



Forecast C2

Clouds and sun

Today's high: 78

Tonight's low: 60

The Villages®

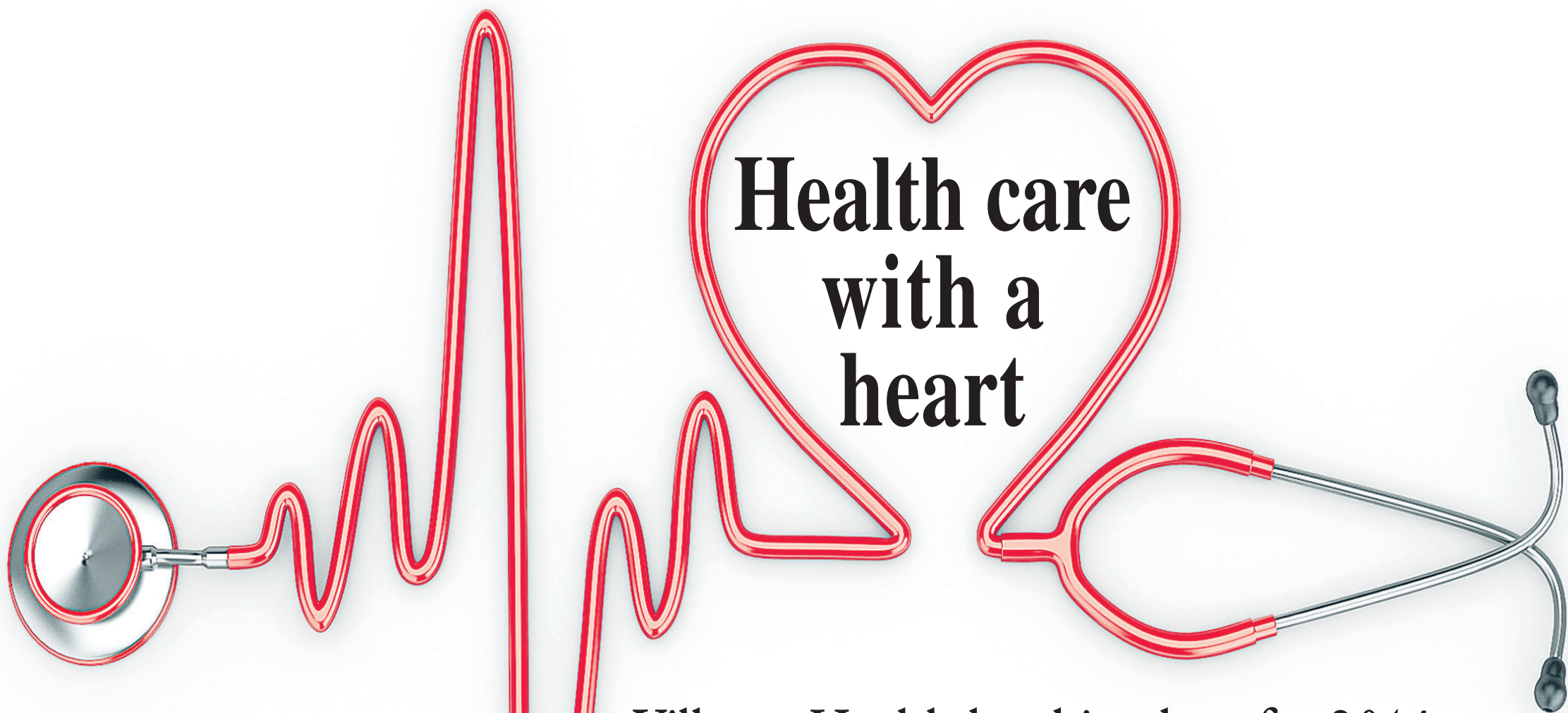
DAILY SUN

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1.00

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 2014

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Health care with a heart

How caring doctors make all the difference

The day was Oct. 17, 1989, and I was just minutes away from holding my daughter for the first time.

Like any parent, I was anxious to know that everything would be OK – especially because of a dream I'd had that Katie might be born with Down syndrome.

All of my internal voices were telling me to be prepared for the worst, while at the same time assuring me that things somehow would turn out fine. I just needed to hear it out loud with a doctor's authority.

Shortly after Katie was delivered, her doctor reassured me that she was perfect. (Of course, he was correct in many ways that I couldn't imagine that day.)

But the signs of Down syndrome soon became unmistakable. A myriad of thoughts rushed through my head. What did we do wrong? How could this happen to my



LARRY D. CROOM

DAILY SUN

See CROOM, A7

Villages Health has big plans for 2014

Dr. Elliot Sussman, The Villages Health chair, wants to exercise more and celebrate the wonderful accomplishments of his colleagues in 2014. See page A6 to learn the goals and resolutions of other Villages Health providers.



By LARRY D. CROOM
DAILY SUN OMBUDSMAN

THE VILLAGES
If you thought 2013 was a big year for America's Healthiest Hometown, wait until you see what 2014 has in store.

"It's going to be another year of growth, new faces, new care centers and new initiatives," said Dr. Elliot Sussman, chair of The Villages Health. "By the end of 2013, we had the privilege of counting thousands of Villagers as our patients. In 2014, we hope many more Villagers will choose us for their health care."

Sussman said that in 2014, The Villages Health will welcome at least 10 more primary care physicians. Two more primary care health centers are set to open this spring – one in Mulberry Grove Plaza and one in Creekside Medical Plaza in Lake Sumter Landing.

"We'll be working even

more closely with our partners at USF Health to build our specialty physician network," Sussman added. "And all of this is about realizing our vision of making our community 'America's Healthiest Hometown.'"

There's no doubt that 2014 will continue the drive toward the vision that was launched in 2013. Last year saw the opening of two new primary care centers, a specialty care facility, the hiring of dozens of medical providers and the groundbreaking of a \$59-million expansion at The Villages Regional Hospital.

The official announcement

In May, The Villages Health unveiled its ambitious plan to revolutionize the face of health care. The goal: turn primary care, specialty care and health insurance upside down to correct problems plaguing the

See HEALTH, A7

National focus



Madelyn P. Hastings / The Associated Press

Mike Ashley, of Muskegon, Mich., walks his 6-year-old dog, Riley, on Saturday in Muskegon.

Historic freeze could break Midwest temp records

The deep freeze expected soon in the Midwest, New England and even the South will be one to remember, with potential record-low temperatures heightening fears of frostbite and hypothermia.

Preceded by snow in much of the Midwest, the frigid air will begin today and extend into early next week, funneled as far south as the Gulf Coast. Blame it on a "polar vortex," as one meteorologist calls it, a counterclockwise-rotating pool of cold, dense air.

Already, parts of New England dropped into the negatives Saturday, with East Brighton, Vt., seeing 30 below zero just after midnight and Allagash, Maine, hitting minus 36. The cold will sweep through other parts of New England where residents are digging out from a snowstorm. **Deep-freeze hazards, A3**

—The Associated Press

Florida focus

Florida's mangroves expanding up state's Atlantic coast

Florida's mangroves are moving farther up the state's east coast, the latest indicator of global climate change.

Florida's Atlantic coast gained more than 3,000 acres of mangroves in the past three decades. That's according to new research published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences journal, The Miami Herald reports.

Scientists documented the mangrove growth by looking at satellite images from 1984 to 2011. Mangrove coverage doubled in the area between Cape Canaveral and St. Augustine.

Brown University postdoctoral researcher

Kyle Cavanaugh said that while there are examples of climate change having a negative impact, this could be different. The mangroves are replacing salt marshes, but both are important and highly productive coastal systems.

The researchers examined several possible explanations and concluded a decrease in the number of hard freezes were the likely factor behind the mangroves' push up the coast. Cold snaps of 25 degrees or less halt the growth of mangrove forests, and with fewer hard freezes they expanded into new areas, the scientists found.

—The Associated Press



Richard Patterson / The Associated Press file photo

Gina Whelchel, of Sugarloaf Key, snorkels during a kayaking tour on Aug. 8, 2003, within the mangroves of Big Pine Key.

Inside today's Daily Sun

Vitamin E may slow dementia progression

Researchers report that vitamin E might slow the progression of mild-to-moderate Alzheimer's disease.

Health A5

VHS gets some revenge at tourney

The VHS girls basketball team earned a little bit of revenge when the Buffalo beat Clearwater Central Catholic 51-37 Saturday.

Sports B1

Renaissance Faire delights, entertains

The Villages Renaissance Faire transformed The Villages Polo Club into an English village with jousts, archers and more.

Local C1



Charity highlight
Mental Illness Awareness



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Vol. 17 Issue 005

AMERICA’S HEALTHIEST HOMETOWN

A weekly report on The Villages’ efforts to become “America’s Healthiest Hometown” compiled by Daily Sun Ombudsman **Larry D. Croom**
Email larry.croom@thevillagesmedia.com.
Or call him at 753-1119, ext. 9366.

Contact The Villages Health at 352-674-1700 or visit the website at thevillageshealth.com.

Did you know?

Caroline Mathis, a nurse practitioner at the USF Health Specialty Care Center, is a big fan of the television show “How I Met Your Mother.”

Fixing health care: All about Dr. James Mersey

Primary care doctors, specialists and other medical providers have been recruited as part of an initiative to revamp health care right here in Florida’s Friendliest Hometown. The Villages Health is partnering with USF Health to bring in family doctors, care providers and specialists who will work as a team, all in the best interests of serving patients. This weekly feature will introduce these innovative medical providers who have joined this effort.

What conditions do you treat?

Diabetes, thyroid disease, hypertension, osteoporosis, elevated lipids like cholesterol triglycerides. And the full spectrum of endocrinology, which might include adrenal disease, pituitary disease and some other things that are a bit less common.

What is your philosophy on health care?

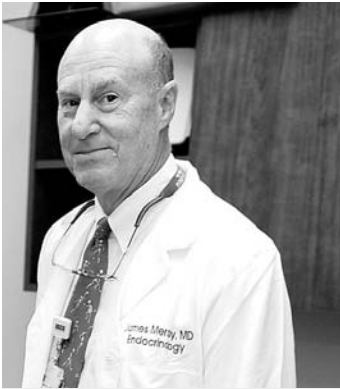
I think that we should provide universally equal health care to the entire population and I think that the current system doesn’t do that. I think we probably can never not have some different levels of health care because that’s probably what people will accept. But I think that we have to come up with a better system than we currently have now so that everyone has access to health care and access to health insurance, depending on how much they can pay.

What is your favorite thing about being a doctor?

I like taking care of patients. I enjoy figuring out what’s wrong and figuring out how I can help them.

What does it feel like to be a part of this health care initiative?

I think this is very exciting. This whole concept of integrated health care is what



Care Center: USF Health Specialty Care Center
Specialty: Endocrinology
Age: 67
Undergraduate: Amherst College
Medical school: Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Residency: Johns Hopkins Hospital
Fellowship: Brigham and Women’s Hospital (Harvard)
Board certified: Endocrinology, internal medicine
Fellow: American College of Physicians; American College of Endocrinology

we’ve been working on for awhile now and not done very well at it. It looks like this system is really going to try to accomplish that.

Next week Find out all about Dr. Helene Aisenstat, a primary care physician who practices at Pinellas Care Center.

Becoming America’s Healthiest Hometown

The importance of making patients feel at home

“I think it puts patients at ease. If they’re able to walk in and feel like they’re almost at home, the intimidation of coming to the doctor’s office is erased, which is important. Many people walk in the door and their blood pressure is already up. Their heart rate is pounding because they associate coming to the doctor with formality and not having a relationship. So I think coming into this kind of environment with the people and the surroundings is very calming.”

Dr. Aya Olejeme,
Bellevue Care Center



Care Centers in The Villages

Primary care

The Villages Health Colony Care Center
280 Farner Place, 352-674-1710
The Villages Health Santa Barbara Care Center
1575 S.E. 165th Mulberry Lane, 352-674-1740
The Villages Health Pinellas Care Center
2485 Pinellas Place
The Villages Health Mulberry Grove Care Center
8877 S.E. 165th Mulberry Lane (Opening spring 2014)
The Villages Health Lake Sumter Creekside Care Center
1050 Old Camp Road, Building 100 (Opening spring 2014)

Specialty care

USF Health Specialty Care Center
1400 N. U.S. Highway 24/441, Building 810
352-674-8731

2014 goals and resolutions



Dr. Robert Aisenstat,
Pinellas Care Center

Personal: Get up an hour earlier every morning, do my walking, watch my diet, lose weight and get it down to a reasonable level where I feel super.

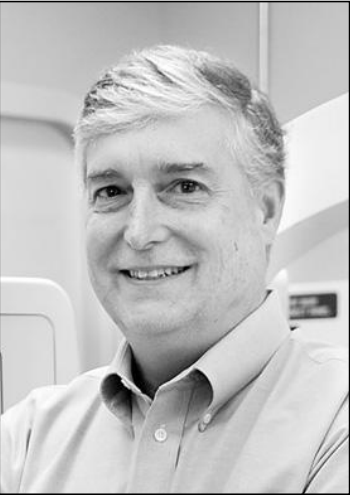
Professional: To help get this (Villages Health) project off the ground and to be able to facilitate what we’re trying to get to in our goals.



Amie Deak,
Villages Health wellness consultant and educator

Personal: I am a runner but I’m going to try a triathlon. So I’m going to learn how to train and swim and bike.

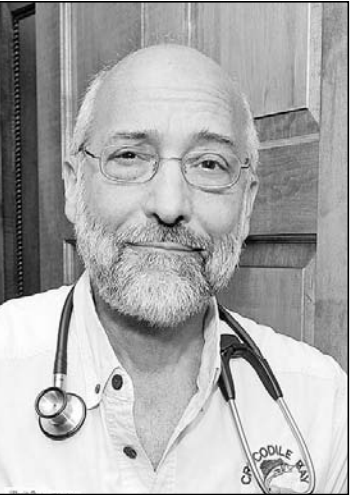
Professional: Continue to grow and learn more about what we need for our patients, what education opportunities we can do through all of our centers.



Dr. David Ethier,
USF Health Specialty Care Center

Personal: To deepen my faith in God and Jesus Christ. Live the slogan, “In God We Trust.”

Professional: To improve the collaboration between specialists and primary care doctors to achieve better outcomes for our patients.



Dr. Joe Hildner,
Villages Health chief medical officer

Personal: To nurture relationships so that everything feels as it should.

Professional: It’s the same – to nurture relationships. That’s how we’re going to make this (changing the face of health care) happen.



Dr. Jack Hocutt,
Colony Care Center

Personal: Learn to play finesse golf rather than power golf and see if that does anything for my score and my fun.

Professional: Try to do my best every day. That sounds a little corny but that’s what I’m really trying to do.



Dr. Karla Noel,
Pinellas Care Center

Personal: To travel overseas. I love traveling and I’m going to make sure I get that to happen in 2014.

Professional: To continue to grow and become an even better servant-leader and being able to help lift everybody up to meet their needs and goals.



Dr. Robert Reilly,
Colony Care Center

Personal: Make sure that I’m focusing on my children and my wife and spending quality time with them – the things that are most important.

Professional: Continue to take great care of my patients and make sure we make The Villages America’s Healthiest Hometown.



Dr. Dave Jordahl,
Colony Care Center

Personal: To complete an Olympic-distance triathlon.

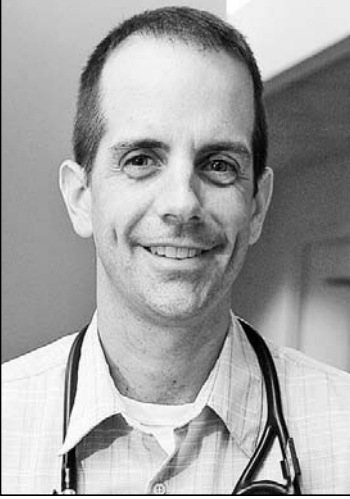
Professional: Continuing to hone my skills as a medical director and physician mentor and leader.



Dr. Saul Rosenblum,
Santa Barbara Care Center

Personal: A basic, daily exercise program. Break 80 on the golf course and spend more time with the family.

Professional: To really reinforce what we are hoping to create here, the values that we’re trying to promote and the kind of care that we’re trying to bring back to people.



Dr. J.D. Steed,
Bellevue Care Center

Personal: To write more. I also have a ukulele. I would love to learn how to play it well and speak the language of music.

Professional: Fulfill my potential as a medical director – to be the leader that I have the potential of being. Prioritize my time with my patients and my things outside of work so that I do them exceptionally well.



Dr. Michael Wald,
Santa Barbara Care Center

Personal: Re-establish personal relationships and pay a little more attention to the people that are really important to me.

Professional: Maintain a medical practice with a concentration on relationships with patients.



Dr. Kathleen Steepy,
USF Health Specialty Care Center

Personal: To incorporate a regular exercise regimen into my busy life.

Professional: To help as many women as I can to regain control of their health and their well-being.

Marquette, Mich.



Sara Nezami / The Associated Press

Sanaz Nazami, a vibrant 27-year-old native of Tehran, Iran, who could speak three languages, wanted to pursue an advanced degree in engineering at Michigan Technological University. Instead, she was brain dead just a few weeks after unpacking her bags in a remote area of the United States, a victim of a fatal beating by her new husband in early December, according to police. With the family’s consent, her critical organs were removed and transplanted to seven people in five states.

Iranian woman dies in small town as nurses, family build bond online

27-year-old victim of fatal beating by new husband, according to police

By ED WHITE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A nurse in a Michigan hospital kissed the patient’s forehead. More than 6,000 miles away, Sanaz Nezami’s family in Iran watched the simple act over a laptop computer and wept.

Nezami, a vibrant 27-year-old woman who could speak three languages, wanted to pursue an advanced degree in engineering at Michigan Technological University. Instead, she was brain dead just a few weeks after unpacking her bags in a remote area of the United States, a victim of a fatal beating by her new husband, according to police.

Nezami’s time in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula can be marked in days. Her impact, however, will last much longer. Technology allowed family in Iran to watch her final hours and build an emotional bond with nurses whose compassion for a stranger from an unfamiliar culture gave great comfort to shocked, grieving relatives a world away.

The family’s faith in the staff led to consent for an extraordinary donation: Nezami’s heart, lungs and other life-saving organs were transplanted to seven people in the U.S., a remarkable gift that occurs in less than 1 percent of all cases.

“We wanted God to perform a miracle and bring Sanaz back to life,” her sister, Sara Nezami, said in a phone interview from Tehran. “But this is a miracle. Sanaz gave her life in order to give life.”

A nurse who took care of Sanaz Nezami said her brief stay, especially the high-tech way of communicating with family, was “eye-opening” for staff at Marquette General Hospital.

“The family was willing to trust us to know she wasn’t coming back,” Kim Grutt said. Nezami’s arrival in Michigan was part of a personal odyssey that took her from Iran to Turkey to the U.S. in just months. In August, she married Nima Nassiri in Turkey and lived with him temporarily in the Los Angeles area, where he was born and raised. Her sister said the two met over the Internet.

Nezami, a native of Tehran, had a bachelor’s degree in engineering and a master’s in French translation. She wanted a doctorate degree in environmental engineering and settled on Michigan Tech in Houghton, about 550 miles northwest of Detroit.

The newlyweds drove their Toyota from California and found a rental home in November in Dollar Bay, a small town near campus. Nezami was familiar with cold winters in Iran, but folks in her new community still liked to remind her about what to expect on the Keweenaw Peninsula in northern Michigan’s Lake Superior.

“The bank clerk told her the snow will fall until April,” her sister said.

Nezami planned to take her first classes after the holidays. Meanwhile, she stayed in touch with family through email, text message and video. On Dec. 7, she asked her sister to proofread some English-to-Persian translation she was doing on the side.

“I was shocked,” Sara Nezami said. “Sanaz was a very precise girl, but she omitted some lines. I asked, ‘Are you OK?’ She told me there was no problem.”

The next day Sanaz Nezami was rushed to a hospital with severe head injuries and was transferred 100 miles to Marquette General. Police believe she was assaulted by her husband, who has been charged with second-degree murder. His attorney, David Gemignani, declined to comment.

“Her brain was so swollen and so damaged, there was no longer any blood flow,”

explained Gail Brandly, who supervises nurses at Marquette General.

There were other problems, too. No one knew anything about Nezami, so Brandly ran her name through Google. Suddenly, the stranger who couldn’t speak for herself was coming alive through a resume posted online.

Nezami was fluent in French, English and Persian. She volunteered to cook for charities. As a teen, she wrote for youth newspapers and magazines and won first place in a 2001 literature competition with an essay on “friendships and the differences between us.”

After about 24 hours, the hospital reached relatives in Iran. Immediate travel to the U.S. was impractical due to visa requirements, so a laptop was set up so the family could see Nezami on life support and talk to nurses and doctors over Yahoo Messenger.

“It isn’t something we’ve done in the past. It’s not every day we’re dealing with family members so far-flung,” said Dave Edwards, spokesman for the hospital.

In Tehran, relatives drifted in and out of the living room at Nezami’s father’s home to watch what was unfolding in Michigan.

“We cried a lot,” her sister said. “We prayed in Persian, Arabic and English. The nurses told us Sanaz had brain damage – her brain was dead.”

At one point, Grutt, the nurse, was asked to stroke Nezami’s head and kiss her forehead.

“They wanted us to do things for Sanaz that they would have done,” Grutt said. “They said, ‘Let her know we love her. We’re here.’ I felt completely comfortable.”

Nezami died on Dec. 9, but her critical organs – heart, lungs, kidneys, liver, pancreas and small intestine – could be used by others. With the family’s consent, they were removed and transplanted to seven people in five states. No other details were released.

HEALTH, from A1

system nationwide.

The radical shift involved several steps. Patient-centered primary care centers would open throughout the community. Specialists would work with a team quarterbacked by the family doctor to provide seamless care.

Electronic health records – information that can be accessed by doctors and patients alike – would become available day and night. An innovative insurance partner would join the team. And most importantly, an all-out blitz would begin to recruit the nation’s top medical professionals.

Insurance partner

In September, United-Healthcare brought a week of Medicare education to The Villages and opened Medicare stores at each town square. In October, the company, which boasts 70 million customers and covers nearly one in five Medicare beneficiaries, unveiled a new Medicare Advantage plan for the community that’s accepted at all Villages Health primary care centers.

New care center

In October, The Villages Health opened Santa Barbara care center near The Villages Regional Hospital. The state-of-the-art facility joined the Colony Care Center and the Belleview Care Center – as well as three other planned centers – as home-like facilities designed to always put the patient first.

Specialty care facility

In November, just eight short months after groundbreaking, the USF Health Specialty Care Center in The Villages came to life and officially opened for business.

The center, in the old Wellness Center near the Sharon Morse Building on U.S. Highway 27/441, opened with

specialists covering gynecology, cardiac thoracic surgery, orthopedics, plastic surgery and endocrinology. Other disciplines, such as cardiology, pulmonary, neurology and gastroenterology, as well as additional orthopedists, are expected to be added.

The specialty care center enjoys a close partnership with The Villages Health that involves primary care doctors and specialists working closely together.

Hospital expansion

The Villages Regional Hospital officially broke ground on a \$59 million expansion and renovation project that will double the size of its emergency department. The 157,236-square-foot addition includes a new tower and brings the total square footage of the hospital to more than 400,000.

The expansion will bring the total number of beds in the hospital to 277, plus space for additional beds when needed.

The project includes 32 intensive-care beds and 34 medical/surgical beds, as well as 18 additional beds in the emergency department and 18 others that can be used for observation of patients and a variety of other functions.

A special anniversary

In December, the Colony Care Center celebrated its one-year anniversary.

Located at 280 Farner Place off County Road 466A, it was the first Villages Health facility to open its doors in Florida’s Friendliest Hometown.

Since then, an array of medical providers have trained at the center and gone on to provide care at other Villages Health facilities.

Another new care center

Another December milestone came when the Pinellas Care Center opened to throngs of Villagers who stopped by to tour the center. Located at 2485 Pinellas Place near the The Villages Sumter County Service Center in

Wildwood, it’s the third center of its kind now open in the system.

Finding the right providers

As new centers were opening and patient-centered health care was being established across the community, Villages Health officials were busy hiring more than 30 physicians.

The 21st-century Marcus Welbys are, in many ways, throwbacks to the days of family doctors who knew their patients well.

“Dr. Welby cared. He sincerely, authentically cared about you,” said Dr. Joe Hildner, chief medical officer of The Villages Health. “He cared about your family, your background, your hopes and dreams and the issues that affect your health beyond the traditional medical things. We’re looking for that doctor that is warm, compassionate and who enjoys forming long-term relationships with patients and whole families.”

Sussman noted that the recruitment effort extends to other medical professionals as well.

“We’re looking for people who share our philosophy in all areas of the care center,” he said. “All those people are really important in seeing that Villagers who choose to use our services get the care and caring that they deserve.”

An ‘amazing’ journey

“It’s hard to believe that we started literally a year ago in The Villages with our first care center,” Sussman said. “What we’ve created, with the help of so many people throughout The Villages and so many Villagers, is the foundation for what I think is going to be a premier health system in the country – maybe *the* premier health system.”

Larry D. Croom is the ombudsman for The Villages Daily Sun. He can be reached at 753-1119 or larry.croom@thevillagesmedia.com.

CROOM, from A1

daughter? How was I going to handle this?

That pity party lasted about 30 minutes and then a wonderful thing happened – I grew up. I spent the next couple of days getting to know my daughter at the hospital. We formed an unbreakable bond – special moments that I’ll always cherish.

By the time our fears were officially confirmed a couple weeks later, I was more than ready to sit down with her doctor and plan the future. I walked into his office actually excited. God had given me a beautiful baby girl and I was going to spend the rest of my life giving her every opportunity available.

But a few short minutes later, the doctor floored me with his assessment.

She’ll never amount to much, he said. Never speak clearly. Or be able to play sports. Or ever have a boyfriend. Graduating from high school is out of the question – and don’t even think about college.

Katie’s mother and I made

three critical decisions that morning that would shape our daughter’s life. First, I didn’t slug the doctor, meaning Katie’s father wasn’t going to jail. Second, we’d find a teacher immediately who’d work with Katie on her muscle tone and movement. And third – and perhaps most important – we said goodbye to that so-called doctor for good.

It’s a lesson I’ve held dear for 25 years – you simply can’t underestimate the value of a physician you trust and respect.

It’s also why this year spent covering The Villages Health-USF Health initiative holds special meaning. This past year brought me the privilege to speak with dozens of medical providers who obviously care deeply about their patients.

I know first-hand how that level of care can transform a person’s entire life.

I came to grips long ago with the ignorance Katie’s first doctor displayed as he completely underestimated my daughter. Not to mention that he also highly underestimated her support system – two sets of parents, three brothers, a sister and seven grandparents soundly in her corner.

Over the years, Katie’s had many wonderful physicians

who’ve helped her in a variety of ways.

And I’ve had many great moments with her.

I’ve been in the stands as she and her boyfriend won dozens of medals in Special Olympics in various sports, including swimming, softball, basketball and flag football.

I’ve seen her work with my wife, Gigi, an award-winning artist, on paintings, drawings and pottery projects.

We proudly watched her graduate from high school and a college program.

She’s a wizard at electronics who taught herself the art of texting. And, for the record, we can clearly understand her when she speaks about her dreams for the future.

That’s the real power of patient-centered care.

It’s why the medical innovations emerging in The Villages are so transformative.

And it’s why I nod my head in agreement with patients who shed tears of joy when they talk about the doctors who’ve made a difference in their lives.

Larry D. Croom is the ombudsman for The Villages Daily Sun. He can be reached at 753-1119 or larry.croom@thevillagesmedia.com.

Start Off the New Year with a Body Composition Analysis Screening

It’s a new year and resolutions are on the minds of many people. How many of you have resolved to lose weight in the new year? A body composition analysis might be a good first step. It is a useful assessment to have when trying to make physical changes because body weight by itself doesn’t tell us how our weight is distributed, how much is lean and how much is fat. Your weight is the total of your body’s water, fat, muscle, bone, tissues, and or-

gans. If you have too much fat — especially if a lot of it is at your waist — you’re at higher risk for such health problems as high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and diabetes. These factors can increase your risk for heart disease and stroke. A body composition test is one way to determine if your weight is healthy for your height since being overweight can strain your heart and lead to serious health problems that can also include high blood pressure,

sleep apnea, Type 2 diabetes and varicose veins. A simple test will give you a good indication of your health by providing your body mass index.

Stop in the USF Health in The Villages office for a free body composition analysis screening. You’ll learn your weight, body mass index, body fat percentage, basal metabolic rate, fat mass, total body water mass, and hydration level. Participants receive a print out of their results and a review sheet.

The Body Composition Analysis Screening uses bioelectric impedance analysis (BIA), so we are not able to allow those with pacemakers or other internally implanted electrical devices to participate. Start getting healthier today!

**1040 Lake Sumter Landing
The Villages, FL
352-753-6200**

Villages.Health.USF.edu



**BUILDING
AMERICA’S
HEALTHIEST
HOMETOWN**

*A weekly report on
USF Health’s
events and
accomplishments
in The Villages*

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