

Child travels from Cambodia to undergo complex plastic surgery

By Annie Oeth
UMMC

Born with a bilateral cleft lip and palate and a cleft on the left side of his face, Both “Scotty” Virak was abandoned as a newborn in the crowded city of Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

“The authorities contacted me and said they had this abandoned baby, but our organization wasn’t ready to take a baby yet,” said Alli Mellon. “We were planning to open a children’s home but not until spring. I couldn’t turn him away. I knew he was meant to be mine.”

A Clinton native, Mellon is founder and executive director of The Hard Places Community, a nonprofit that helps children in Cambodia, Greece, Madagascar and India escape trauma, human trafficking and sexual abuse. She lives in Cambodia.

Surgery to repair those clefts brings the two nearly 15,000 miles to the University of Mississippi Medical Center and its pediatric arm, Children’s of Mississippi. Dr. Ian Hoppe, who heads pediatric craniofacial plastic surgery at UMMC, has performed two repairs on Scotty, who was adopted by Mellon.

“He is a beautiful surprise



Dr. Ian Hoppe examines Scotty Virak’s nasal area while Scotty’s mother, Alli Mellon, and his grandmother, Barbara Mellon, watch. (Photo by Annie Oeth/UMMC)

who brings joy and love to our family every day,” said Mellon, who has also adopted two 10-year-old girls, a 6-year-old boy and a 5-year-old girl.

Scotty’s recovering nicely from palate surgery Dec. 9 that is allowing him to have an easier time eating, said Hoppe, “I performed a repair to his lip deformity earlier this year,” Hoppe said. “We normally proceed with closure of the palate around a year of age, and in that surgery, we addressed his nose. He may need a larger reconstruction for that abnormality later in life, but he’s doing very well now.”

Children’s of Mississippi,

which includes the state’s only children’s hospital, has the state’s only Pediatric Craniofacial Center certified by the American Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Association.

ACPA certification requires a multidisciplinary team including a surgeon trained in transcranial cranio-maxillofacial surgery, a neurosurgeon, a psychologist for neurodevelopmental and cognitive assessment, an ophthalmologist, a social worker, a geneticist, a speech therapist, a dentist and an orthodontist.

“The depth and breadth of knowledge required for ACPA certification are wide,

On Wednesday, December 25, 2019 at approximately 8:37 p.m., the Mississippi Highway Patrol responded to a fatal traffic crash on US51 in Copiah County. A Mercedes Benz passenger vehicle driven by Erik G. Miller, 30, of Crystal Springs, MS was traveling northbound on US51. The vehicle left the roadway and collided with tree. Erik G. Miller received fatal injuries from the crash and was pronounced dead on scene.

All crashes are currently under investigation by MHP.

MHP investigates three fatalities over holiday enforcement period

Press Release

The Mississippi Highway Patrol concluded its 2019 Christmas holiday travel period which began Monday, December 23, at 12:01 a.m. and ended Wednesday, December 25 at midnight. MHP issued 2544 citations with 39 DUI arrests. 116 motor vehicle crashes were investigated which included 27 injuries and 3 fatalities on state, federal highways, and interstates. The MHP safety initiative “Home For The Holidays” will continue through the end of the year in order to promote traffic safety.

On Monday, December 23, 2019 at approximately 12:56 a.m., the Mississippi Highway Patrol responded to a fatal traffic crash on MS27 in Hinds County. A 2004 Mitsubishi Endeavor driven by John A. Lumbley, 24, of Vicksburg, MS was traveling northbound on MS27. The vehicle left the roadway, overturned and collided with tree. John A. Lumbley received fatal injuries from the crash and was pronounced dead on scene.

On Wednesday, December 25, 2019 at approximately 1:25 p.m., the Mississippi Highway Patrol responded

to a fatal traffic crash on MS178 in Lee County. A 2013 Chrysler passenger vehicle driven by Linda C. McMinn, 78, of Mooreville, MS was traveling eastbound on MS178. The vehicle left the roadway and collided with tree. Linda C. McMinn received fatal injuries from the crash and was pronounced dead on scene.

Send in your news!

The Holmes County Herald welcomes reader submissions for news, events and photos for publication in our weekly newspaper. To submit items, email to:

hcherald@gmail.com

Please include all pertinent details, dates, location, name of the event or occasion, all associated people, organizations or groups, reason for event or occasion and **NAMES OF ALL PEOPLE PICTURED IN ANY PHOTOGRAPH.**

We look forward to hearing from you!

-Holmes County Herald Staff

and their standards are high,” Hoppe said. “Having the resources of an academic medical center means we can offer the complete spectrum of care needed by patients born with cleft lip and palates and complex facial clefts.”

Children born with cleft lips, palates and facial clefts may have issues with breathing and feeding, and later, with speech. Patients with rare clefts that involve the eye also need ophthalmology care.

About one in every 1,600 babies is born with a cleft lip and palate, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Complex facial clefts are very rare and their prevalence is not well understood.

Visiting Hoppe for follow-up care in December, a nearly 1-year-old Scotty was wearing sneakers, khakis and a thick cardigan.

“He’s not used to being bundled up,” Mellon said. “Temperatures in Cambodia are usually in the 90s.”

To get to this latest visit, Mellon and Scotty flew from Phnom Penh to China, then to Los Angeles, where they had a 12-hour layover, and then to Nashville for a visit with her sister, Lisa. The trip usually includes about 30 hours of flying time.

“We watch movies to keep from going stir crazy,” she said of the lengthy flights.

About seven months post-surgery, little evidence of Scotty’s cleft lip remains. Since his most recent surgery, eating is easier, and Scotty is a happy, active toddler.

His first surgery, on May 6, was as a 5-month-old. “He got his stitches out May 13,

U.S. Department of Labor updates National Emphasis Program on amputations in manufacturing industries

Press Release

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recently issued an updated National Emphasis Program (NEP) to focus agency inspections on amputation hazards in manufacturing industries. This directive updates the 2015 NEP on amputations.

The NEP targets industrial and manufacturing workplaces where employees are injured by unguarded or improperly guarded machinery and equipment. NEPs focus agency enforcement activity and do not create any new obligation to employers.

The updated NEP: Revises targeting methodology to include data from amputation reporting requirements;

Revises coding requirements for amputation inspections in the OSHA Information System; and

Adds new appendices on and he’s done really well,” Mellon said. “He doesn’t always like to have his face touched, but he gets facial massages four times a day to help in healing.”

Mellon’s mother, Barbara Mellon, loves having her daughter and Scotty in Clinton when follow-up visits at Children’s of Mississippi are needed.

“We just love him,” she said, “and we love taking care of him. He is so sweet.”

amputations targeting methodology and North American Industry Classification System codes.

The emphasis program includes a three-month period of education and prevention outreach, which will run until March 10, 2020. During this period, OSHA will continue to respond to complaints, referrals, hospitalizations and fatalities. Enforcement activities will begin after the outreach period and remain in effect until canceled. OSHA-approved State Plans are expected to have enforcement procedures that are at least as effective as those in this instruction.

Employers are already responsible for ensuring machines are properly safeguarded to prevent worker amputations and other fatal injuries. OSHA’s Machine Guarding webpage provides compliance assistance resources to help employers identify amputation hazards, and follow required procedures to properly guard stationary and portable machines.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA’s role is to help ensure these conditions for America’s working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit www.osha.gov.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE RURAL AREA PROGRAM

The Mississippi Valley State University Mass Transit Program of Itta Bena, Mississippi, is considering applying to the Mississippi Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Division, for assistance through its Rural Area Program to provide public transportation services within the following counties, Carroll, Grenada, Holmes, Humphreys, Leflore, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, and Washington. Funding is available to state agencies, local public bodies and agencies thereof, non-profit organizations, operators of public transportation services in locations other than urbanized Area, and, under special circumstances, private operators of public transportation on a competitive basis to undertake eligible transportation activities.

The goals of the Rural Area Program are: to enhance the access of people in non-urbanized Area to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services and recreation; to assist in the maintenance, development, improvement, and use of public transportation systems in rural and small urban Area; to encourage and facilitate the most efficient use of all Federal funds used to provide passenger transportation in non-urbanized Area through the coordination of programs and services; and to provide for the participation of private transportation providers in non-urbanized transportation to the maximum extent feasible.

The purposes for which these funds can be used are capital purchases that include such items as support vehicles, communication equipment, wheelchair lifts, etc.; administrative costs that include such items as salaries, office supplies, insurance, etc.; and operating expenses that include such items as driver’s wages, fuel, oil, etc. More specific details regarding eligible activities, program requirements and the program criteria will be provided at a public hearing which will be held at **The City of Tchula Court Room, 1027 Main Street, Tchula, MS 39169 on January 10, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.**

The purpose of this hearing will be to obtain citizen input into the development of the application.