

EMPOWERING NURSES

Shared Governance Helps Nurses Improve Patient Care



RICK OLIVIER PHOTOGRAPHY
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Enhancing STPH Patient Education

In 2004, a donation from the Covington-based biomedical firm Pamlab allowed St. Tammany Parish Hospital to acquire the video-on-demand system that has become a crucial component of its patient-education efforts.

Sam and Judy Camp, founders of Pamlab, are long-time supporters of the St. Tammany Hospital Foundation with Sam on the STHF Board of Trustees and Judy a member of the Planned Giving Council.

In November, an additional gift from Pamlab provided much needed upgrades to the centralized video system that enhance STPH's ability to improve patient understanding of topics from diabetes and hypertension to breastfeeding, cancer and smoking cessation.

"St. Tammany Parish Hospital is dear to our hearts and we hope all of the patients who receive such excellent care will utilize this upgraded system," Judy Camp said.

Upgrades to the system allow STPH caregivers to more effectively monitor patients' understanding of educational videos or determine if patients need additional information in a different form, Charlie Vaught, STPH training specialist, explained.

The system allows patients and their family members to watch videos in their rooms at their convenience and replay them as needed. "The system's purpose is to help patients better understand their condition and prepare for essential steps in their care, such as returning home and staying well after surgery," Vaught said.

"The video-on-demand upgrades are a direct benefit to our patients, but ultimately they have a positive impact on our community by keeping people healthier," Vaught added. "In that sense, they are a gift to the community itself."

Information on giving opportunities at STPH is available by contacting Charley Strickland, executive director of the St. Tammany Hospital Foundation, 898-4141 or cstrickland@stph.org.







A LIGHT-FILLED "THANK YOU"

Donor Pays Tribute to STPH Employees

Deedee Suthon remembers her grandmother's message about volunteerism. It was 1942, and then-7-year-old Suthon lived in a 22-room apartment on New York's Fifth Avenue.

"She told me, 'Deedee, when you are in the socioeconomic position you are in, you owe it to your community to be a volunteer and help others," Suthon recalled. "She didn't tell me what 'socioeconomic' meant. She made me look it up."

Suthon enjoys the memory—and never forgot the lesson.

Her life has been focused on volunteerism, including service on the St. Tammany Hospital Foundation Board of Trustees. In that spirit, Suthon dedicated the 2011 Hospice Tree for Life to the employees of STPH.

"This is for the people who mop the floors and copy meeting agendas and care for patients at STPH," Suthon said. "This is such a caring hospital, and the work of every employee is part of that. I wanted the chance to say thank you."

As in past years, the lighting of the Tree for Life was a highlight of the annual Angels of Light ceremony to benefit deceased. Hospice of STPH St. Tammany Parish Hospital.

The December 8 event included music, caroling by the STPH choir and recognition of loved ones both living and deceased. Hospice of STPH provides care and support to terminally ill Northshore patients and their families, from palliative medicine to social and spiritual support.

Information on the 2012 Angels of Light and other giving opportunities at STPH is available by contacting Charley Strickland at 898-4141 or cstrickland@stph.org.



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Our Mission

The St. Tammany Hospital Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization established to sustain physicians and staff of St. Tammany Parish Hospital

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"They were gentle and understanding at every step of the process...The wound clinic gave me back my life."

Diagnostic Center Opens in Mandeville

Facility Opening Reflects Patient Demand for Services

The new STPH Mandeville Diagnostic Center opened this month at 201 St. Ann Drive, Suite A, former site of the hospital's breast center, which was expanded to the Women's Pavilion on Hwy. 190 last year.

The new facility is adjacent to St. Tammany Physicians Network's Mandeville location, providing the full range of primary diagnostics conveniently next door.

"We're bringing the same high quality services patients experience at the Cordes Outpatient Pavilion in Covington, closer to patients who live in the Mandeville area," said Melonie Lagalante, director of the outpatient diagnostic centers. "The new facility offers laboratory services, X-ray, ultrasound, CAT scan and EKG."

Opening an additional outpatient diagnostic facility reflects patient demand for STPH services. In the past, about 30 percent of patients at the Cordes Pavilion had Mandeville ZIP codes, said Sharon Toups, chief operating officer. The additional site in Mandeville offers greater convenience to those patients while freeing up capacity at the Cordes location.

"This is part of our mission of bringing high-quality care into the community," Toups said.

The Mandeville Diagnostic Center's hours are 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Appointments can be made by calling STPH's central scheduling number at 871-5665.

Saving a Foot and a LIFE

Wound-care expertise at STPH prevents amputation



Paula Dawkins lay awake in a darkened hospital room not far from her home near Ponchatoula.

Hours earlier, a local surgeon had given the 46-year-old grandmother dire news. The gaping, bone-deep wound on the bottom of her foot would not heal. It was time to consider amputation, the doctor had told Dawkins.

Diabetics like Dawkins are especially vulnerable to chronic foot and leg wounds due to poor circulation and nerve damage that impede healing. Those factors put diabetics at high risk for leg and foot amputations. Terrified and weak after months of painful treatment, Dawkins made a promise to herself that night.

"I was not going to lose my foot without a second opinion," said Dawkins, who had been diagnosed with diabetes months earlier after noticing the wound on her foot, which had grown to the width of a 20-oz. soda bottle despite months of treatment and reliance on a motorized chair to get around.

Days later, Dawkins underwent evaluation at St. Tammany Parish Hospital's Clinic for Wound Care and Hyperbaric Medicine, where her April 2011 visit resulted in a far different plan of care—and much different outlook for her future.

Jay Groves DPM, podiatrist, performed surgery on her foot, and STPH physicians put Dawkins on a course of powerful antibiotics to combat a life-threatening bacterial infection.

She was hospitalized for nearly a month at STPH after the operation, and then began twice-weekly treatments at the wound clinic. Treatments included binding her foot in a "football wrap" to relieve pressure and prevent additional injury, as well as cleaning and dressing the wound. She remained on intravenous antibiotics for months, and the infection that had raged in her body steadily subsided.

As weeks passed, the main wound and a second, smaller infection on her foot began to slowly close. In time Dawkins graduated to a plaster contact cast that gave her greater mobility while still protecting her fragile tissue.

By June, John Kessels MD, medical director of the wound clinic at STPH, told Dawkins he expected a full recovery.

The STPH wound clinic staff employs a powerful line-up of tools to promote healing and save limbs, including hyperbaric therapy to infuse the wound with oxygen to promote healing. (Dawkins' foot healed without hyperbaric treatments.)

Additional therapies at STPH include grafting techniques that utilize lab-generated living skin cells to encourage tissue growth. Dr. Kessels collaborates with other STPH physicians, including infectious disease specialists, to devise the most effective treatment plan.

From the beginning, Dawkins' experience at the clinic was far different from what she had experienced previously. For starters, STPH nurses and physicians did not clean her wound without administering a numbing agent, she said. They advised her on dietary changes to promote healing and manage the diabetes that made her susceptible to the wound in the first place.

But it was the attitude of Dr. Kessels and the clinic's nurses and staff that was most striking, including after setbacks like a toenail infection that required adjustments in the course of care.



"They were gentle and understanding at every step of the process," she said.

Dawkins eventually graduated to a walking boot, and was later fitted for special diabetic shoes that provide continued protection to her feet. She checks her feet daily for new wounds, which remain a danger because of her diabetes.

By August, Dawkins was back at work after months away from her job at the Tangipahoa sheriff's office. And her foot had healed. "The wound clinic gave me back my life," she said.

More information on wound care is available at 871-6088.









EMPOWERING NURSES

Shared Governance Helps Nurses Improve Patient Care

Traditional nursing practice adheres to a top-down decision-making structure. By contrast, nurses at St. Tammany Parish Hospital care for patients under Shared Governance, which puts a premium on the insights of caregivers who interact most closely with patients and allows the nurse at the bedside to make care decisions.

The nurses have defined their vision for nursing: We will provide patient-centered quality care in a safe and respectful environment that continually strives for excellence utilizing evidence-based practice and professional collaboration in caring for patients and families in our community.

"The idea is that nurses at the bedside are best equipped to make decisions about patient care," said Kathy McWhorter RN MSN, STPH director of nursing. Added Kerry Milton BSN RN MSHA, senior vice president and chief nursing officer: "This means professional nurses are driving the standards of excellence of their profession."

The model has been in place at STPH since 2010 as part of STPH's long-term goal to achieve "Magnet" designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

Teams from STPH's four nursing divisions—adult health, women and children, critical care and surgical services—work to achieve best practice with input from respiratory and physical therapists, pharmacists, dietitians and other experts on the hospital staff.

Overall, better patient care is the goal of Shared Governance. This goal is achieved through shared decision-making based on best practice principles and by fully engaging the nursing staff.

One case in point is STPH's use of "hypothermia" protocol to lower the body temperature of a specific patient population to prevent brain injury. The STPH medical staff approved use of the evidence-based treatment after critical care nurses learned about it at a national conference.

"Our nurses introduced the approach, and our medical staff agreed it was a best practice that we should adopt," McWhorter said.

"For new mothers at STPH, the labor and delivery staff adopted the national best practice of no non-medically necessary inductions less

than 39 weeks gestation, an initiative of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement," Diana Brovold RN MSN, director of women and children services, said.

Another example is the hospital's adherence to a national best practice of early mobility in critical care. "Prolonged ICU stays and mechanical ventilation are associated with functional decline and increased morbidity, mortality, cost of care and length of hospital stay," Teresa Krutzfeldt RN MN, director of critical care nursing said. "By implementing our early mobility program, we look to improve those factors by encompassing progressive mobilization, with the progression based on a patient's functional capability and ability to tolerate walking." McWhorter added, "Shared Governance provides a way for our nurses to improve the care we provide to patients, who are at the center of everything we do each day."

The introduction early last year of an intensivist program in the hospital's two critical care units follows best practices. The physicians of Northlake Pulmonary Associates, a well-known and trusted medical group of intensivists agreed to assist STPH in administrative and leadership functions of the critical care units and with patient care, quality, safety and customer service initiatives.

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PUTTING THE PATIENT FIRST AT ST. TAMMANY Parish Hospital

By STPH nurses and Shared Governance team members Lacylynn G. Mcgehee, Lisa Miller

WE BELIEVE each patient's care is a partnership among patients, families, staff and physicians in an atmosphere of mutual respect and consideration.

WE RESPECT our patients' privacy by keeping information confidential, being aware of our patients' environment, maintaining a culture of quiet and educating ourselves on patients' rights and HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act).

WE KEEP our patients safe from abuse or harassment by respecting differences, advocating on our patients' behalf, obtaining their consent, providing the least restrictive environments conducive to care, taking ownership and accountability for each patient and freely voicing our concerns.

WE COMMIT to keeping our patients safe from harm by performing patient-focused risk assessment, securing continuity of care, bedside reporting, supervisory accountability, creating safe technological environments, practicing evidence-based medicine and interdisciplinary rounding.





In 2011, Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center relocated radiation therapy services to its new location, the first floor of 1203 S. Tyler St., a new building in the Charles A. Frederick Jr. Medical Office Complex, attached to St. Tammany Parish Hospital's main campus via skybridge.

Integrated Cancer Care for Northshore Patients:

Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center at St. Tammany Parish Hospital

Spring 2012 will mark completion of the Northshore's newest integrated, comprehensive cancer center offering the full range of treatment modalities, a community milestone to include clinical trials of emerging cancer therapies.

In 2011, Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center relocated radiation therapy services to its new location, the first floor of 1203 S. Tyler St., a new building in the Charles A. Frederick Jr. Medical Office Complex, attached to St. Tammany Parish Hospital's main campus via

This spring, St. Tammany Parish Hospital will complete its components of the expanded partnership with Mary Bird Perkins by relocating chemotherapy services, medical oncologists' offices and cancer-related support services to the same building.

The combined integrated Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center at St. Tammany Parish Hospital will celebrate with a grand opening in the spring, said Chryl Corizzo, STPH cancer center director.

"It's wonderful to be able to offer the full spectrum of care in one spot," Corizzo said. "It enables patients to feel confident that all they need is available, and they know exactly where to go. With the addition of our new nurse navigator, we feel the experience will be that much more supportive and reassuring."

The 20,000-square-foot center's expanded infusion suite will offer patients comforts such as open, more spacious bays that provide privacy to patients who desire it, said Kerry Milton, STPH senior vice president and chief nursing officer.

The STPH Cancer Resource Center, palliative care and additional support services for cancer survivors will likewise move to the center in spring.

A final, crucial element of the partnership will also likely be in place in 2012. Clinical trials of emerging cancer therapies could begin later in the year, said Renea Duffin, Mary Bird Perkins vice president of cancer programs.

"We are quickly moving forward," said Duffin.

Added Sharon Toups, STPH chief operating officer: "The idea is to centralize these two cancer leaders into one premier cancer center so that patients can get comprehensive, integrated care in one place, without having to travel far from home."

Does *Cholesterol* Really Matter?

by Charles Baier MD, St. Tammany Physicians Network



Few topics in medicine generate more conversation around the water cooler than cholesterol. Everyone seems to have an opinion, yet few people know more than that it is bad for you and causes heart attacks. So, what is the real scoop about cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a waxy fat molecule found in the blood of all mammals. Manufactured primarily in the liver or intestine, it plays a role in making cell membranes. Cholesterol aids fat absorption from the intestine, steroid hormone production such as cortisol, estrogen, progesterone and testosterone and Vitamin D production. It is also prominent in nerve impulse transmission. In short, cholesterol is essential to our survival.

However, problems can develop when cholesterol in the blood is too high. Cholesterol does not dissolve in water and therefore cannot be carried in the blood in large quantities by itself. It has to be attached to protein molecules to form what are called

lipoproteins. The lipoproteins come in several sizes and it is the smaller lipoproteins called LDL or low density lipoprotein that seem to cause problems. When LDLs are high, more cholesterol is taken into the cells that line the arteries. This is particularly important when these arteries supply blood to the heart, brain and legs. The LDL molecules are oxidized and form what are called foam cells that become trapped in the walls of the arteries. These foam cells accumulate and contribute to the formation of plaque that may eventually block the arteries and cause heart attacks, strokes and leg pain. High density lipoprotein, or HDL, may help remove some of the LDL from cells and help reduce plaque formation and the risk of heart attacks or stroke.

So, what can you do to help lower cholesterol and reduce heart attack risk? Reducing consumption of animal fat such as fatty red meat, butter, whole milk, ice cream and foods cooked in animal fat may help. Vigorous physical exercise helps raise HDL. Several medications, alone or in combination, can lower LDL and triglycerides and raise HDL. Omega 3 fatty acids such as fish oil help lower triglycerides. In numerous trials, statins have been shown to reduce risk of heart attack and stroke. These drugs all have a low incidence of side effects including muscle or joint pain, abnormal liver function tests, nausea, flushing and headaches.

Talk to your doctor about testing for cholesterol to see if you may be at increased risk for heart attack or stroke.

To meet with Dr. Baier or his colleagues in St. Tammany Physicians Network, call 985-626-1717 in Mandeville or 985-871-5900 in Covington.

CELEBRATING DOCTORS March 30 Marks Local, National Tradition

to the men and women who save lives and protect the health of families and communities across the nation

Heart to Heart

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During its 2010 reaccreditation visit, the Joint Commission identified two STPH processes as national best practices. Surveyors recognized Endoscopy for reprocessing all endoscopes regardless of use, and Surgery for strategic fire assessment prior to every surgery during the time out.

In acute adult health nursing units, national healthcare industry experts identified the high potential for patients to acquire infections or to fall during their stay.

"Falls stem from the fact that your average patient feels completely in control of himself at home, but at the hospital, that capable adult may be on new medication and disoriented because they're in an unfamiliar environment; plus they're here because they are ill or otherwise experiencing compromised health. These factors can combine to deliver a fall to an otherwise capable adult," Milton said.

Infections have been proven to be drastically reduced and out-and-out eliminated with consistent infection protocols.

"What we did at STPH was to take these basic facts into consideration and work directly and in a focused manner on making sure that everyone who touches our patients thinks first and foremost about infection and fall prevention," said Linda Polo RN, head of infection prevention.

Results are exciting. STPH has seen a decrease in cardiac surgery infections, consistently at zero to one percent, and a 19 percent reduction in inpatient falls.

Throughout the hospital, Shared Governance and the overall STPH philosophy of nursing are weaving best practices into the highly personal nursing care being delivered here.



High-Stakes Safety Checks

Infants Should Stay in Rear-Facing Seats One More Year, Experts Say

For years, parents were told that keeping their infant in a rear-facing car seat until the child was one year old and weighed 20 pounds was the safest way for them to travel in the car.

The American Academy of Pediatrics altered its guidelines last year and now advises parents to keep infants and toddlers in rear-facing car seats until the child is two or until he or she exceeds the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer of their car seat.

A 2007 study found that children under age two are 75 percent less likely to die or be severely injured in a crash if they are rear-facing. Another study found riding rear-facing was five times safer than forward facing. The AAP continues to recommend that children under age 13 ride in a rear seat and use a seat belt.

The stakes in proper car seat safety are enormous. An average of four children ages 14 and younger die each day in motor vehicle crashes in the U.S., while another 602 are injured. More than half are unrestrained or improperly restrained.

"It's so important to use car seats properly, but parents are often confused about how to do it right," said Lori Cage, director of the Parenting Center of St. Tammany Parish Hospital.

The center offers free car seat inspections and installations to help Northshore parents do precisely that. The center provides inspections to the public from 9 a.m. to noon on the second Thursday of each month or by appointment. Louisiana State Police Troop L also provides free inspections from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesdays or by appointment.

Appointments or additional information is available at 898-4435.

Maternal Fetal Expertise CLOSE TO HOME

High-Risk Mothers Don't Need to Travel for Special Care

Like most parents-to-be, Kent and Lesleigh Hall worried about their baby.

But Les, St. Tammany Parish Hospital staff attorney, had added reason for concern. Chronic hypertension put her at high risk for complications during pregnancy, including preterm labor and poor fetal growth.

Hall's high blood pressure also meant she was more likely to develop preeclampsia, which is a dangerous, pregnancy-induced spike in blood pressure.

"Being at high risk means you worry even more," Hall said.

Treatment by specialists at STPH's Maternal Fetal Medicine clinic helped Hall deliver her healthy baby girl, 6-pound, 4-ounce Kennedy, close to home in Covington.

Kennedy was born by C-section at STPH last summer with Northshore obstetrician-gynecologist Katherine Williams MD. Dr. Williams involved the perinatologists in Hall's care starting in her 16th week of pregnancy.

The clinic is held three days a month in the spa-like setting of the STPH Women's Pavilion, where it relocated in fall 2011. Perinatologists monitor risks from advanced maternal age, blood-clotting disorders, thyroid disorders, multiples gestation and other factors, said Diana Brovold, director of STPH women and children services, from her office on the main campus. "It's very important for the peace of mind of the moms and the health of both mothers and babies."

The clinic's Northshore location meant Hall did not drive to Baton Rouge or New Orleans for consultation and ultrasounds with its team of perinatologists, who are obstetrician-gynecologists with special training in the care of high-risk mothers and babies. That meant less stress for the Halls, more convenience for a working mom, and improved chances of delivering the baby at STPH by keeping her close to home throughout her pregnancy.

Luckily, Hall's blood pressure remained stable until her 36th week of pregnancy, so she did not need STPH's 10-bed antepartum unit



Treatment by specialists at STPH's Maternal Fetal Medicine clinic helped Hall deliver her healthy baby girl, 6-pound, 4-ounce Kennedy, close to home in Covington.

for mothers admitted to the hospital before delivery. After a week of physician-ordered bed rest, Kennedy was born at 37 weeks and one day of gestation. After a few days in STPH's Level 3 neonatal intensive care unit, Kent and Les were able to take happy healthy baby Kennedy home.

"It made it so much easier to have that extra expertise close by," Hall said.

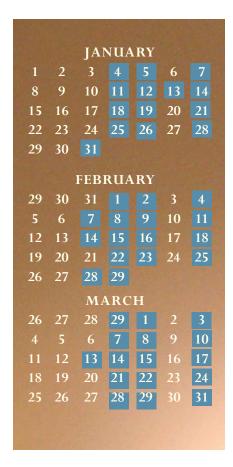
Williams said she is always comfortable caring for her patients, even those at higher risk, but she believes access to the perinatologists' 24/7 hotline reinforces her confidence.

"It makes me additionally comfortable knowing I can tap the latest, best expertise at any time, even in the middle of the night, if a patient needs it," Williams said.

Information and tours are available for expectant mothers. Contact the New Family Center, 985-898-4436.

STPH Calendar Highlights

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



Tai Chi: Healing in Motion Thursdays; 9 am to 10 am

Paul Cordes Outpatient Pavilion

Meditation in motion based on martial
arts movements open to individuals with
a cancer diagnosis, their caregivers and
health professionals. 985-898-4581

Bereavement Counseling

Wednesdays; 10 am

Hospice of St. Tammany Parish Hospital
Support for those who have suffered loss.
Walk-ins are welcome. 985-871-5746

Using Lamaze Techiques

January 7-February 18, March 3-April 21;4 pm to 7 pm

STPH Conference Center

Relaxation and pain control techniques re practiced weekly to help you through the childbirth experience. This is a series of 6 classes, 985-898-4083

Cuddle Buddies

January 12, 19, & 26; February 2, 9 & 16; March 8, 15 & 22; 10:30 am to 11am

STPH Parenting Center

Monthly social group for parents, grandparents or caregivers and babies ages 8-15 months. 985-898-4435

12-Lead EKG

January 13; 8 am to 4:30 pm

STPH Conference Center

One-day course offering 7.5 CEUs for nurses, medical/nursing students, paramedics, EMTs, telemetry techs and other allied health personnel to identify AMI on a 12-lead EKG. 985-898-4083

Organ Wise Guys

January 18; 10 am to 11 am

STPH Parenting Center

Interactive session encourages healthy behavior in children ages 2 to 5 years. 985-898-4435

1, 2, 3, 4 Parents

January 28, February 25; 9 am to 2 pm

 $STPH\ Parenting\ Center$

One-day seminar for learning techniques and strategies to enhance parenting skills. 985-898-4435

Stewards of Children

January 31; 6 pm to 8:30 pm

STPH Parenting Center

Training on child sexual abuse prevention presented by Children's Advocacy Center/Hope House modeled on the Darkness to Light program. 985-898-4435

Baby Care Basics

February 7 & 14; 7 pm to 9 pm

STPH Conference Center

Two-part series on learning how to care for your newborn. 985-898-4083

CPR for Healthcare Providers February 11; 9 am to 1 pm

STPH Conference Center

An initial class for healthcare providers who require certification in basic life support. 985-898-4083

Alternatives to Spanking

February 14; 6 pm to 8 pm

STPH Conference Center

Education for parents on alternate discipline techniques. 985-898-4435

Art of Breastfeeding

February 28 & March 6; 7 pm to 9 pm

STPH Conference Center

Two-part class on the benefits of breastfeeding your infant and common concerns of the early breastfeeding period. 985-898-4083

Teens & Boundaries

February 29, March 7, 14, 21 & 28; 6 pm to 7:30 pm

STPH Parenting Center

Five-week series for teens and pre-teens dealing with physical, emotional, sexual and spiritual boundaries. 985-898-4435

Family Nutrition Night March 13; 6 pm to 7:30 pm

STPH Parenting Center

An interactive educational event for parents and their children on developing healthy lifestyles. A nutritional snack is included. 985-898-4435

Praising Children & their Behavior

March 21; 10 am to 11:00 am

STPH Parenting Center

Workshop on changing your child's behavior through the power of positive reinforcement. 985-898-4435



Friday, April 13

Tchefuncta Country Club Golf Course

12:30 pm Shotgun Start followed by the Lucky Friday the 13th Golfer Party. All proceeds benefit St. Tammany Hospital Foundation. Sponsorship opportunities are available.

For more information, contact Charley Strickland at 985-898-4141 or visit www.sthfoundation.org