

With Attached Photo: Dennis Burgess and Pamela Hamilton, 2023 Bridge Run

Contact: Laura Young, director, Marketing & Public Relations; laura.young@sghs.org, 912-466-2148

Embracing Challenge at Any Age

The Bridge Run keeps Dennis Burgess and Pamela Hamilton fit and forward-thinking.

BRUNSWICK, Georgia: January 23, 2024 – Long-time couple Dennis Burgess and Pamela Hamilton consider themselves late bloomers when it comes to running. “We started in our late 40s. We needed a goal, so we began by running one lap around a school track. After a while we started competing with each other,” Hamilton says. The couple were living in Cleveland, Ohio, at the time. In 2006, they escaped the Ohio winters by moving to St. Simons Island.



All the while, they stayed active, and in 2010, began competing in Southeast Georgia Health System Foundation’s Bridge Run. The annual event raises funds for the Health System’s cancer and cardiac care programs. Hamilton and Burgess have participated in every Bridge Run for 13 years, with the exception of a two-year hiatus during the pandemic.

According to Bryan Thompson, Bridge Run co-chair, the local couple are synonymous with the race. “Every year we have a lengthy checklist for the Bridge Run. All tents up with power? Check. Stage in place? Check. Dennis and Pamela here? Check! Year after year, no matter the weather or how they might feel, Dennis and Pamela are at the start line . . . with both usually winning in their age group! They are a joy and inspiration to us and many other participants of all ages.”

Regular wins are quite an achievement –Burgess is 90 and Hamilton is 78. “I’m happy to be the oldest competitor. It’s a nice feeling when we both come in first,” Burgess says. His running partner agrees. “When you come in first or second in your age group, it’s good for your self-esteem,” Hamilton says. Having survived cancer twice, her victories are especially sweet.

Winning aside, the couple enjoys the camaraderie of this event. “It’s such a good social outlet; it brings so many people together—runners, walkers, and those who come out to support them,” Burgess says.

While many older individuals would not attempt the toughest race in Georgia, these stalwart runners relish the challenge. “I love being on top of that bridge; it’s beautiful,” Hamilton says. While Burgess recalls “plowing up through the wind,” he also remembers feeling encouraged by the band playing at the top of the bridge and fire fighters running in full gear for the Firefighters’ Challenge.

Asked if running is the secret to his longevity, he quips, “I attribute my longevity to Pamela.” For her part, Hamilton credits an active lifestyle and having goals. “You have to have a challenge in life to keep you going.”

--more--

And every year, they keep going back to conquer the 7,780-foot-long bridge, inspiring others to follow their lead. As Burgess says, “You don’t have to do anything clever. You just have to finish.”

To register for the February 17, 2024, Bridge Run, visit [active.com](https://www.active.com) and search “Lanier Bridge Run”.

ABOUT SOUTHEAST GEORGIA HEALTH SYSTEM

Southeast Georgia Health System is a not-for-profit health system comprised of two acute care hospitals, two long term care facilities, two Cancer Care Centers and multiple specialty care centers, including orthopaedic and spine care, joint replacement, breast care, maternity, outpatient rehabilitation, sleep management and wound care. The Brunswick Campus Cancer Care Center is accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer and is one of the few centers in Georgia to offer CyberKnife® M6 with MLC. Additionally, the Brunswick Campus is accredited by The Joint Commission as an Advanced Primary Stroke Center and the Camden Campus is accredited as an Acute Stroke Ready Hospital. The Southeast Georgia Physician Associates medical group includes more than 160 providers working in 20 different medical specialties at more than 50 locations. The Health System is part of Coastal Community Health, a regional affiliation between Baptist Health and Southeast Georgia Health System, a highly integrated hospital network focused on significant initiatives designed to enhance the quality and value of care provided to our contiguous communities. For more information, visit [sghs.org](https://www.sghs.org).

###