A Life in Motion
how STPH helped Hank Miltenberger return to the life he loves
A Close-up of the Heart, from afar

St. Tammany Parish Hospital invasive cardiologists can now access complete patient records, including echo images, from any location where they have Internet access.

Cardiologists’ ability to remotely access patient records can translate into potentially life-saving speed in a cardiac emergency.

“You’re talking about a big difference in the time factor, and in an emergency that can be critical,” said Luis Marquez RN, head of STPH cardiology services.

The PACS system with remote access—short for Picture Archiving Communication System—has been fully operational at STPH since January. Images in STPH’s system, including angiograms and echo images, are seamlessly meshed with physicians’ reports and other records to give cardiologists a complete view of earlier treatment and conditions.

Considered one of the key advancements in cardiology is PACS, which allows the cardiologist to review images side-by-side with patients during office visits.

“It has made a tremendously positive impact on the way that we practice medicine and ultimately in patient care,” Aduli said.

This year’s fundraiser chaired by Eugenie Suggs and Susan James of Covington, will feature the popular “Close-up from afar” event. Tickets at the door are $6 each. Children’s activities wristbands for unlimited games, activities and crafts are $15.

Fun and Games at the 2009 Monster Mash

Fun and games, live music, trick-or-treating and more return to Bogue Falaya Park in Covington on Oct. 24 for the 21st annual Monster Mash. Fun Fall Family Festival presented by Statewide Bank. Proceeds from the 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. event will benefit the St. Tammany Parish Hospital Parenting Center, which provides a diverse array of free and low-cost classes and resources to Northshore families.

This year’s fundraiser is expected to be a big success, according to Sandy Morgan, administrator of PACS. Fun and games, live music, trick-or-treating and more return to Bogue Falaya Park in Covington on Oct. 24 for the 21st annual Monster Mash. Fun Fall Family Festival presented by Statewide Bank. Proceeds from the 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. event will benefit the St. Tammany Parish Hospital Parenting Center, which provides a diverse array of free and low-cost classes and resources to Northshore families.

The comparison permits the physician to more quickly determine what has changed since the patient’s previous treatment or condition, information that is critical in making an initial assessment of the best course of treatment, said Sandy Morgan, administrator of PACS.

The new technology also allows cardiologists to review images side-by-side with patients during office visits.

“It’s done instantly, from anywhere,” he said.

It also means cardiologists can develop their Cardiology can develop a more effective treatment plan, according to Covington cardiologist Farhad Aduli, MD.

Before a procedure, Aduli uses PACS to review earlier patient images, often the night before from his home computer.

“It helps me better prepare the procedure and anticipate any problems or complications before time,” he said. “This leads to a generally much smoother procedure and less risk for the patient.”

Aduli also uses PACS to assess the need for angioplasty for physician partners who do not provide such services. “I can look at the cases live via the Internet,” Aduli said.

PACS also can play a crucial role in the STPH emergency department. If a patient arrives complaining of chest pain, for instance, the cardiologist on call can access a past echo image of the patient’s heart and other records to compare to a new emergency new emergency.
Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 pounds brussels sprouts, washed and bottoms trimmed to remove woody part
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 3 cloves fresh garlic, minced (approximately 1 1/2 tablespoons)
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey

Preheat oven to 375°F.

In a large bowl, toss sprouts with salt and pepper. Add oil and toss until sprouts are lightly coated with oil.

Spread sprouts on a glass or metal baking pan in a single layer, being careful not to crowd too much.

Bake uncovered for 20 minutes at 375°F.

Remove pan from oven and mix garlic with sprouts, either in the pan or a bowl.

Return sprouts to pan and bake for five to eight minutes more.

Remove pan and test sprouts, which should be tender enough to bite through.

Place sprouts in a second pan and chill in refrigerator for 15 minutes to stop the cooking process. When cool to the touch, gently toss sprouts with honey and balsamic vinegar.

Serve immediately or keep refrigerated for up to three days. Dish can be served hot or chilled, but is best at room temperature.

Serves four.
Hank Miltenberger’s healthy lifestyle is the sort that usually keeps folks out of the hospital.

The 57-year-old Covington businessman and longtime St. Tammany Hospital Foundation Trustee has been a long-distance runner since high school, completed triathlons across the U.S. and last year qualified for the Boston Marathon—again.

Cycling along the back roads of northern St. Tammany Parish is another passion.

It was during a Saturday morning ride in January that Miltenberger’s life took a near tragic turn, and his ties to the hospital became decidedly more personal.

As he headed home after a 70-mile ride, Miltenberger was hit by a car while crossing the highway.

First responders rushed him to the STPH emergency department. Miltenberger’s injuries were severe. He had a dozen broken ribs, fractured vertebrae, a broken hand, a broken shoulder, lacerated and severely injured lungs, which collapsed and other chest injuries.

“You can make a difference in the life-saving medical care at St. Tammany Parish Hospital. Make a donation to St. Tammany Hospital Foundation’s year-end appeal by using the attached envelope. Remember keeping STPH healthy, keeps our community healthy.”

“From the start, they encouraged me to help in my own healing process,” said Miltenberger, president of Gilsbar Inc., a Covington-based provider of health-plan management services to hospitals, associations and other organizations across the country.

Miltenberger did work hard during his two-and-a-half week stay at STPH, forcing himself to move and breathe even when it hurt.

But he credits excellent medical decisions and care by the STPH staff with not only saving his life, but also helping him recover quickly. After STPH doctors and nurses stabilized him, for instance, the staff, in conjunction with Miltenberger’s wife, decided to postpone a procedure that would result in six to eight weeks in the hospital and instead carefully watch whether he would begin to recover without it—a decision that shortened his hospital stay by more than a month.

“The staff told me later I had the worst injuries they’d seen on anybody who lived,” Miltenberger said.

He has no memory of the accident, or the few minutes before it. When he regained consciousness a week later in STPH’s critical care unit, one of the first messages the staff gave him was that he could fully recover—if he worked hard enough.

“They encouraged me to get better without rushing me,” he said.

Still, the pace of Miltenberger’s recovery has been remarkable by any measure. He started back at work in March. Two months after leaving STPH he completed the Crescent City Classic 10k run, though this time at walking speed. Today his weekends again include 50-mile bike rides, although his lungs will need a full year to heal completely.

The experience has left Miltenberger more committed than ever to helping the St. Tammany Hospital Foundation raise funds to support and expand the world-class care provided by STPH.

“It’s more committed to the foundation than ever because I now know from personal experience how amazing this hospital is,” he said, “and how it really saves lives… like mine.”

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Angels of Light honors friends and family

On December 10 at 5:30 p.m., the Hospice Tree for Life in St. Tammany Parish Hospital’s lobby will glow with lights amid a holiday tradition that honors and remembers friends and family members.

The 2009 Angels of Light presented by Capital One will feature a lighting ceremony, carols by the St. Tammany Parish Hospital Choir and refreshments. The evening will include a reading of the names of all the loved ones represented in Tribute Angels that hang from the tree.

Proceeds benefit Hospice of St. Tammany at STPH, which is dedicated to the compassionate care of terminally ill patients. Lights on the Tree for Life represent the extraordinary care given to all STPH hospice patients.

The 2009 Tree for Life dedication sponsor is Blanche McCloskey, a donor and member of the St. Tammany Hospital Foundation Board of Trustees, who dedicates this year’s tree in memory of her husband, Dennis.

The McCloskeys raised their daughters on the Northshore, where the couple founded Windmill Nurseries Inc. Sharing the beauty of nature was a passion for Dennis McCloskey, who donated trees to schools, parks and churches on the north and south shores of Lake Pontchartrain.

His family recalls him as a modern-day Johnny Appleseed who dedicated his life to serving his family and community. Angels may be purchased in honor or memory of loved ones for a $10 minimum donation in the STPH Gift Shop or foundation office. Special dedication opportunities beginning at $250 include a Tribute Angel and special recognition at the event.

Information about Angels of Light and other giving opportunities is available at 985-898-4171.

“Only 25 percent of hospitals in the country and one program in the parish can say that.”

“Everything is patient directed,” she said.

Caring & Quality of Life at every stage

Managing pain and other symptoms while supporting patient decisions about care is a core focus of the hospice program at St. Tammany Parish Hospital.

Effective hospice care also means helping families better prepare for the patient’s death, including learning how to communicate about this profound transition.

“I have seen people become less fearful as they learn to speak about what they really want,” said Debbie Miller RN, STPH oncology nurse.

STPH hospice care combines excellence in medical care with emotional and other support for patients and families. Services range from bereavement counseling to at-home physical therapy to help patients maintain their quality of life.

Nurses work closely with the patient’s attending or primary care physician, visiting the patient’s home as often as needed to assure their well-being and adjust care to manage pain and other symptoms, explained Donna Berbling RN, STPH hospice patient care coordinator.

“It gives patients confidence to know an independent organization certifies the care they receive here is the same high quality care they would receive at CoC-accredited programs nationwide,” Cheryl Cortizzo RN, director of the STPH cancer program, said.

National Recognition for the STPH Cancer Program

St. Tammany Parish Hospital continues to enhance its reputation for excellence in cancer diagnosis, treatment and prevention.

STPH, in partnership with Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center in Covington, has earned three-year approval with commendation from the Commission on Cancer (CoC) of the American College of Surgeons (ACoS).

This national distinction reflects STPH’s commitment to providing Northshore communities with the best available tools for cancer diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation as well as comprehensive support services for patients and their families.

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Patients are eligible for hospice when a physician has certified that they have a life expectancy of six months or less, explained Angelique Knoblock RN, head of STPH hospice and home health services.

During that time, nurses can help families learn a range of coping methods, from effective ways to safely move the patient to minimizing symptoms through medication and other means.

“We can be of greatest benefit the sooner patients come to us,” Knoblock said. “There is so much we can do for them.”

Another goal of the program is to help the patient die a peaceful, natural death at home, surrounded by loved ones.

The focus on patient wishes was reinforced through special training for STPH staff that stressed the importance of patient decisions about care and how nurses can best support them, Miller said.

“This is the patient’s journey,” she said.

In support of that view, STPH offers twice-yearly end-of-life workshops to Northshore medical providers, members of the clergy and others who provide comfort and care to patients in the final weeks or months of life.

“We see this as a service to the community,” Knoblock said.
BRINGING MATTHEW HOME
10 Weeks of Hope, Fear & Expert Care in STPH’s Antenatal Unit

Late in the afternoon of November 14, Robert Barkerding received a call that would upend his family’s life.

It was his wife, Nicole, 24 weeks pregnant with the couple’s second child, on the line. “My water broke,” she told him. “I’m headed to St. Tammany.”

So began the Barkerding family’s 10-week stay in the antenatal unit at STPH, where physicians and nurses worked to prevent Nicole from going into labor or succumbing to infection after the rupture of her amniotic membrane.

Barkerding tells a story of expert care during a time filled with fear as the weeks ticked by and he virtually moved into the hospital to be at his wife’s side each night.

Nicole was put on antibiotics to prevent infection while the staff worked to maintain the level of amniotic fluid, which is crucial for a baby’s lung development, said Richelle Dufour RN, head of the STPH New Family Center.

Nicole’s obstetrician, Stephanie Schultis MD of Covington, worked closely with the staff during the long weeks of waiting. STPH neonatologist Alma Levy MD, who would help keep fear at bay.

Clear communication about that progress was the ultimate medical care in our local communities.”

“We are grateful to St. Tammany for the amazing care Matthew and Nicole received, but more than that, we are thankful to a gracious and loving God for this miracle.” – Robert Barkerding

Matthew’s delivery brought a new wave of anxiety after a defective catheter broke inside his body, necessitating his transfer just six hours after birth at 4 pounds, 14 ounces. He returned to STPH at the family’s insistence a month later and remained in its neonatal intensive care unit until April.

“St. Tammany felt like family,” Barkerding said.

Matthew is now a bright-eyed nine-month old and doing great, according to his dad, who lauds the care of physicians, nurses, housekeepers, technicians and aids at every step of their journey at STPH.

“Communication is vital to helping families cope with fear,” Dufour said.

Yet it was also a time of celebration of new friendships and longstanding traditions. The nurses organized a baby shower.

“It was an experience that should be taught in every nursing school in the country,” Barkerding said.

Nicole’s obstetrician, Stephanie Schultis MD of Covington, worked closely with the staff during the long weeks of waiting. STPH neonatologist Alma Levy MD, who would play a crucial role after Matthew’s birth at 34 weeks, visited daily. Regular visits from perinatologists informed the family of the baby’s progress.

Nicole’s obstetrician, Stephanie Schultis MD of Covington, worked closely with the staff during the long weeks of waiting. STPH neonatologist Alma Levy MD, who would play a crucial role after Matthew’s birth at 34 weeks, visited daily. Regular visits from perinatologists informed the family of the baby’s progress.

“We are grateful to St. Tammany for the amazing care Matthew and Nicole received, but more than that, we are thankful to a gracious and loving God for this miracle.” – Robert Barkerding

Clear communication about that progress helped keep fear at bay.

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The extended Barkerding family crowded into Nicole’s room at Thanksgiving and Christmas. The couple’s 3-year-old daughter was a playful presence in her mother’s room in the 10-private-room antenatal unit.

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Nicole and Robert Barkerding play peek-a-boo with son Matthew and daughter Skylar.

More information on WE Care or giving opportunities at STPH is available by calling 985-898-4141.
STPH Calendar Highlights

As your community hospital, STPH hosts events, meetings and opportunities to improve and maintain physical and emotional wellbeing. A short sample of upcoming events is provided below, but please check www.stph.org and local newspapers for additional learning opportunities for individuals of all ages.

1, 2, 3, 4 Parents! Series
Oct 3, 17 or Nov 14, 21, 9 am to noon
STPH Parenting Center
$35 members/$50 nonmembers; social and behavioral changes of children from birth to four years; how to prevent problem behavior and positive discipline skills; registration required. 985-898-4435

New Family Center Tours
Oct 3, 17 or Nov 7, 21 or Dec 5, 19, 10 am to noon
STPH New Family Center
FREE; 30-min. tour; preregister your birth plan; first and third Saturdays monthly. 985-898-4536

Baby Care Basics
Oct 4, 13 or Dec 8, 7 pm to 9 pm
STPH Parenting Center
FREE; helpful hints and what to expect when caring for your new baby. 985-898-4083

Latchkey Children
Oct 5, 3 pm to 4 pm,
STPH Abita Room
Oct 5, 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm,
STPH Parenting Center
FREE; for children and parents; learn safety tips from St. Tammany Parish Communications District; registration required. 985-898-4536

Baby Chat for Siblings
Oct 10 or Nov 7, 10 am to noon
STPH Conference Center
FREE; for children ages 3 and up to understand the changes that occur with a new baby. 985-898-4083

Art of Breastfeeding
Oct 13, 7 pm to 9 pm
STPH Parenting Center
FREE; mothers, babies and expectant mothers join a certified lactation consultant for questions and answers relating to breastfeeding. 985-898-4083

Breast Cancer Screening
Oct 15 or Nov 7, 21, 9 am to 2 pm
Early Bird Van, Mandeville/Covington area
FREE; clinical breast exams for women 18 and older; mammograms for uninsured women 40 and older who have not had a screening in the past 12 months; appointment required. 888-616-4687

Using Lamaze Techniques
Oct 17, 4 pm to 7 pm
Paul Cordes Outpatient Pavilion
STPH Conference Center
$50; series of six classes practicing relaxation and pain control techniques to help you through the childbirth experience. 985-898-4083

Pacemaker Support Group
Oct 21, noon
STPH Telefuncte Bldg., Ste 108
FREE; bring your questions and you significant other; light lunch provided. 985-898-3773

Lymphedema Prevention Clinic
Oct 22, 8:45 am to 4:15 pm
Paul Cordes Outpatient Pavilion
FREE; one-on-one appointments for cancer survivors who have had lymph node removal and have not been diagnosed with lymphedema; appointment necessary. 985-898-4581

Monster Mash
Oct 24, 10 am to 4 pm
Bogue Falaya Park, Covington
$4-$20; fun fall festival fundraiser for the STPH Parenting Center; activities, food, music, family-friendly. 985-898-4435

Homecare/Hospice Seminar
Nov 7, 9 am to noon
Paul Cordes Outpatient Pavilion
FREE; understand the value and quality of life hospice brings to patients and families. 985-871-5976

Look Good Feel Better
Nov 12, 6:30 pm
STPH Cancer Resource Center
FREE; certified cosmetologists demonstrate skin, nail and hair care to enhance your appearance and improve your self-image during treatment; free cosmetics and skin care products; bring a friend. 985-898-4481

Boot Camp for New Dads
Nov 14, 9 am to noon
STPH Parenting Center
$10; dads learn helpful hints and what to expect when the little one arrives from veteran new dads; free T-shirt. 985-898-4083

Nutrition & Your Preschooler
Nov 18, 10:30 am to 11:30 am
STPH Parenting Center
FREE members/$10 nonmembers; helps parents develop kids’ healthy eating habits. 985-898-4435

Alzheimer’s Support Group
Nov 23 and 24, 9 am to 4 pm
STPH Parenting Center
$65; 11-to-13-year-olds interested in learning to develop good babysitting skills; register early. 985-898-4435

Heartsaver CPR
Dec 5, 1 pm to 3:30 pm
STPH Conference Center
$40; basic standards of adult, child and infant CPR, foreign body airway relief and use of an AED. 985-898-4083

Angels of Light
Dec 10, 5:30 pm
STPH Lobby
FREE; Lighting of the Hospice Tree for Life, decorated with Tribute Angels (minimum $10 donation to benefit Hospice). 985-898-4171

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