



MEL AND CAROL TJEERDSMA PLEDGE SUPPORT FOR VITAL CARDIAC EQUIPMENT

In the spirit of ensuring that life-saving cardiac equipment, technology, and facilities are always available to support patients and families across Northwest Missouri, Mel and Carol Tjeerdsma are pledging their support for vital cardiac equipment and expansions at Mosaic Medical Center – Maryville with a \$50,000 pledge.

In May of 2022, Carol Tjeerdsma suffered a heart attack during a stress test at Mosaic Medical Center – Maryville. As the Code Blue was called, emergency room and cardiac nurses and physicians rushed to save Carol's life. From there, Carol was sent to St. Joseph for open heart surgery.

The Tjeerdsma's have always lived a healthy and active lifestyle that includes exercise, travel, sporting events, and for Carol, lots of shopping! Back pain and shortness of breath were really constricting normal day-to-day activity.

"Having heart issues never crossed our minds," says Mel and Carol. "We just felt like we were in good shape and worked hard at taking good care of ourselves." Both environment and genetics can contribute to cardiac risk factors. Prevention is key to success. According to the World Heart Federation, an estimated 80% of cardiovascular disease is preventable. The main elements of prevention include a healthy diet, physical activity, avoiding tobacco, and "knowing your numbers."

The Tjeerdsma's are focused on helping individuals "know their numbers" through cardiac scoring. Cardiac scoring is recommended for generally healthy, asymptomatic males over age 45 and females over age 55 who are at risk for coronary artery disease. Individuals with a strong family history of heart disease may want to undergo cardiac scoring as early as age 35.

"The reality is that you can live an extremely healthy life and still have a heart attack," says Robert Grant, DO, FACC. "We are so thankful that Carol was here when she had her cardiac event, where we could do something about it."

Mel and Carol have been a part of the Maryville community for nearly 30 years. Along with attributed academic and athletic success at Northwest Missouri State University, the couple stays engaged in the heart of serving others through their work with Lettuce Dream, Ten Squared Men, Ten Squared Women, Laura Street Baptist Church, Lions Club, Meals on Wheels, Northwest Board of Regents, Coaches Connection, American Football Coaches Wives Association, and the American Football Coaches Association.

"We are extremely fortunate to have Mosaic right here in our small community with the quality of services that they provide," says Carol. "Had we not had a facility like this, I may not have been here."

Carol has healed remarkably. She and Mel are back to their normal, daily walking routine and can be found powering around the track at the Hughes Fieldhouse most mornings. Carol attributes the healing, both physically and emotionally to the caregivers at Mosaic Medical Center – Maryville's Cardiac Rehabilitation Department.

Funds from Mel and Carol's gift and other contributions to the St. Francis Foundation's Cardiac Campaign will be used to purchase a new Q-Stress Cardiac Testing System that replaces a 17-year-old system, two cardiac testing treadmills, new equipment for cardiac rehabilitation and the expansion of the cardiac testing space.

To join Mel and Carol in supporting the St Francis Foundation Cardiac Campaign, visit www.stfrancishospitalfoundation.com/cardiac-health-fund, or call 660-562-7933.

To schedule your appointment for a cardiac score at Mosaic in St. Joseph, Maryville or Albany, call (800) 455-2479.