

# Heart to Heart

## Partnering for Children

*Collaboration Elevates Pediatric Care,  
Improves Access to Specialists*

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# Expansion Project Under Way

Biggest Project in 20 Years will add Critical Space

St. Tammany Parish Hospital's biggest expansion project in almost 20 years is underway as 2019 begins.

About 100 hospital, business and community leaders attended the Nov. 27 groundbreaking for the \$53.4 million second phase of an overall three-year master facilities expansion project.

Prompted by rising community demand for services, this two-year phase will set into motion a series of construction phases to complete STPH's transition from semi-private to all-private rooms while adding much-needed space for surgery, critical care, obstetrics and other services.

"This project is important to our community," said hospital CEO Joan Coffman. "We're grateful to be able to keep pace with our growing market."

The project is designed to support the hospital's growth during the next five to 15 years. Its highest-profile element is a 160,000-square-foot building that will require 18 months for contractor Milton J. Womack of Baton Rouge to complete. Its first phase was to develop sufficient parking at the periphery of the main campus to allow for the new building construction.

The four-story addition to the main hospital building will include 30 critical-care beds on the second floor, 40 medical-surgical care rooms on the third floor, administrative operations on the first floor and unfinished shell space to accommodate future expansion for the growing hospital on the fourth floor.

Renovation in the existing hospital will follow the new building construction. This third phase of the project will improve space and introduce new technology for obstetrics and the hospital's Level III neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

**Finishing the transition to all private rooms is an important milestone in the history of the hospital, which opened in 1954 with 15 beds in wards.**

The overall project is scheduled for completion in 2020.

The expansion is driven by growing market demand from several sources, including a continuing influx of young families to St. Tammany Parish and STPH's partnership with

Ochsner Health System, which elevates the level of care available in the parish's largest hospital.

Coffman noted that a chief objective of the hospital's 2014 partnership with Ochsner—improving access to medical specialists in west St. Tammany Parish—has increased the number of patients receiving that level of care close to home.

"We've seen tremendous growth as a result of the partnership," Coffman said. "The expansion will accommodate the additional demand created by improved access to specialists."

Market analysis also shows that more community physicians on the Northshore are using STPH, which already runs at 85 percent capacity most of the time, noted Sharon Toups, chief operating officer.

"The need to grow is well established," Toups said.

Finishing the transition to all private rooms is an important milestone in the history of the hospital, which opened in 1954 with 15 beds in wards. On the Northshore as elsewhere, a general shift to outpatient facilities for more procedures means patients who need to be admitted to the hospital tend to be sicker than in the past, Coffman said.

"We see a higher level of acuity when patients are admitted," Coffman said.

The move to all-private rooms is especially significant in view of that shift because studies show private rooms promote healing, shorten lengths of stay and reduce the risk of infection.

"People heal better in a private environment," Coffman explained.

# Enhancing Care through World-Class Technology

State-Of-The-Art Devices to Benefit Patients, Caregivers

St. Tammany Hospital Foundation has kicked off a two-year, \$300,000 initiative to help equip the 160,000-square-foot addition now under construction with next-level technology to enhance patient care, comfort and safety.

STH Foundation's Expansion Initiative aims to outfit the new building with technology for use by both care providers and patients once the project is complete in 2020.

"This technology is in step with the need to provide world-class care in our growing community," said Greg Pellegrini, chairman of the STH Foundation Board of Trustees. "These are important investments for quality of care."

Technology planned for the new building includes devices that seem out of the future, such as self-driving cleaning robots that reduce the risk of infection by zapping bacteria from the air and solid surfaces.

Specific funding priorities for the expansion include handheld devices that permit nurses to quickly send and receive information related to patient care, from treatment plans to updates on availability of patient rooms.

The devices also enhance patient safety by allowing nurses to administer medication with the help of barcodes and easily share information about patient fall risks and allergies, explained Sharon Toups, STPH chief operating officer.

"This technology both enhances care and aids efficiency," Toups said.

Devices to more fully involve patients in their own care are another priority of the fundraising effort and include bedside computer tablets to give patients easier access to their treatment plans, laboratory results and other information, Toups said.

Patients also can use the iPad-based technology to see what is planned for their care that day and for online education modules to learn more about their health condition and how to care for themselves after discharge, said Nicole Suhre, STHF executive director.

"This is a good way to expand patients' understanding of their care and more fully involve them in their own care," Suhre said.

Light-based disinfecting technology is another funding priority. Continuously cleaning robot-like devices use visible light to safely, automatically and continuously kill bacteria in the air as well as on hard and soft surfaces.

"This investment represents an additional way to reduce the risk of infection," Toups said.



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## Healing Arts: Showcasing STPH Initiative

Videos Highlight Art's Role at STPH

The role of the arts in promoting healing and well-being at St. Tammany Parish Hospital will be highlighted in a series of short videos being produced by the state of Louisiana's Division of the Arts.

The state Department of Cultural Development's videos will examine the purpose and expression of the Healing Arts Initiative at STPH and its evolution into a core element of the hospital's healthcare-delivery model.

"We're being told we are one of few hospitals in the U.S. that use art in this way and to this extent," said Nicole Suhre, executive director of the STH Foundation. "This is a chance to showcase our leadership in this area."

The Louisiana Division of the Arts video-production team recently toured the STPH campus for up-close views of paintings,

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*– Nicole Suhre, executive director of the STH Foundation*

fountains, lighting, gardens and other healing arts installations.

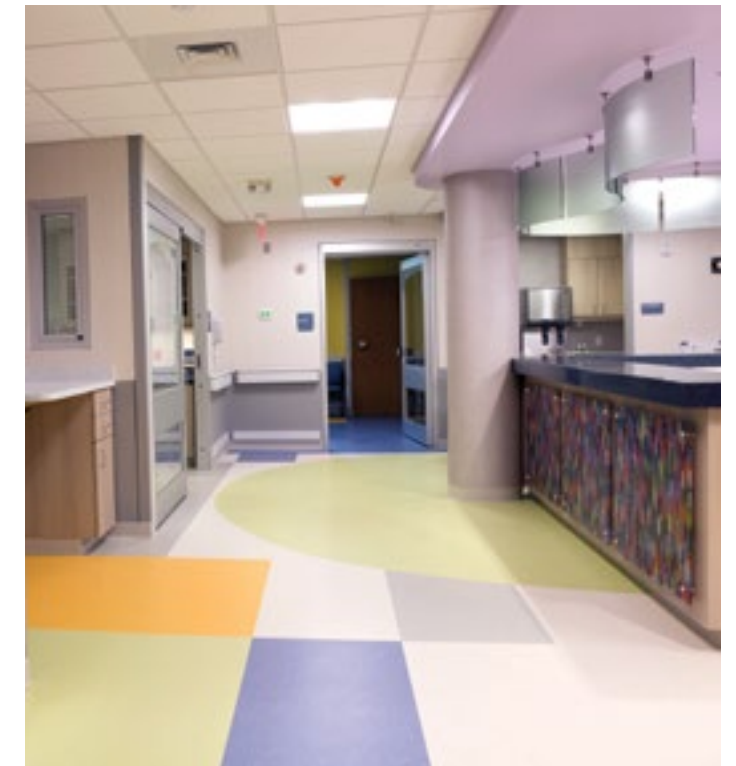
The production team completed interviews with select hospital administrators, employees and caregivers. STH Foundation Board of Trustees member, Healing Arts Initiative committee chairman and former nurse Mary Lee talked about the role of art in promoting healing.

The team also spoke to Bill Stewart, a Covington artist and military veteran who participated in a recent Healing Arts exhibit. Stewart credits teaching himself to paint with his left hand as essential to his recovery from a stroke that cost him the use of his right hand.

The videos on the STH Foundation's 14-year-old initiative will be shared with Louisiana health leaders as well as the National Endowment of the Arts as an example of art's the role in healthcare.

## STPH Expands Pediatric Services in 2019

Pediatric ICU, Round-the-Clock Emergency Hours Reflect Community Needs



St. Tammany Parish Hospital will expand pediatric services in early 2019 with the opening of a new pediatric intensive care unit (PICU) and new round-the-clock hours of operation of its pediatric emergency department.

The opening of the PICU in 2019 means children who need higher-acuity care will be able to remain close to home.

"Our mission is providing world-class healthcare close to home, and that mission includes pediatrics," said Kerry Milton, chief nursing officer at STPH.

Opening the PICU and launching 24-hour pediatric emergency care are examples of steady growth in pediatric services for STPH in recent years.

Earlier expansions include the 2016 opening of the pediatric emergency department and separate pediatric waiting area as well as a pediatric-specialty clinic through partner Ochsner Health System.

Ochsner played an important role in the latest expansion of pediatric services at STPH by providing specialized caregiver training and other support tied to the new PICU.

As with past expansions, the opening of the PICU will ease the

**"Our mission is providing world-class healthcare close to home, and that mission includes pediatrics."**

*– Kerry Milton, chief nursing officer at STPH*

burden of Northshore families who previously had to travel out of the area to get care for their children, said Cindy Ingram, director of Women and Children's Services.

"It's a burden on families to have to drive out of the area to get care for their child," Ingram said. "Offering care close to home eases that burden, and it is

especially important for families that have multiple children."

The more intensive care provided to children in the PICU includes continuous cardiac monitoring. The new unit will be equipped to care for a wide range of pediatric patients age 18 or under, including patients who rely on ventilators.

The new round-the-clock hours of operation at STPH's pediatric emergency department are similarly designed to make it easier for Northshore families to get specialized care for their children. The 24/7, 365-day schedule also will be put in place in the first quarter of 2019.

"Families want access to specialized pediatric emergency care regardless of the time of day," Ingram said. "You never know when you will need it."

# Partnering for Children



## Collaboration Elevates Pediatric Care, Improves Access to Specialists

A look back at the first months of four-year-old Celia Lewko's life perfectly illustrates the value of partnership between St. Tammany Parish Hospital and Ochsner Health System.

The collaboration, also four years old, improves lives for Northshore families through expanded access to specialists and collaboration on growth to meet the needs of the community.

Celia weighed two pounds, 10 ounces when she was born at STPH in December 2014. She was delivered by C-section at 28 weeks' gestation after her mother, Shannon Lewko, experienced placental abruption, a condition that puts mother and baby at risk.

Celia's physicians soon discovered a gap between her aorta and pulmonary artery, a dangerous condition that puts stress on the heart and in her case required surgery. The diagnosis of PDA began weeks of close collaboration between neonatal specialists at STPH and Ochsner's main campus in New Orleans.

**“Our patients now have access to a large number of pediatric specialists. In the past, families typically had to drive out of the area to see those specialists.”**

The teamwork involved transporting Celia to Ochsner Medical Center for pediatric heart surgery just one month after she was born, then transport back to STPH after she stabilized from the procedure. STPH's Level III neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) enabled Celia to recover close to her family's home in Bush.

The STPH and Ochsner teams' work in bringing Celia back to the Northshore literally involved handing off the child in a procedure known as “back transport.”

Elevating pediatric services in west St. Tammany Parish was one of the primary goals of the 2014 agreement, and new opportunities for medical collaboration are just one way that goal is being realized.

The partnership benefits include weekly, biweekly and monthly clinics to provide Northshore families with access to Ochsner specialists close to home, noted Cindy Ingram, STPH director of women and children's services.

These pediatric specialties include cardiology, general surgery, gastroenterology, pulmonology, endocrinology and orthopedics.

“Along with our strong network of community pediatricians, STPH's own pediatric orthopedist and clinic, plus the hospital's pediatric emergency department, the Ochsner pediatric specialty clinic truly elevates children's care in west St. Tammany,” Ingram said. “Our patients now have access to a large number of pediatric specialists. In the past, families typically had to drive out of the area to see those specialists.”

Additionally, STPH's pediatric and neonatal intensive care units now have round-the-clock access to Ochsner pediatric cardiologists via telemedicine.

The technology allows echocardiogram technicians at STPH to scan babies' hearts while interacting in real time with pediatric cardiologists at Ochsner in New Orleans, as the physicians examine the infants' hearts and provide instruction to the technicians, Ingram explained.

“That's another separate benefit of the partnership,” Ingram said.

More recently, Ochsner provided specialized training to STPH nurses who will care for children in the pediatric intensive care unit (PICU) that will open this winter.

“We want to make it as easy as possible for families to get the care they need for their children close to home,” Ingram said. “The partnership helps us do that.”

Shannon Lewko hasn't forgotten her relief at having Celia in STPH NICU for the final weeks of her hospitalization after driving to New Orleans from Bush for weeks after her daughter's birth. “Having her close to home was a big deal to me,” Shannon Lewko recalled.

Meanwhile, Celia is thriving. She has caught up developmentally, loves cats, dogs, bedtime books and shadowing her older sister. These days, she is also enjoying the role of big sister to a toddler brother.

“She's a talker with an elaborate vocabulary,” Shannon Lewko said. “She's also a social butterfly.”



# Gala Attendees “Step into the Ring” for STCC Patients

Debut Event Raised Nearly  
\$200,000 for Local Cancer Care

St. Tammany Hospital Foundation’s premiere of THE Gala raised nearly \$200,000 for patient care at St. Tammany Cancer Center.

Its “Step Into The Ring” vintage Parisian-circus theme fundraiser drew more than 450 attendees to its Oct. 4 debut at the Southern Hotel in Covington’s historic district.

The inaugural event presented by HUB International, was held in the Southern Hotel’s exquisitely restored lobby and courtyard and included vintage-style circus décor, live-artist painting, musical entertainment, circus performers, games, food and drinks.

Additional event sponsors included Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana, Hancock Whitney, Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center, Ochsner Health System and St. Tammany Parish Hospital.

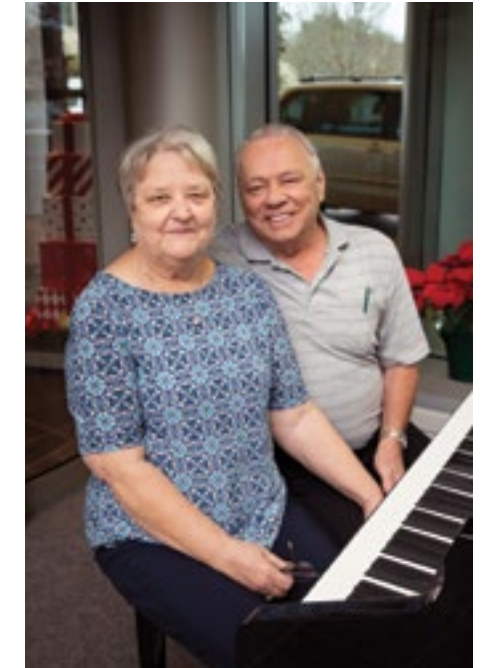


## NEW FUNDRAISER BENEFITS CANCER CENTER

St. Tammany Hospital Foundation’s new gala fundraiser plays an important role in supporting Northshore cancer patients receiving care at St. Tammany Cancer Center.

An evolution of Mary Bird Perkins’ former Benefits of Home, THE Gala presented by HUB International, benefits St. Tammany Cancer Center, whose multidisciplinary medical team includes medical oncologists, surgeons, radiation oncologists, pathologists, supportive services and other cancer specialists.

Connected via skybridge to the main St. Tammany Parish Hospital campus, the center provides integrated, highly personalized cancer treatment in partnership with Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center and Ochsner Health System.



# The Gift of Sweet Music

Bogalusa Retiree Plays Thursdays in STPH Lobby

It takes something big to keep Charles W. Magee from his Thursday sessions at the keys of the piano in the St. Tammany Parish Hospital lobby.

Magee has missed once for a funeral since he began playing the piano with the “a sweet, sweet tone” in 2017.

He missed another session for a trip to the Smokey Mountains with his wife, Becky, who reads or visits with listeners while the 79-year-old Bogalusa retiree plays from 2 to 4 p.m. after the couple completes appointments with physicians or runs errands in Covington.

Turns out, recovering from heart surgery wasn’t big enough for the volunteer pianist who worked 35 years at the box factory in Bogalusa to miss a chance to play.

In May of 2018, Magee had five blockages cleared from his arteries by STPH’s cardiology team. Three days after his Monday surgery, Magee pulled on pajamas, rolled from his hospital room to the first-floor lobby in a wheelchair and spun out four songs.

He was back to his standard two-hour schedule by the following week.

“I do it for the smiles,” said Magee, who took piano lessons as a child but mostly plays by memory. He knows hundreds of songs—tunes by Elvis and The Platters are favorites—and brings a folder of song titles with him so listeners can look it over and make requests.

“I feel blessed to be able to do it,” said Magee.

STPH inpatient physical therapist Jeff Salsiccia likes to walk with

**“...music is a powerful healing force and a mood lifter, and the patients love it.”**

– Jeff Salsiccia, STPH inpatient physical therapist

his patients around the hospital campus during sessions to improve their strength. He recognized an opportunity when he first heard Magee play in 2017.

The men struck up what amounts to an informal partnership after that first meeting in the lobby. Each week, Salsiccia calls Magee to double check that he

will play that Thursday. The therapist then tells his patients about the music to see if they are interested in going to listen Thursday afternoon.

Getting patients the 500-or-so feet from the second-floor rehabilitation unit to the lobby takes careful coordination with nurses, physical therapy technicians and occupational therapists in part because patients can’t be left alone in the lobby at any time.

Patients who have heard Magee the week before often tell Salsiccia to save them a spot the next Thursday.

“It takes some arranging to get patients there, but music is a powerful healing force and a mood lifter, and the patients love it,” said Salsiccia, who has managed to bring as many as six patients at a time to the lobby to hear Magee.

Salsiccia’s patients aren’t just there to listen. He encourages them to stand, dance in place or move around the lobby with walkers or canes as the music plays. Effective rehabilitation, Salsiccia explained, can happen many different places.

“We’re literally doing therapy as we listen to him play,” Salsiccia said.



## Spring Foundation Events to Benefit Expansion Initiative

The 2019 Gurney Games and Get Lucky! Golf Tournament will benefit St. Tammany Hospital Foundation's Expansion Initiative to equip the hospital addition now under construction with new state-of-the-art technology to enhance patient care.

This year's popular Gurney Games will take place from 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 17 at the Covington Trailhead.

Sponsored by fl+WB Architects, Gurney Games features costumed teams competing for the fastest time and other awards as they parade and race decorated gurneys through a fun-filled obstacle course. Spectators will also enjoy music, food, beverages

and kids' activities in a festival-style atmosphere.

The STH Foundation's 2019 Get Lucky! Golf Tournament will begin with a shotgun start at 12:30 p.m. Thursday, April 18 at Money Hill Golf & Country Club in Abita Springs.

Presented by Refreshment Solutions, registration for the eighth annual Get Lucky! event begins at 11:30 a.m.

Sponsorship opportunities for Gurney Games and the Get Lucky! Golf Tournament are now available. Additional information is available by contacting Melanie Rudolph at 985-898-4141 or [mrudolph@stph.org](mailto:mrudolph@stph.org).

# Fall and Winter Events Shaped by Tradition and Giving

Dick Kelley Honored as Perpetual Angel



## Monster Mash Celebrates 30 Years

Monster Mash celebrated its 30th anniversary on Oct. 20 with a day-long gathering at Bogue Falaya Park that raised more than \$75,000 for St. Tammany Parish Hospital Parenting Center.

Monster Mash has raised more than \$1.5 million to support the STPH Parenting Center since its debut three decades ago.

Sponsored by Metairie Bank Northshore, the Halloween-themed event brought out celebrants of all ages for games, food, music and more for what has become a Northshore tradition in support of children and families.

Event sponsors included Community Coffee, St. Tammany Parish Hospital, Ochsner Health System and POOLCORP.



## Angels of Light Pays Tribute to Loved Ones

In December, Angels of Light raised more than \$26,600 for St. Tammany Hospital Hospice.

428 Tribute Angels adorned the branches of the 2018 Hospice Tree for Life, which was dedicated in memory of Ellen "Deedee" Suthon, former member of STH Foundation Board of Trustees and dedicated community activist, volunteer and philanthropist.

The Dec. 6 event in the hospital's lobby also included recognition of the longtime support and generosity of STHF Board of Trustees member Richard "Dick" Kelley, who passed away last summer.

A champion of the foundation's work with a particular interest in hospice and home health, Kelley was named a Perpetual Angel, just the fourth recipient of this recognition.

Angels of Light sponsors included the family and friends of Deedee Suthon; Susan and Kenneth Latham and family; the Dunavant family; Blanche McCloskey; and Cathy Collett Williams, Ned Collett Jr. and Midge Collett.





**OUR MISSION**

A full-service acute care facility committed to providing world-class healthcare and the latest technology, St. Tammany Parish Hospital delivers today's life-improving procedures with the utmost care to area residents with emphasis on wellness, preventive care and disease management close to home. STPH is recognized for quality, safety and the patient experience by CareChex, Leapfrog, Healthgrades, Hospital Compare, Women's Choice and US News & World Report. St. Tammany Parish Hospital is an independent service district in a clinically integrated partnership with Ochsner Health System. Together, the two organizations focus on aligning their healthcare offerings to best serve patients and families in west St. Tammany and surrounding areas. Under their agreement, the two organizations retain their autonomy; neither partner manages nor owns the other. STPH is a self-supporting not-for-profit community hospital; it receives no tax funding. Learn more at stph.org.

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STPH complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. STPH does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. STPH provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us. If you need these services, contact the Patient Relations Department at 985-898-4669.



**OUR MISSION**

The St. Tammany Hospital Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization established to sustain the healing work of the physicians and staff of St. Tammany Parish Hospital.

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St. Tammany Parish Hospital | 985-898-4000 | stph.org  
St. Tammany Hospital Foundation | 985-898-4171 | sthfoundation.org  
1202 S.Tyler St., Covington, LA 70433



# Upcoming Events

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. Please check the calendar on stph.org or additional learning opportunities for individuals of all ages.

## Gurney Games

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Noon - 5 p.m.  
City of Covington Trailhead  
stph.org/gurneygames  
985-898-4141

## Boot Camp for New Dads

SATURDAY, MARCH 16

9 a.m. - Noon  
STPH Madisonville Room

## National Doctors' Day

SATURDAY, MARCH 30

Celebrate National Doctors' Day by honoring your physician with a donation to the foundation. sthfoundation.org/doctorsday  
985-898-4174



## Get Lucky! Golf Tournament

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

Money Hill Country Club & Golf Course  
sthfoundation.org/golf  
985-898-4141

# Save the Date THE Gala: Step into Paradise

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3

Transport yourself to paradise and join us at THE Gala, an unforgettable evening benefiting local cancer care in one healing place - St. Tammany Cancer Center—where nationally ranked leaders, St. Tammany Parish Hospital, Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center and Ochsner, are fighting to beat cancer.  
sthfoundation.org/thegala