

ELLIS INSIGHT



Ellis
MEDICINE

Giving from the Heart

Lester and Karen Gerhardt of Clifton Park have been blessed with good health and happiness for all of their 54 years of marriage, and continue their active sports lifestyle with their two grandchildren. Regular annual visits to their primary care physician reinforced their confidence that they were doing everything right.

Yet, last September was an eye-opener for both of them.

One day, Les felt "off." He wasn't tired, achy or weak, but he was perspiring. Karen noted something more and they saw their personal physician, Dr. Steffani Cotugno. She quickly assessed the situation and had one question: "Which hospital?" Thankfully, they chose Ellis.

Les was brought to Ellis by ambulance and Dr. Peter Cospito and the Cath Lab team were ready. Dr. Cospito quickly discovered that a stent would not work for Les. Emergency open heart surgery was his only option and with that, Dr. Kyril Choumarov and his team, in conjunction with infectious disease specialist Dr. David Liebers, gave Lester the gift of continued life by discovering and treating the infection around his heart.

Ellis' team of physicians, nurses and staff provided very good care every step of the way.

"I was kept abreast of Les' status even when I went home," Karen said. "I was surprised but very pleased to hear from the doctor on the weekend with an update. It gave me confidence that we chose the right hospital," she added. For some, hospitals are not on one's radar until scares like the Gerhardts' happen.

"The care I received after my surgery was just as impressive as the care I received in the Operating Room," said Lester. "I saw my team of doctors each day and found their competency and passion for their profession to be only exceeded by their compassion for my



Karen and Lester Gerhardt

overall well-being. After several days, they seemed more like my family than my doctors," Lester explained.

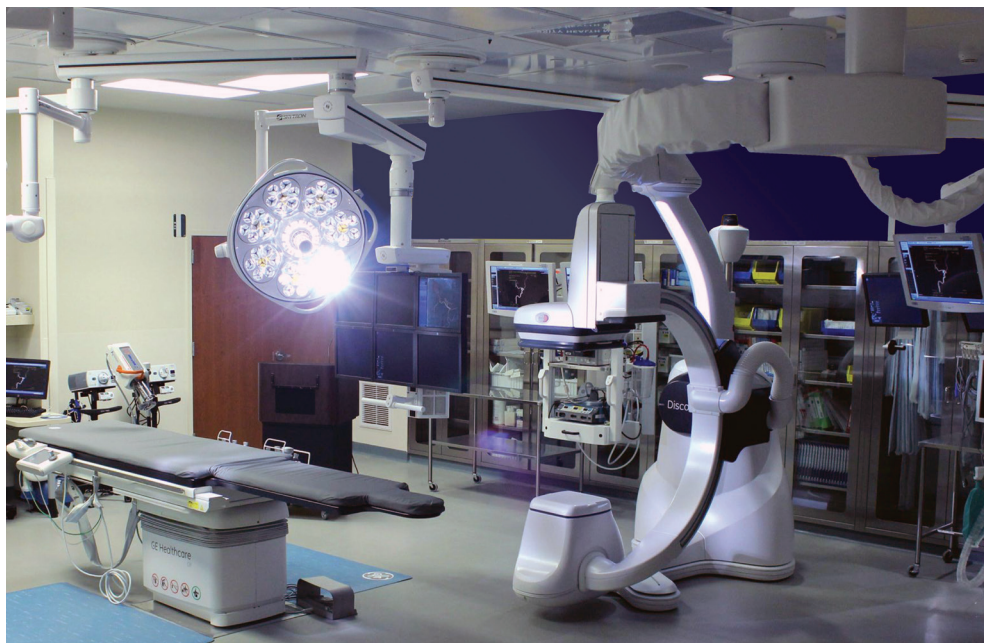
“I saw my team of doctors each day and found their competency and passion for their profession to be only exceeded by their compassion for my overall well-being. After several days, they seemed more like my family than my doctors.”

LESTER GERHARDT
Clifton Park

Les participated in Ellis' programs following discharge, with regular doctor visits, ultrasounds, and visiting nurse support and both he and Karen quickly became enfolded in the Ellis family.

Inquisitive by nature, Les and Karen wanted to learn more about Ellis because it had such a significant impact on their lives, and in particular, Ellis' new project, the Center for Surgical & Interventional Medicine. The new Center will bring the next generation of technology and surgery together to revolutionize the way cardiac and vascular surgery is performed—a purpose Les and Karen could get behind.

This September, the Gerhardts celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary, and Les' first anniversary of extended life by traveling, playing tennis, kayaking, and waterskiing, taking not a single day for granted. And they take great comfort in knowing that Ellis, a nationally recognized heart center, is nearby. "I feel secure knowing that Ellis is in my community, and now the hospital is included in the organizations we support." ●



Construction Progresses on the new Center for Surgical & Interventional Medicine

Ellis is investing \$19.4 million to renovate and expand cardiac, vascular and interventional surgery with upgrades to technology, operating and procedure rooms and the pre- and post-care recovery areas. The jewel of the new Center for Surgical & Interventional Medicine will be a state-of-the-art hybrid operating room (OR) where a team of surgeons, interventionalists, nurses, anesthesiologists, and technicians will work seamlessly together—all to provide better quality of care and better medical outcomes for our community.



Dr. Robert Joy of Cardiology Associates of Schenectady and Chief of Cardiac Services at Ellis, is one of the physicians spearheading this project. With advances in technology, there are

more and more procedures that surgeons can partner with to deliver better care. "The hybrid OR allows us to offer the latest procedures to our patients and uphold our leadership position in cardiac care," said Joy. Currently, in some cases, patients have to be transferred from one location within the hospital to another, under anesthesia to complete those procedures. This is not ideal for the patient, the surgeons

“The best treatment for many cardiac and vascular patients often involves a combination of surgical procedures and non-surgical treatments (also known as interventional procedures). These two converging specialties have different surgical needs. The Center will offer a flexible, versatile environment to perform procedures, and more complex ‘open’ surgeries within the same operating space.”

DR. SEAN RODDY
Chief, Division of Vascular Surgery

or the anesthesiologist. "The hybrid OR is a surgeon's dream come true. And, most importantly, it's great for patients too," added Joy.

Ellis' superb surgical team delivers top quality outcomes—on par with national centers, such as the Cleveland

Why Ellis, Why Now?

- 1 Cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death in the communities we serve.
- 2 Ellis' Wright Heart Center is a leader in technological advancement, providing the latest interventions—close to home.
- 3 The Center for Surgical & Interventional Medicine will bring the next generation of technology to our community.
- 4 High rates of heart disease in our community, an aging population, and new technology and procedures create a need for surgical care that cannot be met by the other hospitals in the region.

Clinic—but they are coping with older equipment and disconnected, cramped spaces outdated for today's complex, technology driven procedures.

"Our patients deserve treatments that minimize discomfort, speed recovery and restore health, and our physicians are committed to staying at the forefront of medicine, using the latest technology to deliver the best possible care," said Paul Milton, Ellis President & CEO. Ellis is committed to assuring that our providers have the tools and the ability to work together, utilizing evidence-based quality and safety practices.

The Center for Surgical & Interventional Medicine project is funded through hospital operations and philanthropy. If you would like to learn more about the project, please call the Foundation at 518.243.4600. ●

PATIENTS WILL BENEFIT BY:

- > Shorter procedure times
- > Less radiation used during imaging
- > Reduced need for ICU care
- > Shorter hospital stays
- > Faster recovery



Werner Feibes

The Gift of Gratitude

When Werner Feibes fell off his roof in 2004, he landed in an alleyway next to his home in Schenectady's Stockade. He injured his entire left side so severely that he spent more than six weeks in the hospital, followed by two weeks of home care provided by the Visiting Nurse Service of Northeastern New York, or VNS for short.

Now, at the age of 87, Werner is fully recovered from his accident. When he first left the hospital, he was told that he could expect to never regain the full use of his leg and foot. "I'm happy to show that they were wrong," he says, as he rotates his foot. "I had a fantastic nurse from the VNS. She demonstrated what she wanted me to do, rather than telling me." Werner, an architect, is a visual learner. His nurse knew the perfect approach for working with him in the comfort and privacy of his own home, and he continues to be both amazed and grateful.

Werner was born in Germany in 1929. After the ascendancy of Nazi Germany, his family fled first to New York City and then to Schenectady, where they "could be American, rather than be immigrants in a neighborhood in New York City. Schenectady has always been very good to me – I am very proud to be a part of this community."

Now Werner wants to give back. He and his partner, Jim, collected art throughout their lives together – a collection that they are leaving to the

Hyde Collection in Glens Falls. Werner also intends to leave another very meaningful gift: through a bequest in his will, he has designated a portion of his estate to support the VNS.

“My experience with the Visiting Nurse Service was just extraordinary. My nurse gave me back my mobility. It's hard to put a price on that, but I hope my gift helps others as much as my nurse helped me.”

WERNER FEIBES
Architect, Schenectady

"The Visiting Nurses helped me when I most needed it. Now I am happy to do what I can to return the favor," Werner says with a smile.

The Visiting Nurse Service of Northeastern New York is a subsidiary of Ellis Medicine and is supported in part by charitable giving, including simple estate gifts such as Werner's. To find out how you can help, please contact the Foundation for Ellis Medicine at 518.243.4600 or go to ellismedicine.org/foundation.

Save the Date!

35th Annual Cardiac Classic
THANKSGIVING DAY, NOVEMBER 24
Central Park | Schenectady
Run. Walk. Join the Tradition.

Winter Gala for Ellis Medicine
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2017

Glen Sanders Mansion
Schenectady

*An evening to honor
Dr. Richard & Karen D'Ascoli*

For more information, call
518.243.4600 or visit
ellismedicine.org/foundation



Lois Lithgow
PLANNED GIVING
DONOR

Have you heard about a gift that pays you back?

With a Charitable Gift Annuity, you can provide long-lasting support for Ellis Medicine and receive fixed payments for life!

To find information about this and other planned giving opportunities, visit:

ellismedicine.plannedgiving.org

Or contact:

Beth Frear
Manager, Sustained Giving
and Legacy Gifts

freare@ellismedicine.org
518.243.3434

ELLIS INSIGHT

2016 | ellismedicine.org | 4

IRA Rollover

If you are 70 ½ or older and are required to take a minimum IRA distribution, you can take advantage of a charitable rollover gift. Simply make an outright gift to The Foundation for Ellis Medicine from your IRA (gifts to all charities cannot exceed \$100,000 per taxpayer per year). Your rollover gift will not be included in your taxable income. Since an IRA is always subject to estate tax, by making a gift to Ellis from your IRA, you also will be removing taxable assets from your estate. For more information, contact Beth Fear at **518.243.3434**.

Giving Begins at Home

"Why do I give to Ellis? Because this is my community, and I am pleased to donate not just my time but also my money, because Ellis Medicine takes care of my family and my neighbors. Ellis is my healthcare provider, and not just my employer."

Brian Forget is the Senior Director of Facilities and Support Services at Ellis – a big title for a big job. After spending 31 years at St. Clare's, "moving up the ranks starting as an engineering technician," Brian now oversees engineering at all Ellis sites, along with security, food service, transportation, and environmental services.

"I've always volunteered to do extra stuff. That's just who I am." Brian describes himself as "that kid – you know, the one



Brian Forget

that offered to stay after school and clean the blackboards."

Brian is one of the 600 hundred Ellis employees who contribute to The Foundation for Ellis Medicine every year. Why do they contribute? Like Brian, Ellis' employee donors want to keep outstanding healthcare here, in their community.

As Brian says, "I have found over the years that what I donate in time and money I get back many times over in satisfaction. Donating? It's not always painless but it is always the right thing to do. I feel honored to donate to The Foundation for Ellis Medicine, and plan to keep doing it as long as I can." ●

STAYING CONNECTED

