Dear Friends:

At Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital, we believe that healing children requires much more than just medicine. In keeping with this philosophy, more than 700 pieces of art are now on display in our new facility as part of our “healing plan” for our patients and their families.

Art is more than a decorative element. It can inspire and uplift even the most discouraged. This is especially true of children.

For the past two years, during the planning and construction of the new Le Bonheur, Linda Hill led a small army of volunteers that included Dianne Papasan, Linda Ross, Kathy Albers, Catherine Peña and Anna Wunderlich. They searched out soothing, colorful and stimulating artwork that would humanize the hospital and offer an appropriate “feel” for aiding in the healing process. Their work is evidenced today throughout every space in our new 650,000-square-foot building. From the “I Can Fly” mosaic statue in the lobby to “Blast Off” (pictured on our cover), the artwork reflects beauty and hope and brings joy and distraction to those within. It serves to relieve unnecessary stress and instills a sense of well-being that helps provide solace, an element of the total health-care environment.

An extraordinary effort went into the planning of Le Bonheur’s interior, specifically, its fine compilation of art, which we are proud to present in this issue. On pages 4 to 6, you’ll read about Linda Hill, who spearheaded the entire acquisitions process with unequalled creativity, sensitivity, acumen, enthusiasm and just plain hard work.

It’s rare to find such a collection outside of a museum or gallery and on pages 7 to 17 you’ll get a glimpse of the impressive range of artworks and those who created them as well as those who have sponsored them. Acquisition of art is an ongoing process. We have many more spaces to decorate — and a future filled with thousands of children in need of imagination and inspiration. Artwork is still available for sponsorship and if you are interested in supporting our special art collection, contact the Le Bonheur Foundation at (901) 287-4430 for information on how you can become a Le Bonheur art patron.

For what we have achieved, I extend my sincere thanks to all of our supporters and volunteers. Please visit us soon to enjoy the art!

Meri Armour, M.S.N., M.B.A.
President and CEO
Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital

On the Cover:
Dianne Papasan and Linda Hill pose with “Blast Off” by Memphis artist Iris Harkavy. Located on the hospital’s 10th floor, this piece is sponsored by Mary Shainberg in honor of her family past and present.
Le Bonheur Ranked Among Best Children’s Hospitals

For the first time, Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital has been ranked among the nation’s best children’s hospitals by U.S. News & World Report. “Our hard work and focus on developing programs of distinction have paid off in a significant way,” Le Bonheur President and CEO Meri Armour said.

The Best Children’s Hospitals list, which was released on May 17, recognizes the top 50 children’s hospitals in 10 subspecialties. Le Bonheur Children’s ranked in four areas: neurology and neurosurgery (No. 25); orthopaedics (No. 32); nephrology (No. 37) and cardiology and heart surgery (No. 46).

“Making the U.S. News & World Report list is a tremendous honor and a testament to the skill, strength and teamwork of the Le Bonheur family,” Armour said. “In addition to providing our patients with world-class care, we have developed a road map for what it means to be the best and this will continue to guide our strategic plan and allow us to focus our program development accordingly.”

Now in its fifth year, Best Children’s Hospitals pulls together clinical and operational data from a lengthy survey completed by the majority of the 177 hospitals asked to participate for the 2011-2012 rankings. The survey asks hundreds of questions and critical information regarding nurse staffing, subspecialist availability and survival rates. Data from the survey is combined with recommendations from pediatric specialists on the hospitals they consider best for children with challenging problems.

“The children we care for count on us to be the best,” Armour said. “We have taken that responsibility very seriously and are thrilled to be recognized. What really counts is that our patients are getting world-class care and we will continue to provide excellent care for children for years to come.”

The rankings are now available online at www.usnews.com/childrenshospitals.

Register for Pumpkin Run

The 2011 Le Bonheur Pumpkin Run 5K and Family Walk will be Oct. 8 with live music, a costume contest and post-race Boo Bash. Last year, more than 1,200 participants turned out for the fall fundraiser that raised more than $75,000 for Le Bonheur. To register online, go to www.lebonheur.org/pumpkinrun or call (901) 287-6308 for information. Pictured is Team Nola Gracyn. Nola and her mother, Desiree Bawcum, are front row center.

Join Jim and Ride

For the sixth year, News Channel 3 meteorologist Jim Jaggers (pictured third from right) will bicycle 333 miles across the roads of the Mid-South for Le Bonheur. Kick off will be Sept. 28 with the live on-air finale broadcast on Oct. 5 from the west lobby of Le Bonheur Children’s. Over the past five years, Go Jim Go has raised more than $400,000 for Le Bonheur. The 2010 event generated more than $120,000 thanks to folks like Steve Roberts of Forrest City, Ark., (second from right) and friends with the St. Francis County Farmer’s Association. To participate, ride with Jim or make a contribution, go to www.lebonheur.org/gojimgo or call (901) 287-4440 for information.

Connect with Le Bonheur

Send us your e-mail address to receive announcements and For Kids Sake, the Le Bonheur Foundation e-newsletter. Just drop a note to Lori Dale at lori.dale@lebonheur.org.

Tweet Tweet

Le Bonheur is using Twitter, a free service that lets you keep in touch with people through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What’s happening? Just go to twitter.com/lebonheurchild.

Watch Us

You can see Le Bonheur’s new patient videos and more on YouTube. Visit youtube.com and type in Le Bonheur Children’s.

Advocate for Le Bonheur

If you would like to sign up for Le Bonheur’s grassroots network, go to Le Bonheur’s home page at lebonheur.org and click on “Join Our Grassroots Advocacy Network.” You’ll receive information on how you can make your voice heard and support legislative issues that affect children’s health care.
Pediatric hospitals have changed dramatically since the days of stark, sterile hallways leading to stark and sterile hospital rooms. Today’s trend is for a simpler, neutral palette embellished with beautiful and inspirational artwork that serves to distract and comfort children who are ill as well as their family and caregivers.

“The power of art gives the eye a place to go and will keep your mind off where you are,” explains Linda Hill, director of art development for Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital. “For centuries, people have embellished their environment. I think the cavemen pretty much established that it is human nature to decorate one’s surroundings. Art is critical in a hospital setting because it serves to help when feeling scared, bored or confused.”

When Le Bonheur began to consider what feeling the new hospital should project, the vision was simple: all artwork needed to be uplifting.

“We wanted pieces designed that would literally lift your eye and the content would lift your spirit,” Hill says. “We wanted the artwork to provide hope and delight and create a sophisticated, whimsical distraction. It also needed to provide layers of discovery to encourage multiple viewings by frequent hospital visitors as well as staff.”

In 2009, just 16 months before the new hospital opened on June 15, 2010, Hill was tapped to lead this effort. Le Bonheur’s president, Meri Armour, had spoken to Hill about helping to fill the hospital with appropriate artwork and then asked her if she would consider volunteering for the job.

At this point, Hill laughs and says that was the “great oxymoron.” Not being one to typically volunteer, Hill says it was more like being “pressed into service.”

Originally from Arkansas, Hill graduated from Newcomb College of Tulane University and came to Memphis for postgraduate work at Memphis College of Art.
“My credentials are not those of one who is formally trained in art consulting, curating or creating,” Hill says. “I had studied pottery and sculpting and had a studio for a few years before raising my family.

“Meri’s only directive to me was for the artwork to be friendly and speak to the universal child,” Hill says. “It needed to be inclusive for every child because that is the heart of Le Bonheur.”

After taking a tour of Le Bonheur, Hill notes that nothing for her was ever the same again.

“I had never had a sick child, so I had no personal knowledge of the extraordinary care that Le Bonheur provides,” Hill says. “Once I learned of patients who came from all over the world for treatment at Le Bonheur’s world-class programs, it became obvious that the artwork needed to be of the highest quality possible to reflect the same high standards and excellence of health care that was achieved there every day.”

It also didn’t hurt that once Hill starts something, she gets tunnel vision.

A TEAM EVOLVES

AFTER CLEARING her calendar, Hill began “volunteering” for the project. It wasn’t long before Hill found herself working 10-hour days, 7 days a week. She soon realized she would need a team to help. Dianne Papasan was the first to step up to the plate and became Hill’s right arm for the next year-and-a-half. (Papasan is the wife of former Le Bonheur Foundation board chairman Larry Papasan.)

“Dianne is a great communicator with wonderful ideas,” Hill says. “She is amazing at deciding where art should go. She nurtures connections and has a great heart.”

Once they got going, the dynamic duo looked to their connections within the art community for guidance. Gallery owners Linda Ross and Kathy Albers were asked to lend their expertise, offer suggestions, serve as a sounding board, brainstorm and generate support among the artists Hill and Papasan called upon to do the creating.

“It was a priority to work withMemphis artists,” Hill says. “Their body of work had to be compatible with Le Bonheur’s high standards, with a spark of sophistication as well as a childlike quality. And it had to have multigenerational appeal.”

All of the major works of art in the hospital are site-specific installations that were commissioned by Le Bonheur. “We thought ‘out of the box’ but we didn’t buy ‘out of the box,’” Hill says.

In addition to commissioned pieces, there were art workshops and children’s art contests. More than 750 pieces of work make up the collection. Another 260 pieces were created by children. Catherine Peña at Memphis College of Art was tapped to coordinate 10 art workshops. These were led by innovative artists to engage the community in the creation of special artwork for the hospital. Kiersten Williams and Anne Froning Wike conducted art workshops with patients, schools, seniors and special-needs youth, while Anna Wunderlich, a former art teacher at Hutchison, headed up a regional children’s art contest with more than 3,500 pieces submitted. (See stories on pages 16 and 17.)

Today, more than 225 artworks by area youth are hanging in the halls of patient floors. Each piece was digitally reproduced by the Gary Walpole Group and uniformly framed to keep all the art the same size so it remains friendly and not chaotic. David Stough with David’s Frames and Art helped with the framing.

“The community has embraced this collection,” Hill explains. “The high profile of the hospital and the status of the art collection have generated great interest from individuals and companies that have sponsored various pieces of art. Many opportunities remain to sponsor commissioned pieces and the children’s art.”
UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCE

Hill and Papasan spent countless hours analyzing the space to determine what was needed. A sculpture in the entrance lobby. A ceiling installation for the event space. A metal rooftop garden to cover up the industrial-looking roof outside a large clinic waiting area. These ideas and more sprang to life as the project grew.

As each piece was commissioned with local and regional artists, the art collection brought on board other area artists who saw being a part of the Le Bonheur project as the pinnacle of their career. “It was like a snowball,” Hill says. “It was obvious to the artists that this was going to be the most expansive public collection of art under one roof in the city. They knew our budget was very lean and bought into it because they wanted so much to be a part of Le Bonheur’s mission.”

Art in a children’s hospital needs to speak to all ages, to never speak down or above anyone’s head and to never set out to create a collection, only for each space to be inviting and warm to the viewer. When analyzed in its totality, the power of art became the voice that spoke to Le Bonheur’s excellence. The collection became an unintended consequence.

“We never set out to create a collection, only for each space to be inviting and warm to the viewer. When analyzed in its totality, the power of art became the voice that spoke to Le Bonheur’s excellence. The collection became an unintended consequence.”

— Linda Hill

Art can emerge from even the most difficult circumstances and the art selected for the new Le Bonheur Hospital offers hope, compassion and a commitment to excellence. I am proud that Memphians and visitors alike can call this wonderful collection of art their own."

— Cameron Kitchin, Director, Memphis Brooks Museum of Art

The region’s top artists lent their talent to make the new Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital a restorative and hopeful place. From quilts and mosaics to metalwork and photography, all of the art in the new Le Bonheur was created around the themes of courage, compassion, hope and love. Now, the new hospital invites you to see and experience the collection created by more than 50 professional artists and 200 regional schoolchildren.

The Le Bonheur art collection is open to the public. To arrange a tour, contact Linda Hill at (901) 287-6966 or e-mail linda.hill@lebonheur.org.

Artwork in Le Bonheur’s collection is still available for sponsorship. If you are interested in supporting any of our special artworks, visit www.lebonheur.org/art or please contact the Le Bonheur Foundation at (901) 287-4430 for information on how you can become a Le Bonheur art patron.
A WELCOMING CENTERPIECE

The welcoming centerpiece in the hospital’s main lobby was designed by Memphis artist Jeanne Seagle and fabricated by Lea Holland. It features more than 500,000 mosaic pieces and stands 17 feet tall, reaching to the second-floor rotunda. Each of the obelisk’s four sides features a tree that represents a different season with the words hope, faith, children and love, symbolizing the passage of time and the patience and faith involved in the healing process. On top of the obelisk is a giant rotating bluebird nearly 9 feet wide. Atop the bird rides a colorful figure representing the “universal” child, just as Le Bonheur welcomes every child who enters our doors seeking care.

“I wanted children and families to be able to escape to a happier place,” Seagle says. “Something for a child to fantasize about while waiting for a scary procedure. An image of transcending his or her pain and fear, an image of hope. It was wonderful to be part of this project to make something that inspires and is so meaningful to other people. I feel like maybe I have contributed a little something to humankind.”

“I Can Fly!”

Jeanne Seagle and Lea Holland, Pomegranate Studios
Sponsored by Larry and Dianne Papasan.

“I Can Fly” is an icon for the diversity of cultures and the elevation of the importance of the child that Le Bonheur represents in the seasons of our life.”
— Dianne Papasan

“I hope this statue will inspire patients and their families to soar above adversity, to overcome obstacles, to transcend fear; I hope it will remind them to allow time to heal; and encourage them to have courage, perseverance and imagination; to tell them they can fly!”
— Jeanne Seagle

Gary Shorb, Dianne and Larry Papasan

I have so loved this piece from conception that my emotions filled to overflowing when Larry and I learned that it would be named in honor of our gift to the campaign. I could not even tell our children because I was so honored and humbled by this gift. Larry and I both have given to this project with great love of what this hospital and its art can give back to our community.

When I enter the space now and see children touch the work and have their picture taken by it, I am touched beyond measure to have our name on this piece. Our children and grandchildren will be honored by this space as well.” — Dianne Papasan
“Pet Therapy”  
Jack Kenner  
Sponsored by the cystic fibrosis care team in honor of all CF patients and their families.

Behind the security desk of Le Bonheur’s Dunlap entrance you’ll find a beautiful photographic image of a young girl wearing a surgical mask standing between two golden retrievers. It is a special piece sponsored by Le Bonheur’s cystic fibrosis care team in honor of all CF patients and their families.

“When I saw the Jack Kenner photograph, I was first struck by the power and beauty of the image and only after I stopped and looked closely did I realize it was one of our patients with cystic fibrosis,” explains Dr. Dennis Stokes, Le Bonheur’s medical director of respiratory care and CF center director. “Our CF team wanted to sponsor this photograph since this young lady and her sister, who also has cystic fibrosis, are loved by our entire team. This beautiful photograph represents all the special patients with cystic fibrosis who spend so much time at Le Bonheur as well as the CF team of physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists, social workers, nutritionists, physical therapists and Child Life staff (and pet therapy dogs) who exist at Le Bonheur to serve these patients and their families.”

“Le Bonheur Landscape: An Archive”  
Brantley Ellzey  
Sponsored by Bruce Edenton and son Carlisle in celebration of the life of Lisa Edenton.

Le Bonheur Landscape hangs behind the lobby reception desk and serves as a welcome to all visitors. Composed of more than 5,000 pages of rolled paper, artist Brantley Ellzey created a Mississippi Delta landscape with a river made from multiple pages of Le Bonheur magazine, trees from Le Bonheur calendars and a sky made up of hospital visitor guide maps. Final construction blueprints of the new hospital building make up the heart.

“The piece is a time capsule of the period in which the new building was created.”  
—Brantley Ellzey

Thedora Taylor, Information Center receptionist

“Day” and “Night”  
Herb Williams  
Sponsored by Lee and Joe Duncan. “Day” is in celebration of the life of Matt Duncan. “Night” is in honor of Norine, Andy, Logan and Mason Duncan.

On the second floor in the surgery waiting area are two panels made of more than 100,000 Crayola crayons by Herb Williams.

“When working on the Art with Heart fundraiser for Le Bonheur I was struck by the true ‘heart’ of the doctors, nurses and associates who worked there,” Lee Duncan says about her and her husband Joe’s decision to sponsor the art by Herb Williams. “We wanted one to honor Joe’s son, Andy, and his family, and the other to celebrate the life of Joe’s older son, Matt. When I heard about Herb Williams’ artwork using Crayola crayons, that was just perfect! Andy and his wife, Norine, have two little boys who love their Crayolas. Matt, who passed away in 1996, was always making kids smile with his playful personality. It just seemed it was meant to be and we couldn’t be more pleased!”
Noted Mid-South artist for more than 60 years, Dolph Smith was well acquainted with Le Bonheur before he was asked to create two historical pieces for the first floor. Designed to honor the legacy of the Le Bonheur Club, “The Le Bonheur Story” recognizes the charitable group of women who organized in 1923 and went on to raise funds for the first hospital building that opened in 1952. The Club’s story is etched onto the grand pages of a steel book whose words were laser-cut and are sliding off the pages into a model of the new Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital. Smith collaborated with the National Ornamental Metal Museum in Memphis to fabricate the work.

“The inspiration that brought the work into being will now live inside the healing process. May it live in the hearts of the healers and guide their hands.”

— Dolph Smith

“The Le Bonheur Story: A History Written in Steel”
Dolph Smith
Dedicated in honor of Le Bonheur Club.

“Lift” continues to tell the Le Bonheur story through a collection of miniature displays illustrating the unique elements of the hospital that promote healing. Patient-room dioramas were created with handmade, found and collected materials. The display is lifted by a bundle of balloons with a set of keys tied to the strings, a nod to the hospital’s opening day in 1952 when keys were released to the wind, signifying that the hospital would never close and always be open to any child in need.

“As a parent, having been blessed with healthy children, I am so grateful for the opportunity to have been a part of this noble and wondrous adventure,” Smith says. “Bringing this work into being was one of the highlights of my career. Now if it can only help bring healing to some little chap or lady! What a joy that would be. It is not something one puts in a resume but in one’s heart.”

“The Le Bonheur Club is highly honored to have Dolph Smith create these two beautiful and different pieces of artwork in honor of our founders and club members. The legacy of Le Bonheur Club’s work on behalf of the patients can be seen in both of these intricate pieces and all of us — past, present and future — say ‘thank you’ to this most creative and dedicated artist for his insight into the healing hands of all who serve the hospital. We are humbled by him and his amazing talent in capturing our story so beautifully.”

— Kim Pitts, Le Bonheur Club President and members of Le Bonheur Club
“Where the Wind Plays”  
Yvonne Bobo  
Sponsored by Kathy and J. W. Gibson in honor of their daughters Alicia Renee and Savannah Jaye.

No two visitors will view in the same way the art created by Memphis metalsmith Yvonne Bobo. Her rooftop metal flower garden is at the mercy of the wind, an unpredictable element that twists and turns the pieces of her garden into an ever-altering art display. The distraction is welcome to patients and families waiting in the heart and neurology clinic. Flowers spin and move with the wind. A frog kicks its legs while a crawling caterpillar joins 20 wiggling ladybugs. More than 315 reflectors catch the sunlight as it streams through the hospital’s windows, with solar panels to light up the garden at night.

“My husband and I have been blessed with children late in our lives,” Kathy Gibson says. “When we sat down and thought about how to decorate a nursery for our twins, we wanted to bring spirituality into the design. From a child’s point of view, nature was one of the best ways to do so. That’s why this piece was so attractive to us. The whimsical nature of it and the fact that so many children would have an opportunity to experience it because of its location played into our decision to sponsor this in honor of our daughters, Alicia Renee and Savannah Jaye.”

“Let’s Dance”  
Brantley Ellzey  
Sponsored by Susan Warner in honor of her husband, Dr. William Warner, for his years of dedication to Le Bonheur’s orthopaedic patients, and her son, for his love of music.

When Susan Warner first learned of the art planned for the ninth-floor elevator lobby she was sold on the idea of sponsoring the art that would soon adorn the wall. Her husband Bill has spent 22 years at Le Bonheur as an orthopaedic physician and this was the perfect way for Susan to honor him for his service to the children and to Le Bonheur. (For many years, Bill served as Le Bonheur’s chief of staff.)

“You just know it when something’s right,” she says. “Once I found out that the orthopaedic floor would be dedicated to music, it sealed the deal.”

Susan relates that her son spent a year recovering from a fractured back. During his recovery time, he turned to music to fill the void of the sports he could no longer play. “He just poured himself into music and today he plays the guitar and sings,” she says.

Once Susan learned that the artist had attended Tulane University, the same school her husband and his father had attended, it was a perfect choice. “Because of this, Brantley’s pieces really meant something to us,” she says.
“Out of the Hearts of Babes”
Bob Myers, Graham’s Lighting Fixtures, Inc.
Fabrication by Bo Graham

The chandelier was sponsored by Glenna Flautt in honor of Le Bonheur President Meri Armour and former Le Bonheur President Peggy Troy in appreciation of their determination to make the new hospital a special place.

Peggy had the initial vision and Meri carried her vision out and added her own vision,” Glenna Flautt says of her decision to sponsor the one-of-a-kind chandelier that hangs over the main lobby security desk. “Together they are important in the history of the hospital.”

Rather than hang a manufactured light fixture in the space, designer Bob Myers decided to make something uniquely Le Bonheur by incorporating children’s art.

“When I heard Linda and Dianne speak so enthusiastically about the art project, I caught their vision for what was to come,” Myers says. Flautt learned what was being planned for the elevator lobby chandelier and she says she loved that the raw material for the project would be children’s art. “Those children can come to view their art and be proud to see their work displayed so prominently, connecting them to the hospital for a long time,” Flautt says. “The art collection has healing qualities and feeds our soul. All patients, their family and friends, and employees and guests to the hospital benefit from the visual feast as they walk through the corridors.”

“Pirouette”
Jim Hirschfield and Sonya Ishii
Sponsorship available.

Husband-and-wife team Jim Hirschfield and Sonya Ishii of North Carolina begin each art project by thinking of a metaphor — something to give the piece a hidden, deeper meaning. For “Pirouette,” they wanted to create a metaphor for change. Each of the 30 geometric, hollow steel cubes are suspended from wire. The cube exteriors have three different colors of iridescent, metallic “flip-flop” paint which changes colors as the viewer moves.

“When children are in the hospital, they go through many changes, both physical and psychological,” Hirschfield says. “Our piece is meant to reflect the change that children inevitably experience when they go through the healing process: change from the surroundings they are familiar with, change in the new relationships they develop with the caregivers and fellow patients and changes in their physical bodies. Being a part of this collection is meaningful to us because we were able to play a role in making this time of change for the children of Le Bonheur a more positive and hopeful experience.”

“The cubes are not unlike the children themselves. Each a little different, each as important as the next, but who together create a beautiful totality.”

— Jim Hirschfield

“Things That Shine”
Anne Hughes Sayle
Sponsorship available.

The artist’s father, Dr. James G. Hughes, was one of the founding physicians of Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital in 1952. Her mother, Jane Barker Hughes, was a member of Le Bonheur Club.

In 1960, Ann Hughes Sayle found herself a patient at Le Bonheur. Her future husband was also gravely ill at the same time. Both recovered and only learned of their overlapping stays at Le Bonheur after they had married. “There is a debt of gratitude for our lives being saved by Le Bonheur’s wise doctors,” she notes.

“The inspiration for my wall-hanging was to fascinate and entertain children who spend time at the hospital,” Sayle says of the textile art hanging on Le Bonheur’s 11th floor. “I wanted to give them something uplifting and positive to look at so they would not be afraid, something to cheer them up. I wanted to remind them of the great, big, shiny world out there just waiting for them. And I wanted to remind them of the magic of God’s glorious creation and all that life calls.”
Memphis artist Greely Myatt created “thought bubbles” from found materials into recycled cutouts that appear to be lifted into the sky. They stretch over 36 feet of wall space in the heart and neurology clinic waiting area. His thought balloons — crafted from wood, including some from Libertyland amusement park — reference the first grand opening ceremony of the hospital in 1952 when keys were tied to balloons and released into the air to symbolize no child would be turned away regardless of their ability to pay. Myatt worked with original graphics on the old wood, including a toy truck that had been painted on a child’s dresser.

“I’m trying to take the kids’ and their families’ minds off of what they are here for and to give them something to think about,” Myatt explains. “The meaning of this work is left up to the viewers to project their own thoughts and hopefully it becomes their voice.”

“Art is for the spirit. It softens our lives and it helps us get through.”
— Greely Myatt

Memphis artist Carol DeForest never imagined the profound impact the creative process would make upon her as well as those who participated by crafting clay for her collaborative piece entitled “Mapping Our Lives.”

“Driving to and from the hospital looks different for each of us,” DeForest explains of her concept for the road to Le Bonheur. DeForest hosted a series of workshops where participants created the images that dot the green ceramic road spanning three walls along the second floor near the surgery waiting area. More than 200 patients, families, schoolchildren and Le Bonheur employees expressed themselves with diverse symbols of their lives, including Memphis scenes, pets, sports teams, children’s homes, an intricately designed breathing machine made by a pulmonary nurse, a sickle-shaped cell crafted by a Le Bonheur parent and a favorite doctor immortalized forever in clay by his unit nurses.

“We were initially drawn to ‘Mapping Our Lives’ because of the collaborative nature of the piece. We love the idea that it was created not just by the artist but by participants from Le Bonheur and the community, old and young alike. The piece seems to be saying that we all find our way in life as part of a larger group. It is especially appropriate for us to sponsor this colorful piece in honor of our young grandsons, Jack and Will, who are just beginning to ‘map their lives’.”
— Glenda and Gary Shorb

“A child who had been burned heroically recreated his tiny burned hands in many colors and with a clear sense of who he was. He was brave enough to reproduce something that scary. He could have chosen another subject or drawn his other hand but instead he chose to accept it and express it through his art. It was such a beautiful moment.”
— Carol DeForest

“We were initially drawn to ‘Mapping Our Lives’ because of the collaborative nature of the piece. We love the idea that it was created not just by the artist but by participants from Le Bonheur and the community, old and young alike. The piece seems to be saying that we all find our way in life as part of a larger group. It is especially appropriate for us to sponsor this colorful piece in honor of our young grandsons, Jack and Will, who are just beginning to ‘map their lives’.”
— Glenda and Gary Shorb
“Wishing Wall”
Conceptual design by Linda Hill
Image design by Catherine Peña
Fabrication by John Steiner and Ray Thompson, Jr.
The “Wishing Wall” is dedicated in honor of Linda Hill whose vision, dedication and talent established the extraordinary healing collection of art at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital.

MAKE A WISH, SAY A PRAYER
At least three times every day, Le Bonheur’s pastoral care team removes the wishes and prayer requests from the “Wishing Wall” located just outside the hospital chapel corridor.
“This is an active prayer wall,” explains Chaplain Manager Jack Conrad of Le Bonheur’s Spiritual Care. “Each one is prayed over and offered in the spirit of the desire of the families and friends for their child. When they are retrieved, we take them to the chapel where they are placed in our offering basket as a sign of the prayers and wishes being offered to God. Every Thursday we read aloud many as part of our worship service.”

Chaplain Conrad says all prayers remain confidential and are chronicled for the hospital.
“The requests made on this wall are for everything you can imagine,” he says. “Most are for healing of the child but often it is for strength of the family members or the support staff. Many return and offer a prayer of thanksgiving for a good outcome.
“They unite us in a common bond of trust beyond ourselves,” he adds. “Someone is always praying for those who leave their requests on the wall.”

May 2004 was a great day for Peggy and LaVerne Lovell of Memphis. Their first grandchild had been born! Mackenzie had arrived five weeks early with respiratory problems and was transferred to the children’s hospital in Norfolk, Virginia, near her home. Yet even with the tubes and machines that surrounded her in the NICU, Peggy knew that Mackenzie was perfectly gorgeous! “We bounced emotionally between the euphoria of having this new life in our lives and the constant worry that she be able to thrive,” Peggy recalls.

Nine weeks later, Peggy’s daughter Kelly (Mackenzie’s mother) collapsed outside her home and was rushed to the hospital with cardiac problems that resulted in her heart pumping insufficiently. One week later, the family made the decision to donate Kelly’s organs.
“At 10 weeks of age, our precious Mackenzie had lost her mother and we had lost our only daughter,” Peggy says. “Kelly was 27 years young, always full of life that lit up any room she entered.”

Six and a half years have passed since that nightmare summer.
“As parents who have lost a young adult child, we constantly look for ways to keep her memory alive and to give meaning to an earthly life cut short,” Peggy says. “My work in the Le Bonheur Club, in a way, is a kind of ministry that allows me to give back to a children’s hospital that serves families so well.”

Upon first seeing the painting called “Mackenzie’s Tap Tap,” which depicts a very happy school bus and a smiling sun, Peggy says she and LaVerne were smitten.
“We knew this was a way that we could bring some joy into a sick child’s life and we felt privileged to have this opportunity to sponsor the art. Someday we hope to bring our Mackenzie to see this portrait donated in her mom’s memory.”

Susan Lawhon places her prayer request in Le Bonheur’s “Wishing Wall.”

“Families are going to experience this art together during an otherwise stressful time.”
— Mary Jo Karimnia

“A play area for children in the heart and neurology clinic waiting room features a mosaic mural designed by Memphis artist Mary Jo Karimnia. The wall was created largely with found art, including Matchbox cars, golden keys and princess dolls. The work has an “I spy” feel to it, giving children and their families a chance to interact with the art. The list of fun objects to “find” in the wall is written along the brightly colored sections of the piece. Kids are welcome to feel the texturally stimulating surface which serves as a pleasant distraction to pass the time. “I love to see the kids finding things on the list and hope that their parents will join in on this small adventure to make their hospital experience a bit less stressful and a bit more fun,” Mary Jo says. “Being happy helps healing and I love having this opportunity to bring a smile to a child’s face.”

As friends of the artist, Deborah Craddock says she and her husband followed the progress of the piece from design to installation which convinced them to sponsor it. “We see and admire in Mary Jo the same things that led us to support Le Bonheur,” she says. “It is the care and dedication both have to their mission.”
“Flowers at Dawn”  
Pam Hassler’s art students  
Dedicated in celebration of the life of Caroline Hope Turns.

**Caroline Turns died in June 2009 at the age of 9,** one year after receiving a transplant to replace five organs in her digestive system. Doctors at Le Bonheur had found a rare malignant tumor that was the size of a baked potato. The tumor was inoperable and Le Bonheur’s job was to find a way to help her. They referred her to The Miami Transplant Institute at Holtz Children’s Hospital located at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Medical Center, the nation’s busiest program specializing in multivisceral organ transplants involving a single donor and recipient.

Within two months, Caroline was headed to Miami for a multiorgan transplant which offered her the best chance for a long and normal life. Everything went as well as could be expected. All signs of the tumor were removed and the organs fit perfectly.

Like many transplant patients, however, Caroline experienced infections and required multiple hospitalizations. Then in October, doctors found cancer in her lungs.

Just weeks after her death, Caroline’s friends and classmates painted flowers in vases and assembled their separate drawings into one large artwork featuring a checkered tablecloth and a sun rising above rolling hills. They presented it to Le Bonheur where it now hangs behind glass in a purple frame.

“God had called Caroline to heaven a few days before we did the painting so she was fresh on our minds,” her friend Samantha McCann says. “I had the idea to dedicate it to Caroline and the group welcomed the idea. Even though Caroline is not here today standing beside us, I believe she is living in our hearts.”

“Caroline loved art projects and painting was her favorite medium,” her father Patrick says. “Art was how she occupied her time during her hospital stays.”

The dedication of this painting in Caroline’s memory means a great deal to Caroline’s family who chose to sponsor it in gratitude and thanksgiving to the students for using their talents to honor Caroline. As her grandmother Karen Shea says, “Our family is deeply touched by the outpouring of love by the members of Caroline’s art class and art teacher, Pam Hassler. To have this painting hanging at Le Bonheur in celebration of Caroline is a gift to our family which expresses the affection that Caroline and the other artists shared.”

“Even though Caroline is not here today standing beside us, I believe she is living in our hearts.”
— Samantha McCann

**“Hall of Unity”**  
Leslie Barron  
Sponsorship available.

“I’ve had families walking through the spiritual Care area to the chapel ask me, ‘What does this mean?’” says Rev. Corey D. Johnson, Le Bonheur’s administrative director of Community Health and Well-Being, about the inspiring artwork created by Memphis artist Leslie Barron. “My response is that it represents the universal faith connection.”

The grouping of five paintings that hang in the chapel corridor represent Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu and Bahá’í houses of worship.

“We are a faith-based institution and we need to represent all the major faiths so that no matter where a person is on their faith journey, they will find the chapel a place of security, healing and comfort,” Rev. Johnson says. “Their faces light up when I explain it to them.”

The concept of the art was to represent a cross-section of religious backgrounds to give anyone who might seek out the hospital chapel for some quiet meditation, prayer or reflection something they would immediately recognize and be familiar with.

“Everyone is able to connect in some way with one of the paintings and their response is always positive,” Rev. Johnson notes. “What I find most encouraging is that people understand we are all connected, regardless of their degree of spirituality, and they can find themselves on this wall.”
**ART AND A COMMITMENT OF LOVE**

The story of the Ticking family is one of believing in yourself and the miracles that result when you follow your God-given path.

Fourteen years ago, Dorothy Ticking did just that. The licensed practical nurse, then 50 years old, longed for a change. Her job was demanding and she had been a widow and alone for the past 16 years. Her prayers were soon answered, like most prayers are, in a most unusual way.

When her three grandchildren were going to be sent into foster care, Dorothy resigned from her job so she could care for them. Four-year-old Bobby, 2-year-old Mia and 6-months-old Rachel came to live with her in her small house in an impoverished Birmingham neighborhood.

Dorothy learned to make do with a monthly welfare check of less than $200. She relied on the help of strangers and the Salvation Army to get by.

It was five years before Tres and Helene Taylor met Dorothy and learned of her situation. Dorothy’s fourth grandchild Willie, then 7, became a playmate of the Taylors’ children and once their paths crossed, nothing would be the same again.

Some days Willie would arrive at the Taylors before breakfast and wouldn’t leave until well after dinner. Tres, an artist, discovered a raw talent in young Willie and encouraged him to hone his artistic craft. Willie soon found his passion for painting using the art supplies and cardboard boxes the Taylors left for him to occupy his time.

The Taylors adopted the Ticking family as a commitment of love. They took Willie to Atlanta with a suitcase filled with his artwork and unveiled it at the largest folk art show in the world. Within two hours, every piece Willie had painted had sold and he made enough money to pay for the repair of his grandmother’s van. “It was a precious moment to see how empowering art was for this family,” Helene says. Willie’s art was soon providing a much-needed income for his family. As he grew older, sports and friends began to take up more of his time and the Taylors turned their attention to his younger siblings, then 9, 7 and 5.

Bobby, now 18, paints trees, houses and churches. Mia, now 16, draws colorful birds and Rachel, 14, makes angels. The Taylors sell their art at shows around the country and every penny goes back to the Ticking family household.

Artwork by Bobby, Mia and Rachel hangs on Le Bonheur’s sixth floor, a testament to what encouragement and art can do for a child when combined with love.

The money the children earned from their 30 “commissioned” pieces for the hospital that adorn the Intermediate Care Unit arrived just in time for Dorothy to buy them new school uniforms, socks and shoes. “That was a big deal,” Helene says, noting that it often goes to something more pressing, like groceries or the electric bill.

Through it all, art has been the fiber that binds the Taylor and Ticking families together.

“Instead of an arbitrary charity, we have this family and a connection to them,” Helene says. “We call them our ‘God family.’ Of course, they give us more than we give them. But we teach them general life skills and now they know how to feed themselves. They know how to make their way.”

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**ART SPONSORSHIP**

If you would like to sponsor any of the artworks at Le Bonheur Children’s created by the Ticking family or are interested in other artwork sponsorship at the hospital, please call Flora Jenkins at (901) 287-4430 or e-mail flora.jenkins@lebonheur.org.

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“**My Happy Place**”

Kiersten Williams

Sponsorship available.

When Marshall Arts Studio artist Kiersten Williams was called upon to create the art for the Emergency Department corridor, she summoned children from the community to assist. Aspiring artists aged 6 to 12 brainstormed with her about all the things that make children happy. Ice cream, football and butterflies were among their answers.

Williams then took their ideas and simplified the images and traced them on to large canvasses. Then she asked the kids to fill in the lines with bright paint. Her “paint-by-number” project enabled the children to fill in the colors and literally see the paintings come to life before their eyes.

“I wanted to involve kids in this project and their hands and energy are all over these pieces,” Williams says. “This energy helps the artwork to serve as a distraction for the patients and perhaps make them upbeat from what they are really feeling.”
In 2010, Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital sponsored an art contest which was open to all students in grades K-12. The response to this contest was overwhelming and more than 3,500 pieces of art from across the region were submitted. Le Bonheur thanks all of the students and art teachers who participated in this contest. More than 225 pieces were framed and installed along the patient corridors on the hospital’s fourth through 12th floors.

“The outpouring of artwork from everywhere was truly amazing,” says Anna Wunderlich who headed up the regional children’s art contest. “We received entries from all surrounding states, county and city schools and church groups. The entire community took part and it was very exciting to see the vast representation of work.”

Wunderlich says what makes the children’s art in the hospital so remarkable is that the children knew they were creating art for sick children to help them feel better. “Everyone was doing their part to ‘fix’ illness,” she says. “Some of the art entries were made by children who were former patients or had friends who were patients at Le Bonheur and it really meant something to them. It is so authentic and there is so much heart in the pieces.”

As the contest selection committee — Linda Ross and Dianne Papasan — reviewed each piece one by one, Wunderlich says there were many tearful moments. “With children there’s no beating around the bush,” she says. “One child painted a picture of ‘a happy family.’ From this child’s point of view, that’s what she wanted to see around the hospital.”

Wunderlich notes that many of the winning entries helped inspire self-confidence among the young artists. “We learned of kids who, when they found out they had won, stood taller and felt enormous pride,” she says.
ART CONTEST INSPIRES CONFIDENCE

When Bruce Elementary art teacher Bobby Spillman first met Patterio Hopson four years ago, the boy was in kindergarten. It was Spillman’s first year of teaching at the Memphis city elementary school and he recalls Patterio was a shy child who lacked self-confidence.

“I often had to give special attention to him to get him to work,” Spillman recalls. “He was always telling me that he couldn’t do the assignments.” Yet Spillman didn’t give up on the boy. He asked him to try first and assured Patterio that if he made a mistake that he would help him figure it out.

Over the next couple of years, things changed for Patterio. He became more aware of himself and would often put forth more effort, often relying on Spillman’s help.

When the assignment was made that spawned Patterio’s “bird” picture, now part of Le Bonheur’s art collection, Spillman was teaching his students to create their own ideas about the same subject. “I am an active, working artist as well as a school teacher,” Spillman says, “and having a true understanding of how artists work and think helps tremendously when dealing with the individual children and their vision. The kids watch me draw in class and that is how they learn to draw in my classroom.”

Spillman assigned his art class to connect shapes and form an animal such as a bird. Students were then to add a background and color to their picture.

“Patterio is not a fan of color and it took him a minute to get up the courage to draw his bird,” Spillman says. “He drew it all by himself, and I could sense his fear of messing up the drawing with crayon color. I, too, hated coloring my drawings at my age and our solution was to use a fat black marker to outline the drawing. Once Patterio had erased the pencil lines away, he was excited to see his drawing still in place outlined in dark black ink. He was very proud.”

Spillman hung the picture in the school hall. The teachers and students enjoyed his work. When Spillman entered Patterio’s bird in the Le Bonheur art contest, the budding artist was very excited but he had no idea how much attention he was about to get for his creation.

“When he saw the enlarged version of his piece hanging in the hospital, the biggest smile I had ever seen appeared on his face,” Spillman says. “I told him he got recognized because he had tried. He then began to realize that it was his own personal choice not to fit in with the class and to go his own way that had singled out his art. I assured him that’s what true artists do.”

Since then, Spillman says he hasn’t seen any insecurity in Patterio. “When Patterio has art supplies in his hand,” Spillman says, “he feels he can do no wrong.”

To see the children’s art collection, visit www.lebonheur.org/art.

“…ever growing into the light”
Anne Froning Wike
Sponsorship available.

Because there were no windows in the Physician Dining Room, artist Anne Froning Wike wanted to bring the outdoors inside to create something soothing for the doctors. Her 20-foot-long wall sculpture of clay glazed in earth tones resembles a winding river with a blossoming tree branch.

To create this piece Wike incorporated the work of 12 students from the Madonna Learning Center in Memphis. During a field trip to the Memphis Botanic Garden, the students wandered the grounds picking up found objects from nature. Then they rolled them in clay to make impressions that were then used by Wike in her final design.

“The students really helped me fulfill the vision I had for this piece,” Wike says. “They knew their individual pieces wouldn’t be highlighted, that it was a collaborative effort of the entire team. Yet seeing it upon completion was very emotional for them and for me. It is one of the most gratifying projects I’ve ever done with children.”

Le Bonheur’s director of art development, Linda Hill, notes that when the girls came to visit the new hospital and saw their work displayed in this beautiful setting, “they squealed with delight when they saw their names on the art signage and there wasn’t a dry eye in the crowd of those witnessing their joy.”

“The students loved the idea that they were making something for Le Bonheur because many of them have been treated here.”

— Anne Froning Wike
At the scene of the crash, paramedics were planning to take both his wife, Lynn, and daughter, Rachel, to the same hospital. Instead, Lynn insisted that one of the ambulances take Rachel, who had experienced severe head trauma, to Le Bonheur.

“There are two unsung heroes in our story,” John Thompson says. “Lynn, who had the thought process and good judgment to send our daughter to Le Bonheur, and the paramedics, who got Rachel to Le Bonheur on time.” Thompson notes that Rachel required life-saving procedures twice while on the way to Le Bonheur.

Lynn was released soon after emergency care for a back injury so she could be with Rachel at Le Bonheur for brain surgery. In a follow-up procedure, Rachel, like thousands of other children before her and to come after her, selected a toy from the Bunny Room to comfort her when the surgery was over. The Bunny Room was initiated by the Le Bonheur Club in 1952 so patients frightened about surgery would have something to look forward to after their operation was over.

“I can’t tell you why but for some reason she chose a toy basketball with the Chicago Bulls logo on it,” Thompson says.

Three weeks later, Rachel went home and today is 100 percent recovered and a freshman at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

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“How do you repay for the life of your child?” Thompson says. “I can never give back to Le Bonheur what they gave us.”

Since that fateful day in 1995, when 3-year-old Rachel was dearly holding on to life, Thompson has made it his mission to give back to Le Bonheur whenever and wherever he could.

He began by sponsoring trees at the annual Enchanted Forest fundraiser presented by TWIGS of Le Bonheur. Then 10 years ago, a friend hosted a Christmas party and suggested that each guest bring a toy, establishing Thompson’s Le Bonheur Bunny Room project. More than 400 toys were gathered that holiday.

Parties in ensuing years met and exceeded this number so that by year three, Thompson was sending direct mail requests to his clients and friends to participate. In 1998, more than 3,000 toys were donated and as the years have passed, that number has grown exponentially. When Thompson made his 2010 contribution, the combined total gathered over the past decade reached more than 21,000 toys, blankets and more than $25,000 in cash contributions.

“It’s really a family project now along with the hundreds of people who have rallied around us,” Thompson says of the phenomenal success he’s had in fulfilling his mission. “It’s truly amazing who has come out of the woodwork to help.”

Several groups actively work year-round to assist Thompson in collecting toys and contributions for Le Bonheur, including members of Covenant United Methodist Church in Cordova, Tenn. Sunday school classes and the Covenant Quilters group have all answered the call to make donations. Boy Scout Troop #257 at Central Church and Boy Scout Troop #332 at Covenant, along with students at Briarcrest Christian and Newberry elementary schools, gather hundreds of toys each year. Thompson also has the support of area real estate businesses, including Germantown Properties, Crye-Leike and Keller Williams and First State Bank in Union City, Tenn. Even his friends in the David Johnson Chorus from Weakley County, Tenn., make it a point to sing to the children at Le Bonheur twice a year as their way of helping Thompson give back.

“Our Le Bonheur project has developed a life of its own,” Thompson says. “People ask, people are interested and people are involved 12 months of the year. We will continue as long as we are here.”

For Thompson, the inspiration from seeing a patient select one of the toys reinforces how something so simple can touch so many.

“My friends have helped me touch thousands of lives through their kindness in helping me repay an unpayable debt,” Thompson says. “I will always be forever grateful to the physicians and caregivers at Le Bonheur who saved my daughter’s life.”

And whatever happened to that toy basketball with the Chicago Bulls logo on it?

Lynn keeps it in a cherished place inside their home.
Carrie and Jim Pedersen, married a little more than 11 years, had met while attending the U.S. Air Force Academy. They married the day after they graduated. A family soon followed.

The whole family was looking forward to the Memphis trip, particularly Ashley, 6, and her younger brother Lucas, 2-and-a-half years old. Ashley adored Lucas and Lucas always wanted to do whatever Ashley was doing. The whole family was looking forward to the trip together.

They arrived in Memphis on a Friday night and were joined by their friends who had chosen Memphis for a stopover as they traveled from Alabama to Missouri. Memphis was a convenient place for all to meet, with plenty of activities for their weekend reunion.

Sunday came and it was time to say goodbye and head back to Arkansas. On their way home, a terrible car accident occurred. Lucas and Ashley were both brought to Le Bonheur while Carrie was declared dead at the scene.

Sadly, Jim and Ashley lost Carrie and Lucas on that day.

“Nothing could be done for Lucas but I know if there had been any chance for him, Le Bonheur was the right place for him to be,” says Jim Pedersen. “At first the doctors were unsure of the severity of Ashley’s head injury but after a thorough examination, they did a magnificent job managing her trauma. I am very grateful that both she and Lucas came to Le Bonheur.”

For Pederson, the days after the accident were extremely tough, having lost Carrie and Lucas while at the same time worrying about Ashley’s care and treatment. “If there was one positive aspect of the crash, it was that it happened near Le Bonheur,” Pedersen says.

Ashley, now 10, is active in her school sports program, playing basketball and soccer. She is bright and excels in math and like all parents, Pedersen proudly boasts that she does very well in all her school subjects.

For the first time since the accident, this spring Jim and Ashley returned to Le Bonheur, this time to tour the new hospital and to see the examination room named in honor of the gift Pedersen made to the new hospital and dedicated in celebration of Lucas’ life. “We are all proud that Lucas’ name is on the room,” Pedersen says. “It feels good to help others in his memory.

“Bad things can happen to children, as it did in our case,” Pedersen continues. “But seeing all the great things that Le Bonheur offers children and their families is comforting. Looking back on the care that Ashley received after the crash and how Le Bonheur supported her and our family, we thought it was fitting that we dedicate a room in the Emergency Department to Lucas. I can’t think of a better way to honor him and it feels good knowing that there is a place that will have his name on it.”

Jim and Ashley now live in Colorado Springs. He works at the Space Innovation and Development Center at Schriever Air Force Base on space and cyberspace issues. They have a wonderful support team from both sides of their family which has been a positive force in healing everyone.

“When I reflect on the week when Ashley was a patient at Le Bonheur, I attribute the care she received there as the reason she recovered 100 percent physically and is doing so well today,” Pedersen says. “No parent wants to see their child suffer. There are many needs in Memphis as well as across the country. Positioning Le Bonheur to meet those needs for the long term is the right thing to do.”
Mary Ann Ford was most inspired by Le Bonheur’s absolute and unconditional delivery of world-class services to children in the community. She was proud of her association with Le Bonheur until her death in 2010 and for this reason she named the hospital a specific beneficiary under her will.

“Mom was very glad to be an integral part of an organization that did so much work and helped so many children in her community,” her oldest son, Price Ford, says. “She was always a true matriarch for Le Bonheur.”

A former president of the Le Bonheur Club (1978-79), Mary Ann served on various Club committees, including chairing the Gold Tag drive. Price and Mary Ann’s younger son, Mott, both remember boxes of gold tags all over their house during Mary Ann’s year to lead the group’s largest fundraising effort at that time.

Perhaps one reason Mary Ann was such a stalwart for Le Bonheur is because she had learned firsthand about the Club’s volunteer efforts during the time Mott, then a toddler, developed severe asthma and was hospitalized at Le Bonheur.

“I spent a lot of time at Le Bonheur and remember the work the Club members did [when Mott was ill],” she said in a 1978 newspaper story announcing her presidency of the Club. “Volunteerism is just so important to any community. I think our community would be in very sad shape without us to meet the needs of so many institutions. Volunteers can instigate and carry through a number of programs that would never be completed if people had to be paid to do them.”

Mary Ann’s love of children and her volunteer spirit, along with the fact that she had many friends who were Le Bonheur Club members, led her to become active in the philanthropic and social organization. It was certainly natural for her to turn her passion into a calling. Her favorite job was pushing the Club’s craft cart and library cart room to room, for it was the patient contact that Mary Ann craved and most loved about serving at the hospital.

When Mary Ann’s granddaughter, Emily, was a patient at Le Bonheur in 2009, she shared her recollections of Le Bonheur as the family visited during Emily’s recovery from emergency hip surgery.

“As you would imagine, she was quick to tell all of us her stories regarding her early days at Le Bonheur and the wonderful people she knew and the friendships that blossomed as a result of her involvement there,” Price says.

For Mary Ann, her family always came first, with Le Bonheur a close second. She also was a devoted and active member of Calvary Episcopal Church where she served in the vestry, enjoyed reading, traveling, playing mahjong and getting together with her “lunch bunch.” She adored her companion dog, Daisy.

“Mother’s gift to Le Bonheur says a lot about her and her priorities,” Mott says. “Others before her gave in order that we might benefit and she felt she should do the same for future generations. She believed Memphis was fortunate to have the world-class resources of Le Bonheur and that the community should support it.”
Barnes Leads FEFH Volunteers

Thonda Barnes is the new development manager at the FedExFamilyHouse where she serves as the head of volunteer programming.

Barnes comes to Le Bonheur from ALSAC/St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, where she worked as a Leadership Development Specialist. Prior to joining St. Jude, Barnes was at FedEx Corporation for 24 years in various leadership-development, social-responsibility and customer-service positions. A native of Memphis, Barnes received her B.F.A. in graphic design and M.Ed. in curriculum design from the University of Memphis.

If you are interested in volunteering at the FedExFamilyHouse, e-mail thonda.barnes@lebonheur.org.

Kohl’s Baby Safety Showers Help Moms “At Risk”

Safe Kids Mid-South, led by Le Bonheur Children’s with generous support from Kohl’s Cares®, is coordinating special events to help bring awareness to the high infant mortality rate that is a huge problem in Memphis and Shelby County.

Statistics show that high infant mortality is often due to unsafe travel and poor sleeping habits. With this in mind, Kohl’s Baby Safety Showers have become a unique way to reach “at risk” families with important safety information and safety products. The “showers” offer interactive lessons that focus on safe transportation, safe sleeping environments and other important home-safety tips.

Shower attendees are surprised to receive complimentary gifts, including child safety seats, cribs, mattresses, fitted crib sheets and other safety-related items. In keeping with a safe and healthy theme, the Maternal League of Memphis provides nutritious refreshments for shower attendees.

“The take-home message is to gather together in common unity to promote safety and good health so that all children may come into the world with sound minds and bodies and live to see their first birthday and more,” explains Susan Helms, director of injury prevention and Safe Kids Mid-South.

“We thank Kohl’s Cares® for this tremendous opportunity to help make a difference in our community.”

A Family Affair

Le Bonheur Foundation is now accepting nominees for the 2012 Family Affair held annually in Memphis and Tupelo, Miss. Le Bonheur families are needed for this friendly competition to reach out to their family and friends to raise awareness and funds for the hospital. Your family will have eight weeks to think creatively and present opportunities for generating contributions for Le Bonheur. Present a talent show. Sell t-shirts. Set up a bake sale or lemonade stand. Host a bowling or golf tournament. For information on the Tupelo event, call Connie Haygood at (662) 840-2389 or e-mail connie.haygood@lebonheur.org. For the Memphis event, contact Erin Duncan at (901) 287-6101 or e-mail erin.duncan@lebonheur.org. Pictured from left is event coordinator Erin Duncan with the Underwood, Eggers and Aylor families at this year’s Memphis event.

Dolls of Japan Tour Le Bonheur

A world-traveling exhibition of Japanese dolls was displayed at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital in May. It was the first time this exhibit has been shown outside of a museum and the first and only time to be shown in Memphis before the exhibition traveled to Chili.

“The Dolls of Japan: Shapes of Prayer, Embodiments of Love” is an exhibition coordinated by The Japan Foundation. The Hon. Hiroshi Sato, consul general of Japan in Nashville, along with his wife Yoko, attended an opening reception on May 4.

Special thanks for helping Le Bonheur with the exhibit goes to FedEx, Sekisui Restaurants, The Memphis Bamboo Chapter #44 of Ikebana International and Suzuki players of the community school at the University of Memphis.

Japanese dolls have been a highly recognized art form since the 17th century and the exhibit is an example of the finest workmanship of the doll-making tradition.
Tune in for Le Bonheur

During 2010, Le Bonheur radiothons in Memphis, Jackson, Tenn., and Tupelo, Miss., raised a combined total of more than $269,000 in pledges. This year’s events will be presented on WWYN FM 106.9 in Jackson from Aug. 31 to Sept. 2 and on WWZD FM 106.7 (Wizard) in Tupelo from Aug. 10 to 12. A new event, hosted by Radio Now on 101.9 FM in Memphis, will be Aug. 25 and 26. Returning for a second year is Radio Ambiente AM 1030 on Nov. 18 and 19. Please tune in to the station in your area and make a contribution for our kids!

Pictured is Eriberto Herrera and Helen Leitner at the 2010 Radio Ambiente event.

Walmart Appreciation Day

Associates with Walmart and SAM’s Club gathered at Le Bonheur for the annual Walmart Appreciation Day on March 31. Walmart is a national Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals partner and different store locations are hosting their own special fundraising efforts in their quest to be “Super Heroes for Le Bonheur.” At Walmart #94 in Millington, Tenn., store associates are taking turns wearing a crazy hat and are collecting more than $200 a day, according to store manager Don Hardwick. Pictured is Tristen Thompson wearing the crazy hat at the Millington Walmart.

Coke Donates Toys

Coca-Cola Bottling Company in Jackson, Tenn., donated toys to families served by Le Bonheur’s therapy outreach and the Mobile Health Unit in West Tennessee. Pictured with the donated toys are Le Bonheur Community Outreach physical therapist Petra Mysiewicz and speech therapist Stephanie Tong.

Delta Day of Service

Twenty-two training facilitators from Delta Airlines visited Le Bonheur for a day of service. Delta is a national Children's Miracle Network Hospitals partner. The group toured the hospital, had lunch in the cafeteria and then dispersed into teams to offer arts and crafts activities for patients and their families and deliver the activity cart to the nursing floors for patients unable to leave their rooms. In the afternoon, the group hosted a cookie and ice cream break for families at the FedExFamilyHouse. Delta volunteers baked 40 dozen cookies. Leftover cookies were wrapped to distribute in welcome bags for new guests at FEFH.

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Memphis Family Affair
Five families vied for this year’s fifth annual Memphis Miracle Maker Family of the Year title and the winner was crowned on May 3 at a circus-themed party held at the Memphis Pink Palace Museum. The Eggers family (pictured) of Rossville, Tenn., received top honors with their fundraising total of $29,100. The Aylor family of Hornsby, Tenn., ran a close second with contributions totaling $28,000. Other participating families included the Banks family of Springfield, Mo., the Joyce family of Monroe, La., and the Underwood family of Memphis.

Tupelo Family Affair
The 2011 Tupelo Family Affair was an unprecedented success with four area families raising $95,019. This was the third year for the Tupelo event. The winning family was announced at a red-carpet-themed party held at the BancorpSouth Conference Center on March 24. The Darling family (pictured) of New Albany was crowned Le Bonheur’s North Mississippi Miracle Maker Family of the Year after raising more than $34,000 for the hospital. Other families closely competing for the title included the Grissom family of Mooreville ($29,289), the McCostlin family of Bruce ($27,128) and the Scales family of Baldwyn ($3,656).

Rebels Host Kids Day
The Ole Miss Rebels softball team at the University of Mississippi in Oxford hosted “Kids Take Over the Ballpark Day” on April 23. Children ages 5 to 13 signed up as bat boy or girl, cheerleader, field crew, public address and water manager. Activities also included face painting, an inflatable bounce tent and a skills clinic following the game against LSU. Participants brought donations of toys, crayons, puzzles, stuffed animals, action figures and video games for Le Bonheur patients. Pictured is the Rebel mascot and team members.

Le Bonheur Chili Dinner
The JAMS youth group of First Presbyterian Church in Carruthersville, Mo., donated more than $1,500 for Le Bonheur after the group chose Le Bonheur as the recipient of their mission service project. The group of approximately 30 children, ages 4 to 10, many former Le Bonheur patients, hosted a Valentine chili dinner and collected change. Pictured are the children who presented their group’s earnings to the Le Bonheur Foundation.

Ebert Foundation Visits
After touring the hospital and visiting with Dr. Sunny Anand in the critical care unit, Adrienne Ebert Le Blanc and Chris Le Blanc posed with the building-block sculpture recognizing campaign donors, including the Horatio B. Ebert Charitable Foundation’s financial commitment to Le Bonheur. Adrienne is a member of the Ebert Foundation board, which supports selected children’s programs in several parts of the country.

Tiger Team Visits
The University of Memphis men’s soccer team played its annual “Kicks for a Cause” charity match on March 24 against the Irish team Colaiste Iide. Proceeds were donated to the John Talley Pediatric Neurological Fund at Le Bonheur. A crowd of 1,377 packed into the Mike Rose Soccer Complex to watch an intense, physical match-up that ended in a 1-1 draw. Prior to the game, the team visited patients at the hospital, signed autographs and talked soccer with their young fans. Pictured with the team is patient Carson Braun.

Credit Union Makes Donation
Representatives from the FEDEX® Employees Credit Association visited the hospital and presented Marcie Mulhern, special events coordinator for Le Bonheur Foundation and CMN liaison, with $14,500 they raised in donations during 2010. Pictured from left: Nicole Reese, Carrie Babinski, Mechell Cole, Kristen Babula, Marcie Mulhern, Diana Hatzigeorgiou, LaRachel Scott and Timisha Reese.

Le Bonheur Chili Dinner
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MSU BBQ & Blues
Mississippi State University’s Kappa Alpha Chapter of Phi Mu sorority raised more than $18,000 for Le Bonheur during “Miracle Week” April 3 to 7. The week of fun-raising activities culminated with Phi Mu’s second annual BBQ & Blues event, including entertainment and barbecue from Petty’s BBQ. Pictured (from left) are Phi Mu’s Christy McCool, Kellie Kilcline, Lindi Morgan, Hannah Farris and Morgan Lott.
CHAPLAIN ANN PHILLIPS IS CRAZY about George Rodrigue’s Blue Dog painting that hangs in Le Bonheur’s first-floor “Hall of Mirrors,” which leads to the Heart and Neurology Clinic. On her way to the hospital chapel, she often detours just so she can walk by and greet the grinning blue canine aloud.

“How’z ya do-zing? Having a good dog day?” she’ll say, just like she does to her own dog, Abby, at home.

Since Blue Dog found his special place on the hospital’s wall, Ann has discovered it to be a perfect distraction for comforting young, scared patients. “It’s the power of the Blue Dog,” she says, then shares the story of how Blue Dog turned a little boy’s fright into laughter.

“One day, just as I had said my morning greeting to big Blue, I heard a shriek and turned to see a little fellow about 6 years old racing toward me,” Ann says. “We nearly collided in his apparent attempt to escape a clinic appointment. His mother was hot on his heels.

“He stopped short, looked at me for a split second to determine whether I was friend or foe,” Ann continues. “As our eyes met, I said, ‘Have you ever seen a blue dog?’”

He paused.

“There’s no such thing as a blue dog,” he replied.

“Yes there is,” Ann responded. “I’ll show him to you.”

With this, Ann grabbed his little fingers in her hand and led him to the painting.

“A blue dog!” the boy shouted, pointing excitedly and smiling for the first time that morning.

Then, he thought about it for a moment.

“It’s not a real dog,” he told her. “Speak to him,” Ann said.

The boy looked puzzled, questioning her judgment.

“I usually say, ‘Blue Dog, how’z ya do-zing? Having a good dog day?’ Go ahead. Try it. Speak to him.”

The boy hesitated and pondered his options — to make a break for it or talk to the dog.

He leaned in close to Blue’s right foreleg and planted a kiss. Then he whispered, “Hey, Blue Dog.”

By this time, he was grinning and laughing as his mother took his hand and led him peacefully back to the clinic.

“A place that has a giant blue dog can’t be all that bad,” Ann says. “That’s the power of Blue Dog. Time just stops when kids see him.”

This piece is available for sponsorship by calling Flora Jenkins at (901) 287-4430 or e-mailing flora.jenkins@lebonheur.org.