

Sarah Bush Lincoln

# Health

# styles



## IN HER HAPPY PLACE

After pain treatment, Dieterich woman is back to what she loves

## DAILY DOSE OF EXERCISE ENDORPHINS

Single mother of three loses 50 pounds through medical exercise program

## NOT BROKEN JUST BENT

SBL Hospice provides compassion, support through unexpected loss



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*Health Styles* provides general information on health-related topics. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, which should always be obtained from your physician.

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# Health *styles*

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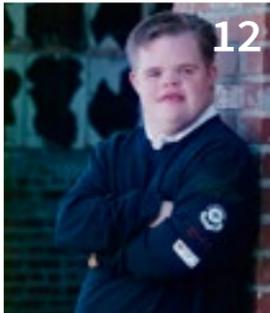
## Sarah Bush Lincoln Welcomes

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# A Special Announcement

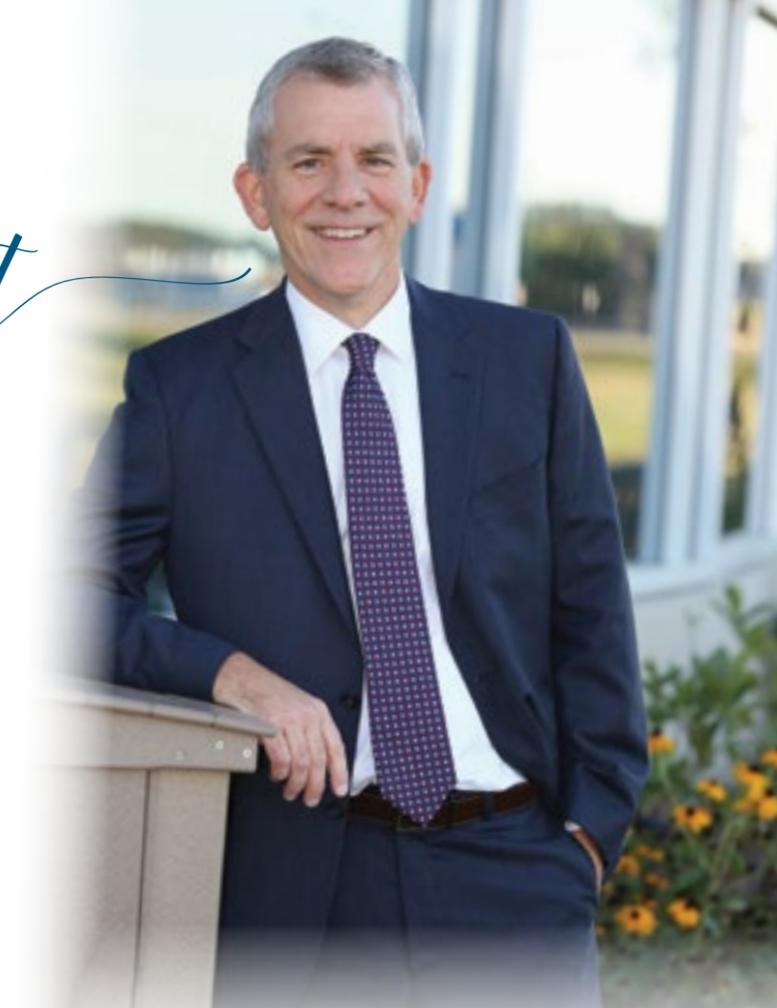
In 2016, the Sarah Bush Lincoln Board of Directors asked me to lead this organization as its next President & CEO. I was more than honored and accepted the offer or, maybe, accepted the challenge!

It has been thrilling, exhilarating, humbling, and deeply satisfying. Last week I announced my retirement to our team effective in late July. It has been a privilege to work in the healthcare field throughout my entire career – since 1985 – when I accepted my first job at SBL as a staff pharmacist.

I have been very fortunate to be surrounded by a high-performing team which is the backbone of Sarah Bush Lincoln. The people on the nursing floors, those performing tests, the hundreds in our extended campus clinics, the behind-the-scenes people who make this engine turn every day, are doing the heavy lifting. They are Sarah Bush Lincoln and they have immense “ownership” in the organization and a driving desire to help our patients.

Through the efforts of many, Sarah Bush Lincoln has experienced incredible growth in recent years that has afforded us the ability to take advantage of opportunities like acquisitions of medical clinics in our southern market, partial ownership in a surgery center and the purchase of another hospital. Because of our growth, we were able to open a free-standing Regional Cancer Center and Surgery Center, as well as expand our bed capacity and build a comprehensive Heart Center. People choosing us for care is the impetus of our latest expansion of an additional 20 beds to care for critically ill people. With this project, our Lumpkin Education Center will be greatly enlarged as well.

Our growth is driven, in part, by the medical staff and our ability to attract and retain primary care and specialty care. For a physician, the world is his/her oyster. Every hospital is competing for the same talent. We have to rise to the top to



attract them to our community. Recently, we have been fortunate to attract intensivists, those who specialize in the care of critically ill people. It enables us to care for community members who need that specialized care, right here.

I grew up at Sarah Bush Lincoln and will always have a deep fondness for it and for the people who make it come alive. Our Board of Directors anticipates making an announcement regarding my successor in the coming weeks. They are wise people and I am certain they will select a wonderful new president & CEO.

Stay well,  
Jerry Esker

June 3, 2022



Mattoon Golf & Country Club

Net proceeds support the new SBL Hospice House.

For more information, contact the SBL Health Foundation at **217 258-2511** or **klockart@sblhs.org**.



# Tight-knit Family Not Broken, Just

# Bent

## Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospice provides compassion, support through unexpected loss

Janice McConkey spent her life being her family's rock: helping loved ones through the tough times and celebrating the joyful ones. But when she was diagnosed with terminal cancer, it was time for others to care for her.

In 2015, Janice experienced unusual pelvic pain. Diagnostic imaging revealed that she had cervical cancer. She was only 53.

"We were shocked and sad to find out mom had cancer, especially at such a young age. She battled it hard. The chemo damaged her bladder, but she never gave up," her daughter, Brittany Irwin, explained.

The cancer shrank, and Janice went into remission, getting scans every few months to confirm that the tumors hadn't grown. After four years, the cancer returned as stage 4 metastatic in her lungs. Janice began chemotherapy and the cancer shrank briefly, but by Spring 2021, the cancer had metastasized to her liver. She had also developed pancreatic cancer.

Sisters Heidi, Brittany and Heather with their late mother's hospice nurse, Cassie.



Janice's case became very complex, as biopsies from her lungs and pancreas proved those cancers were different. By Thanksgiving, the cancer had spread to her brain.

"Toward the end, the cancer had spread quite a bit. There was no slowing it down at that point. In a way, I'm glad the cancer progressed quickly because the effects of it could have been worse. We really had all of her until the very end," her youngest daughter, Heidi Conine, remarked.

Janice's three daughters struggled to select the right care for their mother. She fought the idea of leaving the hospital and entering into home hospice care, because she knew her daughters would become her primary caregivers. But the family had heard wonderful things about Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospice and convinced Janice to try it. Right away, they knew it was the right choice.

Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospice staff took care of Janice immediately, once she was discharged from the hospital. Cassie Elliot, RN, was Janice's primary care provider. "At our first meeting, Cassie was respectful and professional, but also laughing with us. It wasn't all serious, and she wasn't pushy," Brittany recalled. "She just asked us what the team could do for mom, and she gave her autonomy in her care."

Janice's Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospice team educated the daughters on how to use a gait belt, schedule medications and rotate their mom so she didn't get bed sores. The nurses planned home visits around the family's schedules, so no one missed important events. The family also received a book detailing the hospice process at every stage, including what to expect as someone passes away. SBL bereavement counselors sent the grandchildren care packages with books and called consistently to see how they were faring.

"The resources were enormously beneficial," Janice's eldest daughter, Heather Stafford, said. "I've worked in healthcare and have seen the hospice process. It was a blessing for me not to have to tell my sisters what was happening to our mom. It felt like everyone's arms were wrapped around us, giving us phenomenal care."

Cassie felt like family to Janice and her daughters at a time when compassionate guidance was needed most. Cassie even checked on the family while she was on vacation, just to say she was thinking about everyone.

"She asked if she could do anything for us. That still gives me goosebumps, because it meant so much that Cassie would call on her personal time to check on not just my mother, but on us, too," Brittany expressed.

The family celebrated Christmas early as Janice's condition declined rapidly. Her memory slipped so often that she started initialing her daughter's conversations in a notebook. Cassie gave them enough warning to encourage the grandchildren to say their goodbyes a day before Janice entered complete bed rest.

"Our mom was very scared at the end. We had many rough days where we were battling. She did not want to die at 59 years old. But we are so blessed that she received such dignity and comfort through Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospice," Heidi stressed.

On January 7, Janice passed away peacefully in her Paris, Ill., home with family by her side. She was a lead transcriptionist and health information clerk at Horizon Health for more than 40 years. Her daughters will remember her innate ability to know when someone needed her help and how she lovingly created home-cooked meals. She was an accomplished cook who owned bookshelves of cookbooks, ranging from those published by the local church to the White House.

"I truly don't know how we would have gotten through this tragedy without Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospice's services. Everyone from the nurses to the equipment delivery people to the CNAs who helped bathe my mom gave us the utmost respect and compassion. We are devastated— but grateful," Brittany said.

Janice McConkey prioritized quality time with her daughters and family.



For more information, call Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospice at **1-800-454-4055**.



In her

# Happy Place

## After pain treatment, Dieterich woman is back to what she loves

Juanita Bracey was raised on a farm south of Effingham and knows quite a bit about hard work. In fact, she finds the sometimes back-breaking work of gardening and yard work enjoyable and relaxing. Some might say she absolutely lives for it.

Juanita is very particular about her property and has spent years manicuring it. She and her husband, Ronnie, have an acre in Dieterich where she cuts the ditches with a push mower and does all of the mowing and trimming.

It's a lot of work for anyone, but at 74 years old, Juanita does all she can in the yard because that's her happy place. "It just makes me feel good to be in the yard, tending to flowers and gaining a sense of accomplishment; it's soothing," she said, even with sweat on her brow.

She wouldn't be able to do all of this without the help of Pain Specialist Brian Ogan, MD, of SBL Interventional Pain Management. Dr. Ogan periodically treats Juanita's chronic pain, so she has mobility and a better quality of

life. He offers advanced pain-fighting techniques and expertise to patients to eliminate pain without the use of narcotics and other addictive drugs.

Juanita grew up around pipeline construction. Her father and brothers were pipe liners, and she worked in the pipeline office traveling around the country working wherever the crew was. She swore she'd never marry a pipe liner, but then she met Ronnie

**"Dr. Ogan explains everything to you in words you can understand and shows you on MRI films whether he can help you. He really fixed me up through injections."**

—Juanita Bracey

and fell in love. Now their sons and grandson are pipe liners too.

She was left with pain in 1999 after a procedure to repair a ruptured disc in her neck. Between arthritis and stenosis (a narrowing of the spaces in the spine), Juanita's pain eventually grew out of control. "I have a lot a pain in my thoracic area. Much of it comes from overwork," Juanita explained. Her son, Ron Jr., recommended Dr. Ogan to her. "He [Dr. Ogan] explains everything to you in words you can understand and shows you on MRI films whether he can help you. He really fixed me up through injections," she said. "He took care of my pain. I was very impressed with him right away."

As the sole caretaker of her husband, who has a degenerative eye disease, she continually pushes herself to do as much as she can. "There aren't as many flowerbeds and landscaped areas as I would like, but I couldn't keep up with it all. My knee isn't good either, so I use a stool to more easily reach the flowerbeds. I manage," she explained.

Having been treated by Dr. Ogan for more than 23 years now, Juanita considers him, not only her doctor, but her friend. "He's a wonderful man. He helps me feel very relaxed and makes sure I feel better," she said. "If he can't fix you, then he'll refer you to someone else. He's a fine doctor."

She admitted, "I usually wait as long as I can before I go back for an injection to help the pain, and Dr. Ogan will always ask me why I waited so long to come in!"

After 53 years of marriage, Juanita says her caretaking abilities are a gift from God. "I raised my sons while Ronnie was on the road and after they graduated from high school, I left home to be with him. I love to take care of people; I just didn't think I'd be taking care of my husband. It's a hard life, but God is watching over me and helping me," she added.



For more information about SBL Interventional Pain Management, call **217 347-2332**. Dr. Ogan works with Advanced Practice Provider Melissa Pahlke, APRN. Their office is located in the SBL Bonutti Clinic at 1303 West Evergreen in Effingham.

# Daily Dose of Exercise

# Endorphins

## Single mother of three loses 50 pounds through medical exercise program

Marshae Young had an active lifestyle growing up, when she took weight lifting classes in high school and was a cheerleader. Her life changed dramatically in 2014, however, when the birth of her first child meant Marshae had limited free time, and her focus turned away from exercise. It wasn't long before Marshae's sedentary lifestyle caught up with her, and she began experiencing debilitating back pain.

At just 28 years of age, Marshae was diagnosed with a herniated disk, a condition in which the soft, jelly-like center of a spinal disk pushes through a crack in the tough exterior casing of the spine, causing pain, numbness and weakness. When the pain grew unbearable, Marshae sought care at the SBL Center for Interventional Pain, where she was prescribed biannual epidural shots to manage her pain— an alternative to addictive prescription medications.

Interventional Pain Specialist Ragai Mitri, MD, explained that excess weight and inactivity can contribute to the prolonged effects of herniated disks. "Lack of movement caused my weight gain, which caused my back pain. So I needed to lose weight to improve, but I had limited knowledge about how to properly work out," Marshae recalled. "It felt like the two things were moving against each other."

Dr. Mitri suggested that Marshae try the four-month medical exercise program offered by the Center for Healthy Living. The WomenConnected charitable giving group gifted her access to the program at a reduced cost. Marshae felt nervous at the beginning of the program, but Exercise Specialist Melissa Pruemmer put her at ease.

"She made the gym feel like a comfortable place for me," Marshae said. "Melissa made training fun, and I started to see results early on."

**"I am really proud of how far I've come. It's been a life-changing experience, and I am grateful for my opportunities."**

—Marshae Young

Before joining the Center for Healthy Living training program, Marshae had gone to gyms and had worked on any machines that she saw. By contrast, trainers at the Center for Healthy Living gave her the knowledge to structure workouts into sessions that focus on cardio health, the legs, arms and abdomen.

"With my back injury, it's so important for me to have correct form, and I didn't have that before. Now I try to always watch myself in the studio room mirrors when I train alone," Marshae remarked.

As a single mother of three young children, she has precious little time to exercise, but she makes it a priority by waking up at 4 am nearly every morning. She has found that consistent exercise helps her mental health, too.

"Mental and physical health became my priority, and it's important that I stay consistent to regulate my mind and body. Exercise really helps with that. I feel great about my accomplishments, and now I have a better outlook on life," she said.

Marshae also met with a nutrition specialist to make goals and to learn about healthy food options for her family.

"The most important advice that she gave me was to not be so hard on myself. Eating broccoli with cheese is better than cheese fries," Marshae said. "It's better to have some fruits and veggies than none at all. Her guidance taught me to be more forgiving and recognize that subtle changes have long-term effects."

Marshae's family loves fruits and vegetables. "It's hard to keep fruit in my house. It's gone on the first day," she joked.

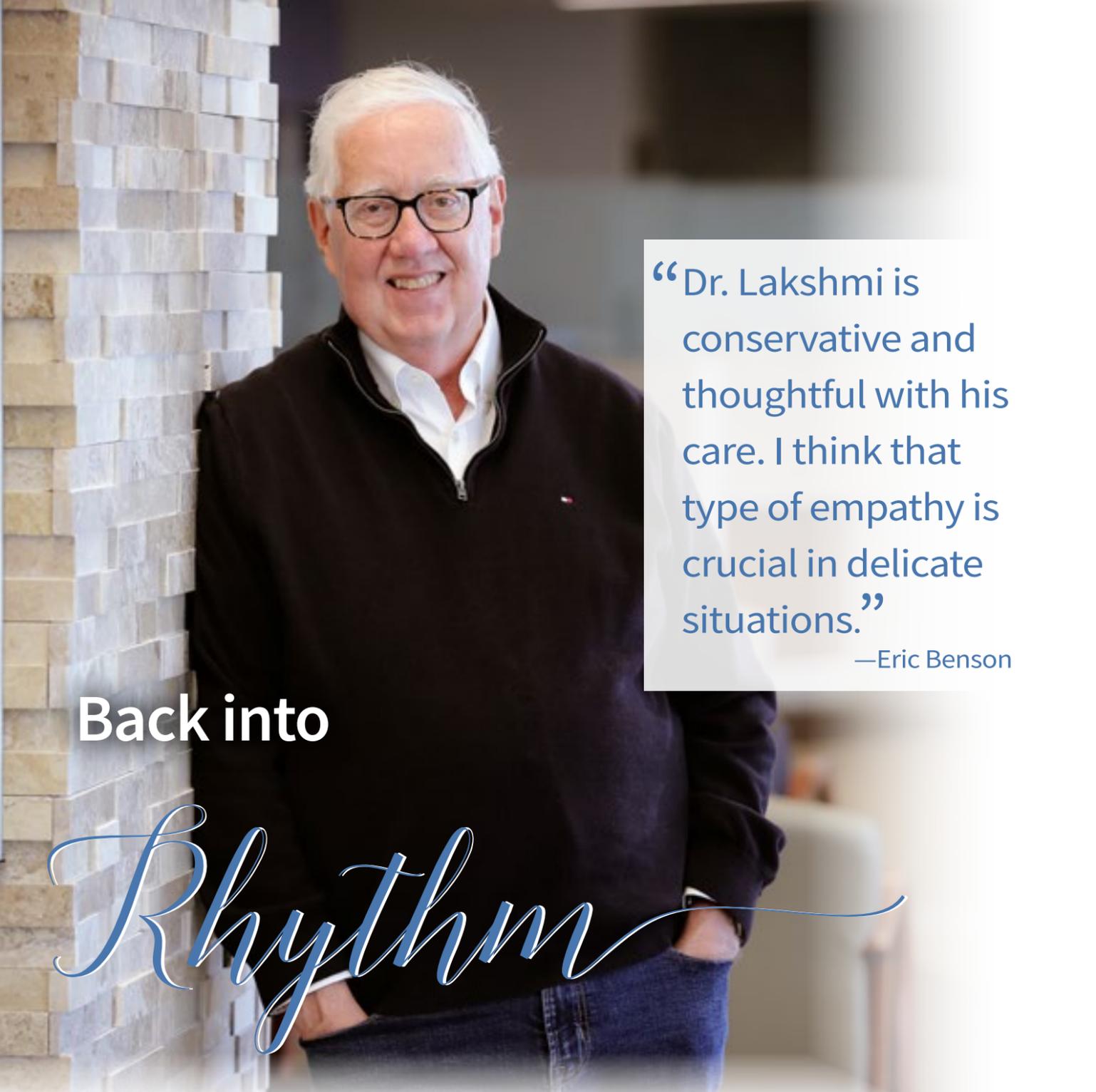
Through her hard work and dedication, the Charleston native lost 50 lbs. by the end of the program. She no longer needs numbing epidural shots, and Marshae and her children have more energy than before, thanks to the healthy

foods they are eating. She places an emphasis on holistic methods for healing her body. Marshae can even sit cross-legged on the floor and do yoga with her children without pain from sitting on her knees.

"I feel good, and my family feels good. I remember on the first day of training, when my trainer had me do an abdominal exercise where I could barely do two repetitions. I said I would never go any further, but now, I can do 25 repetitions," Marshae said. "I am really proud of how far I've come. It's been a life-changing experience, and I am grateful for my opportunities."



For more information on the Center for Healthy Living medical exercise program, call **217 238-3488**.



“Dr. Lakshmi is conservative and thoughtful with his care. I think that type of empathy is crucial in delicate situations.”

—Eric Benson

## Back into

# Rhythm

### Former healthcare administrator is confident in treatment for lifelong heart condition

Eric Benson learned about his heart murmur at nine years old, but he didn't let it stop him from living a normal life. Instead, he managed his heart condition by paying close attention to his body and not over-exerting himself when he participated in physical activities, such as intramural sports and jogging. It was nearly four decades before Eric experienced the serious side effects of his condition.

While at graduate school at Michigan State in 1976, Eric met his wife, Anne. They married and moved to Houston— their first stop in a long line of big-city moves, including stays in Washington D.C., and Chicago. When the vice president of Human Resources position opened at Sarah Bush Lincoln in 1999, Eric accepted the role and the family moved to its first small town.

“There were fewer places to eat in Charleston, but my eight-minute drive to work made up for it, especially after years of long commutes,” Eric mused.

Right after the 9/11 terrorist attack, Eric was walking across Sarah Bush Lincoln's campus talking to a colleague when he realized that he felt so winded that he might not make it to his destination. He originally suspected that he might have asthma, but that walk was the wake-up call he needed to tend to his heart. The problem was quite serious.

“After that, I decided to stop being stubborn and seek help for my heart. I was getting tired more easily, and I needed to figure out what was wrong with me,” Eric explained.

He had congestive heart failure, a shocking diagnosis for a 46-year-old who lived a healthy lifestyle and never smoked. Eric was hospitalized to get his condition under control, when Cardiologist B. Lakshmi, MD, visited him to discuss the treatment plan.

“His professionalism gave both my wife and me solace. He didn't sugar-coat the real issue that my heart was in distress. There was a comfort level from the beginning,” Eric recalled.

He spent five days in the hospital and, afterward, he began the METS cardiac rehabilitation program. Eric took up daily walks and removed the excess salt in his diet by making special breads and soups. His aggressive treatment paid off; within six months, his echocardiogram showed major improvement.

“Dr. Lakshmi would see me in the hallways, and he would joke and say he had never seen someone recover so quickly. I felt much better at that point,” Eric insisted.

The treatment boosted his health, and he remained stable until seven years later when Eric experienced further heart complications.

“Going up a simple flight of stairs and being winded was not common for me at that time. I started having ventricular fibrillation,” Eric said. His heart was out of rhythm.

Eric was told to wait six weeks to receive a blood thinning medication, but he couldn't wait that long.

Four weeks later, a significant respiratory issue drove him back to the hospital, where doctors performed a cardioversion.

“Dr. Lakshmi was out of the country, but he made sure to call me while I was in the hospital. That's just the kind of guy he is,” Eric remarked.

Despite moving to Bloomington, Indiana, Eric drives back to Sarah Bush Lincoln every few months for Dr. Lakshmi's care. He received a pacemaker in December 2021, which can shock his heart back into rhythm to prevent heart attacks. The device also collects data on Eric's heart rhythms and beats.

“My heart data goes directly to The SBL Heart Center staff to examine. That is a huge comfort,” Eric explained.

Eric appreciates Dr. Lakshmi's great ability to explain health issues and treatments in a way he understands.

“Dr. Lakshmi tells me he wants to get me to 90 years old. He doesn't always jump to procedures. He is conservative and thoughtful with his care. I think that type of empathy is crucial in delicate situations. And he always asks me how my family is doing at every visit,” Eric said.

Eric now carries on his activities such as walking, attending plays and spending time with his family, knowing he has constant heart monitoring and a team of medical providers ready to care for him when he needs it.



Cardiologist B. Lakshmi, MD



For more information about The Heart Center, or to make an appointment with Dr. Lakshmi, please call **217 238-4960**.



# Sarah Bush Lincoln

## Welcomes

“The whole process is fascinating — listening to their concerns, treating their issues, and seeing them improve.”

—Stacia Dennison, APRN

### Stacia Dennison, APRN

Orthopedics

Stacia Dennison, APRN, grew up surrounded by medical jargon because her mother shared both heartbreaking and heartwarming stories about her nursing career. Her mom also helped to care for her sister who has muscular dystrophy, a group of genetic diseases that cause progressive weakness and loss of muscle mass. Through her family experiences, Dennison understood the direct impact that medical providers make on their patients, so she intuitively knew she had to go into healthcare.

“My mother was an exceptional pediatric nurse, and her stories just drew me in. I’ve always been around medicine, and I feel so blessed to be able to help people,” Dennison emphasized.

Dennison treats a wide variety of orthopedic issues in collaboration with Orthopedic Surgeon Timothy Gray, MD, FAAOS. Most commonly, she remedies arthritis issues, fractures, sprains, and knee and hip pain.

“As we age, the cartilage in our joints wears down through our occupations, athletics and daily life. That’s the premise for arthritis, a very common condition among older adults,” Dennison explained.

As alternatives to surgery, Dennison prescribes anti-inflammatory medication, physical/occupational therapy and exercise plans. However, Dennison said surgery is often recommended in cases where the pain can’t be alleviated in other ways. She is Dr. Gray’s first assistant in surgery three

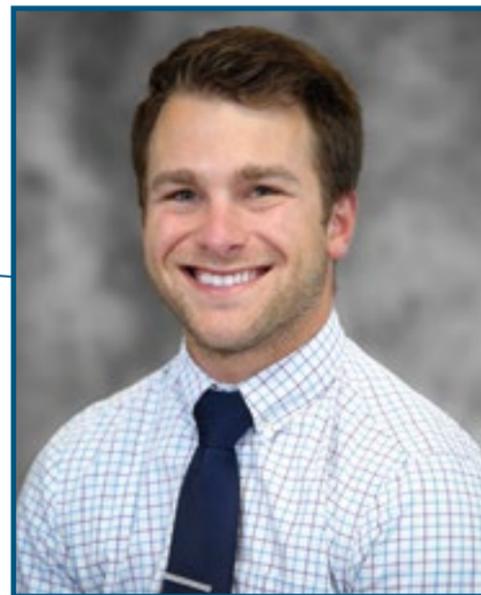
times a week, giving her the ability to see patients from their preoperative to postoperative care, every step of the way.

“I frequently hear patients say that they wish they had their knee replacement or other surgery years earlier. Some people couldn’t walk two blocks before, and now they are out walking a mile. Getting them back to their normal lifestyles is so satisfying,” Dennison remarked.

Dennison started out as an LPN and then decided she wanted more education to provide people with a higher level of care. She graduated from Eastern Illinois University with her bachelor’s of nursing degree in 2013 and immediately earned her master’s degree at Indiana State University in 2016.

Though she specialized in family medicine, she answered the job post seeking someone to assist Dr. Gray in surgery as well as manage his clinic patients when he wasn’t available. Five years later, she couldn’t be happier at the SBL Bonutti Clinic.

“Dr. Gray and I have a great collaborative relationship. I’ve been very blessed to work with him. I like to tell people I struck gold with this job. I had a surgical nursing background for 10 years, and I’m constantly given opportunities to expand my knowledge as an advanced practice provider. We provide top-tier care to match the immaculate new facility we now reside in,” Dennison said.



### Evan Hakman, PA-C

Orthopedics

Early exposure to the healthcare field led Evan Hakman, PA-C, toward a career in medicine. His mother, an emergency department nurse, sparked his interest by sharing stories from work. By high school, Hakman had enrolled in Health Occupations, a program through which he earned his Certified Nursing Assistant certificate, by taking classes and shadowing medical professionals, including physician assistants.

“Being a physician assistant became my goal, once I learned about the profession. Hakman remarked. “It’s the perfect fit for me.”

The Effingham native wanted immersive healthcare training while he was in school, so he worked as a medical scribe and CNA at the local hospital. From the observation deck, Hakman watched SBL orthopedic surgeons perform total joint replacements.

“After watching the surgeries, my interest took off from there. I love the pace and intricacies of orthopedic surgery. Seeing the need for care in this area really drove me,” Hakman explained.

The hands-on experience of helping patients understand their treatments and then recover post-surgery solidified his path. He loved the idea of being able to get people back to their normal lives.

Now Hakman works alongside Orthopedic Surgeon Frank Lee, MD, FACS, who specializes in hand procedures and has more than 30 years of medical experience. The team treats mostly upper extremity injuries, including those in the hand, wrist and elbow. The most common injuries include fractures, rotator cuff tears, sprains, “trigger finger” and carpal tunnel syndrome.

Hakman performs examinations, orders and interprets diagnostic tests, and prescribes medications and therapy. In addition to

“I try to learn as much as possible about patients so I fully understand their conditions and explain their treatment options. I want patients to feel comfortable with me because I am genuinely interested in their lives, medically and personally.”

—Evan Hakman, PA-C

assisting at surgery, Hakman manages fractures, and he performs wound closures and joint injections.

“It eases patients’ spirits a bit when I am able to give them a breakdown of what exactly occurred within the operating room, knowing I was directly involved with their procedure,” Hakman said.

He and Dr. Lee always treat conservatively with physical or occupational therapy, medication, and time for the body heal itself before surgical methods are employed. Deep discussions that explore the best opportunities for people often leave patients feeling more at ease.

“Surgery is a big part of what we do, but it’s also the last resort. We always try to treat conservatively to reduce the risk to the patient. I try to learn as much as possible about patients so I fully understand their conditions and explain their treatment options. I want patients to feel comfortable with me because I am genuinely interested in their lives, medically and personally,” he declared.

Hakman earned a bachelor’s degree in biological sciences at Eastern Illinois University before earning a master’s in physician assistant studies from Saint Louis University. After graduation, he returned to Effingham and joined the SBL Bonutti Clinic in Spring 2021. Hakman’s decision to return to Sarah Bush Lincoln after his graduate studies rotation was cemented by the people and the Health System’s reputation.

“Sarah Bush Lincoln is absolutely growing with respectable providers and great facilities. We are treated with the utmost respect, and the community has a lot of support for the Bonutti Clinic,” Hakman said.



For more information, or to make an appointment with Stacia Dennison, APRN, call the SBL Bonutti Clinic, Effingham, at **217 342-3400**.



For more information, or to make an appointment with Evan Hakman, PA-C, call the SBL Bonutti Clinic, Effingham, at **217 342-3400**.

## Courses, Classes and Support Groups

### Wellness

#### Center for Healthy Living

A medical center through which participants receive a custom-designed exercise and lifestyle program to manage chronic illnesses. Provider referral is required.

■ 217 238-3488

This program is funded in part by WomenConnected, a women's giving circle within the SBL Health Foundation.

#### First Aid for Emergencies; Adult and Pediatric CPR

Instructors certified by the American Heart Association. Scheduled periodically, \$50 fee for each class.

■ Shirley Sherwood, RN, 217 258-2403

#### Hearing Aid Services

Offered at Sarah Bush Lincoln and SBL Effingham Clinic. 217 258-2568

#### Living with Diabetes

This program is for people with diabetes and focuses on managing it through nutrition and exercise.

■ Paula Enstrom, RN, 217 238-4808

#### Pulmonary Rehabilitation

This program is for people with COPD, Pulmonary Fibrosis and other respiratory conditions.

■ 11 am, 12:30 pm, 2 pm every Tues. and Thurs. in the METS department.

■ Cathy Matheny, RTT, 217 238-4973

#### Tobacco Cessation Services

A program to help people quit smoking or using smokeless tobacco.

■ SBL Wellness Services, 217 258-2140

### Prepared Childbirth

#### Oh, Baby! Prenatal Education

Oh, Baby! offers a variety of comprehensive prenatal and infant care educational classes to help expectant and new parents and their babies get off to a great start. Preregistration is required. Please check the website for the most current class schedule. Some classes have a fee.

Financial assistance is available.

■ Allison Masse, RN, IBCLC, ICCE, 217 258-2229  
■ [sarahbush.org/ohbaby](http://sarahbush.org/ohbaby)

### Support Groups

#### Diabetic Support Group

■ 7 pm, second Tues. of the month in March, June, Sept. and Dec. at SBL  
■ Cindy Foster, RD, certified diabetic educator, 217 258-2135

#### Hopeful Horizons

A support group open to anyone who has lost a loved one.

■ 1 to 2:30 pm, third Thurs. of each month, Prairie Pavilion 2, at SBL Hospice  
■ 1-800-454-4055

#### Ostomy Support Group

■ Evening meetings four times a year in Mattoon and Effingham. Call for dates, times and locations.

■ Jenna Kreke, RN, 217 238-4804

#### Pathways Through Grief

A support group open to anyone who has lost a loved one.

■ 7 to 8:30 pm, first Wed. of each month  
■ Lumpkin Education Center at SBL  
■ SBL Hospice, 1-800-454-4055

### Financial Assistance

#### Affordable Care Act

Certified Application Counselors are available to help with Marketplace enrollment in the following counties: Coles, Clark, Cumberland, Douglas, Edgar, Effingham, Jasper, Moultrie and Shelby.

■ 217 238-4994

#### Financial Assistance

If you have any questions about the SBL Financial Assistance Program, please call Patient Financial Services between 8 am and 4:30 pm, Mon. through Fri.

■ 1-800-381-0040

■ Forms may be downloaded from [www.sarahbush.org](http://www.sarahbush.org)

## Mattoon Couple Honors Trailblazing Son with Windows to Heaven

# Star

The couple wanted to memorialize their gregarious son, but they weren't sure how. A Sarah Bush Lincoln employee and long-time friend suggested that the Sheehans participate in the Windows to Heaven program. Inspired by a Swedish children's song, Windows to Heaven is a series of beautifully hand-crafted windows where a brilliant night sky filled with stars can be seen. It is located in the Chapel at Sarah Bush Lincoln.

Windows to Heaven enables families who have lost children to honor their loved ones by engraving silver stars to place inside the windows. Participants may attend a commemorative ceremony at Sarah Bush Lincoln with other families who have lost children. The Sheehans brought family members and close friends along to celebrate Anthony's life.

"I stood up at the podium and shared a short story of his life, which can't be compacted down easily because he lived such an extraordinary life. We were so lucky that he was our son," Mark said.

Anthony defied fear and physical challenges by visiting Disney, attending countless St. Louis Blues games and traveling all over the world riding horses and hot air balloons. As strong advocates for his academics, the Sheehans pushed for Anthony's full integration into both the special education and regular learning programs. All of their hard work paid off in 2005 when Anthony became the first individual with Down's Syndrome to graduate from Mattoon High School.

"When he walked across that stage, he did it with pride. His teachers and classmates were wonderful to him. We didn't listen to negative people or let anyone dictate what our child could do. Anthony accomplished a lot and knew it," Moni recalled.

The couple stops by the chapel when they visit Sarah Bush Lincoln. "It's nice to go in there and see his name in the stars. I sit down to mourn him, but then I think about my happy memories with Anthony, and it's comforting," Moni said.

Funds raised from the purchase of stars go toward bereavement services including literature, support and individual counseling.



Moni and Mark Sheehan felt lost when their 32-year-old son, Anthony, passed away. For more than three decades, the trio had grown and tackled obstacles together. However, in March 2018, the trio tragically became a duo.

"We still function some days by the seat of our pants. The grief is a horrible thing. I'm so grateful to go through it with my high school sweetheart, though," Moni stressed.

Anthony was born premature, with Down's Syndrome and an enlarged heart, all of which marked him as medically fragile. Doctors from metropolitan area hospitals informed Moni and Mark that their son would not make it to his fifth birthday. They rejected the prognosis and opted to give Anthony a life with no limits.

"There were a lot of things that doctors and strangers said Anthony wouldn't be able to do, but we proved them all wrong. Most of all, he touched so many lives along the way. Teachers loved having him in class, and he made lots of friends at school, Camp New Hope and everywhere he went," Mark remarked.



For more information about bereavement services or to purchase a star, call SBL Hospice at 800-454-4055.

Sarah Bush Lincoln

## Walk-In Clinics

7 am – 7 pm  
Monday through Friday

8 am – 3 pm  
Saturday and Sunday

#### MATTOON

200 Dettro Dr.  
217 238-3000

#### CHARLESTON

2040 Lincoln Ave.  
just east of IL Route 130  
217 345-2030

#### TUSCOLA

1100 Tuscola Blvd.  
217 253-4764

#### EFFINGHAM

905 N. Maple St.  
217 540-6123

10 am – 8 pm  
Monday through Friday

# We are changing ...and it's not just our name.

Organizations evolve. And over the years, we've evolved too. The post-acute care services, which include Lincolnland Home Care, Lincolnland Hospice, and Lincolnland Home Medical Equipment, have changed their names to Sarah Bush Lincoln Home Care, Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospice and Sarah Bush Lincoln Home Medical Equipment.

Sarah Bush Lincoln acquired Lincolnland Home Care and Hospice nearly 25 years ago. Over those years they have become Sarah Bush Lincoln, adopting the culture and service standards of the Health Center and clinics. We are one organization and the post-acute care services name reflects this. This change will fully integrate the post-acute care services into Sarah Bush Lincoln and have access

to all the resources of Sarah Bush Lincoln. This transition is expected to be complete by July 1.

While the name change may be the most obvious, other changes are subtler, but perhaps more important to those who trust us to care for their patients and their family members. We're committed to being more available in person throughout our service area that stretches to 20 counties for hospice and home medical equipment, and 15 counties for home care. Our community deserves the best and we will strive every single day to exceed expectations!

# Sarah Bush Lincoln

1000 Health Center Drive  
PO Box 372  
Mattoon, Illinois 61938-0372



Printed on recycled paper.

**May 14, 2022 | [sarahbush.org/races](http://sarahbush.org/races)**

# Races for all Paces



**O'Brien Stadium @ EIU**

**Half Marathon | 10K | 5K | 1 Mile Walk/Run**  
7 am                      7:50 am      8:15 am                      9:30 am

**Toddler Trot & Diaper Dash**  
10:15 am

Register today:  
**[www.sarahbush.org/races](http://www.sarahbush.org/races)**

For more information call  
**217 345-6828**