



Atrium
Medical Center

F O U N D A T I O N

LEGENDS

FROM THE HILL TO THE ATRIUM

*A Tribute to the Men and Women
Who Made It Happen*

ISSUE 12

Southwest Ohio Businesses

As Atrium Medical Center's 100th anniversary approaches, we look at the impact the area's corporate culture of innovation continues to have on health care in the region. A passion for community and an unwavering vision for a better tomorrow motivated early business leaders to pursue a "Greater Middletown" that included a hospital delivering "world-class care." Today, businesses around the region continue to lend their considerable expertise and support to foster excellence at Atrium Medical Center.

A Hospital is Born

As I learn of the efforts of the citizens of Middletown are putting forth to bring about a greater and a better community in which to live and work, I cannot but feel that their energy and vision and strength of purpose call for earnest commendation.

– Herbert Hoover, Secretary of Commerce

Greater Middletown: A Dream Come True, Middletown Civic Association, 1924

From Middletown's pioneer days in the late 1700s, to its incorporation as a city in 1886, to today's growing metropolis, southwest Ohioans have held fast to core values, including building community, pursuing innovation and envisioning an even better future. During the last half of the 19th century, Middletown became a commercial hub, empowering visionary industrial leaders who would shape the community's future in fundamental areas such as health care, education and recreation.

In March 1903, with direction from Sorg Tobacco and Sorg Paper leaders, prominent Middletown citizens formed the Businessmen's Club "to take the initiative in all matters pertaining to the industrial and business advancement of the community." The American Rolling Mill

Company (Armco) came before this group in 1909 with a proposition: Armco's new plant would like to locate in Middletown if the city could meet seven needs for quality-of-life improvements for its citizens. All seven requirements were, in fact, met – among them, building a public hospital where Middletonians could receive world-class medical care without having to travel to a distant city. As health care became more complex, this criterion continued to be a top priority, as it is today.

In 1910, business leaders formed a committee to select a site for the hospital, and Gardner-Harvey Paper Company owners and executives took the lead in securing land and raising funds. The non-profit Middletown Hospital Association was incorporated in 1913, and the 28-bed hospital opened its doors in March 1917, quickly becoming part of the fabric of the community. Its seven employees were confronted immediately with the great flu epidemic of that year.

Shortly after the new hospital opened, the Businessmen's Club morphed into the Middletown Chamber of Commerce. In 1920, Armco came before the chamber and noted that the "hospital on the hill" was no longer large enough for a city that had grown to 30,000.



*George Crout Collection,
MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio*



Armco proposed that the city launch a civic fund campaign to raise \$1 million to meet the city's needs and highlight Middletown as one of Ohio's most progressive cities. Thus, the city's Civic Association was born.



The Gardner-Harvey Paper Company, along with Armco, continued to support Middletown Hospital, including fundraising for the hospital's expansion to 100 beds in 1923 and service on the hospital board. Today, descendants from the Gardner and Harvey families continue to champion Atrium Medical Center. Armco's early support for world-class health care in Middletown also continues today.



AK Steel corporate executives have served on both the hospital board and the Atrium Medical Center Foundation board.

The Ticket to Transformation

Determine that the thing can and shall be done and then we shall find the way.

– President Abraham Lincoln

Innovation (plus hard work, faith and courage) fueled Middletown's transformation into "the city of paper and steel." The spirit of innovation is seen in many corporations in the entire Butler-Warren county area and beyond in southwest Ohio. They have improved their own businesses and contributed to Atrium Medical Center.

These companies have created innovative approaches to building and repairing the country's infrastructure and transforming communities by designing and building great places to live, learn, work and play. They have advanced the efficient recycling of metal and electronics and made notable advances in supporting the automotive and defense industries. They have applied sustainable practices in the manufacture of paper products and packaging. And they have financed, insured, advised and fed – literally – the region's businesses and its residents.

Hundreds of southwest Ohio businesses have also given their time and treasure to support continuing innovation at Atrium Medical Center, including construction of the hospital itself. They have generously donated to ongoing excellence in technology, compassionate care and safety-net services. Company leaders have served on both the hospital and Foundation boards, some for as many as 25 or even 40-plus years. They have chaired fundraising campaigns and galas, led committees, advised strategic planners, networked with city officials, and rallied others to join them in their commitment to stewardship of the hospital and the community.





From its inception, Middletown Hospital was an early adopter of new technologies. In a region so steeped in a corporate culture of innovation, how could it be otherwise?

Middletown was among the region's first hospitals to open a coronary care unit and a cardiac rehabilitation program. Middletown surgeons were the region's first to perform both arthroscopic surgery and FDA-approved hip replacement. Without ongoing assistance from the corporate community, improvements such as these would have been far slower in coming.

Looking Ahead

A vision is not just a picture of what could be; it is an appeal to our better selves, a call to become something more.

– Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Director
Harvard University Advanced Leadership Initiative

The visionary community leaders who founded Middletown Hospital could not have foreseen Atrium Medical Center's 190-acre Health and Technology Campus. Thanks to the bold vision and generosity of the business leaders who followed them, the hospital now has a strong presence in the Cincinnati–Dayton growth corridor along I-75.

New challenges and opportunities in health care will demand innovative solutions and strategies. In its mission to build healthier

communities, Atrium Medical Center and its Foundation don't stop dreaming of what could be. Although the hospital will soon be 100 years old, to many business leaders, government leaders, citizens, administrators and health care providers, it always feels like just the beginning. There is much to do – a community to serve, innovations to discover, and visions to inspire.

With Deep Gratitude

These businesses rank among the top corporate donors to the hospital over the past century. We're very grateful for their commitment.

Aeronca	Healthcare Management Group
AK Steel/Armco	Magnode Corporation
Akers Packaging Service Group	Medical Imaging Physicians, Inc.
Al. Neyer, LLC	Messer Construction
Baker Concrete Construction	Middletown Cardiovascular Associates
Barnitz Bank	Miller-Valentine Group
Children's Medical Center, Inc.	Owens and Minor
Clark Schaefer Hackett	Pierson Automotive
Cohen	Premier of TeamHealth
First Financial Bank	Sorg Paper Company
Gardner-Harvey Paper Company	Time Warner Cable

Our gratitude for helping with this installment of Legends goes to: Joseph Bidwell, Wilbur Cohen, David Harrison, James Kleingers, Lawrence Mulligan, Rick Pearce, Kirk Reich and Michael Schneider.

This article is the 12th in a series of profiles celebrating the 2017 centennial anniversary of Atrium Medical Center (formerly Middletown Hospital and Middletown Regional Hospital). The series honors the men and women whose civic-mindedness and genuine caring for others helped Greater Middletown grow and contributed to the first-class medical center the region boasts today.

Past Legends focused on:

Paul Galeese, *Issue 1*; E.O. Bauer, MD, and John L. Bauer, MD, *Issue 2*; Educating Our Caregivers, *Issue 3*; Russell L. "Rusty" Malcolm, MD, and Albert S. Malcolm, MD, *Issue 4*; Ann and Arthur Bidwell, *Issue 5*; Atrium Auxiliary Middletown, *Issue 6*; Dr. Dick and Charlotte Nisbet, *Issue 7*; The Wilbur Cohen Family, *Issue 8*; Middletown Area Federation of Women's Clubs, *Issue 9*; Dolly Frieman Casper, *Issue 10*; The Sawyer Family, *Issue 11*.

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