



Riverbend Celebrates Opening of New OSF HealthCare Moeller Cancer Center

\$14 Million dollar investment expected to add 600 new patients a year

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Madison County's cancer rate is the second-highest in the state -- topped only by that in the populous Cook County in south Chicago. So the OSF HealthCare Moeller Cancer Center on the Saint Anthony's Health Center campus in Alton is a welcome addition.

The \$14 million dollar, 15,000 square foot, single-story building will be home to the most tenured medical and radiation oncologists in the Riverbend and will bring comprehensive, compassionate cancer treatment and support services under one roof. An enclosed walkway connects to the hospital and will allow for easy access to therapy, treatment and support services.

Bishop Thomas John Paprocki from the Diocese of Springfield, presided over the blessing of the center Tuesday, a tradition for any new building or expansion in the OSF HealthCare system. He also sprinkled holy water throughout the structure, including the entrance where many will walk through the doors filled with hope.

"Let us ask for God's blessing on all those who will be patients here or who will devote themselves for caring for the sick; and let us ask the divine, blessing on this building, erected for care of the sick," he prayed.

Sister Judith Ann, chairperson of the Boards of OSF HealthCare, said the center allows the sisters to continue the mission they began 140 years ago, to serve with the greatest care and love. She added, "With that kind of focus, the sky's the limit as to what we can bring to the Riverbend to help restore, sustain, enhance and coordinate health care needs."

The center is named for Mike and Amy Moeller, who made the largest private donation of \$1 million toward the construction of the center and the couple pledged \$150,000 for sponsorship of an annual golf outing that supports ongoing services.

Moeller lost his father to cancer but he recalled his dad often prayed with patients, something he, Amy and their four children pledge to do. As he looked back toward the new building, he said, "There is nothing in that building that is lacking but what will make this place special is you all. It's the people. It's the caregivers. It's the sisters. It's everybody in this community that'll make this a special place."

Radiation Oncologist, Dr. James Piephoff called the new center a game changer.

"The OSF Moeller Cancer Center will allow us to more easily not just treat cancer but instead treat the whole patient – body, mind, and spirit," he said.

Sister M. Anselma, OSF Saint Anthony's Health Center chief operating officer and a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George, the original founders of Saint Anthony's, said the goal was to make the center a beacon of hope and planners visited cancer centers throughout the Midwest and sought input from cancer patients to design every detail.

Riverbend Growth Association President John Keller said, "There isn't a better example of our area's resurgence and change than the OSF Moeller Cancer Center. "I'm told the new technology and treatment options are expected to bring

600 new patients a year to this center and that most of those cases consist of patients that previously would have had to travel across the river."

Cancer survivors and those still undergoing treatment streamed through the building during tours after the dedication, blessing and Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting. Single mother of three Crystal Dolbee of Wood River was among them. She was diagnosed to metastatic breast cancer in November of last year and she's still undergoing treatment. After her tour she declared, "This place is heaven!"

She also said, "This place gives you hope," and added her favorite feature is the option to receive chemotherapy in the healing garden or enjoy privacy in the infusion bays that can be adapted to whatever patients want in their experience.

"It's beautiful. They've got a garden there ... a nice little area. It's like being on your back patio or back porch. You feel like you're at home," she shared. "You want to feel more like yourself, like you're not just at a hospital with people passing by. And, you've got your privacy (if you want it), you've got Netflix. It's like sitting on your couch at home. It's very homey -- friendly and homey."

The OSF HealthCare Moeller Cancer Center will officially begin operations Monday, October 14.

[Here is more information](#) about comprehensive cancer care available now at the OSF HealthCare Moeller Cancer Center. The community capital campaign for the new cancer center is ongoing and contributions can be made [online here](#).

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OSF HealthCare is an integrated health system owned and operated by The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, headquartered in Peoria, Illinois. OSF HealthCare employs nearly 21,000 Mission Partners (employees) in 126 locations, including 13 hospitals - 9 acute care, 4 critical access - and two colleges of nursing throughout Illinois and Michigan. Its physician network employs more than 1,200 primary care, specialist physicians, and advanced practice providers. OSF HealthCare operates an extensive network of home health services; owns PointCore, Inc., comprised of health care-related businesses; and OSF HealthCare Foundation, the philanthropic arm for the organization. More at www.osfhealthcare.org.