



MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL

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For Immediate Release

November 27, 2012

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CHRISTMAS PARADE KICKS OFF THE HOLIDAYS AT MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL

WHITFIELD – Mississippi State Hospital is getting ready to kick off its busy holiday season with the annual Christmas parade on Friday, Dec. 7 at the hospital's Whitfield campus.

Featuring festive floats, classic cars and marching bands from several local schools, the parade will begin at 10 a.m. and makes its way around the MSH campus for the enjoyment of patients, residents, employees, and anyone else who would like to attend the show. The parade is just one of many activities taking place on the MSH campus during the holiday season.

During that time, the Volunteer Services Department schedules holiday activities for the hospital's patients and residents, with parties, dinners or other events scheduled almost every day. Those parties are hosted by the hundreds of volunteers who visit the hospital to help ensure patients and residents have a happy and memorable holiday season. Volunteers will spend time with patients, make donations, prepare gift bags, bring fresh fruit and home-cooked foods, and play the part of Santa throughout the season.

The annual Christmas program will this year be presented by Carpenter's Wood, a vocal ensemble from William Carey University. The group sings in high schools, community colleges and churches, as well as its performances at other community events. They will perform at the MSH campus on December 19.

Two days later, on Friday, Dec. 21, the holiday activities will all culminate in Santa Day, another annual tradition at Mississippi State Hospital, when dozens of volunteers visit the campus, get dressed in the traditional Santa Claus outfit and make special deliveries to each and every patient and resident at the hospital.

Volunteers and employees will be spending the coming weeks preparing for Santa Day, and there will be plenty of opportunities for anyone who would like to volunteer their time, energy or talents to other people during this time of year. During this time, the Building 71 Public Relations Conference Center becomes known as "The Christmas House" as gifts are prepared and sorted into the individualized gift bags that will be delivered on Santa Day.

Many volunteer groups come year after year and have become fixtures around the campus during the season. Groups from all over the state travel to the hospital, coming as families, service clubs and church groups to not only host parties and dinners, but bring gifts and donations.

Individuals can bring new clothing items, personal care items, books, games, puzzles, music and more to the Christmas House in Building 71. Monetary donations are also welcome, and they may be designated for specific Christmas activities or gifts.

For more information, visit www.msh.state.ms.us or call 601-351-8018.

MSH, a facility of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, was founded in 1855 and facilitates improvement in the quality of life for Mississippians who are in need of mental health, chemical dependency or nursing home services, by rehabilitating to the least restrictive environment, utilizing a range of psychiatric and medical services, which reflect the accepted standard of care and are in compliance with statutory and regulatory guidelines. MSH is accredited by the Joint Commission.

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PHOTO ATTACHED: MSH Christmas Parade – Pictured is a float in last year’s Mississippi State Hospital Christmas parade based on the classic Christmas movie “A Christmas Story.” The theme for this year’s parade, set for 10 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 7, is “Christmas Around the World.” The public is invited to attend the parade.