Roy Nichols and his wife, A.B. are longtime supporters of children and Childrens' Hospitals in both Alabama and Mississippi.

Roy is a former professional golfer and successful Christmas tree farmer with his first "choose and cut" tree farm in Mobile, Alabama in 1981. Success with the Mobile location led to expansion, and ownership of tree farms in North Carolina and Mississippi; and his first taste of philanthropy for a Children's Hospital at UAB Cancer in Birmingham in 1982.

In 2009, the Nichols met with Blair E. Batson Hospital Public Relations staff to discuss plans to introduce the best Christmas tree, both in quality and freshness, and use a portion of the proceeds to benefit the children at Blair E. Batson Hospital.

Get Easy Driving Directions to both retail lot locations:

Mississippi State Fairgrounds
1207 Mississippi St
.Jackson, MS 39202-3536

Formerly Rapids on the Reservoir
1808 Spillway Road
Brandon, MS 39047

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NICK TRAIN FOR FUND RAISER - Roy Nichols (left) shows off the train he purchased to his wife, A.B. (right) for the upcoming Winter Wonderland set to begin Nov. 25 at the Rapids at the Reservoir parking lot on Spillway Road. Money raised at the event, which goes from Nov. 25 to Dec. 22, 2011, will be donated to Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital. Nichols said there will be plenty of activities for the children and adults. Christmas trees will be sold with the funds going to the hospital as well.

Nick's Wonderland benefitting Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital

By Marcus Bowers

Roy and A.B. Nichols of north Rankin County, owners of the Pumpkin Patch, are planning a huge Nick's Winter Wonderland and Nick's Trees to benefit Blair E. Batson Hospital for Children.

Nick's Wonderland will be in the parking lot of the Rapids of the Reservoir on Spillway Road in Rankin County. Also, Nick's Trees for Christmas will be located at the Rapids location and the Mississippi Fairgrounds, Building 13 Christmas Tree Mall.

All proceeds will be donated to Blair E. Batson Hospital for Children. Winter Wonderland will start Nov. 25, the day after Thanksgiving. Nichols said he has purchased a train to ride at the Winter Wonderland, merry-go-round, 60-80 foot tent for special sales, jumping game for the kids, and a snow maker. Winter Wonderland at the Rapids will open Monday - Friday 3 - 9 p.m. Saturday and Sunday time for opening will be 10 - 9 p.m. Tree sales will be seven days a week 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.

"The rides will cost between $1 and $2, said Nichols. "We'll also have Santa in his sleigh on Dec. 4, 11, and 18 from 1-4 p.m."

He said Two Rivers Restaurant will be selling dinners and all proceeds will go to Blair E. Batson Hospital for Children.

The Christmas tree sales will begin on Nov. 25 at the Rapids location and at the Mississippi Fairgrounds.

How did the Nichols family get into helping the children's hospital? Nichols, a native of Alabama, was a professional golfer. He was considered a power hitter golfer. "I lost my dad to cancer," said Nichols. "Then, as a golfer on the PGA Tour, I met a young boy, Earl Alsobrook, 8, in remission of Leukemia in Alabama. "His dad told me he needed $24,000 for an operation. That really touched me so that it brought tears to my eyes." As part of a fund raiser, Nichols took a 9-iron and hit a ball all the way from Mobile, Ala. to the UAB Children's Hospital in Birmingham, Ala. which took several days. All the time he was raising funds for the UAB Children's Hospital on the trip. It was reported that when Nichols arrived at the hospital in Birmingham, Alsobrook was there waiting for him.

Nichols said a year ago, he met a young boy and his family from Hattiesburg who had traveled to purchase a Christmas tree at the Mississippi fairgrounds location. The family spoke about how Blair E. Batson Hospital saved their son's life. "It brought tears to my eyes."

Nichols said there has always been a "Tree of Hope" at his last two fund raisers at Christmas time. It contains the names of the patients in Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital. "We'll have the "Tree of Hope" again and this year, we hope to have each child write a letter to put on the tree."

The day before Thanksgiving, Nichols said patients from the children's hospital will have the opportunity to come and ride and play at the Rapids in the Winter Wonderland. "As they ride the train, snow will fall on them," he said. "We have Barbie Bassett coming to do a live weather report at the event."

Nichols said he will be presenting a check early at Blair E. Batson Hospital to help in research or where needed.

"This is a fund raiser for those in need and we hope people will come out and help us raise as much money possible for the hospital. There is no admission cost to the event."