



# MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL

P.O. Box 157-A, Whitfield, MS 39193  
Phone (601) 351-8018 Fax (601) 351-8364  
www.msh.state.ms.us

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## **For Immediate Release**

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Contact: Adam Moore (601) 351-8262, adam.moore@msh.state.ms.us

### **MSH CHRISTMAS PARADE KICKS OFF A BUSY HOLIDAY SEASON**

WHITFIELD – Mississippi State Hospital is getting into the holiday spirit with its annual Christmas parade, the official kicking off of the busy holiday season at the hospital.

The parade will be Friday, Dec. 2 at 10 a.m. on the hospital campus. The parade will wind its way all across the hospital grounds, giving hospital patients, employees, and any visitors who would like to come a chance to view the festive floats, classic cars and several different marching bands that will be taking part this year.

“Everybody has a great time at the parade, and it’s something you don’t want to miss out on,” MSH Volunteer Services Director Sheila Shows said. “We always have antique cars, bands, winners from beauty pageants and all kinds of floats in the parade,” Shows said. “It’s open for anyone who wants to join us, and we’d love to have everyone.”

The Christmas parade kicks off the holiday season on the MSH campus, one of the busiest times of the year there. 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. It comes to a close on Santa Day, when dozens of volunteers visit the campus, get dressed in the traditional red garb, and make special deliveries to every patient and resident at the hospital.

Santa Day this year is scheduled for Thursday, December 22. While that may be the culmination of the holiday season at the hospital, the previous weeks will be packed with opportunities for anyone who would like to volunteer their time, energy or talents to others.

“We have people come all year round, but the holidays are a very special time for us,” Shows said. “We have volunteers come from all over the state to spend time with our patients and residents. They do everything from preparing a home-cooked meal and singing carols to just bringing some snacks and spending time with the patients.

Anyone is welcome to host a party at the hospital. Many 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. They come as families, service clubs and church groups to not only host parties and dinners, but bring gifts and donations.

MSH patients and Jaquith Nursing Home residents particularly enjoy table games, portable radios, batteries, sunglasses, socks, slippers, gowns and pajamas. They will all be given out in the gift bags on Santa Day.

“We work on scheduling these groups and organizing these events all year long, but it’s more than worth it,” Shows said. “The work of our volunteers and staff helps spread joy to everyone here, and we’re glad to be a part of that.”

Individuals can bring new clothing items, personal care items, books, games, puzzles, or art supplies to the Christmas House in Building 71, or make monetary donations by mailing checks to MSH Volunteer Services, P.O. Box 157-A, Whitfield, MS 39193. Checks should be made payable to Mississippi State Hospital.

For more information, visit [www.msh.state.ms.us](http://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 – Santa waves from his float in last year’s parade on the Mississippi State Hospital campus. This year’s parade is Friday, Dec. 2 at 10 a.m. The public is invited to attend.**