



RankenJordan®
PEDIATRIC BRIDGE HOSPITAL



This booklet commemorates the 80th anniversary
of Ranken Jordan Pediatric Bridge Hospital.
The information in these pages is a collection of hospital archives,
news articles, patient stories, interviews, and family history from
Susan Walker, the great niece of our founder Mary Ranken Jordan.
We send our sincere gratitude to Ms. Walker, the patients we served,
and the employees and volunteers who provided
their time and service to share our history.

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Consider the Children First66



80 years

OF HEALING

The MRJ WAY



In 2021, Ranken Jordan Pediatric Bridge Hospital proudly celebrated 80 years of providing exceptional, specialized care that encourages kids with medically complex needs to engage, play, and heal so they can get better faster.

From our beginning in 1941, Ranken Jordan has pioneered a bold vision to fill unmet health care needs for children in the community. When children no longer need care in a traditional hospital, but aren't yet ready to go home, we're there. We've created a unique *Care Beyond the Bedside* model that has sparked thousands of remarkable stories of recovery, healing and hope.

Behind Ranken Jordan's Care Beyond the Bedside model, which promotes play in healing, is the generous founder and benefactor of the hospital, Mary Ranken Jordan. Although she passed away in 1962, her care philosophy of always considering the children first in all decisions is at the heart of Ranken Jordan today. We call it the "MRJ Way."

As we've expanded services and care has advanced to serve increasingly challenging patients, Mary's spirit continues to gently guide Ranken Jordan. At each step of progress in the past 80 years, the right people at the right moment were always in place.

We're grateful to everyone who has played a role in making Ranken Jordan the inspiring hospital it has become. We look forward to leading the way—the MRJ Way—helping more kids who need us in the next 80 years.

HELPING CHILDREN WITH
MEDICAL COMPLEXITIES FOR
80 YEARS AND COUNTING



OUR FOUNDER, MARY RANKEN JORDAN



Mary Ranken, 1895



Mary's family settled in Northern Ireland near Londonderry. She spent her childhood there until she ventured to the United States to join her uncles John and Hugh in St. Louis.

M

ary Ranken Jordan comes from a long line of courageous family members who made a lasting impact in the world.

Mary's ancestral family in Northern Ireland found prosperity as linen merchants—the Irish linen that remains prized worldwide today.

Mary's father, Thomas Ranken, was driven by an adventurous spirit that took him to Australia and to the United States where he sought his fortune mining for gold in Montana in the early 1860s. He also visited his brothers, John and Hugh Ranken, who had emigrated to St. Louis and were running successful businesses.



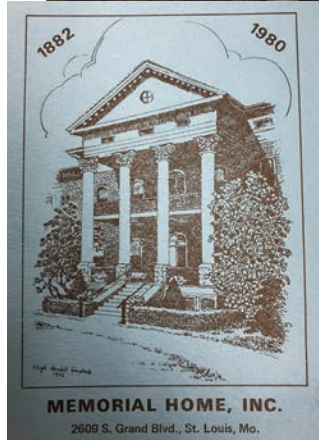
Mary was an adventurous spirit her entire life. She would go on to travel the world, visiting dozens of countries across five continents. She often traveled with her best friend Ettie, pictured here fourth from left.

After his global travel, Thomas returned to Ireland and soon married Sarah Patton. Mary, their first child, was born in 1869. Thomas and Sarah had another child in 1870 who died at 4 months old. Sadly, Thomas passed away when Mary was just 3 years old. Sarah eventually remarried and had four more children.

Sarah was well educated and was determined to give Mary the same opportunity. Until age 18, Mary attended Victoria College in Belfast, a school known for its innovation in education, especially for girls. This experience provided Mary with a comprehensive

education that included grammar, arithmetic, geometry, history, and science. It went far beyond the traditional education for girls at that time, which typically included basic homemaking skills, painting, piano, and embroidery.

After her educational experience, Mary became restless in Ireland. She relished hearing tales of America from her two successful uncles in St. Louis through their visits and letters. Hugh Laughlin Ranken was in real estate and rail stock, while John Dunlop Ranken had established a major industrial manufacturing plant.



The Memorial Home in St. Louis opened in 1882 in order to serve aged men and women. Mary joined the organization later in the 1880s and eventually served as its president for 30 years; she retired in 1950 after more than 50 years of service. When she passed, the home wrote this about her: "Mary Ranken Jordan's great wealth, coupled with her great wisdom, steered Memorial Home to years of successful operation. The respect held for her by the St. Louis community and out of state as well, brought Memorial Home to the forefront, and her good judgment kept it there. We owe Mrs. Jordan, our benefactress, a great debt of gratitude. It was through her foresight, generosity and financial planning that security and continuity were made possible. Her death in July 1962 was a distinct loss to Memorial Home and to those who were privileged to know, admire and love her."

The appeal of America captured her imagination. With her father's adventurous soul and a promise of a home with her uncles, Mary set sail from Ireland for New York City, arriving May 31, 1889. She was just 20 years old. Her journey continued west to St. Louis where she settled into the opulent Southern Hotel and became the belle of the Gateway City.

But Mary had grander aspirations. Applying her intelligence and extensive education, Mary worked closely with her uncles to learn about business and finance. Over the next decade, her wealth grew along with her desire to help the less fortunate.

An independent woman, Mary involved herself in community and charity works and began traveling the world at the turn of the century. She became close friends with Ettie Amelia Jordan, who often traveled with her.

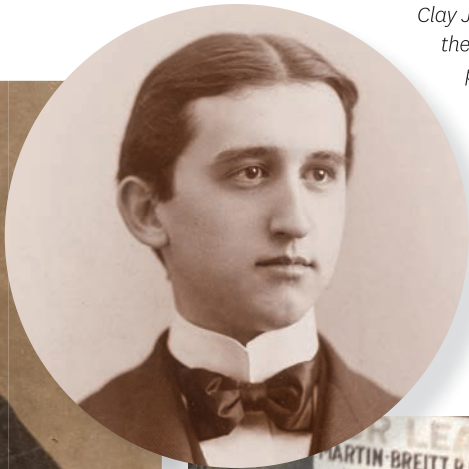
On one of their worldwide adventures, Mary and Ettie were joined by Ettie's cousin, Clay Eugene Jordan, an accomplished musician who earned success in his family's cutlery business. Romance soon followed and Mary and Clay married in 1905. They built a life together that included multiple philanthropic endeavors that aligned with their passions, from music to child welfare.

Numerous organizations in the St. Louis area also benefited from Mary's business acumen and leadership skills. She served as president of the St. Louis Union of Kings Daughters and was president of the Memorial Home for the Elderly for more than 30 years. She was active in the Missouri Historical Society and even acted in a progressive Wednesday Club play in 1920 to celebrate the 19th amendment, which gave women the right to vote.



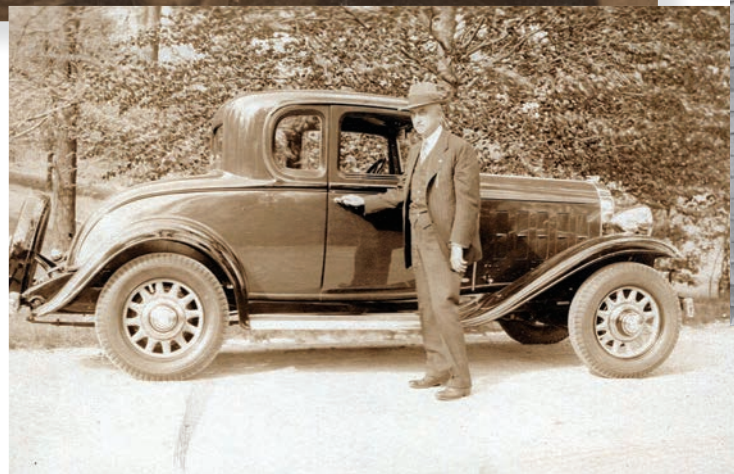
Upon moving to St. Louis, Mary joined the Second Presbyterian Church where she met Ettie Amelia Jordan. The two had much in common and became lifelong friends. They both enjoyed travel, valued education, served charities, and shared the same faith. Mary and Ettie traveled all over the world together, including countries in Asia, Europe, Africa, and South America, as well as all across the United States. On some of those trips, Ettie's cousin Clay Jordan would join as well. Mary and Clay married, and Ettie officially became family.

Mary and Ettie also volunteered at many organizations in the region and ultimately founded the Mary Ranken Jordan and Ettie A. Jordan Charitable Foundation so they could provide philanthropic support to non-profits across the area, including the Missouri Botanical Garden.



Clay Jordan was a St. Louis native, born to the family that founded Jordan Cutlery. To prepare to work for the family business, Clay attended and graduated from the Phillips Academy and Yale University.

Like his wife Mary, Clay enjoyed traveling, education, and music. When he passed, Mary donated to the College of the Ozarks, which named the music building and auditorium in his honor.



Mary's husband, Clay, was the first president of the board at Ranken Jordan. The St. Louis native was a graduate of Phillips Academy and Yale University. He spent his career working at his family's cutlery manufacturing business. Clay passed away in 1945 at age 69.

While Mary and Clay had no children of their own, children always held a special place in Mary's heart, especially those with medical needs. After consulting with leading experts in the area, Mary discovered a gap in care for children with ongoing medical needs such as polio, osteomyelitis and bone tuberculosis, which were scourges in the late 1930s and 1940s.

This led her to establishing the Ranken Jordan Home for Convalescent Crippled Children, a state-of-the-art facility that has evolved to become a national model for innovative care of children with medically complex conditions.

Over the years, Mary's generosity spread throughout the St. Louis community. Mary shunned the limelight and attention for her philanthropy but never missed an opportunity to quietly make a difference for others, especially for children.

Mary passed away in 1962 at age 93. She is buried in Bellefontaine Cemetery in St. Louis alongside her husband, Clay, and her best friend, Ettie Jordan.



Mary and Clay were married in May 1905 at a private ceremony in Richmond, Virginia. When they returned to St. Louis, the news had spread. As a socialite, Mary was not immune to gossip. The papers exaggerated the age difference between her and Clay, but they ignored the critics and spent the next 40 years happily married.

THE BIRTH OF RANKEN JORDAN: 1940s-1950s

Philanthropy and a passion for children’s well-being have driven Ranken Jordan’s birth and growth.

Mary Ranken Jordan was a thoughtful, visionary leader who saw a need and made a difference.

As a charter member of the Missouri Society for Crippled Children in the 1920s, Mary had gained special insight into the needs of children with physical limitations. It drove her to take action.



She changed the face of pediatric rehabilitation by establishing Ranken Jordan Home for Convalescent Crippled Children in 1941 with a gift of \$160,000.

For the building location, Mary chose a 5-acre site in the country, with gently rolling hills, flowering shrubs and pine trees. While just 15 miles from St. Louis, 10621 Ladue Road in Creve Coeur was far from the soot, heat and noise of the city.

Her founding philosophy of Ranken Jordan was to “consider the children first in all you do.” Before plans were drawn, the architects and Mary visited the leading convalescent homes for children in the United States and incorporated the best features of each in the design for the new state-of-the-art facility.

No detail was overlooked. The children’s living quarters were built to benefit from a southern exposure with large windows, while the entrance hall, reception room, exam rooms, treatment rooms and physician offices were on the northern exposure.

Mary with her husband Clay and friend Ettie were strong philanthropists in the community. After donating to and volunteering with the arts, education and civil service, they asked the community what else they could do. Local physicians responded and asked for a home where children who are critically ill could recover. Mary, Clay and Ettie found a space “in the country” on Ladue Road in St. Louis County.

At age 72, Mary founded the Ranken Jordan Home for Convalescent Crippled Children where children and young adults with illnesses and injuries could find care away from the hustle and bustle of the city. The house was built on rolling acres of trees and grass and included sleeping porches so the kids could breathe fresh air while resting safely indoors.



THE BOYS AND GIRLS EACH HAD
THEIR OWN SLEEPING QUARTERS.
BETWEEN THEM WERE SHARED SPACES,
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ROOMS. SOCIALIZING TOGETHER HAS BEEN
CONSIDERED PART OF HEALING SINCE
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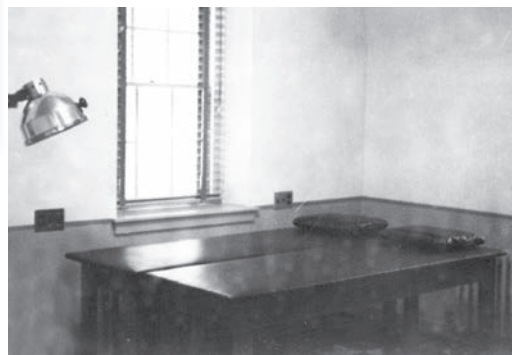
While the limestone building was built using the most advanced design of the time, it didn't include air-conditioning, which was still rare in buildings in the 1940s. Special sleeping porches were incorporated into the design so children could sleep in the fresh air.

Wings at each end of the main building were arranged with separate dormitories for boys and girls with the babies' ward in the middle. Decorations and furniture were focused on creating bright, cheerful spaces.

On April 9, 1941, nearly 200 people attended the dedication ceremony for the new Ranken Jordan home. Dr. J. Archer O'Reilly, president of the Missouri Society of Crippled Children and the first Ranken Jordan medical director, gave the dedicatory address. He described the new home as a "greatly needed institution for convalescent care of crippled children after hospital treatment."



Opening day dedication ceremony for the new Ranken Jordan home, April 9, 1941





Playing outside and enjoying the benefits of nature was one of Mary's values and continues today through our Care Beyond the Bedside model.



When Ranken Jordan opened, it welcomed children ages 15 months to 15 years. Stays were limited to three months, and there was a waiting list for admissions from orthopedic divisions at St. Louis hospitals.

The first resident superintendent, Agnes Swenson, formerly of Shriner's Hospital for Crippled Children, oversaw a staff of about eight nurses, attendants, cooks, and maids. Living quarters for the staff were provided on the building's third floor.

For Mary, charity was about more than giving money. She took a loving, personal, practical interest in those she helped and knew the children by name. Mary visited the children at Ranken Jordan frequently, provided them with new clothes and gifts, and planned activities and parties for them such as teas and an extravagant annual Christmas party. No patient was billed for care during that time, and we continue that philosophy to this day. No patient is turned away due to financial hardship.

Because of their commitment to children, Mary and her best friend, Ettie Jordan, were recognized nationally as "Good Neighbors of the Day" by Tom Breneman on his "Breakfast in Hollywood" program in 1947.



The nominator was R.M. Good, president of the College of the Ozarks. In his letter he said: "Months before Christmas, the closets in their apartment begin to bulge with toys the Jordans have collected for their children, and Christmas Day itself they devote to the children and their happiness.

"Instead of building for themselves a fine home at this beautiful location, they built this wonderful home for crippled children. Many youngsters today are walking and playing because of it. Victims of polio and other crippling diseases, children whose parents have no money at all, have come ..."

Over the past 80 years, the home has evolved to become the nationally acclaimed Ranken Jordan Pediatric Bridge Hospital. Its reputation for innovative care and extraordinary recovery for children has grown exponentially. Today, it is regarded as a premier model of care by medical professionals around the country.



The holidays have been a big celebration at Ranken Jordan since its founding in 1941. It was reported that Mary and her family hosted parties at the house every day from the first Sunday of December until Christmas Day. Many of the local organizations would visit the house and host parties there, giving food and clothing to the patients. Of course, Santa always made a visit, and he continues to come every year to Ranken Jordan.



The children and staff celebrate many holidays at Ranken Jordan. Here is Mary with the children on Easter Sunday and Independence Day.



LAUNCHING LEADERSHIP

Clay Jordan, Mary’s husband, served as the first president of Ranken Jordan. Other relatives and trusted business associates rounded out the small board.

The first Ranken Jordan board, established in 1940, included:

- Clay Jordan, president
- Mary Ranken Jordan
- Ettie A. Jordan, Clay’s cousin and Mary’s best friend
- Catherine S. Lytle, Mary’s cousin
- Dr. Archer O’Reilly, first medical director
- Samuel A. Mitchell, vice president, Jordan family law firm representative
- J.J. Farrell, secretary and treasurer

Sam Mitchell of the Thompson & Mitchell law firm became the second president of Ranken Jordan after Clay Jordan passed away in 1945. He led until 1960.

Joe Logan, another lawyer at Thompson & Mitchell, followed Mitchell to become board president in 1960 and served 30 years in that role—longer than anyone has ever served at Ranken Jordan.

BUILDING AN IMPRESSIVE REPUTATION

In February 1950, a reporter from *The St. Louis Star and Times* newspaper wrote a story about Ranken Jordan that praised its “fun” approach to convalescing children and called it an “institution of distinction.” He noted that the patients are considered guests. They were eager to stay at Ranken Jordan as long as they could because they enjoyed their time there. The reporter wrote: “For nine years now, Ranken Jordan has offered about the only haven extant for less-privileged youngsters who’ve been crippled by disease or accident and need a friendly bridge between hospital and home.”

That mission continues today.

Agnes Swenson, the superintendent of Ranken Jordan when it opened in 1941, took the writer on a tour of the facility. She emphasized that “as much as possible we try to make it a home, where the youngsters will have the best possible chance for complete recovery.”

The tour included meeting Catherine Lytle, a Ranken Jordan board member and Mary’s cousin, as well as Helen Haywood, a Ranken Jordan school teacher who taught children first to eighth grades for about three hours a day “to avoid undue

“CARE BEYOND THE BEDSIDE”

STILL FLOURISHES AT RANKEN JORDAN.

strain.” A recreation hall doubled as a school room. Some students could walk on their own to class, while others were wheeled in on their beds. That approach to “Care Beyond the Bedside” still flourishes at Ranken Jordan.

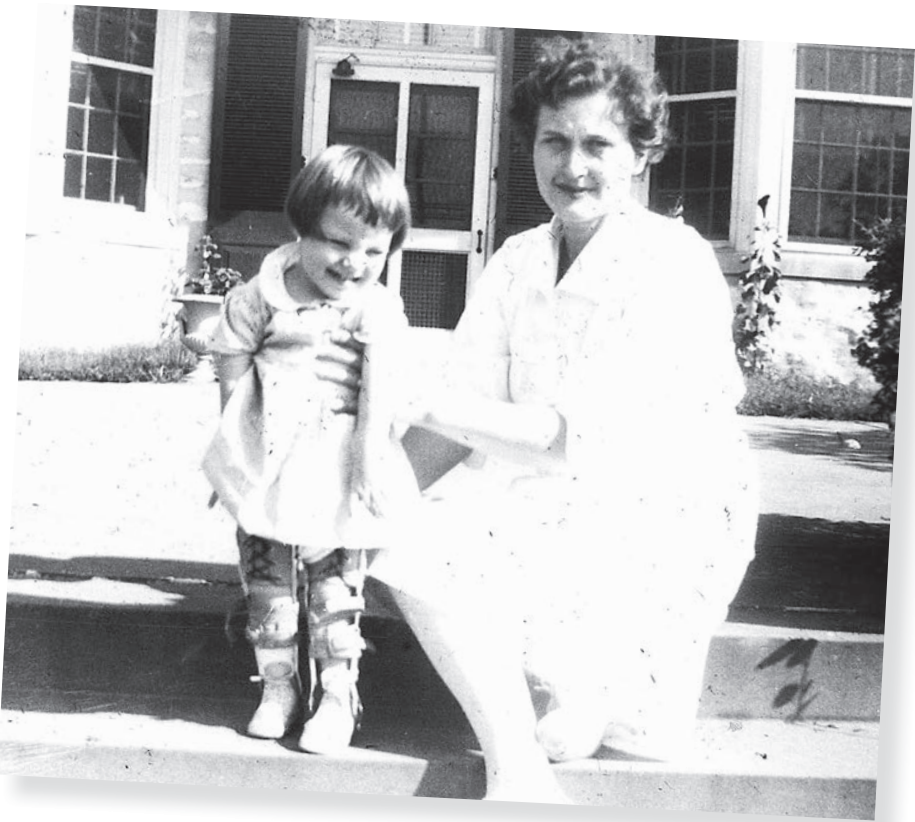
The story also highlighted the physiotherapy room that included exercise bars, massage tables, and tubs. Many children were learning to knit as part of the occupational therapy program.

A source of significant generosity came from Jordan family members. Mary had established a trust in 1940 for the maintenance of the home. In 1957, Ettie Jordan passed away at age 86. She left an estate valued at \$1.5 million. The bulk of the estate went to the foundation she had established with Mary called the Mary Ranken Jordan and Ettie A. Jordan Charitable Foundation. Its purpose was to help charities in which the two women were interested.

Donor generosity was as essential then as it is today.

Additional funds for the home were provided in a will of Lewis Wilkins Hyer, who died in 1957. He was a close friend of Mary’s and a fellow philanthropist.

The American Legion, Rock Hill Lions Club, the University City and Webster Groves Eastern Star chapters, and others regularly showed movies at Ranken Jordan or provided games and other entertainment. The Dula Foundation provided televisions to the children.



Helen Haywood was one of Ranken Jordan’s first hires. She was the school teacher and taught every grade and subject to the patients. Reflecting on her tenure at Ranken Jordan, Helen said in an interview, “I was there during the polio epidemic and some of the kids could not even use their hands in any way but they had a stick to turn the pages. It was something different than I had ever done, but it really got into my system because I was there 26 years after that.”

RANKEN JORDAN HISTORICAL FIGURES



Mary Ranken Jordan



Clay Jordan



Ettie A. Jordan

Mary Ranken Jordan

Mary Ranken Jordan was born in 1869 in Ireland and set sail for America in 1889 at just 20 years old. She settled in St. Louis under the watchful eyes of her two uncles, who had become successful businessmen.

With an independent spirit, Mary channeled her energies into community and charity works in St. Louis. Numerous organizations benefited from her leadership skills and business acumen. She was president of the Memorial Home for the Elderly for more than 30 years.

Mary married Clay Jordan in 1905 after meeting him through her travels with her best friend, Ettie Jordan. Clay and Ettie were cousins.

While Mary and Clay had no children of their own, children always held a special place in Mary's heart. As a result, she built Ranken Jordan Home for Convalescent Crippled Children in 1941 as a state-of-the-art facility to care for children with ongoing medical needs from devastating illnesses of the time such as polio, osteomyelitis, and bone tuberculosis.

Her founding philosophy that remains today at Ranken Jordan was to "consider the children first in all you do."

Over her lifetime, Mary gave generously throughout the community before she passed away in 1962 at age 93. Her legacy of generosity continues to benefit Ranken Jordan and dozens of other charitable and cultural organizations 60 years later through the Mary Ranken Jordan and Ettie A. Jordan Charitable Foundation.

Clay Jordan

St. Louis-native Clay Jordan graduated from Yale University before he joined his family's cutlery manufacturing business. He enjoyed travel, which is how he met Mary Ranken. Mary and Clay married in 1905 and built a life together that included multiple philanthropic endeavors that aligned with their passions, from music to child welfare.

Clay passed away in 1945 at age 69, just four years after he and Mary opened Ranken Jordan Home for Convalescent Crippled Children. Clay served as the first president of the board there.

After Clay's death, Mary established the Clay Jordan Music Center at the College of the Ozarks in Clay's memory.

Ettie Jordan

Ettie Jordan was Mary Ranken Jordan's best friend and cousin to Mary's husband, Clay. She traveled extensively with Mary and was an integral part of Ranken Jordan after it opened. She served on the board and was an avid photographer around the home. She also co-hosted many holiday parties with Mary at Ranken Jordan for the children and community.

After Clay died, Mary and Ettie shared an apartment together until Ettie died of a stroke in 1957 at age 86. Ettie left behind an estate valued at \$1.5 million. The bulk of the estate went to the Mary Ranken Jordan and Ettie A. Jordan Charitable Foundation, which supports Ranken Jordan as well as dozens of other cultural and charitable organizations.

Dr. J. Archer O'Reilly

Dr. J. Archer O'Reilly, the first medical director of Ranken Jordan, was a lifelong advocate for people with disabilities. He lived with a physical disability himself and wore an artificial limb for most of his life.

An orthopedic surgeon and professor at Washington University School of Medicine, Dr. O'Reilly founded the St. Louis chapter of the Missouri Society for Crippled Children in 1927. He also was president of the state organization for decades. Mary Ranken Jordan was a charter member.

Dr. O'Reilly was instrumental in helping Mary learn about the special needs of children with physical limitations. Ultimately, this inspired her to create the Ranken Jordan Home for Convalescent Crippled Children in 1941 and appoint Dr. O'Reilly as its first medical director.

Dr. O'Reilly died in 1947.

Agnes Swenson

Agnes Swenson was a ward supervisor at Shriner's Hospital for Crippled Children before she became the resident superintendent at Ranken Jordan when it opened in 1941. She supervised a staff of about eight graduate nurses, attendants, cooks, and maids.

Agnes was known for her no-nonsense approach to coordinating the many facets of running Ranken Jordan while always ensuring children were put first.

Helen Haywood

At age 20, Helen Haywood started teaching at Ranken Jordan and dedicated her life to children there for the next 26 years. She taught every grade level through the polio epidemic. Some of the children didn't have use of their arms due to polio so they used a stick to turn the pages of their text-

books. This experience and others deepened her commitment to helping the children. Helen says Ranken Jordan was her life.

Living upstairs at Ranken Jordan, Helen got to know Mary Ranken Jordan and Ettie Jordan well. She was even present when Ettie had a stroke that ultimately took her life.

Helen recalls the many Christmas parties Mary hosted for the children. Mary always bought the children special clothes to wear for the parties along with toys and other clothes to take home with them. Helen says Mary and the staff made sure the children were included in all events at Ranken Jordan and were always first priority.

Lewis Wilkins (Wilk) Hyer

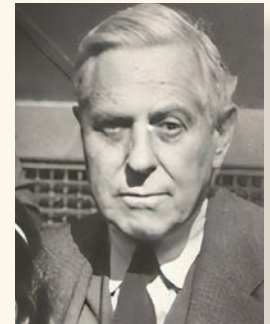
Lewis Wilkins (Wilk) Hyer was a top executive for J.C. Penney Corporation. A Missouri native, Wilk and fellow philanthropist Mary Ranken Jordan became friends and supported some of the same organizations, including the College of the Ozarks.

He died in 1957 at age 87. Because of his friendship with Mary, Wilk created a trust estate to benefit Ranken Jordan that continues to support children at the hospital 60 years later. Through his will, he also donated portions of his \$14.6 million fortune to other hospitals and organizations.

In honor of Wilk's generosity, Ranken Jordan established the Lewis Hyer Society to recognize generous donors who invest gifts totaling \$10,000 or more annually.

Joe Logan

Joe Logan was president of the Ranken Jordan board for 30 years, longer than anyone before or since. He assumed the position in 1960 replacing his mentor, Sam Mitchell of Thompson & Mitchell.



Dr. Archer O'Reilly
PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY O'REILLY



Agnes Swenson



Helen Haywood



Lewis Wilkins Hyer



Joe Logan



Dr. Nick Holekamp



James Gunn, Sr.

Thompson & Mitchell (now Thompson Coburn) was the original law firm of record for the Jordan family. Logan, a Harvard Law graduate, joined Thompson & Mitchell after serving in the Navy during World War II. He saw combat, supported the Allied landings at Normandy on D-Day, and earned a Bronze Star for his actions during the battle of Okinawa.

Logan was a mentor to Tom Minogue, another Thompson & Mitchell attorney. As part of the board succession plan, Logan asked Minogue to join the Ranken Jordan board in 1984. In 1990, Minogue became Ranken Jordan's fourth board president.

Logan died in 2019 at the age of 98. He was married to Yvonne, a peace activist, for 74 years before she passed away in 2017 at age 97.

Dr. Nick Holekamp

With a background as a pediatric hospitalist, Dr. Nick Holekamp started at Ranken Jordan in 1999 as a part-time medical director. The position quickly became a full-time position as Ranken Jordan's patients became increasingly medically complex and required more medical oversight. Dr. Holekamp currently serves as chief medical officer and vice president.

Dr. Holekamp's vision for Ranken Jordan included serving more children with medically complex needs. From the beginning, he has followed in Mary's footsteps as the guiding champion for the hospital's Care Beyond the Bedside model.

To expand Ranken Jordan's impact, he worked closely with the board to successfully change Ranken Jordan's license from a pediatric nursing home to a unique subacute hospital in 2002. This changed the hospital's financial reimbursement structure and expanded the services the hospital could offer. Dr. Holekamp wrote the hospital criteria

for the State of Missouri that is still used for insurance reimbursement today.

With the increasing number of children with complex medical needs, Ranken Jordan quickly outgrew its original facility. Dr. Holekamp led efforts to create a larger, more modern facility that opened in 2004 with an expansion in 2018.

Under Dr. Holekamp's leadership, Ranken Jordan has grown into an advanced pediatric specialty hospital that is regionally recognized as a center of excellence for children with medical complexities.

James Gunn, Sr.

Ranken Jordan faced a major legal challenge when leaders decided to change from a pediatric nursing home to a licensed subacute hospital. To assist, leadership brought in James "Jim" Gunn, a St. Louis Thompson Coburn attorney who was a national expert in health care law.

Gunn was instrumental in negotiating with the state to rewrite state laws to account for Ranken Jordan's unique structure as a pediatric specialty hospital.

Gunn partnered closely with Dr. Nick Holekamp, Ranken Jordan medical director, to develop policies, bylaws, training, competencies and credentialing so Ranken Jordan could be licensed as a hospital. At that time, there was no hospital like Ranken Jordan in the state and few in the country.

The team was successful in acquiring the first-ever subacute licensure, which changed the hospital's financial reimbursement structure and expanded the services the hospital could offer.

James Gunn Sr. passed away in 2019 at age 78.



“CONSIDER THE CHILDREN
FIRST IN ALL YOU DO.”

MARY RANKEN JORDAN

CHANGE ON THE HORIZON: 1960s-1980s



In 1961, Mary was honored as one of Ten Women of Achievement by the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* newspaper. The honorees were selected by an anonymous, non-partisan group of St. Louisans who were familiar with the civic contributions made by women throughout the greater St. Louis community.

Mary received the Lifetime Award and, at age 91, was noted to be the “least-known philanthropist in St. Louis, although she has helped countless numbers of individuals and organizations during her lifetime.” The master of ceremonies commended Mary for going beyond a “checkbook contributor” and for giving generously of her time and attention. She is, he said, “a great citizen of St. Louis.”

The audience at the Women of Achievement awards luncheon gave Mary a standing ovation. As Mary accepted the award, she modestly said she was glad if she had “been able to serve in any way the people of St. Louis, especially those who need help most.”

The award recognized her life dedicated to service as she avoided the limelight. During Mary’s lifetime, she generously gave her time and money to the St. Louis Women’s Christian Association Memorial Home, the Board of Religious Organizations, Second

Presbyterian Church, Missouri Historical Society, Symphony Society, Shaw’s Garden and several other institutions and organizations.



AS MARY ACCEPTED THE TEN WOMEN OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARD, SHE MODESTLY SAID SHE WAS GLAD IF SHE HAD “BEEN ABLE TO SERVE IN ANY WAY THE PEOPLE OF ST. LOUIS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO NEED HELP MOST.”

CREATING A LASTING LEGACY

After an adventurous and philanthropic life, Mary passed away in 1962 at age 93. True to the MRJ Way, she left a sizeable endowment to ensure Ranken Jordan’s mission lives on.

In addition, Mary made specific generous bequests to schools, charitable institutions, friends, and employees. This included a \$50,000 gift to the College of the Ozarks for endowment of a music department in honor of her husband. Mary previously established the Clay Jordan Music Center at the College of the Ozarks in memory of her husband.

Other large bequests were made to the St. Louis Society for Crippled Children and the King’s Daughters home in Mexico, Missouri, among other gifts.

Sixty years later, Mary’s legacy continues to positively impact St. Louis through The Mary Ranken Jordan and Ettie A. Jordan Charitable Foundation, which supports numerous charitable and cultural organizations with a focus on education and children’s health and welfare.

Some of the St. Louis organizations the foundation continues to support include Wyman Center, Grace Hill Settlement House, and multiple agencies focused on children, as well as larger organizations such as American Red Cross, The Magic House, Missouri





Botanical Garden, Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis Science Center, Missouri History Museum, and dozens more.

PARTNERING FOR BETTER CARE

In the 1960s, Ranken Jordan expanded to 26 beds with a larger staff and additional space to care for even more children. But change was on the doorstep, and Ranken Jordan was seeing fewer patients with each passing year.

By the end of the decade, Ranken Jordan's mission to care for patients with polio and bone tuberculosis had become dated. The introduction of antibiotics combined with a polio vaccine meant Ranken Jordan's role had to evolve.

In 1952, Ranken Jordan cared for 14 patients with polio. By 1958, there was only one patient treated with polio. That same year, Ranken Jordan treated 38 patients with rheumatic fever but by 1966 only three patients were treated for that illness. And in 1963, the number of patient hospital days was about half that of 1953.



The diseases and conditions that were considered medically complex in the 1940s and 1950s began to change. Fewer children were stricken with polio and rheumatic fever, but more children arrived at Ranken Jordan with cerebral palsy or injuries, such as burns and complicated wounds. What defines "children with medical complexities" continues to change to this day as medicine advances.



Medical research achievements meant fewer children suffered from these crippling diseases. It also opened the door for Ranken Jordan to explore new avenues to help more children through modern medicine.

With fewer patients needing Ranken Jordan's convalescent care, the home's expenses were low. During the first two decades of Ranken Jordan, the total income available exceeded the total operating expenses by "sizable amounts." This income included Mary Ranken Jordan's trust.

To continue to honor Mary's desire to help children, in 1968 the board decided to donate some of the surplus funds to create a partnership with St. Louis Children's Hospital and Washington University School of Medicine to benefit children in a new way: research.

The plan was to establish a Center to be operated in St. Louis Children's Hospital for research and treatment related to crippling diseases, particularly those that were inherited.

In 1968, Ranken Jordan contributed \$500,000 to renovate a building for this genetics research at St. Louis Children's Hospital and pledged \$50,000 for 10 years to defray operating expenses for the genetics facility.

Two years later, the Center for Metabolic Diseases opened at St. Louis Children's Hospital to focus research on inherited malformations or birth defects that are often tied to metabolic disorders.

While the center has restructured over the past 50 years, Ranken Jordan's donation and partnership with St. Louis Children's Hospital launched invaluable research and advancements that have led to better care and treatment for children with medical complexities.





Lassie the collie visited with children at Ranken Jordan in 1971.

MODERNIZING FOR THE FUTURE

Ranken Jordan continued to be in the spotlight in the 1970s and even attracted “celebrity visits.” In December 1971, Lassie the collie, the canine star of “Lassie,” a popular television show of that era, visited Ranken Jordan much to the delight of the patients there.

Meanwhile, Ranken Jordan’s focus remained on helping children recover from their illnesses and injuries so they could return home safely. In 1972, Ranken Jordan expanded its therapy team to include occupational therapists and recreational therapists.

Four years later, Ranken Jordan completed a \$500,000 renovation to better meet the changing needs of patients and to refresh the facility. This renovation expanded sleeping quarters and added new therapy rooms and equipment.

The following year, 1977, Ranken Jordan was in the news for caring for conjoined twins as they prepared for separation surgery at St. Louis Children’s Hospital. This effort once again reflected the strong partnership Ranken Jordan had with area hospitals.

PUTTING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FIRST

Throughout its history, Ranken Jordan has taken on one challenge after another as it “considers children first.” The team’s commitment to the MRJ Way has carried through decade after decade.

Children who come to Ranken Jordan often face multiple health issues. Some children also face an unsafe home environment or families who are unable to care for a medically complex child. To address this issue, Ranken Jordan led the way to find more foster and adoptive families for children with medical needs and developmental disabilities. It was instrumental in creating PARTNERS (Providing Alternatives Through Respite Training, Net-working and Effective Recruitment Services).

The PARTNERS program began in 1982. In addition to recruiting families for fostering and adoption, Ranken

TODAY, RANKEN JORDAN CONTINUES TO
TEACH FAMILIES HOW TO CARE FOR THEIR
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THEY CAN GO HOME SAFELY AND THRIVE.

Jordan provided ongoing training to help these families handle children’s medical issues more confidently and effectively.

Today, Ranken Jordan continues to teach families how to care for their children with medical complexities so they can go home safely and thrive.

A TURNING POINT

Through the 1980s, Ranken Jordan tinkered with a few unofficial name changes including Ranken Jordan Pediatric Extended Care and Ranken Jordan Children’s Rehabilitation Center. These name changes may have been a symptom of the hospital trying to find its identity as health care needs were changing and Ranken Jordan’s patient load was dwindling.

Yet by the late 1980s into the early 1990s, new health threats emerged and Ranken Jordan filled again. Lead poisoning and burns became more common in children. And because of advances in medicine, more children were surviving serious medical crises such as prematurity, congenital heart disease, and traumatic brain injuries. These children required extensive rehabilitation, which was at the heart of Ranken Jordan’s mission.

This was a turning point for Ranken Jordan. As children’s care needs increased, so did the costs for this care. The staff and the facility, which was licensed as a pediatric nursing home, weren’t yet fully equipped to manage some of the most challenging patients. Yet Ranken Jordan’s team, driven by meeting the needs of children, was determined to reinvent itself and adapt to meet changing needs.

But the road wasn’t easy.



As new health threats and conditions requiring extensive rehabilitation emerged, Ranken Jordan adapted to meet the need.

AT THE CROSSROADS: 1990-2000



In the 1990s, Ranken Jordan served 26 resident patients and 81 outpatients with a staff of 59 full-time people and about 50 to 70 volunteers each month. Patients stayed an average of seven and a half weeks. That statistic included children whose parents brought them to Ranken Jordan for a few days of respite care and other children who were there for a year of treatment.

In 1992, Ranken Jordan was recognized for its work supporting families as a recipient of the Humanitarian Awards of Human Development Corporation of Metro St. Louis.

The diverse patients at Ranken Jordan generally fell into four categories: premature babies with respiratory, cardiac and digestive system problems; children with traumatic injuries from



accidents, abuse or neglect, fire, gunshot wounds or other causes; children suffering from lead poisoning or exposure to drugs; and children with long-term illnesses whose families needed time to attend to other responsibilities.

Fundraising for Ranken Jordan became more important as the cost of care and the number of patients with complex needs steadily increased. Meanwhile, Ranken Jordan was licensed as a pediatric nursing home so insurance reimbursement wasn't enough to cover the growing expenses.

In November 1990, Ranken Jordan held its first-ever major fundraising event to celebrate its 50th anniversary. The 1940s-themed tea dance raised money for the expansion of the acute care nursery, which had a waiting list of babies needing expert care. At the time, the home in its original location needed more oxygen and electrical service for ventilator assisted children, according to Jo Ellerbrake, who was the executive director at Ranken Jordan at the time.

In 1991, Friends of Ranken Jordan was formed with 65 members to raise funds for special projects. Barbara Bush was the first Friends president. Other officers included: vice presidents Mary Kay Hays, Ann Stuff, Renee Backerman, Julie Stevenson, Pat Weier and Michelle Francis; treasurer Kelly Danis; recording secretary Lisa Uxa; corresponding secretary Peggy Garrett; and members at large Kathy Fulstone, Ann Leonard, Pat Peck, Susan Rechter and Marie Shields.

Healing through play allows our young patients to focus on recovery while still being a kid. Our children play music, socialize together, dress up, swim, and enjoy pet therapy. All these activities and therapies continue today.





The Friends of Ranken Jordan hosted a “Shipboard Tea Dance” in 1992 featuring high tea and big band music. The event raised money to renovate and purchase new accessible playground equipment.



During the first year, Friends held various fundraising events including a fashion show. The following year, Friends raised \$40,000 for a new accessible playground and therapy equipment.

Led by co-chairs Renee Backerman and Ann Stupp, a creative Silver Screen Cowboys Boot Scootin’ Boogie Party netted \$13,000 to buy new beds and monitoring equipment for Ranken Jordan.

With growing awareness and support, Friends held its first Glitter and Glitz fundraiser in 1994 that raised \$35,000 for Ranken Jordan to support special therapeutic activities such as horseback riding,

swimming and community integration trips. Because of its success, Glitter and Glitz became an annual event. By 1999, Friends hit a milestone of raising \$130,000 over five years for Ranken Jordan.

FINDING A NEW VISION

As managed care took a strong hold in health care in the 1990s, the leadership at Ranken Jordan was put to the test on numerous fronts.

Tom Minogue’s mentor and colleague was Joe Logan of Thompson & Mitchell (now Thompson Coburn) who served as Ranken Jordan board chair from 1960-1990. As part of the board succession plan, Logan asked Minogue to join the Ranken Jordan board in 1984. In 1990, Minogue became Ranken Jordan’s fourth board president.

“It was a much smaller board then,” Minogue recalls. “After Joe had served 30 years as board president, my first action as chair was to put in place term limits so there is a new board chair every three years now.”

As the 1990s rolled on, Ranken Jordan’s leadership saw a need to broaden the board, Minogue says. “We brought a lot of new people onto the board and transformed it. My number one accomplishment as board president was recruiting Rabbi Mark Shook. He was a great addition.”

Rabbi Shook was the senior rabbi at Temple Israel, which happened to be right next door to Ranken Jordan’s location on Ladue Road. Minogue “cold called” to ask Rabbi Shook to join the board. The community-minded Rabbi accepted.

Ranken Jordan and its neighbor Temple Israel had a warm, reciprocal relationship. The Temple allowed Ranken Jordan to use its parking lot, playground and pool and in turn the home provided hearing and speech screenings for the Temple Israel Nursery School.

The broadening of the board led to a renewed strategic vision at Ranken Jordan “to be more than what we were,” according to Minogue.

“In the 1990s, our path to the future was unclear because there wasn’t enough patient demand to sustain our operations,” he says. “We had to re-vision.”

As a newly added board member, Rabbi Shook remembers that time well. “As the patient population started to dwindle, we began asking why we weren’t getting patients. By 1995, we realized we had to do something to change the dynamic. The



Tom Minogue



Rabbi Shook

THE BROADENING OF THE BOARD
LED TO A RENEWED STRATEGIC VISION
AT RANKEN JORDAN “TO BE MORE
THAN WHAT WE WERE.”

world had changed. As the frontiers of medicine made it possible for more children to survive, those children needed more complex rehabilitation and more specialized care. So Ranken Jordan evolved and pioneered that care.”

Serendipitously, in 1996, Ranken Jordan then-president Laura Lambrix contacted architect Steve Hunsicker to reconfigure the front door of the facility in Creve Coeur to improve the flow. As a problem-solver and big-picture thinker, Hunsicker saw broader issues with modernizing the facility that needed to be addressed and suggested those be worked into the strategic plan and vision for Ranken Jordan.

Hunsicker didn’t realize at the time that his suggestion had planted the seed to moving Ranken Jordan to a new site in Maryland Heights. His involvement opened the door to a long-term, groundbreaking partnership. Twenty five years later, Hunsicker is still closely connected to Ranken Jordan after designing Ranken Jordan’s new hospital as well as its expansion.

RAMPING UP MEDICAL OVERSIGHT

In 1999, Dr. Holekamp was offered a position as part-time medical director at Ranken Jordan, where he would work alongside chief nurse and future president Lauri Tanner. He was intrigued since it allowed him to continue to be a stay-at-home dad while also providing patient care 15-20 hours per week.

Before Dr. Holekamp came to Ranken Jordan, he worked for nine years at St. John’s Mercy Hospital (now Mercy Hospital) as a pediatric hospitalist. Even then, he was ahead of his time. Pediatric hospitalists were unusual in the 1990s.

While at Mercy, he worked in multiple areas, including the ICU, emergency department and an outpatient clinic for the underserved.

“I had a smattering of different experiences,” Dr. Holekamp says. “I consider it nine years of post-residency training in hospital-based care.”

He didn’t know then how valuable his experiences would be to the future of thousands of children.



“In the late 1990s, Ranken Jordan was still licensed as a pediatric nursing home and was under-resourced and out of date with the community’s needs,” Dr. Holekamp says. “The board had recommended it beef up medical management or close down.”

The position of medical director offered challenges but Dr. Holekamp didn’t realize the magnitude of what the job would become. Twenty years later, he oversees more than two dozen medical team members and a hospital staff of more than 400.

When Dr. Holekamp started as part-time medical director, he spent the first several months learning what the children needed and how to meet the needs of the community and referring physicians.

“The more time I spent, the more I recognized that I needed to provide more input and control over their care than they had been getting over the past few years,” he says

Dr. Holekamp opened the lines of communication with referring physicians, provided more direct involvement and oversight of medical care, and strengthened the staff’s ability to provide the more advanced care the patients needed.

Dr. Nick joined Ranken Jordan in 1999. He embraced the Care Beyond the Bedside philosophy and enhanced it to become the integral part that it is today at the hospital. Under his medical leadership, the facility became a licensed hospital in Missouri and advanced the level of care it provides to children with medical complexities.



Since he joined Ranken Jordan, Dr. Nick focused on getting to “yes.” Yes, kids should be able to play while in the hospital. Yes, Ranken Jordan can care for even more kids. In 2011, Dr. Nick was recognized by the Missouri Hospital Association for his “dedicated service to Missouri’s hospitals health care systems, patients and communities.”



“The challenge was to understand the needs of the referring doctors,” he says. “My most important job was good communication within the building and outside of it, too. By beefing up our medical oversight, we could relieve the responsibility of the referring physician and provide superior care onsite.”

He says today referring physicians who had hesitated to refer patients in the past now refer kids to Ranken Jordan regularly. “The reliable, competent and sophisticated care made providers feel comfortable sending kids to us.”

Dr. Holekamp quickly realized within his first year as medical director that his half-time schedule wasn’t enough so he transitioned to full-time in 2000. Even full-time wasn’t enough for one person so he soon hired a nurse practitioner and then another pediatrician. “It was a quick ramping up of medical care,” he says. “I felt responsible and made a promise to keep kids safe. The referring doctors entrusted their patients to us.”

He continues: “As we ramped up, we explored what steps we needed to take to be able to handle each challenging patient. We worked to meet the needs and challenges of kids and the providers who referred them. That has been the key to success for our organization.”

In the 1990s, Dr. Holekamp says there were two big differences in care. “Kids were either sick and in the hospital or well enough to go home—there was no middle ground. In addition, most kids we care for now would not have survived 30 years ago. With the many advances in health care and medical technology, more kids were being saved. While this was a great thing, the medical community was unknowingly creating a population of highly medically dependent children. So the need for caring for these kids has continued to grow.”

After about a year with Dr. Holekamp at the helm, Ranken Jordan cared for its first ventilator-dependent child.

“Then the floodgates opened and there was clearly pent-up demand,” Dr. Holekamp says. “Ranken Jordan was established as a reliable provider. Today there is more demand than we can meet. That reflects the need for the special care we provide.”



“WE WORKED TO MEET THE NEEDS AND CHALLENGES OF KIDS AND THE PROVIDERS REFERRING THEM. THAT HAS BEEN THE KEY TO SUCCESS OF OUR ORGANIZATION.”

– DR. NICK HOLEKAMP



A NEW ERA BEGINS: 2000-2010



In 2000, Rabbi Mark Shook became the Ranken Jordan board chair as the hospital was on the cusp of monumental change. There was a growing demand for Ranken Jordan to serve patients with an increasingly higher level of acuity.

Rabbi Shook considers the appointment of Dr. Holekamp as full-time medical director in 2000 to be a pivotal moment for Ranken Jordan.

“We hired Dr. Holekamp to be medical director because we saw his passion,” he says. “He spelled out what he wanted to do and it was not being done anywhere else. Nothing would have happened without his vision of what the hospital could be. And he was always focused on the philosophy of considering kids first.”

“WE BEGAN ASKING ‘WHAT IF WE’RE NOT
A NURSING HOME ANYMORE AND BECAME
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EVERYTHING FROM THAT MOMENT ON.”

– RABBI SHOOK

Rabbi Shook continues: “Dr. Holekamp’s vision was brilliant: To get kids out of their patient rooms to eat and play with other children so they can get better faster. Dr. Holekamp explained that children heal differently than adults and require stimulation to help their developing bodies ‘rewire’ and recover.”

With board support, Dr. Holekamp and other leaders researched facilities around the country and found a hospital in Baltimore that served as a model for their aspirations for Ranken Jordan.

“However, we ran into a brick wall in pursuing that model because we were still under regulations and reimbursement for a nursing home,” Rabbi Shook explains. “The nursing home reimbursement model didn’t provide us enough funding to cover the increased cost of caring for medically complex children.”

While Mary Ranken Jordan’s trust continued to provide support to Ranken Jordan, it was no longer enough to cover the cost of the extensive care required for children with complex medical needs.

“Reimbursement as a pediatric nursing home was woefully insufficient to cover care of complex patients at about \$300 per patient per day,” Dr. Holekamp explains. “That was a fraction of what it cost to care for each patient.”

As the board discussed next steps, Rabbi Shook said the conversation began to change. “We began asking ‘what if we’re not a nursing home anymore and became a hospital instead?’ That changed everything from that moment on.”

To receive the maximum reimbursement rate from the state for each patient, it was time to become a hospital.



Many of the patients at Ranken Jordan have been in and out of the hospital their whole lives. To make them more comfortable in the hospital, our staff will use “medical play” so the children can use and play with the tools they will see every day, like a blood pressure cuff and stethoscope.

“WE WERE A ONE-OF-A-KIND
PEDIATRIC NURSING HOME
THAT WAS CONVERTING TO
A ONE-OF-A-KIND PEDIATRIC
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REWRITING THE STATE LAWS.”

– TOM MINOGUE

FROM HOME TO HOSPITAL

The board and leadership team wanted to create a special licensing category for Ranken Jordan. However, the state of Missouri declined that request and mandated Ranken Jordan either remain a nursing home or become a hospital. So the leaders set forth to become a hospital.

As a result, the board developed a strategic vision that included:

- Broadening the patient mix to serve patients at a higher acuity level
- Changing how Ranken Jordan was reimbursed by the state by converting from a pediatric nursing home to a pediatric specialty hospital
- Building a new facility to address the new purpose of the hospital

Changing licensure from a nursing home to a pediatric hospital proved to be a significant challenge that required changes to laws and regulations in Missouri.

Recognizing the serious legal challenge Ranken Jordan faced, Tom Minogue brought in his Thompson Coburn colleague, Jim Gunn, who was a national expert in health care law to assist.

“Tom knew we needed the big guns so he brought in Jim Gunn, who had an immense presence and commanded a room,” Dr. Holekamp says. “He got our foot in the door to work more closely with the state through the process.”

“The real hero of this story was Jim Gunn,” Rabbi Shook says. “He had a tremendous impact on Ranken Jordan.”

Gunn was key to working with Missouri to rewrite the state laws to account for Ranken Jordan’s unique structure as a pediatric specialty hospital. Dr. Holekamp’s role as medical director expanded exponentially through this process.

“Hospitals are the most regulated industry in the world so it was a big effort to develop the necessary policies, bylaws, training and competencies and credentialing and more to get a license as a hospital,” Dr. Holekamp says. “Then we had to convince the state to let us become a hospital without having traditional areas such as an ER, OR, radiology, pharmacy or a lab.”



Gunn recommended Dr. Holekamp describe in writing what Ranken Jordan does to help the state better understand as they considered the licensing change.

“At that time, there was nothing like Ranken Jordan in the state and few in the country,” Tom Minogue says. “We were a one-of-a-kind pediatric nursing home that was converting to a one-of-a-kind pediatric hospital, which required rewriting the state laws.”

So the day before Thanksgiving in 2001, Gunn and other leaders from Ranken Jordan drove to Jefferson City, the capitol of Missouri, to make the case for Ranken Jordan’s new license. Their efforts were rewarded. The new subacute licensure changed the hospital’s financial reimbursement structure and expanded the services the hospital could offer.

Ranken Jordan also became the only subacute hospital in Missouri with this classification.

“Thompson Coburn helped us negotiate with the state to create an exception,” Dr. Holekamp says. “We became a hospital with a waiver. I give Rabbi Shook credit for our transformation. He was at the helm as board chair at the decision point between whether we go out of business or go forward.”

By 2002, all systems were go and Ranken Jordan officially became a pediatric specialty hospital.

CREATING A BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE

Changing the designation from a pediatric nursing home to a specialty hospital was the turning point for Ranken Jordan. “Everything changed then,” Rabbi Shook recalls. “That expanded what we can do and we quickly realized we needed a bigger facility. Once the vision for Ranken Jordan’s future became clear, then the idea for a new building fell into place.”

The increasing need for technology to care for medically complex children further highlighted the limitations of Ranken Jordan’s aging facility on Ladue Road.

Once again, the right people were in the right place at the right time. Ranken Jordan board member Rich Vandegrift had just retired from McCarthy Building Companies in 1999 with decades of experience in hospital construction management under his belt. It was meant to be.

The board turned to Vandegrift for his expertise as they considered their options for a new hospital.

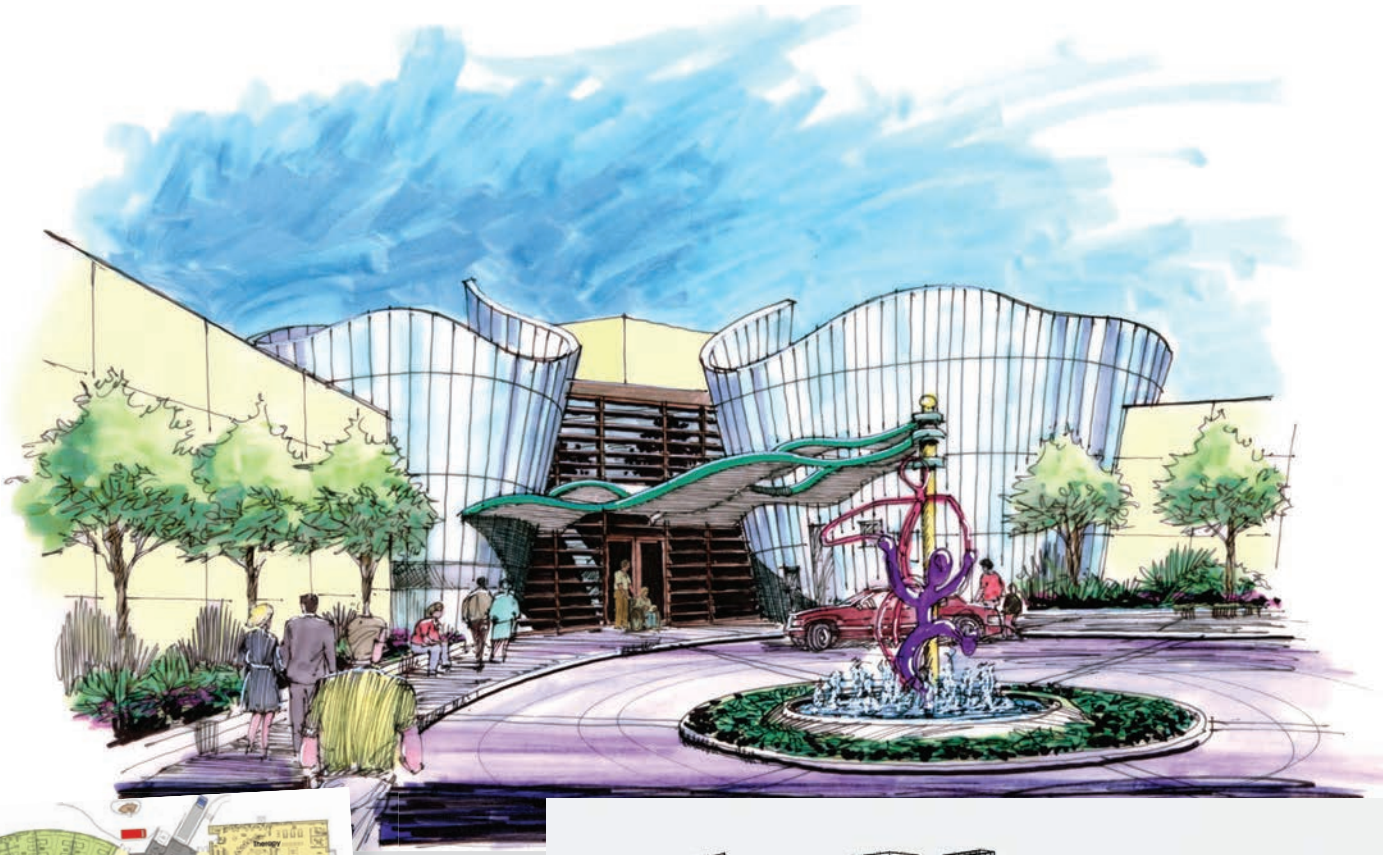
One option was to stay in the current location on Ladue Road and double the size of the existing home on Ladue. But that was met with some resistance from the neighboring community.

In addition, the limestone and concrete building built in 1940 had no central cooling and limited options to upgrade systems to accommodate the growing needs of children with medically complex conditions.

Because of these issues, combined with the changing health care landscape and economic challenges, Vandegrift recognized a building expansion at the current location was “not a wise investment,” he says.



In recognition of Rich and June Vandegrifts’ selfless dedication to Ranken Jordan’s mission, and with the support of many friends and colleagues, the hospital established an endowed fund in their honor in November 2020. The Rich and June Vandegrift Fund provides long-term support for the needs of the facility that Rich helped bring to life, and that plays a critical role in the healing journey for patients at Ranken Jordan.





“WHEN WE FOUND THE SITE
ON DORSETT IT WAS LIKE
GOLDILOCKS AND THE THREE
BEARS—IT WAS JUST RIGHT.”

– RABBI SHOOK

“With a need for a better facility to meet the changing needs of the patients, we decided to look for a new location,” Vandegrift explains.

With additional services planned, the hospital needed a much larger site where Ranken Jordan’s special care could flourish. A small group of board members and leaders visited several sites before finding the location on Dorsett Road in Maryland Heights. The open, grassy area was ideal for a new facility with room to grow.

“When we found the site on Dorsett it was like Goldilocks and the Three Bears—it was just right,” Rabbi Shook says. “Rich Vandegrift, who was a professional’s professional, took the construction project from beginning to end. He could smile at someone and get them to reduce costs in the name of helping a children’s hospital.”

Vandegrift’s expertise in keeping costs under control and shepherding construction was invaluable in building Ranken Jordan’s new facility.

“IN THE DESIGN PROCESS, STEVE ASKED
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– DR. NICK HOLEKAMP



DESIGNING WITH KIDS AT HEART

The new hospital design was a culmination of many ideas from a variety of sources.

After Ranken Jordan became a hospital, it joined the National Association of Children’s Hospitals and Related Institutions (NACHRI), a precursor to the Children’s Hospital Association.

Ranken Jordan was considered a “related institution,” which was a specific subgroup of NACHRI. Through that organization, they learned about hospitals with similar missions such as Mount Washington in Baltimore, Maryland.

“They were 10 years ahead of us,” Dr. Holekamp says. “While we were still different, we did borrow some design ideas from their building. Yet Ranken Jordan still had a proprietary model of care that required new ideas for design.”

Architect Steve Hunsicker, principal of 527 Architects, was the creative force who pulled all the ideas together, applied his talent and designed a one-of-a-kind building that captured the imagination of everyone involved.



Steve Hunsicker, Architect



“WHAT IF IT WAS FUN, INTELLECTUALLY
STIMULATING, AND HELPS KIDS IMAGINE
THEY’RE NOT IN A HOSPITAL?”

– STEVE HUNSICKER

Hunsicker started the process by asking questions to understand the purpose of the building and how it would be used.

“Upfront, he told us he could build a conventional hospital but said that’s not what we needed,” Dr. Holekamp recalls. “So in the design process, Steve asked for input from patients, families, staff, donors and the community. He even asked us to draw what we imagined it to look like. He gave the kids Legos and told them to show him what they wanted. In the design, we sought out ways for kids to be kids—where they could default to their natural state, which is wanting to play. In the end, the design was nothing like I expected and I wouldn’t change a thing.”

According to Hunsicker, Ranken Jordan leaders initially thought they wanted the new building to be “homey.” One leader even drew a picture of a mansion—similar to what the original Ranken Jordan facility looked like.

Hunsicker challenged that design direction. “I pointed out that the hospital was not a home,” he recalls. “Instead, what if it was fun, intellectually stimulating, and helps kids imagine they’re not in a hospital?”

The conversation opened doors to a fresh vision for Ranken Jordan. Hunsicker learned that most kids said they’re most comfortable in their rooms. “So we thought maybe kids would feel more comfortable outside their rooms if we gave them something to explore. Therapy is all about getting kids out and moving. We began thinking of Ranken Jordan as a camp where kids get up, have breakfast, and then get out to do all the different activities available. That changed our perspective.”

In addition to the “fun” incorporated into the design and a goal to bring the outside in, the building design also had to address the medical challenges the patients face and meet the staff needs.

“It was a challenge to the norms yet changes the outcomes,” Hunsicker says. “The early conversations with leadership, frontline staff and patients set the vision. And the kids were our motivation. This is a building of possibilities.”

Board member Betsy Prosperi was moved by Hunsicker’s vision and commitment to designing the new building. “He is a passionate architect who put his heart into this project. His involvement was meant to be. More than 20 years later, he continues to stay involved with Ranken Jordan in many ways and attends our events and supports our mission.”

The collaborative process of creating a new hospital always centered on putting children first—the MRJ Way. “We started with a clean slate and built the hospital into what we wanted and needed it to be,” Rabbi Shook says. “During the design and building process it was as if Mary Ranken Jordan was looking down on us and guiding us. We created the environment to be playful so the kids can get out of bed, learn and have fun.”





MAKING A SPLASH

As part of the new building design, Hunsicker was tasked with designing an accessible therapy pool.

“We recognized the value of aqua therapy so it was a must-have in our new facility,” Dr. Holekamp explains. “Our philosophy is to combine play and therapy. The pool is so good for kids’ recovery and it makes therapy fun so it covered both goals. While Steve looked into premade rehab pool options, he decided it was best to design our own pool to meet our specific needs. He hit the mark perfectly with his design.”

Through his leadership and community involvement, Rabbi Shook secured a gift from the Tilles Foundation to build and maintain the therapy pool that continues to benefit children at Ranken Jordan.

“It’s challenging to have a pool in an indoor space,” Rabbi Shook says. “But once we saw how the therapy pool was used and its value, we were committed to making it work. It has changed how we can help children.”

RALLYING COMMUNITY SUPPORT

From 2000 to 2005, Ranken Jordan invested \$25 million to build the new facility with the help of donors.

Tom Minogue says Hunsicker’s unique design created momentum for Ranken Jordan. “Steve’s architectural drawings inspired the board and helped with fundraising efforts.”

Funding the new building required a leap of faith from banks and donors. It started with a bond offering combined with a \$6 million capital campaign.

“It was a huge hurdle to demonstrate we were a good investment because we had no track record then,” Dr. Holekamp says. “We had one source of income so at face value, banks were hesitant. But when people visited and looked past the numbers and financials to see the impact we were making for kids, the investors were enthusiastic.”

Fundraising for the new building was challenging at first, as well. “The biggest hurdle was that few people had awareness of us and so some donors weren’t ready to jump in aggressively,” Dr. Holekamp says.

Yet with perseverance and a laser focus on the mission, the one-of-a-kind new hospital opened in 2004. “There was enough confidence in the demand for this care,”

Dr. Holekamp says. “We would show people pictures and give them tours and their eyes widened to see the level of normalcy we offered kids with high-need care.”

OPENING DAY

“In the early 2000s, we took a big leap with a new facility that essentially rebooted Ranken Jordan,” Minogue says. “It all came together at the same time: focusing on higher acuity patients, relicensing as a hospital, and building a new facility. If any of these three fell through, the Ranken Jordan of today wouldn’t exist. I can’t say enough about the board leaders who guided us through this.”

From the groundbreaking of the new building to the grand opening, the experience is imprinted on Minogue forever. “I remember being at the groundbreaking for the new building and thinking, wow, we’ve really accomplished something.”

Rabbi Shook agrees. “It was a terrific feeling to be part of it and to celebrate transitioning from a failing nursing home to a thriving pediatric specialty hospital.”

Prosperi recalls the spectacular grand opening for the new facility. “The excitement for the new facility was through the roof. We had outgrown our old facility and we couldn’t retrofit it to meet our needs. Our new state-of-the-art facility was such a cool place for very sick kids where we could treat them so much better. It was exciting to be part of.”

The many people who dedicated themselves to creating the new hospital are forever part of the fabric of Ranken Jordan. Special tributes are sprinkled throughout Ranken Jordan that will always honor their contributions of time, energy and heart.

For example, when the bright, modern facility opened in 2004, June and Rich Vandegrift were surprised and humbled to learn that a bridge in the new facility was named after them in recognition of their dedication to the hospital’s construction. Today, the colorful Vandegrift Bridge still welcomes visitors as they enter Ranken Jordan.

Rabbi Shook had several influences on the design of Ranken Jordan, as well. He supported an interfaith chapel in the new design to give parents a quiet space to go while they are at Ranken Jordan. He also secured a beautiful tapestry that still hangs in the meditation space today.

In addition, Shook Circle in front of the hospital was named in his honor.

The shapes and curves of the building serve more than aesthetics. When designing the new facility, everyone agreed it should not look like a typical hospital. The building included high ceilings with lots of windows and skylights to allow natural light to brighten the facility. Each color of the building represents a difference space inside, including the patient rooms, shared spaces, and even a tower with a 360 degree view of the area.





THE PLAYFUL, WHIMSICAL NEW FACILITY INCLUDED A 1,500-GALLON AQUARIUM, A CIRCULAR SLIDE AS WELL AS TWO THERAPY GYMS TO ENCOURAGE A CHILD'S NATURAL INCLINATION TO PLAY, EXPLORE AND DISCOVER.



MOVING DAY

In 2004, it was time to move from the dated facility on Ladue to the bright, modern facility on Dorsett Road in Maryland Heights. About 20 patients were moved with room for 34 at the new facility.

Staff members were in place at both locations to send and receive the children for the move.

"While it was a logistical challenge, the day went remarkably smoothly," Dr. Holekamp says. "Families and kids seemed to feel right at home immediately."

He recalls one mother whose teen was staying at the original Ranken Jordan after a traumatic brain injury. Recovery was slow and the teen couldn't speak. Yet soon after the move to the new building, the teen started to wake up. With the help of a tearful, joyful therapist, the teen called his mom and surprised her with "Hi, Mom."

"While we can't prove that the teen's recovery improved specifically because of the new environment, we believe it helped."

The playful, whimsical new facility included a 650-gallon aquarium, a circular slide as well as two therapy gyms to encourage a child's natural inclination to play, explore and discover.

While the new space was more than twice the size of the old facility, it was quickly filled and used to its full potential. As a pediatric hospital, Ranken Jordan also could now care for a broader age range of patients and began offering services from birth to age 21.



Dierberg's Kitchen offers a space where patients, families, and team members can gather. The kitchen itself is standard heights, so patients can rehab in a space closest to their home environment. Cooking classes, horticulture, and many recreational activities happen in this versatile space.



Rich Vandegrift and the Ranken Jordan staff transport the kids from the "house" into the new facility on Dorsett Road.

RAPID GROWTH TO CARE FOR MORE KIDS: 2010-2020



After the new facility on Dorsett Road opened in 2004, awareness dramatically increased about the services Ranken Jordan provided. As a result, demand for these services quickly grew.

Ranken Jordan was caring for 300 patients a year with capacity for 34 at a time. Ranken Jordan had an ever-growing waiting list of children in the community who needed complex care before they could transition from the hospital to home. The time to expand Ranken Jordan again had come.

“Within five years of opening the new building, we saw the need to expand to be able to care for more kids so we started the planning process,” Rich Vandegrift says.



Thankfully, the existing site was large enough to accommodate an expansion.

The project brought back the dream team of McCarthy and architect Steve Hunsicker to create a seamless design between the original building and the expansion.

The vision was to double the number of beds to accommodate 60 patients and to expand areas for outpatient services to help more kids in the community.

Construction on the \$35 million, 75,000-square-foot expansion at Ranken Jordan began in fall 2016 and was completed in February 2018. The larger facility enabled Ranken Jordan to add more than 100 jobs as well as more space.



This time obtaining bank funding and donor support was easier because the hospital now had a proven track record and had gained more allies and donors.

The expansion included a three-story indoor addition as well as a fully adaptive and accessible outdoor addition.

The additions focused on function, form and fun. Expansive windows, soaring ceilings and whimsical details brightened the entire facility to make it feel less like a hospital environment.





The Berges Family Foundation promotes the arts and cultural engagement, youth empowerment, and academic preparation in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). The Berges Family Foundation also provides funds for health, welfare and career guidance to local first responders and military veterans. In 2016, they announced a gift of \$1 million to Ranken Jordan to expand the hospital. In 2018, Ranken Jordan named a new 30-bed wing after the Berges Family Foundation.



Board Chair Steve Cortopassi, left, worked closely with Rich Vandegrift to design the hospital and pushed for large spaces where families could gather and feel like they are home and not in the hospital. As a matter of fact, the entry of the expansion is now called “Corto’s Pass” in his honor.

Hunsicker envisioned a village-like feel of small Lego-inspired buildings—or boxes—broken into program elements within the overall building. Lights and banners along the paths add to the village atmosphere. The goal was to bring as much of the outside feel to the indoor space.

Through the generosity of the Berges Family Foundation, a significant part of the expansion included a dedicated adolescent center. This area features video and arcade games, a reading nook and a teen lounge where teens can just hang out and be teens.

The Berges Family Foundation Adolescent Center allows teens to have a separate area for care. Care for infants and younger children was then centralized in the original hospital wing.

The second level of the addition was designed for clinical and therapy space, a wellness center and office and meeting space. The lower level added office and training space as well as an expanded area for the hospital pharmacy.

Overhead lifts were incorporated into the design to assist moving kids from their beds to wheel chairs that allow them to move more freely around the facility.

Long-time board member Minogue was honored to learn a board room was named after him in the expansion. “Our prior board room was named after my mentor, Joe Logan, so it was a true highlight for me to have the new board room in my name.”



There is no typical day at Ranken Jordan. Part of a child’s therapy may include therapeutic art or even a climb up the rock wall!

Therapeutic art provides sensory stimulation and relieves anxiety and stress. It can even enhance social skills, increase self-esteem and help develop motor skills. For young patients who are non-verbal, therapeutic art offers an effective way for expression in a safe setting.

As part of physical therapy, the young patients may use the rock wall as part of their healing. Some may literally climb it, others may rise up using a chair.

The indoor addition also included a 28-foot rock-climbing wall, an indoor play-ground and an entertainment stage equipped with sound and lighting, an audience viewing area and multiple electrical outlets so team members can plug in necessary medical equipment while patients are out of their rooms.

The Ranken Jordan team works with Upper Limits, a professional rock climbing gym that offers adaptive climbing so patients can get full use of the rock-climbing wall. Upper Limits comes to Ranken Jordan every other week, thanks to generous support from the Margaret and Richard Riney Family Endowed Play Dates Program at Ranken Jordan, designed to bring more play, learning and entertainment opportunities to the hospital.

Two functional kitchens, including the Dierberg’s Kitchen, were added to the facility as well. These were each designed with a mix of universal, accessible features as well as standard features to help prepare children to transition home.

Three integrated bridges provide access points around the facility. This includes a 112-foot long bridge on the second floor that connects the original and the new wings.

With Ranken Jordan’s spacious setting on Dorsett Road, the hospital was able to expand outdoor access, too. Thanks to Bill and Shannon Willhite and the Catch-22



Board Chair Bill Willhite led the financing and build of the hospital expansion. His wife Shannon serves as a volunteer at the hospital.

When the hospital expanded, it added a baseball field where the young patients and community could play games. The field was generously donated by Bill and Shannon Willhite and the Catch 22 Foundation, a non-profit founded by former Ranken Jordan board member and former manager of the St. Louis Cardinals — Mike Matheny and his wife Kristin.



Foundation, founded by Mike and Kristin Matheny, a 5,700-square-foot, built-to-scale ball field was added to be accessible to all patients and visitors.

“The barrier-free design was a game changer that enabled kids who had previously not been able to play sports because of limited mobility the opportunity to participate in games, whether they are using wheelchairs, walkers, braces, ventilators or are even on a stretcher,” explains Brett Moorehouse, CEO of Ranken Jordan.

The ball field became home to Ranken Jordan’s Challenger Baseball teams that include current and former patients as well as other community members. The teams are part of a national Challenger Baseball League for children with disabilities.

The multi-purpose field is also used for soccer and golf.

In addition, the outdoor area includes a six-hole putting green, an outdoor patio and a paved pathway around the lushly landscaped grounds. Rose bushes are placed around the grounds as a tribute to Mary Ranken Jordan who loved gardening —roses in particular.



Brett Moorehouse joined the hospital in 2006. “Of course the unique hospital setting and incredible mission brought me here,” Moorehouse says. “But I was excited to join because I was told we needed to expand. Nearly as soon as we moved to Dorsett Road, we outgrew the space already. I was charged with exploring how we could expand and care for this growing population.”

The first phase of the outdoor expansion was completed in August 2018. In 2021, the Activity Canyon opened with updated, accessible outdoor playground equipment, sensory and nature elements, and an outdoor care station so kids can receive necessary monitoring and treatment while they continue to play outside.

“The outdoor area is designed to be enjoyed by kids with even the most severe and complicated medical conditions while ensuring their medical needs will continue to be met with a fully equipped outdoor care station—the first of its kind for any hospital in the world,” Moorehouse says.

CARE BEYOND THE BEDSIDE CONTINUES

The building’s original design as well as the expansion reinforce Ranken Jordan’s Care Beyond the Bedside model.

This model that encourages kids to get out of their rooms and play has always been central to care at the hospital.

“I give our designer Steve Hunsicker credit as much as anyone for naming this Care Beyond the Bedside model,” Dr. Holekamp says. “He pointed out that our differentiator, our hallmark, is care away from the bedside. And he incorporated that into every aspect of our building design.”

Ranken Jordan even quantified how much time kids spend out of bed. Through an in-house survey and room-to-room audit, the team found that patients spend nearly half of their waking hours outside of the beds or actively engaging with someone.

“Our advancements in technology and equipment allows us to better communicate and monitor the patients so we can keep them safe while they are away from their rooms,” Dr. Holekamp explains.



The staff has been playing golf with the young patients for years at Ranken Jordan. When the hospital expanded in 2018, it added a six-hole putting green where the young patients could expand their golf game.

Kevin Corn, a PGA professional, has been volunteering at Ranken Jordan since 2011. Every Wednesday, he arrives at Ranken Jordan and teaches children and young adults to golf. Along with recreational therapy, he will set up indoors or outdoors, weather depending.

MOVING THE VISION FORWARD: 2021 AND BEYOND



One of the annual events the staff and patients look forward to is Paint the Docs. As part of “medical play,” the patients don gowns and fill syringes with paint. The medical team holds canvases that the patients will paint, though much of the color ends up on the team themselves!



Ranken Jordan has come a long way since its founding in 1941. Its core philosophy of putting children first in all we do remains.

Today, Ranken Jordan specializes in caring for children from birth to 21 with the most complex conditions, illnesses and injuries, and bridges the gap between hospital and home.

Every inch of Ranken Jordan’s state-of-the-art facility was designed with children in mind with the goal of helping children heal physically, spiritually, mentally and emotionally, so they can return home safely.

The bright, child-centered 60-bed facility and positive, nurturing environment are the backdrop for inspiring stories that happen every day at Ranken Jordan. It starts with the innovative Care Beyond the Bedside model that encourages children to play and engage with others as part of the healing process.

A GROWING TEAM FOR A GROWING NEED
As services have grown, so has the team. And that will continue as Ranken Jordan aspires to meet the growing need for care of children with medically complex issues.

“We’ve seen remarkable growth over the past 20 years,” Dr. Holekamp says. “It took a long time to get to 50 employees, then we grew to 100 in the new building

in 2004. Today, the Ranken Jordan team totals more than 400 to care for an average of 45 patients at a time. That speaks to how labor intensive it is to care for these medically complex children. But that also shows that care is what gets kids better. It makes sense to have a high staff-to-patient ratio when we don’t have the other overhead such as labs, radiology and operating rooms. This allows us to invest in frontline clinical people—because this is a ‘people’ intensive job.”

Dr. Holekamp is proud of where the hospital is now and excited about where it is going. “Now we’re on Ranken Jordan 3.0. We have added terrific new professionals across the hospital and we have the right people with the right attitude.”

The passionate, motivated team members partner with children and their families to encourage progress through individualized treatments and approaches to provide a complete continuum of care.

Every day, the children at Ranken Jordan are encircled by positive encouragement. Our team embodies the philosophy of YES: YES, you can play and socialize while you’re on a ventilator. YES, you can go play outside. YES, you can do this.

“From the beginning, the Ranken Jordan team has always been fully committed to the mission,” Dr. Holekamp says. “It has grown and evolved to care for higher acuity patients but the core values have not changed. Lots of hospitals do great things but Ranken Jordan plays a unique and special role. There is no other place like it. Ranken Jordan has transformed itself many times. Mrs. Jordan would be astonished and proud of where we are today.”

INNOVATING FOR THE FUTURE

Fueled by extraordinary passion, commitment and vision, Ranken Jordan Pediatric Bridge Hospital has become a national leader in care and innovation for children with complex medical needs.

Because of Mary Ranken Jordan’s thoughtful generosity and dedication to children, the hospital has helped thousands of children heal and live life more fully no matter what challenges they face.

While much has changed at Ranken Jordan over the past 80 years, we are forever committed to putting children first. Every child, every day — because that’s the MRJ Way.



Board Chair Walter Bazan, Jr., was recognized by the Missouri Hospital Association as the Trustee of the Year in 2021 for his leadership. A year after the expansion, Bazan took the helm and championed for additional jobs, led the development of a new strategic plan, and advocated and implemented COVID-19 support for employees, patients, and their families.

PATIENT MEMORIES AND PERSPECTIVES



JOHN REDDING: Still Thriving Nearly 80 Years After Surviving a Fatal Childhood Disease

John Redding has an unusual claim to fame but is forever grateful for it. In the 1940s, he was the first pediatric patient with rheumatic fever to ever be treated with penicillin, the game-changing antibiotic that was first introduced to care for wounded soldiers during World War II.

Redding was 5 when he was diagnosed with rheumatic fever in the late 1940s. His initial treatment was at St. Louis Children’s Hospital where he was cared for by David Goldring, MD, a world-renowned pioneer in pediatric cardiology.

At that time, there was no known medical treatment for rheumatic fever. It was often fatal. The complex illness, which is a reaction to a streptococcal throat infection, can severely damage the heart valves and also can attack joints, skin and the brain in children.

Dr. Goldring, who was studying the use of antibiotics to treat infections, was confident that large doses of the new “miracle drug” penicillin could successfully treat rheumatic fever in children.

Redding was grateful that he was “in the right place at the right time.” His parents allowed Dr. Goldring to administer the antibiotics to him experimentally at St. Louis Children’s Hospital as part of research.

Redding was later transferred to Ranken Jordan for six months while he continued antibiotic injections three times a day and eventually penicillin in tablet form as he continued to recover.

“Those pills were as big as sugar cubes and tasted awful,” Redding recalls. “But I know the penicillin treatment plus the compassionate and excellent medical care at Ranken Jordan resulted in my full recovery and cure of rheumatic fever.”

Pioneering Treatments and Care During Trying Times

While Redding was a pioneering patient, he met another pioneer: Mary Ranken Jordan, the founder of the original Ranken Jordan Convalescent Home for Crippled Children.

“Mary was a frequent visitor at Ranken Jordan with a caring presence,” Redding says. “I remember her always smiling and wearing hats—that stands out. Her kindness, compassion and dedication to the children were comforting.”

The 1940s were a frightening time for parents as life-threatening childhood diseases loomed.

“At Ranken Jordan, I stayed in a large room with several other patients but patients with polio were in a separate room,” Redding recalls. “Most children at Ranken Jordan then had either polio or rheumatic fever. I have vivid memories of seeing polio patients in iron lungs. It was a scary time back then with polio before there was a vaccine. Swimming pools and other places closed down. It was almost like COVID-19 today.”

Helping Kids Be Kids—Then and Now

Yet Ranken Jordan was a restful and relaxing place for Redding, he says. “I couldn’t walk because I was weak but we stayed pretty active. I liked being able to go outside in my wheelchair when the weather was nice and there were always lots of activities and games. We also had a black and white TV to watch, which was a big deal back then. And we had birthday parties and celebrations when kids went home. I don’t remember feeling sick, sad or bored while I was at Ranken Jordan. It was a positive experience.”

Because of his experience, Redding has a special appreciation for nurses that remains today. “The nurses at Ranken Jordan were very attentive,” he says. “Some would read to us or have singalongs. You could tell they really enjoyed what they were doing. The loving, caring environment made it easier to be there. I still have a high regard for all nurses today.”

At the time, Redding didn’t realize how significant his illness or treatment experience was but now he recognizes how it changed his life.

“Rheumatic fever was fatal for most kids back then or it left kids with major heart issues,” he says. “I knew others with rheumatic fever who died early or had a severely restricted life because of the heart damage it caused. But the penicillin and care I received at St. Louis Children’s Hospital and Ranken Jordan saved my life and allowed me to live a normal, healthy life.”



John Redding — now and then

“THE NURSES AT RANKEN JORDAN WERE VERY ATTENTIVE. SOME WOULD READ TO US OR HAVE SINGALONGS. YOU COULD TELL THEY REALLY ENJOYED WHAT THEY WERE DOING. THE LOVING, CARING ENVIRONMENT MADE IT EASIER TO BE THERE. I STILL HAVE A HIGH REGARD FOR ALL NURSES TODAY.”

JOHN REDDING

The Priceless Gift of a Full, Healthy Life

Redding moved to Florida when he was 8 and had what he calls the ideal childhood. “I drove a boat to school,” he says with a laugh. He later joined the U.S. Navy and volunteered in the Submarine Force with no heart irregularities to limit his participation.

“The Submarine Force has some of the strictest physical and mental requirements in the military,” Redding explains. “One of the many medical history questions I was asked was did I ever have rheumatic fever. Of course I said yes, but the doctor who checked my heart said ‘You couldn’t have had rheumatic fever as there is no sign of any heart irregularity.’ I’ve lived a very blessed life. It makes me feel humbled.”

He married his high school sweetheart 58 years ago and had two daughters and a successful career as a corporate communications executive. Today, he lives in Phoenix, Arizona, his home since 1977.

“When I told my health story to my daughters, it made me realize even more how thankful I am for the care I received,” he says. “I owe my life to Ranken Jordan and the treatment I received there. Because of my experience, I have great compassion for what kids go through. It’s a blessing that medical miracles are still helping kids today. What Ranken Jordan does for kids is priceless.”

BARBARA ANDREWS: Some Experiences at Ranken Jordan are Forever Imprinted on Patients’ Hearts.

Barbara Andrews was a patient at Ranken Jordan in 1965. Although her arthritic condition was mild compared to some children at Ranken Jordan who were in wheelchairs, casts and braces, Barbara’s perspective and her life were forever changed, she says.

Perhaps the biggest impact was on Andrews’s education. In the early years of Ranken Jordan, patients were entitled to receive a college scholarship thanks to a special fund established by Mary Ranken Jordan who wanted to help children have a better life.

“The experience I had at Ranken Jordan gave me the opportunity to get well physically and then gave me the opportunity to go to college, which in turn afforded me the freedom to make choices I wouldn’t have had otherwise,” Andrews says. “Because of Mary’s generosity, I was given a full ride to college that covered my tuition, room and board, and my art supplies.”

With a deep-rooted love and talent for arts and crafts, Barbara became an art teacher and has spent her career teaching kindergarten through high school. She is also a well-known clay and fiber artist in the Knoxville, Tennessee, area, and, fittingly, has led an art workshop called “Recovering the Creative Child Within.”

In Her Own Words:

I remember Ranken Jordan well. The grounds were beautiful and teeming with wildflower gardens and rose bushes. On the inside, one wing was for girls, and the other was for boys. In the middle there was a nursery dedicated to caring for babies and younger kids.

I was only at Ranken Jordan for three weeks, which was mild compared to other kids who were there for much more complex medical conditions. I met children who were in there for six months or more. Some of the children were confined to wheelchairs and hospital beds. Others were in full body casts. Though my stay was relatively short, the days spent at Ranken Jordan have had a profound impact on my life.

Our days were built around creating normalcy for all the children. Every morning, we would wake up and get dressed in nice clothes that were provided for us. All the children would eat breakfast together in the dining room. Then we would gather for school lessons in a large room that doubled as our classroom and theater. Children would be in and out of class for individual therapy throughout the day. The staff made it a priority to keep us active and learning while receiving the care we needed.

There was more than just a daily schedule mixed with therapy and schoolwork. Nurses made fun a priority, too! There were so many little extras that I am still thankful for to this day. When I arrived, I was given a wonderful little suitcase full of all sorts of nice gifts. A professional beautician came twice during my three-week stay to fix my hair, and it made me feel so beautiful.

What really stuck with me was the time staff took to learn my interests and make special provisions just for me. When the nurses learned that I really enjoyed art, they made sure I got my own art supplies. Nothing compares to the generosity I felt while I was there. I am sure that has everything to do with Mary Ranken Jordan’s spirit still being very much alive in her house.

I have always wanted to give back to Ranken Jordan. It is just such a positive place for children. The staff goes above and beyond, despite the rising costs of medical care. A lot of the children I met there came from lower income families. When I came into a small amount of money this past year, the first thing I thought of was expressing my gratitude for all Mary had done for me so many years ago.

Though Mary had passed away years before I came to Ranken Jordan, her spirit was still there. I often think about Mary and her commitment to children. I am inspired by everything she made possible in my life and the life of other children through her compassion and generosity.



Barbara Andrews



Jeffrey Hogan

I am sure there are children at Ranken Jordan right now in similar situations, facing complex medical conditions. It feels good to know that they are still being given opportunities of healing through Mary’s genuine spirit that continues to live on through the generosity of others. There is a difference in the care that is offered that they may not receive otherwise. To this very day, I look back at all that was given to me and offer a prayer of thanks for Mary and all who strengthen her mission.

JEFFREY HOGAN: A Childhood Without Limits

Jeffrey Hogan was born with cerebral palsy in 1962. The condition affected his ability to move and maintain balance and posture. In addition, Hogan’s hips were dislocated, which caused them to come out of their sockets frequently.

In 1970, when Hogan was 8 years old, he came to Ranken Jordan for the first time to recover after hip surgery to attempt to stabilize his hips. He was a patient intermittently until 1982 and experienced a newfound independence that he carries with him as an adult today.

In His Own Words

I was 8 years old when I came to Ranken Jordan in 1970 as an inpatient and I stayed until 1982. During that time, I needed to be taught how to do various things: how to walk, how to change my clothes, how to just do the basic things on my way to learning to be as independent as I am today.

The staff was excellent and were great motivators. I spent a lot of time being rehabilitated after several major hip surgeries related to cerebral palsy. I got a lot of different kinds of care and it was something I truly enjoyed because I knew the people cared. They were all about making me better and making me as independent as I could possibly be.

I wanted to learn as much as I could because my future was going to depend on how independent I could become and that was very important to me.

To help me learn how to walk and do all the other things I needed to learn, there was a young lady named Ann Sharp and she was one of a kind. She had that drive to make me do what I needed to do even when I did not want to. She always looked ahead to the future and let me know that this was going to help me or benefit me in the long run. Because I knew that she cared that much, it gave me the drive to do more and more to be as successful for her as well as for myself.

The people at Ranken Jordan were interested in me as a person and that is why Ranken Jordan is so special to me. That’s why I knew this was the place to become the kind of person I am today.

Although we were patients, overall it was a fun time. We used to go to ball games, Six Flags, hockey games, swimming, and the Muny Opera and there was always something fun going on. It helped because we did not just stay in bed. We went and did things. There was nothing that was off limits.

Ranken Jordan has made a difference because I moved out of my mother’s house when I was 18 years old and I have been on my own ever since. Ranken Jordan has really played a huge part in my world and in life.

I have seen a lot of people with different disabilities like I have and they have not learned to be as independent. It hurts them in the end—we need to learn to be as independent as possible because we do not want society to have to take care of us.

I know today there are a lot of individuals in nursing homes or in group homes because they did not have the people around them to show them the love and care and show them what they needed to do to be independent. That is what makes Ranken Jordan special.

If I had not been a patient at Ranken Jordan I can almost guarantee you that I would be in a nursing home or group home and would not be as independent as I am today.

The people at Ranken Jordan got to know me on an individual basis and what kind of personality I had. To become independent, I needed someone who would let me know why it was important to learn to walk or why it was important to learn to use that wheelchair.

When someone leaves Ranken Jordan they need to know that they can go get their own apartment and their own job. For me, it was all about Ranken Jordan making me as independent as possible, i.e. the Glow of Independence.

I think GLOW is a pretty special word because if I had not come in contact with Ranken Jordan, I don’t know where I would be today. Back then, Ranken Jordan was important and today Ranken Jordan is important.

There is no place like Ranken Jordan in St. Louis. They are very unique in what they do and what they provide. Ranken Jordan will continue to play a vital role in the future. Once you see Ranken Jordan, you will fall in love with it because it is all about the care of the patient.

Today, I work for a movie theater in St. Louis where I have been for nearly 30 years. Ranken Jordan played a very big part in making it possible for me to be as independent

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KILAND



Kiland

as I am today. I cannot say it enough that we continue to need a place like Ranken Jordan where kids can get the care they need to become as independent as possible.

KILAND: How a Volunteer Inspired Hope

Kiland was a star tennis player at Parkway North High School in St. Louis. In fact, he was one of the best in the state for his age group. His team was invited to play in the Mid-Tac Tennis Tournament in Indianapolis. After another triumphant victory, Kiland and his friends went back to the hotel pool to celebrate. Kiland dove in head first to what he thought was eight feet of water. It was only four feet. “All I could do was move my eyes, think, and pray,” says Kiland. “I kept thinking, ‘please God don’t let me die, is this how I’m going to die?’ Then I passed out.”

Luckily Kiland’s tennis partner and friend pulled him out of the water. “If he wasn’t there, I probably wouldn’t be here today,” says Kiland. The ambulance came and rushed Kiland to the hospital. “I saw how much my mom was crying’, he recalls. “I knew it wasn’t good.”

Kiland spent the next two weeks in the ICU recovering and was transferred to Ranken Jordan to learn how to adapt to his new life as a quadriplegic, paralyzed from the chest down. He arrived at Ranken Jordan depressed and spent as much time as he could alone in his room. He stared at his computer, watching the lives of his friends



and fellow tennis players. “Tennis was my life,” Kiland says. “I began playing when I was four-years-old. And here I was, unable to move my legs.”

One day, a volunteer at Ranken Jordan talked to Kiland about his tennis skills. Kiland reminded the volunteer he could hardly move his fingers. The volunteer put a racket in Kiland’s hand and duct tape around it. Kiland felt the grip in his hand and the rush of the game overcame him. He swung the racket over and over. “After that I was a totally different person,” says Kiland. “I started to think about everything that I could do rather than what I couldn’t do. I completely changed my mind set on life.”

Kiland’s entire demeanor changed. He noticed other patients, especially those in wheelchairs, would gravitate towards him at Ranken Jordan. “I think it was my never-give-up attitude,” says Kiland. “There were three guys in wheelchairs there, and they were down in the dumps. Just like I was. I sort of became their role model. They would see me out and socializing and being active, and they started to do the same. I told them there’s a lot of stuff you can do, you just have to try.”

Through intense therapy and self-discipline, Kiland returned to school where he was asked by his coach to play tennis again. At first, he wasn’t wild about the idea, but his mom encouraged him to consider it more. Then, he was approached by the Gerber Wheelchair Tennis Program at Dwight Davis Tennis Center. It seemed the universe wanted Kiland to continue his tennis career. Soon, he was playing again and began to play competitively.

His lifetime of tennis knowledge helped him advance quickly in his wheelchair league. His efforts took him all the way to the US Open Wheelchair Competition in 2015 and 2017. “I was afraid I was going to need help all my life,” he says. “Ranken Jordan showed me how to be independent. It changed me — not just physically, but mentally.”

Kiland returns to Ranken Jordan to volunteer. “It brings me so much joy to volunteer,” he says. “The volunteers did so much for me when I was a patient, I only felt it was right to do the same. So I became a volunteer and still to this day, it brings me so much joy. The things I love about volunteering is putting a smile on the kids’ faces and knowing that you’re making a difference. I feel with me being in a wheelchair a lot of the kids can relate to me and I can relate to them. I have become such an inspiration not only to the kids at Ranken Jordan, but the staff as well. I love reading books to the kids, playing catch, video games, and even going on out trips to the zoo, Saint Louis Science Center etc. Interacting with the staff is something I love as well. I have developed a relationship with so many nurses and CNAs throughout the years. So many people at Ranken Jordan tell me every day I go there, ‘you’re such an inspiration to the kids here.’”



Kiland spent weeks recovering in the ICU and later at Ranken Jordan. Here he is seeing his house for the first time after months in the hospital.



Patient May reaches for her friend, Kiland.

CONSIDER THE CHILDREN FIRST



1941

Mary Ranken Jordan opens the Ranken Jordan Home for Convalescent Crippled Children.



1947

Patient Tommy Gilbert chosen by the St. Louis Browns baseball team to be an honored guest at the Browns spring training in Miami



1957

Lewis Wilkins Hyer, a director of J.C. Penney Corp., dies and includes Ranken Jordan in his will.



1961

Mary Ranken Jordan honored as one of Ten Women of Achievement by the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.



1972

First occupational therapists and recreational therapists added to Ranken Jordan therapy services.



1976

Ranken Jordan completes \$500,000 renovation, expanding sleeping quarters and adding new therapy rooms and equipment.



1983

Ranken Jordan starts new program called PARTNERS to train parents of foster children with special health care needs so more kids can find forever homes.



1990

Ranken Jordan holds first-ever major fundraising event to celebrate its 50th anniversary.



1991

Friends of Ranken Jordan is formed with 65 members to raise funds for special projects.



1993

Silver Screen Cowboys Boot Scootin' Boogie Party nets \$13,000 to buy new beds and monitoring equipment for Ranken Jordan.



2000

Dr. Nick Holekamp named to full-time medical director of Ranken Jordan.



1994

First Glitter and Glitz fundraiser raises \$35,000 for Ranken Jordan to support special therapeutic activities such as horseback riding, swimming and community integration trips.



2002

Ranken Jordan changes licensing from nursing home to pediatric specialty hospital.



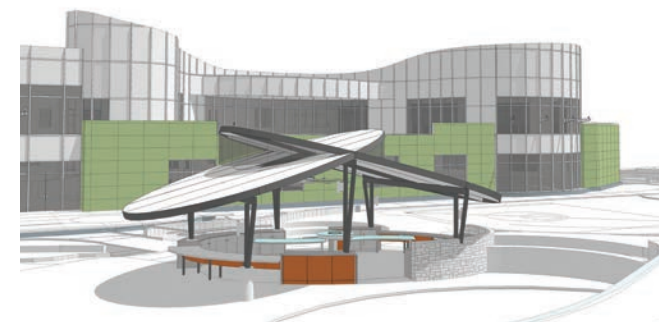
2018

Ranken Jordan doubles capacity to 60 patients with \$35 million, 75,000 sq ft expansion; Ranken Jordan receives first-ever endowment.



2004

New 35,000 sq ft modern facility built with capacity for 34 patients in Maryland Heights, Missouri.



2021

Outdoor Nurse's Station opens, equipped with electricity and plumbing to care for kids outside.



RankenJordan.
PEDIATRIC BRIDGE HOSPITAL

Transitioning Kids from Hospital to Home

11365 Dorsett Road
Maryland Heights, Missouri 63043