The Lady Has Heart

A Quiet Hero for Families in Need
Art’s Healing Power At Work
A Painting becomes a Final Gift from Father to Son

The Healing Arts Initiative uses elements as different as sculpture, a meditation garden, a piano and intricate light installations to improve patient well-being. Research confirms Healing Arts’ aim of improving health through the arts. Studies show a soothing environment shortens hospital stays and improves health outcomes.

“You never know how a piece of art might contribute to the healing process,” said Mary Lee, chair of the Healing Arts Initiative, a project of St. Tammany Parish Hospital Foundation.

The experience of the family of a STPH hospice patient underscores art’s healing power.

The patient’s wife was walking through a hallway exhibit area at STPH this spring when a painting by artist Elizabeth Impastato caught her eye.

The painting, part of the Healing Arts Rotating Gallery Series of work by local artists, depicted a sailboat in a marina and children walking on a wharf. The woman stopped before the painting, dug out her phone and called Impastato. She wanted the painting, she said, not for herself, but for her husband’s son, who only days later would lose his father to cancer.

“The battle was won at those intersections.”

Project Manager Randy Willett.

“The widening of Highway 21 in Covington has been a sister project of sorts for St. Tammany Parish Hospital’s own demographics-driven expansion.

Work to expand the north-south artery that runs alongside the hospital campus began shortly after STPH launched the multi-phase $321 million project that includes expansion and renovation of its Emergency Department.

Almost a year after STPH completed its own project, the state Department of Transportation is wrapping up the most recent phase of work to widen Highway 21 north of Interstate 12.

The now-concluding phase of work added second lanes to the highway from Bootlegger Road to 11th Highway, where it will again taper to single lanes.

The newly four-lane stretch of Highway 21 is scheduled to be fully functional by the end of July, with the exception of incidental work that won’t affect the flow of traffic, said STPH Support Services

Moving Toward the Future
Highway 21 Widening Comes to a Close

The scope of roadwork includes new traffic signals at 8th and 11th avenues, including new turning lanes at those intersections.

The highway never closed since work began in 2014, although on several occasions ambulances temporarily redirected to side streets to access STPH Emergency Department.

STPH’s expansion project began in 2013. Driven by continuing growth in the Northshore population, the two-and-a-half year project added 8,600 square feet to the Emergency Department along with specialized areas for pediatric, mental health and geriatric emergency services and trauma care.

The hospital also added 21 new inpatient private rooms in its third-floor patient unit during the construction period. That element of the project was completed in 2015.

The following day, Lee delivered the painting to the family and arranged for another piece by Impastato to take its place in the “No Ordinary Moments” exhibit.

“This woman knew instinctively that the painting would help the son heal,” Lee said.

“Our mission is to connect people with the power of arts at key moments in their lives. We accomplished that goal with this experience,” Lee credits trust in her committee by the STFH Foundation Board of Trustees to achieve such moments. That trust empowers Lee and fellow committee members — Sarah Bonnette, Catherine Cooper, Lauren Davis MD, Jean Marie Desrochers and Amanda Paxton — with putting that trust to good use, she said.

“This organization supports us in finding ways to create an interplay between our community and the arts,” Lee said. “That is a wonderful way to work.”

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Catching Lung Cancer EARLY
Low-Dose CT Improves Treatment Success

Early detection is key to successful treatment of lung cancer, but just 30 percent of lung cancers are diagnosed in the early stage of disease. “As with other malignancies, treatment and therefore survival are stage-dependent,” said St. Tammany Parish Hospital radiologist Andrew Stone MD.

STPH offers the only recommended screening for patients at high-risk for lung cancer. Recent changes in Medicare guidelines have expanded access to the test, called low-dose CT, by making the cost of the test reimbursable for eligible patients.

A growing number of private insurers is likely to follow Medicare’s lead and start covering the cost of the test, said Lori Chopin, low-dose CT screening program coordinator for STPH.

“It’s a good screening, and many people may be unaware that Medicare and more private insurers are covering it,” Chopin said. “It’s worth checking to see if your insurer covers it.”

Research bears out the effectiveness of low-dose CT in reducing lung-cancer deaths. A large clinical trial found that screening with low-dose CT reduced the risk of dying from lung cancer by 20 percent among high-risk patients.

Nevertheless, the test has been little used since the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force in 2013 began recommending the scan for high-risk patients. In 2015, for instance, just 267,700 of 6.8 million people in the pool of eligible U.S. patients had the scan, research shows.

Dr. Stone and others are optimistic more people will hold a single breath while they are in the CT machine. Patients do not need to disrobe for the quick screening, which takes only a few minutes. The scan generates detailed images of the lungs that can reveal cancer or other undetected problems.

“Not only is the test a success if your insurer covers it,” Chopin said. “It’s worth checking to see if your insurer includes it.”

A doctor’s referral is necessary for low-dose CT for lung cancer, which STPH offers at the Paul D. Cordes Outpatient Pavilion.

The test comes with some risks for patients, including the chance of a false positive. About 24 percent of scans detect a nodule in lung tissue, but only four percent turn out to be cancer, noted Dr. Stone.

Over-diagnosis, or the detection and treatment of cancer that may have never caused a health problem for the patient, is another risk.

Low-dose CT also exposes patients to a small amount of radiation.

“For such reasons, low-dose CT is suitable for heavy smokers or former smokers who have quit in the past 15 years and who are between the ages of 55 and 77,” Chopin said.

Additional eligibility includes a smoking history of asbestos or family history of lung cancer, Chopin noted.

Patients also are eligible for screening if they are 50 or older with a 20-pack per year smoking history and one additional risk factor, such as exposure to radon or asbestos or family history of lung cancer, Chopin noted.

Additional information on assessing lung-cancer risk and eligibility for low-dose CT screening is available at stph.org/lungcancerscreening or by calling 985-898-4581.

Learn More

Foundation MVPs Gather for a Night of Celebration
2016 Adrian Award Goes to Kids & Family Northshore

St. Tammany Hospital Foundation celebrated its 2016 MVPs—Most Valued Patrons—during its annual recognition of donors and supporters at Tchefuncta Country Club.

The May 18 event highlighted 2016 giving by Partners in Philanthropy whose support put them on the Donor Wall of Honor in the STPH lobby or moved them to a new level of lifetime giving on the wall.

Tailgate-style dining, live jazz and gourmet popcorn favors set the tone for a sports-themed celebration that included presentation of the 10th annual Adrian award to Kids & Family Northshore.

Owner and publisher Elizabeth Heil accepted the spotlight award on behalf of the regional family-resource guide. Since 2001, Kids & Family Northshore has generously donated in-kind advertising for the Monster Mash fundraiser benefiting the hospital’s Parenting Center.

Named for Dr. Adrian B. Cairns Jr., the first chairman of the STH Foundation Board of Trustees, the Adrian award is presented each year to an exceptional friend of the foundation.
Joyce McHenry is one of St. Tammany Parish’s quiet heroes. For nearly 30 years, she has worked as a hospice volunteer, visiting terminally ill patients in their homes so their caregivers can run errands, keep appointments with dentists and hairdressers or just take a little time to themselves.

McHenry reads to patients or chats if they feel like talking. She is quiet if she senses that is what the patient wants. She fixes meals and snacks, washes dishes, folds laundry, plays cards, holds hands. She listens. Sometimes her visits last four hours or more.

“The main thing is just to be there,” McHenry says. “Each patient is different, so you don’t know ahead of time what they’ll need most and how best you can help.”

McHenry looks for chances to delight patients, too. McHenry and her late husband, Leemon McHenry, who spent 33 years with the U.S. Marine Corps, once organized a tribute to the military service of an elderly patient.

McHenry was an uplifting presence for Frank Tridico in the late ‘80s and early ‘90s during his mother’s slow decline from scleroderma, a gradual hardening of her internal organs. The retired Louisiana State Police lieutenant colonel recalls the woman’s cheerful conversation about children and favorite Italian recipes. McHenry’s visits over three or four years provided an enormous practical benefit, allowing his father to run errands and go to work during his mother’s illness when she could not be alone.

McHenry was also a critical source of support when Tridico’s sister died while his mother was ill.

“There’s only one Joyce McHenry,” Tridico says. “She provides more than companionship to hospice patients. It’s genuine care, and she’s not looking for anything in return. She just wants to help.”

“Others do more,” she insists. “And I enjoy this.”

McHenry is upbeat, intuitive and striking at 81. She moves with the easy grace of a dancer, which she has been all her life. She was born in Independence. She left at 17 for Kilgore College in Texas, where she danced with the two-year community college’s famed Rangerettes, a precision dance team and forerunner to the Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders.

She was a standout dancer and natural leader. At 19, she was recruited by the University of Southern Mississippi, which offered her a full scholarship to form a similar dance team there.

She moved to Hattiesburg, held auditions, came up with the name Dixie Darlings and choreographed halftime numbers. She returns to the campus each year to hit the field with current and former dancers of what grew into a famed dance team.

She married after college and traveled the world with her husband, a Marine Corps colonel. The couple raised two boys and moved 27 times. The McHenrys made their home in places as varied as Japan, Camp Lejeune, NC, and Twenty-Nine Palms, CA. She found time to volunteer with the Red Cross in the last two places.

She has the energy of women half her age. Hospice is just one of several endeavors. She calls bingo on Saturdays at a local retirement home, throws bunko parties, hits the gym and makes her breakfast each day, she says.

Joyce McHenry is one of St. Tammany Parish’s quiet heroes. She provides more than companionship to hospice patients. It’s genuine care, and she’s not looking for anything in return. She just wants to help.” – Frank Tridico
Focused on Safety
Ongoing Review Shapes Safety Initiatives

“Safety is an ongoing journey that builds on itself. It’s a continuous process of evaluation and improvement.” — Sharon Toups, STPH chief operating officer

Elements of the process include close monitoring of safety alerts issued by The Joint Commission about safety-related incidents at other U.S. hospitals. Clinical staff who serve on separate safety committees in equipment, infection-prevention and other areas use the national alerts to help identify potential areas of improvement at STPH.

Each of the committees meets regularly to discuss updates and new information related to safety.

“We work to identify safety triggers before they happen,” Toups said. Technology also plays an important safety role. For instance, STPH uses centralized temperature monitoring of refrigeration units that store patient medication. Alarms sound if there is a power interruption or failure in any unit in the hospital, Toups said.

Empowering employees to speak up if they see a possible safety lapse is likewise fundamental to the process.

Every STPH employee is empowered to take action if they see a violation of Joint Commission-based “red rules,” such as taking a time-out before surgery or any other invasive procedure, Toups noted.

Additionally, an Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality patient-safety survey every two years allows for in-depth perspective from hospital employees on safety-related matters, including in areas such as teamwork, communication and patient “handoffs” between departments.

“Using the insights of our employees is an important part of the safety process,” Toups said.

Gurney Games Races Back
Teams Race for Gurney Glory

High-spirited competitors helped raise more than $14,000 for St. Tammany Hospital Foundation at the 2017 Gurney Games. Sixteen teams of costumed racers navigated decorated hospital gurneys through an obstacle course during the March 26 event at the Covington Trailhead.

The first-place winner in the Gurney Glory category was St. Tammany Parish Hospital Human Resources with “We’re All Mad Here.” The award for Best Overall Gurney went to the team from the STPH Paul D. Cordes Outpatient Pavilion. The STPH Critical Care Unit team took home the Fan Favorite award for its Dr. Seuss-inspired “One Pill, Two Pill, Red Pill, Blue Pill” gurney.

The one-of-a-kind Northshore fundraiser supports the work of the STH Foundation. FLWB Architects presented the event, which was brought back by popular demand in 2017 after a five-year hiatus.

A Banner Year for Quality
National Awards Confirm STPH Focus on Patient Care

St. Tammany Parish Hospital is the recipient of a string of 2017 national awards for excellence in patient safety, quality and patient experience.

STPH was named one of the safest hospitals in the nation in 2017 by the Leapfrog Group, Healthgrades and Women’s Choice. The accolades include an “A” grade for the nonprofit Leapfrog Group for efforts to reduce errors, infections and accidents that can harm patients. STPH was one of just 823 U.S. hospitals to earn Leapfrog Group’s highest grade in this key safety measure.

The awards reflect continuing improvements in infection rates, falls and other safety measures as well as a well-defined process that looks at best practices in hospital safety across the country, Toups said.

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From toddler tantrums to teen eye-rolls, children at every age present their parents with joys and challenges alike.

A new class at the St. Tammany Parish Hospital Parenting Center helps parents understand and lovingly navigate the sometimes- frustrating phases of children’s healthy development.

The center will begin offering its Ages & Stages class this summer.

The class incorporates the teachings of psychologist Eric Erikson on the phases of healthy human development in childhood, explained instructor Renee Ridgley MSW.

“Parents many times have unrealistic expectations for what children should do at certain ages, and they become frustrated when their children don’t meet those expectations,” Ridgley said. “The class helps parents understand the importance of each phase and what behaviors they may see at each stage.”

The class includes practical tips on issues like potty training such as delaying this milestone until age 3. Likewise, a positive strategy for dealing with temper tantrums—a big frustration for many parents of toddlers—often starts with allowing the child some time to vent their frustration, Ridgley noted.

Parents also learn the importance of setting realistic boundaries and consequences for children in later stages of development, such as adolescence.

The importance of patience, for child and parent alike, is a focus during all class sessions.

“Patience is easier for parents to develop when they understand what is happening with their child at that stage of development,” Ridgley said.

Four Northshore residents with records of community involvement and support are the newest members of St. Tammany Hospital Foundation’s Board of Trustees.

They are Nancy Baldwin, Jennifer Rice, Carlos Sanchez and David Toups MD.

Baldwin’s past service to the foundation includes committee service for the Healing Arts Initiative. The Covington mother of three grown children is past president of the Junior League of Covington. Along with her husband, John, she is a longtime supporter of the foundation both personally and through the family business, Baldwin Motors.

Jennifer Rice also has established ties to the foundation. She previously completed a nine-year commitment on its board of trustees and has since served on the STPH Board of Contributors.

A long history of giving has made the real estate professional and her husband, Tim Rice, among the foundation’s most generous supporters as partner level donors.

Jennifer is very active in the community and is an avid polo player and enthusiast.

Carlos Sanchez is owner and property manager of Fenchez, LLC. A collector and patron of the arts, Carlos recognizes its important role in the cultural life of the community, as well as in healthcare.

He serves on the steering committee for the New Heights Therapy Garden Party, which he and his partner, David Fennelly, host annually and is also a 2017 graduate of Leadership St. Tammany. Carlos and David reside at Summergrove Farm in Folsom and are generous contributors to the foundation.

David Toups MD is medical director of the St. Tammany Emergency Physicians Group. Well respected among STPH colleagues and staff, Dr. Toups and his wife, Lauren Davis MD, who is medical director of the STPH Sleep Center, most recently supported the foundation through its Pediatric Capital Campaign.

The couple divides their time between uptown New Orleans and downtown Covington.

“We are thrilled to have this group of individuals joining our board,” said Nicole Suhre, foundation executive director. “Each one of them brings a unique perspective and set of skills, and I am excited to see what they are able to accomplish.”

- Nicole Suhre, Foundation Executive Director

Join Us for Ages & Stages

**SINGLE-SESSION AGES & STAGES CLASS**

Focus on Toddlers

Wednesday, July 12
10:45 to 11:30 a.m.
$5 for members and $10 for non-members
STPH Parenting Center
1505 N. Florida St. in Covington
Childcare is available during the class.

**THREE-PART AGES & STAGES**

**THURSDAY EVENING SERIES**

Focus on children’s development from infancy through the late teen years

Sept. 7, Sept. 14 and Sept. 21
6 to 7:30 p.m.
$35 for the series

Classes are open to the public.
Additional information and registration is available at 985-898-4435.
STPH CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

As the Northshore’s community health network, St. Tammany Parish Hospital hosts events, meetings and opportunities for you to improve and maintain your physical and emotional well-being. We’ve provided a short sample of the many upcoming events below, and please check stph.org/calendar and your local newspaper for additional learning opportunities for individuals of all ages.

For New Parents

New Family Center Tours
1st and 3rd Saturdays | 10 a.m. to noon
STPH New Family Center | Free
Learn about our private birthing suites, rooming in, skin-to-skin program and more.
For more information, contact 985-898-4436

Prepared Childbirth
Tuesdays, August 1 & 8 | 6-8 p.m.
STPH Conference Room | Free
Learn the physical and emotional changes that occur, how your baby develops throughout pregnancy, the signs and stages of labor, what to expect during childbirth and the breathing and relaxation techniques used during labor. Anesthesia options will be discussed.
For more information, contact 985-898-4083

Baby Care Basics
Tuesdays, Aug. 14, Sept. 11 & Oct. 9 
6-8 p.m.
STPH Conference Room | Free
Learn helpful hints and what to expect when caring for your new baby.
For more information, contact 985-898-4083

Art of Breastfeeding
Mondays, Sept. 6 & Nov. 1
6:30-8:30 p.m.
STPH Parenting Center | Free
Discuss benefits of breastfeeding as well as common concerns of the early breastfeeding period to create a positive and successful breastfeeding experience.
For more information, contact 985-898-4083

New Baby Support Group
Every Thursday
11:15 a.m. to noon
STPH Parenting Center | Free
Join other mothers and their little ones to discuss child development and parenting tips with professionals as well as other parents.
For more information, contact ksusan@stph.org or 985-898-4435

For the Kids

Play and Learn
Tuesdays, Aug. 15, 22 & 29;
Sept. 12, 19 & 26 | 9:30-10:15 a.m.
STPH Parenting Center
$15/members, $24/nonmembers
For more information, contact ksusan@stph.org or 985-898-4435

Ballet
Wednesdays, Aug. 17, 24 & 30; 
Sept. 13, 20 & 27 | 9:15-10 a.m.
STPH Parenting Center
$21/members, $30/nonmembers
For more information, contact ksusan@stph.org or 985-898-4435

Cuddle Buddies
Thursdays, Aug. 17, 24 & 31; 
Sept. 14, 21 & 28 | 10:30-11 a.m.
STPH Parenting Center
$6/members, $12/nonmembers
For more information, contact ksusan@stph.org or 985-898-4435

For the Grown-Ups

Sister Survivors Support Group
1st Tuesday of each month | 7 p.m.
ST. Tammany Cancer Center | Free
Support group open to any female cancer survivor, whether currently receiving treatment or has completed treatment for any cancer diagnosis.
For more information, contact cmhughes@stph.org or 985-276-6832

Grief Support Group
1st Wednesday of each month | 3 p.m.
STPH Madisonville Conference Room
For adults who have suffered loss.
For more information, contact dvanek@stph.org

1 in 4 St. Tammany
2nd Tuesday of each month | 6 p.m.
STPH Women’s Pavilion Conference Room
Supports mothers, fathers and their families that have experienced a pregnancy or infant loss.
For more information, contact dvanek@stph.org

STH Foundation Events to Remember

29th Annual Monster Mash
Oct. 21 | 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Bogue Falaya Park

“Raising the Roof for Charity” Raffle House
WINNER ANNOUNCED

Congratulations to Michael Taylor, Jr. of Covington, winner of the 2017 “Raising the Roof for Charity” Raffle House. St. Tammany Hospital Foundation would like to thank everyone who purchased a ticket on our behalf. With your help, St. Tammany Hospital Foundation earned first place in the charity competition. Our portion of the proceeds will benefit the programs and services of St. Tammany Parish Hospital.