

# Shands For Kids



Fall 2008, Volume 2

## The Greatest Gift ~ Jori Hall's Story

When Jori Taylor Hall was born in Valdosta, Ga., on Aug. 11, 1991, she appeared perfectly healthy. However, on the following evening, Hall began breathing abnormally, and she was moved to an intermediate intensive care unit. At 4 days old, Hall's condition did not improve, and she was transferred to Shands Children's Hospital at the University of Florida.

UF physicians diagnosed Hall with hypoplastic left heart syndrome (HLHS), a condition in which the left side of the heart does not develop fully. Also, many of her arteries were not functioning properly.

Hall's parents were faced with three options. First, she could be placed on a heart-transplant list. But due to the lack of available infant hearts, many babies die waiting. The second option was a three-stage procedure, the Fontan, but it had not yet been used on an HLHS patient. The third option was to do nothing. Hall's family chose the Fontan.



Hall had many complications following the surgeries, including a stroke that resulted in a three-and-a-half-month stay at Shands Children's Hospital. However, with medication, Hall did extremely well for many years.

In August 2006, Hall, nicknamed Bird, began Lowndes High School in Valdosta, and soon celebrated her 15th birthday. A week later something

went wrong. While at school, her heart rate began to race – 235 beats per minute. Her parents brought her to Shands for a month-long stay. Hall had developed acute anemia that had caused a blockage in her heart and forced her to receive a pacemaker.

In February 2007, she returned to Shands again with an elevated heart rate. She was admitted three more times in 2007 for gastrointestinal (GI) bleeds, a result of her heart condition. In April 2008, she returned to Shands with the same malady.

On April 26, Hall went into congestive heart failure and developed an intestinal condition that caused a protein deficiency. Her only option was a heart transplant, and she couldn't leave Shands without one. Eleven days after celebrating her 17th birthday in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and on the 30th anniversary of her grandmother's passing, Hall received the gift of her life – a new heart.

Hall is doing well since receiving her heart and has returned to her Valdosta home to complete her recovery. During her five-month wait, she never lost sight of the things most important to her – her friends; her dogs (Jake and Katie); the Gators; Jay Fricker, MD, Gerold L. Schiebler Eminent Scholar pediatric cardiology chair and UF College of Medicine pediatric cardiology division chief; and most importantly her mom.



## Check out the New Look of Shandskids.org!

This past August, we launched the new Shandskids.org Web site. The site still includes news and patient stories, sponsor recognition and our event calendar and it has many new features as well. You can now sign up to be a volunteer online as well as submit family information to become a Shands Children's Hospital Ambassador Family. Ambassador families and pediatric patients treated at Shands Children's Hospital are part of many of our events around the state. Your child's story could also be featured on the Web site and on printed materials. Log on today to "Share Your Story." Check out the online store and learn more about the many ways to support Shands Children's Hospital.



### Did You Know?

The ShandsCair flight team made 198 air transports for pediatrics last year alone. This includes 163 flights by helicopter and 35 by fixed-wing jet.

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This is a periodic publication produced and funded by the Office of Development at Shands HealthCare. The purpose of this publication is to inform our readers of the latest developments, improvements and advances at Shands Children's Hospital, Children's Miracle Network and our SAFE KIDS program. For further information, please call 352-265-7237 or 1-800-284-6472. Or check out our Web site at [www.shandskids.org](http://www.shandskids.org).

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