

# The Meaning of Care<sup>®</sup>

magazine

Summer 2013

**Lee Vogt**

Rescued from Death  
by Aortic Dissection

  
**METHODIST**







**John M. Fraser**  
President and CEO  
Methodist Health System

## President's Letter

We are fortunate to have real-life superheroes in the world. They do not wear capes, nor do they fly solo. Instead, they unite with others to offer help, healing and hope where it is clearly needed.

Miracles become possible when people act compassionately and collaboratively, devoting their skills and knowledge to helping others. We see this every day in the heroic actions of the Methodist physicians and staff who make a difference in our hospitals, clinics, community — and halfway around the world.

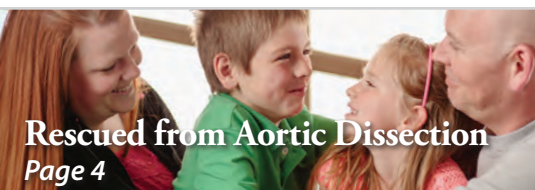
Examples close to home include the Methodist Hospital medical teams that rescued a father from imminent death due to aortic dissection. Caregivers battled against impossible odds to bring Lee Vogt back from the brink and then to assist Lee and his family on a journey of recovery.

Aortic dissection is a too-common killer that can be missed or misdiagnosed, as it was in the tragic deaths of 19-year-old Omahan Tyler Kahle in 2002 and actor John Ritter in 2003. Here at Methodist, we have worked hard to take what we have learned beyond our walls, advancing systemic change in the diagnosis and treatment of aortic disease so others, like Lee, will get a second chance.

Second chances and mini-miracles are happening half a world away thanks to the medical missions Dr. Joseph Dumba leads to his homeland in South Sudan. With only 120 doctors for 10 million people, South Sudan is one of the world's most medically underserved nations. Dr. Dumba and the mission team members are helping to reshape the future of South Sudan and its people.

These “superheroes” are making a difference without fanfare or capes — just one more way to live the Meaning of Care.

Sincerely,



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## News Briefs

### Methodist Women's Hospital Welcomes 10,000th Baby

On Saturday, April 6, Methodist Women's Hospital reached an impressive milestone.

At 2:56 p.m., the hospital's 10,000th baby arrived healthy, happy and to the cheers of the labor and delivery staff and Dr. Carolee Jones, Methodist Physicians Clinic Women's Center OB/GYN, who delivered.



**Jenna and Avery Grace Friesen**

To reach the 10,000 mark in less than three years is quite an accomplishment.

Avery Grace Friesen weighed 8 pounds and was 20 inches long. She is the first child for Jenna and Barrett Friesen of Omaha.

Avery was born in the same room as the first baby to be delivered at Methodist Women's Hospital shortly after it opened its doors on June 21, 2010 – purely by coincidence!

### Twitter Chat Raises Sexual Assault Awareness

A unique social media event and collaboration among organizations resulted in a greater awareness of sexual assault resources and prevention.



**Several agencies participated in the SANE/SART Twitter chat.**

A Twitter chat, held April 21, saw Methodist Hospital SANE/SART, the Omaha Police Department, Women's Center for Advancement and UNO Voices Against Violence come together for a one-hour live chat. The Twitter chat was held in conjunction with Sexual Assault Awareness Month, which is observed each April.

Using the hashtag #BeAwareOutThere, the unique social media event reached thousands of young women throughout the Metro area and beyond.

### Methodist Women's Hospital Earns Chamber Honor

Methodist Women's Hospital was honored as the 2013 Business of the Year at the recently held Western Douglas County Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Banquet.

Since opening its doors in June of 2010, the Women's Hospital has been an active member of the Western Douglas County community while providing quality care to county residents and the Metro area.



**Those present to accept the award were, from left: Cindy Mirfield, service leader, NICU; Stephen Zubrod, corporate vice president marketing; John Fraser,**

**president and CEO of Methodist Health System; Julie Donnelly, service leader, Surgery and Emergency Department; Sue Korth, vice president and COO of Methodist Women's Hospital; Steve Goeser, president and CEO of Methodist Hospital; Sharon McArdle, service leader, Labor and Delivery and director of nursing; Lisa Smith, service leader, Mother/Baby; and Ronni Draper, manager, Childbirth Education and Outreach.**



**From left: Greg and Theresa McDermott, Steve Goeser, Josie Abboud and Patty Bauer hold the Creighton Pink Out event poster.**

### Special Visitors to 6 South

In appreciation of Methodist Health System's participation in the February 2 Pink Out basketball game versus Bradley, Creighton basketball coach Greg McDermott and his wife, Theresa, recently paid a visit to 6 South at Methodist Hospital.

During their visit, they talked with breast cancer patients Cindy Albus from Morse Bluffs and Misty Biel from Ogallala. The visit was especially meaningful to the patients, as the McDermotts offered encouragement, with Theresa herself a breast cancer survivor.

While on 6 South, they presented autographed posters to hospital officials Steve Goeser, president and CEO, Methodist Hospital; Josie Abboud, vice president, Ancillary and Professional Services; and Patty Bauer, service executive, Oncology Services.

The Pink Out event raised \$30,000 for the American Cancer Society.





# Alive!

## LEE VOGT'S RESCUE FROM DEATH BY AORTIC DISSECTION

Family friend Lindsey Neff joins in as Matthias and Alexis Vogt celebrate the joy of life with their dad, aortic dissection survivor Lee Vogt.

Speed and skill prevented death by aortic dissection.

For more information, visit [bestcare.org/heart](http://bestcare.org/heart).



**"I'm alive! I wake up every day grateful just to wake up."**

Lee Vogt, 42, describes himself as a changed man who now feels every breath, every heartbeat, every opportunity to wrap his arms around his two young children as both a blessing and a medical miracle.

When Lee says "I'm not the same person I used to be," he is talking about more than the

10-inch surgical scar down his chest or the soft clicking of the mechanical heart valve placed inside.

"God hit me over the head with a two-by-four," Lee explains. "Everything is different now — body, mind and spirit."

Lee wants people to know that great good can come from adversity, including his catastrophic health crisis.

"My old life ended, and a new one began."

### Life Before

Lee says his old life was a simple one: A satisfying warehouse job that put his considerable strength to good use. The quick comfort of fast food, caffeine and cigarettes.

Even with extra pounds on his 6' 6" frame, high blood pressure and back problems, Lee felt able-bodied and invulnerable.

A divorced dad, Lee lived for his weekends with son Matthias, 9, and daughter Alexis, 7.

They spent time playing at parks, swimming, reading, video gaming, laughing and just being together.

Lee says he is forever grateful that the catastrophe did not happen on one of his weekends with the kids.

### God's Two-by-Four

On that fateful Sunday, December 16, 2012, Lee visited longtime friend Lindsey Neff.

"There were no warning signs. Lee seemed fine when he left," Lindsey explains. "Moments

**"God hit me over the head with a two-by-four. Everything is different now — body, mind and spirit."**

— Lee Vogt

later, he called me from his car, his voice weak and barely recognizable. Lee said just two words: 'Come here.'"

"Before I could drive away, I was hit by the worst back pain of my life," Lee remembers. "On a scale of one to ten, this was a 15."

Lee remembers saying "Call 911," feeling a leg go numb, being loaded into the ambulance, and then nothing of the next five days.

### Diagnosis: Aortic Dissection

He has no memory of arriving at the Methodist Hospital Emergency Department, conscious and able to describe his pain to Kelly Schroeder, MD, and nurses Chelsea Craig, BSN, and Kim Pettegrew, BSN. He has no memory of Lindsey by his side as his condition rapidly deteriorated, or of the care team racing to keep him alive.

Dr. Schroeder immediately suspected more than a back problem. She rushed Lee in for a CT scan to check for aortic dissection, a potentially fatal tear in the aorta, the body's largest blood vessel, which carries blood from the heart.

"We have to rule out what will kill you first," Dr. Schroeder said. "The aorta stays at the top of the list until proven otherwise."

Dr. Schroeder explained that aortic dissection can occur at any age, with a variety of symptoms. Appropriate imaging tests must be done quickly to exclude the diagnosis for those at high risk, and most dissections require emergency surgery. These are lessons that were learned at Methodist



Lee Vogt



Lee, loving father of Matthias and Alexis



Cardiothoracic surgeon  
John Batter, MD





Hospital from the tragic death of 19-year-old Tyler Kahle to undiagnosed thoracic aortic dissection in 2002. (See sidebar, “Tyler Kahle’s Lifesaving Legacy.”)

When Lee’s CT scan revealed a tear in the aorta running from his heart down one leg, emergency calls were placed to cardiothoracic surgeon John Batter, MD, to a Methodist Hospital surgical team and to Lee’s family.

## Long Odds, Long Road Ahead

“The E.D. staff gently but firmly explained that surgery was Lee’s only hope,” Lindsey said. “The entire time they were giving Lee such excellent and prompt care, they also gave me so much compassion and support. I wanted them to focus on Lee, and they did — while comforting me too.”

Soon Lindsey was joined by Lee’s father and stepmother, Mel and Linda Vogt, of Harlan, Iowa, and Lee’s brother, Mike.

“Hearing your kid is in the hospital is a shock,” Mel said. “I was just so thankful Lee was still alive.”

“We learned Lee had maybe a 10 percent chance of making it through surgery,” Mike said, “and a long road ahead if he did.”

## In Trouble

“Lee was in trouble,” Dr. Batter explained. “I had to relieve the pressure of the blood pooling around his heart, knowing his aorta could rupture at any time — and it did when I opened his chest. Essentially, Lee was dying in the E.D. and dead in the O.R.”

“I have the greatest love and respect for everyone associated with saving my life.”

— Lee Vogt

Dr. Batter repaired the tear in Lee’s ascending aorta, replacing the ruptured aortic root with a graft and the shredded aortic valve with a mechanical one. He emphasized that speed, training, teamwork and experience are of the essence in a case like this.

“Every second counted, so both the E.D. and O.R. teams merit special kudos,” said Dr. Batter. “Their performance was exemplary, both in making the diagnosis and in expediting everything needed for an emergency surgery of this kind.”

In the waiting room, brother Mike was uncertain what was worse: waiting or knowing. Would Lee live? With what quality of life?

Methodist Hospital chaplain Tony Salomone joined with family and friends as they kept vigil. Lee’s dad described chaplain Tony’s presence then and in the weeks to come as “a great inspiration and comfort.”

## Milestones

Prayers were answered. Lee survived the difficult surgery, eventually awakening in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) on a ventilator, his condition fragile, his care complex. Lee exceeded all expectations just by being alive.

Although Lee has no memory of his ICU stay, his father was struck by the doctors’ and nurses’ “friendliness, constant care and vigilance” in providing the healing environment Lee needed.



Kelly Schroeder, MD

John Batter, MD

When he finally regained consciousness, Lee was shocked to learn what had happened and to find family rallied around him. For years, Lee had had little or no contact with his father, stepmother and brother. The relationships had been rocky at best.

“I was always closer to my mom, and her death five years before was a turning point,” Lee said. “When she died, I lost my faith, quit my plans to enter the ministry and broke from family. Yet here they were, offering love and assistance.”

Another milestone was Lee’s transfer to the Cardiac Unit, where he celebrated Christmas Day with family and brief visits from well-wishers, including the nurses who cared for him in the E.D. After chatting with Lee, Chelsea Craig remembers thinking, “This is why I became a nurse — to play a part in saving a life.”

## Devotion to Duty

Mel Vogt later wrote a letter of appreciation thanking the Methodist Hospital teams for “exemplary devotion to duty” in saving Lee’s life and helping the family through a troublesome time.

“All of the doctors and nurses and staff went out of their way to do all the right things at the right time, not only to care for my son,” Mel said, “but to be supportive of our family.”

Mel described the personal attention from cardiac nurses Ron Salsbury, BSN, and Chad Colburn, BSN, as exactly what his son needed for the long journey ahead, and Lee agrees.

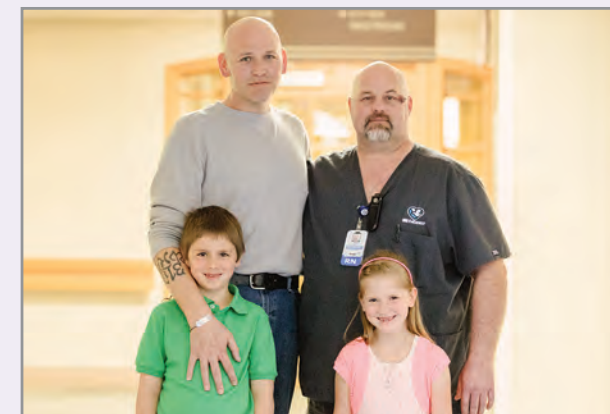
“Ron told me straight up how lucky I was that doctors were able bring me back — this time,” Lee said. “He and Chad helped me see I had to change my ways, stop smoking, eat healthy and let family back in to help.”

Another lesson was the importance of family medical history, especially in cases of aortic dissection. Lee was surprised to uncover several related problems on the maternal side of his family tree. While Lee will never know if aortic weakness may have contributed to his mother’s death, family members are taking steps to deal with the potentially increased risk.

## Life Now

Lee is also stepping forward to educate others about aortic dissection and the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

“I don’t want another family being told their loved one won’t be coming home because of aortic dissection,” Lee said. “I’m only here because everything fell into place exactly as it needed to, and I have the greatest love and respect for everyone associated with saving my life.”

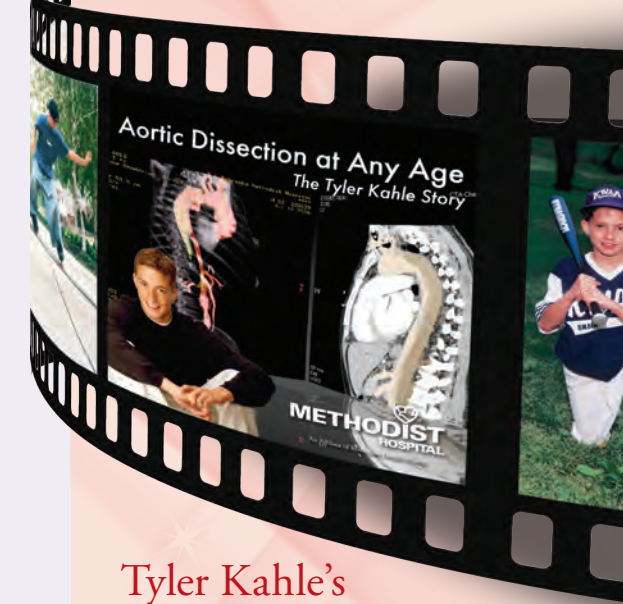


Lee and his children return to thank cardiac nurse Ron Salsbury, BSN.

A changed man, Lee is grateful to have his life, faith and family back.

“I get to be a father, a son, a brother,” Lee says. “This was my wakeup call from God. He’s not done with me yet, and I’m going to make the most of my second chance.”

♥ Story by Julie Cerney



## Tyler Kahle’s Lifesaving Legacy

### Methodist’s Leadership Role in Aortic Dissection

Lee Vogt is alive thanks to the skill of Methodist Hospital’s care teams and to innovations implemented after 19-year-old Tyler Kahle died from an undiagnosed thoracic aortic dissection in 2002. Methodist developed and hardwired an aortic dissection bundle of diagnostic steps, established a chest pain center and shared lessons learned in the award-winning video “Aortic Dissection at Any Age: The Tyler Kahle Story.”

Heralding the video during this year’s National Patient Safety Week, the Sorry Works! organization said, “Not only has this video advanced patient safety at this one hospital, but also at many other facilities around the United States.”

Methodist’s continuing partnership and advocacy with Tyler’s mother, Deb McMillan, has included national presentations, distribution of the video to emergency departments, online education, founding membership in the TAD (Thoracic Aortic Disease) Coalition and adoption of key changes by three of the top five providers of emergency department information system software to improve the diagnosis and treatment of thoracic aortic dissection, saving lives nationwide.

To learn more, visit [bestcare.org/Tyler](http://bestcare.org/Tyler).





Joe Partusch works with Cindy Schwieger, physical therapist, on improving his range of motion.



# LSVT BIG AND LOUD

Having a conversation with Joe Partusch these days can be entertaining and, quite frankly, rather loud.

That's not being critical of Joe; it's just that several months ago, chatting with Joe was much different and oftentimes repetitive.

You see, Joe was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2004. Since that initial diagnosis and over time, his foot started dragging, his dexterity became problematic and his speaking voice fell to a hush.

"I was devastated when I found out," Joe said of the diagnosis. "But then I thought, because of the Parkinson's, I can make a milkshake all by myself."

That's Joe's sense of humor coming through in reference to the tremors and trembling often associated with the disease.

## The Impact of Parkinson's

Parkinson's disease impacts the lives of more men and women in the Midwest, including Nebraska and Iowa, than any other region of the country. The disease can hinder a person's ability to walk, talk or even complete simple tasks of daily living.

The disease slowly began to take a toll on Joe's life. The dragging foot, the loss of dexterity and the softening of his voice eventually led him to leave his postal job in Omaha.

Medications were prescribed, which helped through the years, but his voice became even softer, resulting in lots of repetition when he would have conversations with family and friends.

## Exploring Other Options

Joe had reached a point where he was ready to explore other treatment options. Enter the Lee Silverman Voice Training (LSVT) BIG and LOUD programs at Methodist Hospital.

Methodist was the first certified program in the Metro to offer both BIG and LOUD therapies as options for treatment for Parkinson's.

The LSVT program has become the gold-standard treatment for Parkinson's patients suffering from speech and motor function issues.

"Our LSVT program pairs patients with LSVT-certified speech, occupational and physical therapists who will work to enhance their quality of life," said Cindy Schwieger, physical therapist with the program.

Participants in the BIG and LOUD programs are taken through 16 sessions that focus on improvement of core physical movements while maximizing speech intelligibility.

“My steps used to be very small — now I’m taking bigger strides.”

— Joe Partusch

"The LOUD portion of the program helps patients improve their vocal loudness, speech and facial expressions," Schwieger said. "The BIG component will help patients walk faster with bigger steps, improve their balance and increase their trunk rotation."

## Commitment to Change

When Joe started the program, he was committed 100 percent — he wanted to improve his quality of life.

"Once I got involved, I made up my mind I was going to give 100 percent," Joe said. "After



Lauren Kincaid, speech language pathologist, works with Joe on improving his voice.

the third session, I began to notice a difference. I worked hard on my dexterity and my balance. My steps used to be very small — now I'm taking bigger strides."

Upon completion of the sessions, the work does not stop. Every patient is given a program to continue working on at home.

"I do my exercises every day," Joe said. "If I don't, my granddaughter reminds me and we do them together."

Now, each day, Joe steps with authority, can grab an egg with ease and speaks with confidence — and enjoys a good milkshake now and then.

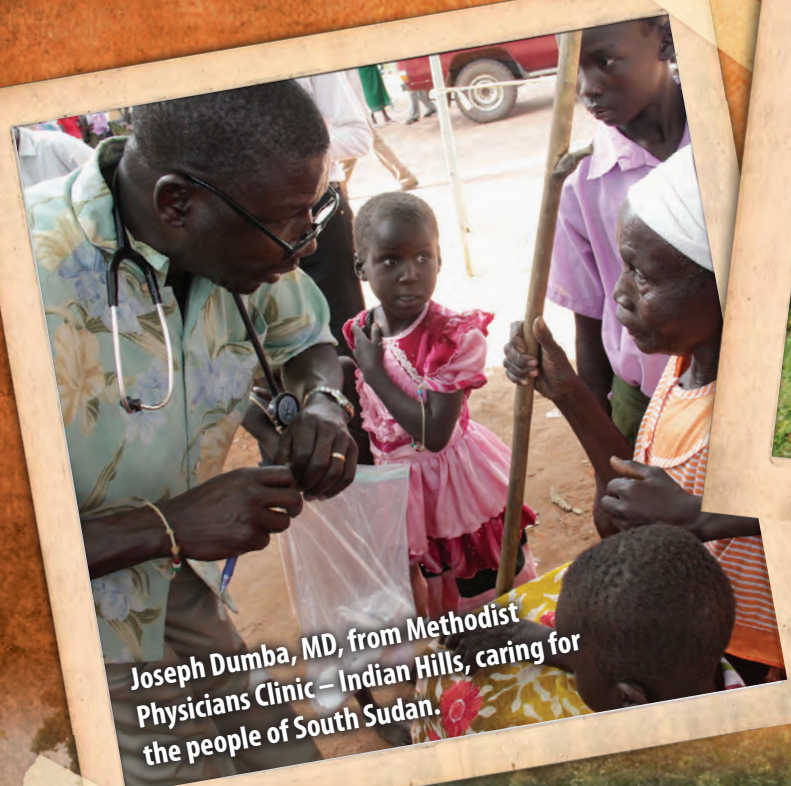
Story by Claudia Bohm





# Journey to South Sudan

A MEDICAL MISSION TRIP OF FAITH AND HEALING



Joseph Dumba, MD, from Methodist Physicians Clinic – Indian Hills, caring for the people of South Sudan.



Amy Anderson, Methodist Health System marketing account manager, in Kajo Keji, South Sudan.



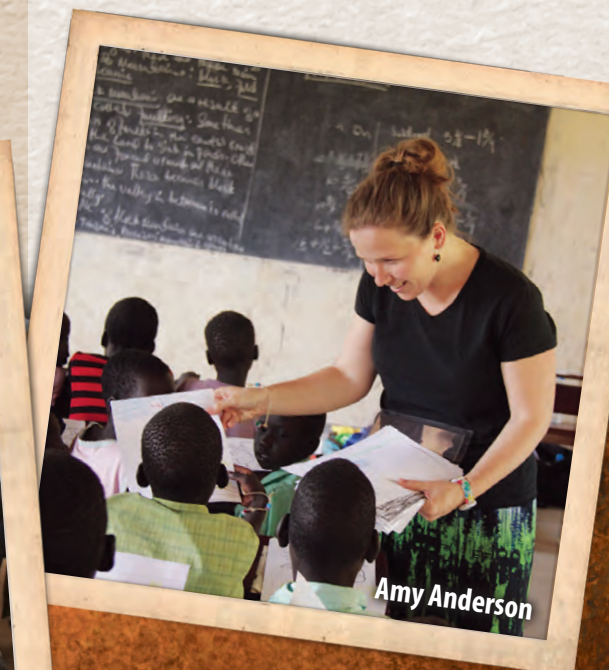
KAJO KEJI (SOUTH SUDAN)



Dan Steier, MD



Alicia Abboud, BSN



Amy Anderson

*“I first saw images of religious persecution when I was a teenager. Millions of people around the world were being killed or made to suffer for holding different beliefs about God, with the most severe persecution of Christians centered in war-torn Sudan.*

*Focusing on a different country each day, I started praying for those who suffered. Though I have likely forgotten a few daily prayers over the past 15 years, I remember Fridays. Fridays are for Sudan. ”*

—Amy Anderson

Amy Anderson is a marketing account manager for Methodist Health System. She is also a world traveler who finds the greatest joy not in the easy comfort of traditional tourism, but in getting to know and give back to people in need. Her travels, often with faith-based organizations, have taken her to places like India, Mexico, Niger, Northern Ireland, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uganda. This year, she joined in a medical mission trip to help those she keeps close in her heart and her prayers: the people of South Sudan.

Amy was one of the two dozen mission team members led by Methodist Physicians Clinic family medicine physician Joseph Dumba, MD. This was Dr. Dumba's fifth medical mission to his homeland since the signing of Sudan's 2005 peace accords, which ended decades of civil war.

Amy describes how the South Sudan mission trip deepened her admiration for the members of the team, reinforced the power of prayer and illustrated all that is possible when people reach out to make a difference.

## Such a Young Nation

Our 9,000-mile journey from Omaha to Kajo Keji, a village and county in South Sudan, takes four plane trips and a six-hour Jeep ride, bouncing across the bush country and sloshing through rivers. We have come to a very young nation in a beautiful but remote part of the world.

It would be easy to focus on what is not here: no paved roads, bridges, electricity, running water or flush toilets. Most people grow up without ever seeing a doctor. Many grow up without ever wearing shoes.

With brutal civil wars spanning half a century, generations grew up knowing death, destruction, poverty, famine and hunger. In the most recent war, which raged from 1983 to 2005, more than 2 million South Sudanese were killed. Millions more, like Dr. Dumba and his wife, Sabina, fled as refugees, fortunate to escape with their lives.

The hopes and dreams of millions were realized when the Republic of South Sudan was born on July 9, 2011. Our mission team arrives in April 2013, before this young nation



celebrates its second birthday. I am struck not by a lack of first-world conveniences, but by the strength and resilience of these people, who clearly treasure their country's new freedom and independence.

Filled with Celebration and Joy

While the people may have few material possessions, their capacity for celebration, friendship and laughter seems limitless. I am overwhelmed by the warm welcome we receive — the smiles, songs and jubilant dancing.

The villagers take special joy in greeting their returning hero: Joseph Dumba, the son of a Kajo Keji peasant, returns to give back to the people of his homeland. He speaks their language, understands their joy and suffering, and inspires great leaps in faith and practical good works wherever he goes.

The colleagues and friends Dr. Dumba brings with him include Dr. John Franklin, Drs. Dan and Jim Steier, and nurses Jessica Pfeiffer and Glenette Robinson, all from Methodist Physicians Clinic – Indian Hills, and nurse Alicia Abboud from Methodist Hospital. Dr. Dumba brings physicians, nurses, pharmacy staff, a water sanitation engineer and members

of Christian faith ministries, like me. Our mission is to help as many people as can — body, mind and spirit.

The villagers view the team's presence as a wonderful gift, and they reciprocate, presenting us with a live goat. This is Dr. Jim Steier's birthday, so "Stewie" becomes Dr. Jim's special present and a central part of the evening meal. Stewie is a delicious gift, contributing to a one-of-a-kind birthday celebration we all enjoy.

Bright, Beautiful Children

The children of South Sudan are delightful. They are beautiful, playful, outgoing and smart — both like and unlike U.S. children in many ways. They grow up in mud huts, called

South Sudan has 120 doctors to care for the nation's 10 million people.

Source: Ministry of Health, South Sudan

tukuls. The luckiest ones, those whose families can afford to pay for schooling, sit crowded together on rickety benches, eager to learn from teachers who have few books for their students, often just a chalkboard.

We give the children Bibles, crayons and coloring paper. For most, this Bible is their only book and the crayons are prized additions to their few school supplies. I am thrilled and humbled by their joy in accepting these gifts, and by the skill and creativity shown in their coloring.

We teach the children a lesson about connections between our two homelands on a world map, sharing photos of the children in Omaha who bundled the crayons and continue to send their prayers and good wishes. My South Sudanese students laugh with me as I do my best to use the dozen words I know of the local Bari language.

A student named Grace tugs a little harder at my heart. Like the others, male and female, her hair is cropped close to the scalp. (I learn this is a necessity in a land that teams with parasites but lacks clean water for drinking and washing.) She, too, is eager to learn, but her challenge is greater than most. Grace attends school with her infant sister tied on her back.

This is a nation of 10 million people and just 120 doctors, with one of the world's shortest life expectancies and highest death rates during childbirth and infancy. For the children who manage to survive diarrhea, malaria, pneumonia and other dangers, access to education is limited, but improving. According to the World Bank, girls in South Sudan now have a 17 percent chance of obtaining an eighth-grade education. I can't help but wonder what the future holds for Grace and her sister.

Great Need, Contagious Hope

No matter how early we rise to set up the day's clinic, we find a line of people, patiently awaiting us. They journey to us on foot, willing to walk day and night for the chance to see a doctor. They come dressed in their Sunday best because this is a special occasion. For some it will be a life-changing, even a lifesaving event.



Nearly 10,000 villagers were treated in five days.

I have always admired the care and compassion Methodist Health System's doctors and nurses provide to their patients — but perhaps never more than today, at the nurses' check-in center under a mango tree, or inside this Kajo Keji schoolroom, now a makeshift clinic the doctors share. I watch six physicians at work, each warmly greeting patient after patient. Gently, tirelessly, with the help of an interpreter when needed, the doctors ask about concerns, assess needs, give care and comfort.

Patients come with untreated burns and broken bones, snakebites, tumors and intestinal parasites that make children's

tummies swell and ache while robbing them of the nutrition needed to grow bigger and stronger. Cataracts are commonplace, thanks to a lack of eye protection from the tropical sun. Crushing neck and back pain is a frequent complaint from women, who carry 40 pounds of water on their heads each day, making trip after trip to a well or a puddle of rainwater to refill the large jugs for their families.

In the clinic, I watch one small miracle after another unfold.

A wound is dressed and antibiotics are given to stop an infection that would have taken a limb or a life. Children get vitamins and medicines that will give them a little time to grow stronger. A woman's eyes light up when Dr. Franklin fits her with reading glasses that suddenly sharpen her vision. A frail old woman who has not eaten in days hears Dr. Dumba say, "You must buy food," as he slips a few South Sudanese pounds into her hand.

And, sometimes, for some of the families, the needs are so great that all we can do is pray together.

Over five clinic days, each at a different village, the team sees nearly 10,000 patients. The final day is the longest, the line seemingly endless. The team scrambles faster, triaging feverishly to identify those most in need before darkness falls and we must go. On this day, nearly twice as many patients

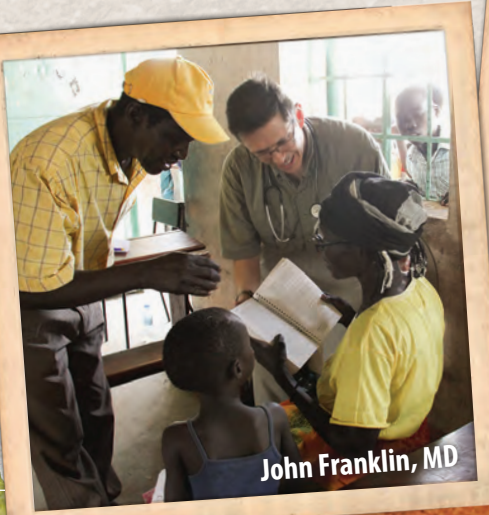
are seen. Still, hundreds must be turned away, a potential death sentence for some.

Many individuals, churches and other organizations in the Omaha area helped to make this mission trip possible with donations of time, money, materials and medicines. More supporters are needed to help Dr. Dumba and the Healing Kadi Foundation bring modern, reliable, sustainable health care to South Sudan.

A major step forward was taken when a fully functioning medical facility made from three 40-foot shipping containers, called "Clinics in a Can," opened on a Kajo Keji hillside this summer. Visiting medical mission teams will assist the clinic's small full-time staff, and so much more is becoming possible with exam rooms, X-ray machine, a surgical suite, pharmacy, laboratory and office — all with electricity and clean water. The next goal is construction of a full hospital on this site, with three operating rooms, a maternity ward and emergency room.

While the need is great, so is the enthusiasm to help that has caught fire and continues to spread. Like other members of the team, I leave South Sudan eager for a chance to return. I want to do more to help these people and this young nation.

To learn more, visit [healingKadi.org](http://healingKadi.org). Story by Amy Anderson, with Julie Cerney





## EARNING AN *A+* IN Philanthropy



From left: Brita Sjogren, Corrin Killion, Allison Brock, Madelyn Pospisil, Phoebe Perry, Mr. Paul Nielson - NHS Adviser, Marian Gottner, Dallas Sims, Melissa Seyler

Never underestimate the determination of a teenager — or in this case, the determination of an entire student body.

Students at Omaha Central High School raised \$2,737.21 to renovate and expand the Methodist Hospital Surgery Department, the busiest surgical center in Nebraska.

“Make your community a better place; give back” is what National Honor Society adviser Paul Nielson told his students.

The students listened and set up a two-week competition, asking classmates to donate their spare change.

“The students chose to contribute the money to the Surgery Renovation Project because it impacts the entire community,” said Nielson. “And the students really like that Methodist Hospital Foundation has a donor who is doubling every gift. Their donation has an even bigger impact.”

The competition pitted Central’s 81 homerooms against each other.

The effort received a big boost from freshman Corrin Killion, who became very familiar with Methodist

Hospital after dislocating her shoulder. Corrin’s experience in the Emergency Department made her a grateful patient.

“I’m not sure if it was the care she received or that she was coming out of anesthesia, but she did profess her love to a male nurse,” said Becky Balestri, Corrin’s mom.

Driven by her time at Methodist and her competitive nature, Corrin started asking relatives for donations.

“My uncle said he would give a gift with one condition — I needed to give too,” said Corrin, “and I did!”

Corrin’s mom, who spent time in the Methodist Emergency Department herself, cheered on her daughter and also gave a gift.

“This shows a commitment by the students. It shows they are interested in the community,” said Becky. “It’s important to remember others.”

The students aren’t done yet. They plan to raise more money next year. The goal is to get Central’s name on the donor recognition wall, which they will achieve after raising a total of \$5,000.

“We can do it,” said Corrin.

They’ll rely on the same determination that helped them surpass this year’s goal; an achievement worthy of an A+.

### Supporting Surgical Excellence

Methodist Hospital Foundation thanks these generous donors who have made gifts of **\$25,000 and greater** to benefit the Methodist Hospital Surgery Renovation Project. The gifts recognized below were made between **April 1, 2012 and May 31, 2013.**

Dr. Tyron Alli  
Anesthesia West, P.C.  
Chad Bauerly, M.D.  
Monte Christo, M.D.  
Mark D’Agostino, M.D.  
Tad Freeburg, M.D.  
Michael Grubb, M.D.  
Gregg Hirz, M.D.  
Stephen Hosman, M.D.  
Wes Hubka, M.D.  
Kent Hultquist, M.D.  
Kent Hutton, M.D.  
Paul Jacobsen, M.D.  
John Lindsey, III, M.D.  
Robert Moore, M.D.  
Thomas Ohrt, M.D.  
John Peterson, M.D.  
Kelli Peterson, M.D.  
Hap Pocras, M.D.  
Douglas Rennels, M.D.  
Chris Robertson, M.D.  
Josh Smith, M.D.  
J. Kenneth Tiojanco, M.D.  
Mark Wilson, M.D.

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