Memorial Hermann Heart & Vascular Institute was born, firmly establishing Memorial Hermann as a mecca for groundbreaking research and programs that set the rhythm of global innovation.

### The Memorial Hermann Heart & Vascular Institute was born under the leadership of Dr. Safi



**Hazim J. Safi, MD**, Professor and Founding Chair of the Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth (Retired) • Chief of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery at Memorial Hermann Heart & Vascular Institute

Today, with Anthony L. Estrera, MD, as the department's professor and chair, along with esteemed associates specializing in aortic disease management, electrophysiology, mechanical circulatory device technology, heart transplants, cardiac ablation and more, Memorial Hermann provides a uniquely comprehensive network of care for anyone at any stage of cardiovascular disease. Across the Greater Houston area, the system offers every-

thing from general doctor's office visits to advanced imaging centers, and from cardiac rehabilitation and cath-lab procedures to full-blown open heart surgery and everything in between.

In fact, the in-between is one of the most exciting parts of the story, as Memorial Hermann is helping to lead the way in new, minimally invasive procedures that afford the highest-risk patients a second chance at life.

**“Less is more, especially for high-risk patients. Minimally invasive surgery is the future, and we’re leading it.”**



**Anthony L. Estrera, MD**, Professor and Chairman, Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery, McGovern Medical School at UTHealth • President and Chair, Memorial Hermann Heart & Vascular Institute

### Heart valve surgery without general anesthesia

Imagine having complex aortic or mitral valve replacement through a tiny incision, while you're basically awake, and being ready to go home from the hospital within a few days. It happens regularly at Memorial Hermann, and not just in the Texas Medical Center, but in hospitals across the system--even for patients in their 90s.

*“Patients are getting treated faster and better,”* says Amy Harberg, vice president of heart and vascular services. *“If you need the most basic care, we have it. If you need the most complex care, we have that, too. We circle the Greater Houston area with the best of the best in heart care.”*

Add in the ready assistance of Memorial Hermann Life Flight® critical air medical transport services, and patients clearly have every opportunity to receive world-class care within minutes of experiencing a serious heart event.



### Respected leaders in transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) procedures

Tom C. Nguyen, MD, leads the minimally invasive heart valve surgery program at Memorial Hermann. He is also the reason the world looks to Memorial Hermann as experts in this rapidly evolving field. Dr. Nguyen has been performing transcatheter aortic and mitral valve replacements from the beginning, nearly 10 years ago. Not surprisingly, he's now one of very few surgeons who can do them proficiently from start to finish and is credentialed to train others in the procedure.

To put his proficiency into perspective, where the average surgeon does five mitral valve cases a year, Dr. Nguyen does as many every week. He and his team have been involved in the all the major trials from day one, which means they not only have the devices approved by the Food and Drug Administration, but access to the techniques and devices in the pipeline for the future.

*“Not to toot our own horns,”* Dr. Nguyen says sincerely, *“but we’re known as international leaders. I easily put in a hundred thousand miles a year just going around the world giving talks and doing research and training. And our cardiology colleagues do the same.”*

**To put his proficiency into perspective, where the average surgeon does five mitral valve cases a year, Dr. Nguyen does as many every week.**



**Tom C. Nguyen, MD**, Chief of Cardiac Surgery, Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery Director, Minimally Invasive Valve Surgery, Department of Cardiothoracic & Vascular Surgery Associate Professor, McGovern Medical School, Cardiothoracic Surgery

MEMORIAL HERMANN HEART AND VASCULAR CARE

## AT A GLANCE

## WORLDWIDE

First to show heart disease could be reversed, using advanced PET imaging for detection

Pioneering surgical breakthroughs in aortic aneurysm repair

## IN TEXAS

First to perform aortic valve replacement and mitral valve repair without open heart surgery

First to use clot-dissolving drugs to stop heart attacks

First to offer cardiac screening designed specifically for women

## IN HOUSTON

First to perform cardiac catheterization

First to implant miniature heart assist devices in heart attack patients

Despite their worldly credentials, Drs. Estrera and Nguyen and their entire heart and vascular team's philosophy is to place patients' well-being above all. Memorial Hermann nurses and affiliated cardiologists, surgeons and specialists set their egos aside to make the best treatment choices.

*"It's all about the patient,"* says Dr. Estrera. *"We can only deliver the best care by focusing on one patient at a time."*

Dr. Nguyen is known for his own personal style. He avoids medical jargon and makes decisions based on how he would treat his own parents. He gives patients

his email address and sincerely means it when he encourages them to use it, promising to respond within 24 hours.

*"This is kind of a one-stop shop where we can very thoughtfully go through all the various options and provide what's best for the patients,"* he says.

Lucky us to live in the city the rest of the world comes to for such extraordinary care.

## LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Given a second chance at life, Buzz Hurt will never forget Dr. Safi and his team of miracle workers



**T**rained by legendary heart surgeons DeBakey and Crawford, Hazim J. Safi, MD, is a legend in his own right. His illustrious career began with the impression he made on Dr. DeBakey as a trainee in Baghdad. Since moving to Houston in 1977, Dr. Safi has perfected his own highly specialized surgical procedures to treat aortic aneurysms and aortic dissection.

Making an impression is a recurring theme for this cardiothoracic icon.

**A life saved becomes a lifelong friend and supporter**

For one grateful patient, a chance meeting long ago has sparked a special friendship and inspired annual gifts to support the heart and vascular program Dr. Safi helped build.

It began on what was a typical Sunday for oilman and cattle rancher James R. “Buzz” Hurt, until it wasn’t. One minute he was saddling up his horse, the next, they were both sprawled out flat on the ground, his horse struggling to get up off Buzz’s left leg. In the process, the horse knocked into him, splitting his hearing aid in two and cutting him badly.

*“I called my wife, Betsy, and told her I’d had a bit of an accident,”* Buzz recalls. *“When she saw me, she knew we had to get to our local emergency room.”*

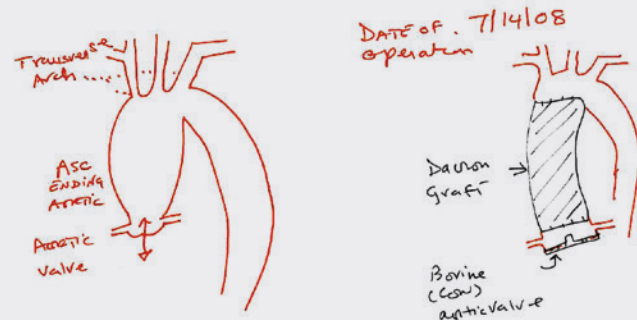
There, doctors looked him over and bandaged his ear after somehow managing to get him to take off his beloved cowboy boots. When he tried to put his boots back on, he nearly fainted. Tests revealed an irregular heartbeat and an ascending aortic aneurysm. By the following Friday, he was flying from Odessa to Houston, where Dr. Safi and team made the complicated repairs. It’s a dangerous procedure few hospitals can perform, even fewer with the results Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center sees.

Ironically, replacement valves for these procedures are made from cattle tissue, which Dr. Safi dubbed a “bull valve” in Buzz’s case.

**An unforgettable experience, an unforgettable team**

That was more than 10 years ago, yet Buzz, now nearly 90, still makes regular treks to Houston to see his old friend, Hazim, and to comfort patients recovering from the same operation that saved his life. And every year since that fateful day on the ranch, he and Betsy have made generous gifts to the Memorial Hermann Foundation in appreciation.

As Buzz puts it, *“Dr. Safi saved my life. Once I was able to, I knew I needed to go see him and make a gift to support the heart program. It’s the least I could do.”*



Dr. Safi’s hand-drawn illustrations of the surgical procedures he performed on Buzz Hurt in 2008



*“We just really hit it off. Buzz is a West Texas guy, and I’m from Baghdad, where we’re known as cowboys, too.”*

Dr. Hazim J. Safi

**The changing of the guard**

When Dr. Safi came to Memorial Hermann, cardiac, vascular and thoracic disciplines were virtually nonexistent. Through his commitment to research and innovation, and his own stellar reputation, Dr. Safi has helped attract and recruit an extraordinary team over the last 20 years. Today, the Memorial Hermann Heart & Vascular Institute is a global center of excellence, renowned for its highly trained surgeons and a body of vital clinical research.

While Dr. Safi continues to perform surgery, write scientific articles and train the next generation of cardiothoracic and vascular surgeons, he is stepping down as chair of cardiothoracic and vascular surgery at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth. Anthony Estrera, MD, has agreed to serve as the new chair, with Dr. Ngyuen taking his place as chief of cardiac surgery at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center.

Dr. Safi has made an indelible impression in this world.

MEMORIAL HERMANN HEART & VASCULAR CARE

**4**  
Dedicated Heart & Vascular Institute locations

**6**  
Open heart programs

**4**  
TAVR programs

**4**  
Watchman™ AFib device programs

# A NATURAL CHOICE

Memorial Hermann turns to a distinguished native Texan as its new President and CEO



It's never easy to see a longtime friend and respected leader move on. And yet, the time has come. Memorial Hermann Health System has selected David L. Callender, MD, to become the new President and CEO as Chuck Stokes takes a well-deserved retirement.

Dr. Callender is as excited about the opportunity as we all are in knowing that Chuck's legacy remains in extremely capable hands.

#### The search for a successor goes across the country and back again

Dr. Callender is a Wichita Falls, Texas, native with deep roots right here in our community. This is where he earned his degrees, where he practiced as an ear, nose and throat oncologic surgeon and where he led impressive projects and turnarounds for some of our region's most prestigious academic health systems, most recently as president of UTMB Health.

In his 12 years there, Dr. Callender helped their Galveston campus recover from more than \$1 billion in damage caused by Hurricane Ike in 2008, ultimately bringing the system back stronger than ever.

Dr. Callender's track record fits like a surgeon's glove with Memorial Hermann's vision for the future.

*"I have been inspired by Memorial Hermann's efforts to bring more personalized, value-based care to our communities. I'm excited and honored to help lead the way in extending those efforts."*

DAVID L. CALLENDER, MD

The Memorial Hermann Foundation looks forward to working with Dr. Callender, and we wish him all the best. We can also happily delay our goodbyes to Chuck for now, as he has agreed to stay on through the end of the year to ease the transition.

# SHARING THE WEALTH

Bobetta Lindig believes in giving, because there's a need and because she can

From the penthouse of a tasteful high rise, a devoted Houston couple takes comfort each night in their view of the iconic blue lights of the Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center they have quietly helped to shape and evolve over the last two decades.

They are Bobetta and Bill Lindig, and on a hot and steamy August afternoon, Bobetta graciously lets us barge into her lovely home with cameras, lights, a photographer, makeup artist, creative director and Foundation team in tow. And,

as anyone who knows her would guess, she immediately worries about what she can do to help us. She also confesses her worst fear: having her picture taken.

She is one of those rare women who is instantly likeable—funny, charming and surprisingly down-to-earth when you consider the numerous million-dollar contributions she and her husband have made to Memorial Hermann, without fanfare, just because they saw a need and chose to meet it.



The couple celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in June, and Bobetta has clearly cherished every minute of their time together.

*“We’ve had a super life, just great,” she says, adding, “I feel so fortunate.”*

Bobetta lights up when she speaks about Bill and her beautiful family. They have two sons she obviously adores. Brad, their youngest, has recently moved to Austin with his wife and daughter. Brett and his wife and three sons live in Hideaway Lakes, about a mile from the Lindigs’ second home in East Texas, where they spend about half their time these days. As Bobetta puts it, the families live so close, if she fries bacon, they all come running.

Their life in the Memorial area of Houston began in 1968, and the Lindigs have been loyal fans of the area and Memorial Hermann ever since. Their legacy of giving started as a result of Bill’s prostate cancer diagnosis back in 1996. He and their son, Brad, were on the Memorial Hermann Foundation board at the time. After undergoing treatment at Memorial Hermann, Bill became friends with urologist, Melvyn Anhalt, MD, who shared Bill’s interest in creating a men’s health center where men

could come in on their lunch hour, have a test, speak to a doctor and find all the personal support they need.

The Lindig Men’s Health Center opened at Memorial Hermann Memorial City in 1997. Since then, the couple has provided funding for many other projects to serve the community they love.

*“It’s just the greatest health system I can ever imagine being affiliated with.”*

BOBETTA LINDIG

What sparks the Lindigs’ interest is as much about improving the patient experience as it is about adding the latest equipment and technology. Sometimes, the inspiration is personal; sometimes, it’s simply a matter of filling a human need. The Lindig Family Cancer Resource Center, for example, gives anyone the opportunity to do research and find support as they deal with a cancer diagnosis. The Kate Lindig Neonatal ICU, named for their granddaughter, benefited from improved facilities, but also pioneered the idea of parents spending the night with their babies.

Another personal event, Bill’s serious motorcycle accident years ago in the Texas Hill Country, prompted the couple to show their appreciation for Memorial Hermann Life Flight® with a donation toward a much-needed helicopter pad.

More recently, Bobetta had surgery for a brain aneurysm at Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center.

*“It was one of the scariest things I’ve ever gone through,” she admits, “but I’ve never seen the workings of a group of people go so smoothly.”*

Still, it’s the Bobetta Lindig Breast Care Center that brings Bobetta the most joy. As a regular mammogram patient at Memorial Hermann Memorial City’s original facility, she remembers it as a place not much larger than a walk-in closet. While she felt confident that the equipment and medical teams were top notch, the experience was not.

As Bobetta describes it, *“If you were more than fifth in line, you probably had a folding chair in the hallway. You took your clothes and your purse and moved it all along with you while you were there. I knew that needed to be corrected.”*

Today, 12 years after the Bobetta Lindig Breast Care Center opened its welcoming doors, Bobetta still receives notes from women saying how much they appreciate its cozy touches. The Center is a 7,500-square-foot, state-of-the-art screening and diagnostic facility. But it’s the warm fluffy robes, the coffee bar, the lockers and the spa-like atmosphere that women find especially comforting.

*“Every doctor we’ve seen was kind and took all the time in the world to explain what was going on and what to expect.”*

BOBETTA LINDIG

*“It’s exactly as I envisioned it,”* Bobetta says, with the smile of a woman who loves making good things happen.

In fact, as vital as the major gifts she and Bill make to Memorial Hermann and many other Houston-area causes are, Bobetta sees philanthropy all around her.

*“The floor-to-ceiling windows in our bedroom overlook the hospital. We watch the seasons change, we watch the lights change. Rarely do we go to bed without appreciating the sight of those familiar blue lights.”*

BOBETTA LINDIG

*“I see it in the volunteers at the hospital as they help people every day,” she explains. “Or in a group of 9-year-olds selling lemonade on the street for a cause. That’s philanthropy. It extends beyond the great donations. I like to see the little things happen.”*



**MEMORIAL HERMANN BLOOM**

*Celebrating 10 years of Razzle Dazzle in honor of Bobetta Lindig*

Bobetta is the Memorial Hermann Foundation’s honoree for the 2019 Razzle Dazzle luncheon, a fitting tribute for our 10th anniversary celebration of this important fundraiser. Bobetta was instrumental in launching the first event, which benefits the Bobetta Lindig Breast Care Center at Memorial Hermann Memorial City Medical Center, and she continues to share her time and resources on behalf of breast cancer awareness and treatment.

Thanks in large part to her tireless efforts and support, the Razzle Dazzle luncheon has grown by leaps and bounds over the last few years. The event now draws such large crowds, the Foundation has had to move it to the Post Oak Hotel.

*“I’m so honored, so proud,”* Bobetta says. *“Maybe in 10 years, I can do it again. And maybe we’ll have to move it again, who knows? Maybe the Astrodome will be ready by then.”*

Thank you, Bobetta, for all that you and your family do for the Memorial Hermann Health System and the Greater Houston area.

# BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS

A standing ovation for Chuck Stokes. A warm welcome to the new President and CEO. A heartfelt testimony from a very grateful patient. An impressive review of extraordinary heart and vascular advances being made every day. This year's State of Health Care Breakfast was a morning to remember.



Jo Lynn Falgout, Susan Sarofim, Anne Neeson



Dr. David Callender, Dr. Anthony Estrera, Bill Easter



Anne Neeson and Jim Postl



George Farris, Philamena Baird, Dan Wilford



Chuck Stokes receives standing ovation



Ed Emmett



Dr. David Callender, Lisa Simon, Jim Smith



Dr. David Callender, Tim Baker, Roy Hearnberger, Sue Hearnberger, Dr. Anthony Estrera



Deborah Cannon and Susan Sarofim



## HEROES IN HEALTH

Memorial Hermann is all that it is today thanks in very large part to its donors' generous spirit. In 2019, we look forward to celebrating them through our new *Heroes in Health* society for individual donors who make annual contributions of \$1,000 or more in support of our mission. *Heroes* enjoy an array of benefits and invitations to exclusive events with our leadership and affiliated physicians.

**Join us and become an inaugural member of *Heroes in Health*.**

[memorialhermann.org/makeagift](http://memorialhermann.org/makeagift)

### LEVELS OF GIVING

\$1,000 • \$2,500 • \$5,000 • \$10,000  
\$25,000 • \$50,000 • \$75,000 • \$100,000+

Heroes in Health  
**MEMORIAL  
HERMANN**  
Foundation



# MEMORIAL HERMANN Foundation

## Memorial Hermann Foundation

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## VISION

### Memorial Hermann Foundation

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### FAREWELL TO CHUCK

It is with bittersweet feelings that we bid farewell to our friend, Chuck Stokes, as he retires. His leadership as President and CEO since 2017, after nearly a decade as Chief Operating Officer, has been instrumental in helping Memorial Hermann Health System flourish in a challenging healthcare environment, earning national recognition for operational excellence.

## Mark Your Calendar

**Heroes in Health Life Flight Picnic**

Sunday, November 3, 2019

*for donors contributing \$1,000 or more*



**Heroes in Health Holiday Reception**

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

*for donors contributing \$5,000 or more*



**Heroes in Health CEO Dinner**

Wednesday, January 29, 2020

*for donors contributing \$10,000 or more*



**Circle of Life Gala**

Saturday, April 25, 2020