

George H. W. Bush | 1924-2018

Leader of a nation, a family

He launched a dynasty, but first this proud public servant stayed true during a tumultuous era.

Washington Post
George H.W. Bush, the 41st president of the United States and the father of the 43rd, was a steadfast force on the international stage for decades, from his stint as an envoy to Beijing to his eight years as vice president and his one term as commander in chief from 1989 to 1993.
The last veteran of World War II to serve as president, he was a consummate public servant and a statesman who helped guide the nation and the

world out of a four-decade Cold War that had carried the threat of nuclear annihilation.
His death, at age 94 on Friday, also marked the passing of an era.
Although Bush served as president three decades ago, his values and ethic seem centuries removed from today's acrid political culture. His currency of personal connection was the handwritten letter — not the social media blast.
» See **BUSH, 7A**

Tampa Bay Times

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A TIMES INVESTIGATION

Johns Hopkins promised to elevate All Children's Heart Institute. Then patients started to die at an alarming rate.



Leslie Lugo's family visits her grave in September.

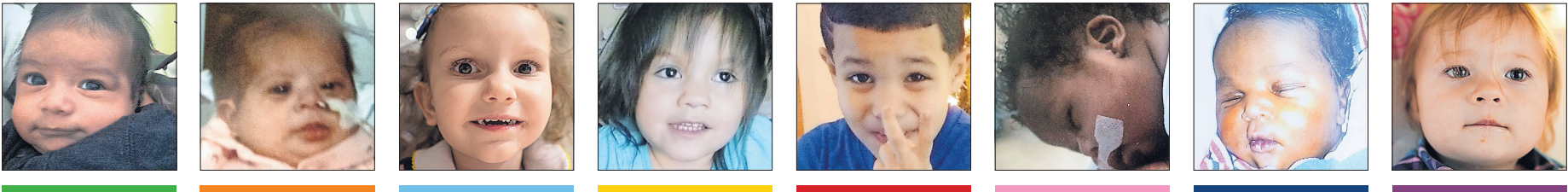
HEARTBROKEN

STORY BY KATHLEEN McGRORY AND NEIL BEDI, PHOTOS BY EVE EDELHEIT | Times Staff

Sandra Vázquez paced the heart unit at Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital.
Her 5-month-old son, Sebastián Vixtha, lay unconscious in his hospital crib, breathing faintly through a tube. Two surgeries to fix his heart had failed, even the one that was supposed to be straightforward.
Vázquez saw another mom crying in the room next door. Her baby was also in bad shape.
Down the hall, 4-month-old Leslie Lugo had developed a serious infection in the surgical incision that snaked down her chest. Her parents argued with the doctors. They didn't

believe the hospital room had been kept sterile.
By the end of the week, all three babies would die.
The string of deaths in mid 2017 was unprecedented. Nurses sobbed in their cars. The head of cardiovascular intensive care sent an email urging his staff to take care of themselves and each other.
The internationally renowned Johns Hopkins had taken over the St. Petersburg hospital six years earlier and vowed to transform its heart surgery unit into one of the nation's best.
Instead, the program got worse and worse until chil-

dren were dying at a stunning rate, a *Tampa Bay Times* investigation has found.
Nearly one in 10 patients died last year. The mortality rate, suddenly the highest in Florida, had tripled since 2015.
Other children suffered life-changing injuries. Jean Kariel Viera Maldonado had a heart transplant at All Children's in March 2017. Soon after, the stitching connecting the 5-year-old's new heart to his body broke, and he had a massive stroke. Today, he can no longer walk, speak or feed himself. His parents care for him full time.
» See **CHILDREN, 12A**



EIGHT CHILDREN: All of these kids went to the Heart Institute and had problems with their care. Four died. Read their stories, beginning on 12A.

FLORIDIAN
A chat with Barry Manilow
The singer talks Christmas songs, retiring from touring and ... holograms. **1E**

LOCAL
Teachers with guns?
The idea is back, but many Florida educators still say no thanks. **1B**

EDITORIAL
Testing for justice
Let DNA testing remove doubt in death row cases. **18A, 21A**

BUSINESS
Trimming the tree
Christmas tree sales are off to a strong start in Tampa Bay, shortage or not. **1D**

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