



Heart to Heart

A publication of St. Tammany Health System



BRASWELL'S JOINS THE STHS FAMILY

Purchase keeps Covington pharmacy in local hands, p. 11

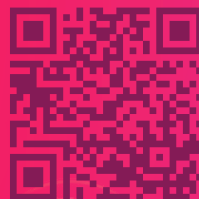
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SAME-DAY APPOINTMENTS WITH FACES YOU KNOW

Of the MANY decisions a parent will have to make, choosing a pediatrician is a big one. You need someone who can see your child THAT day. And return your calls quickly. No matter the time of day. Someone who uses an electronic record system that can go where your child goes. Someone connected to the top health system on the Northshore.

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We are the heartbeat of our community, caring for our patients and their families with excellence, compassion and teamwork.

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Gratefully Yours

One more example of compassion in action



Joan Coffman, FACHE

“Every decision we make is made with the ultimate goal of increasing access to quality healthcare for Northshore residents.”

By now you have certainly heard the news. If not, then I am happy to be the one to tell you: Braswell's pharmacy has joined the St. Tammany Health System family.

On Sept. 15, we closed on the purchase of the Covington business, which has been serving local residents since 1981. This union of two longtime fixtures of the local healthcare community is important for many reasons, but in my mind two rise above the rest.

First, it keeps Braswell's in local hands. More than that, though, it puts it in the hands of an organization that has been dedicated to caring for our community for the past seven decades.

To be honest, this purchase was a no-brainer for us. Every decision we make is made with the ultimate goal of increasing access to quality healthcare for Northshore residents.

To me, that boils down to one simple concept: compassion.

I am certain you will find evidence of that throughout this issue of Heart to Heart, which is packed with both information and inspiration, from our Braswell's purchase (p. 11) to our latest Healthier Northshore cooking demonstration (p. 7) to our wonderful Survivors Day ceremony (p. 8) and more.

Thank you for taking the time to read them — and thank you, as always, for trusting St. Tammany Health System with your family's healthcare needs.

Gratefully,

Joan M. Coffman, FACHE
St. Tammany Health System president and CEO



United in Pink

A chromatically coordinated Joan Coffman, president and CEO of St. Tammany Health System, does the honors as one of the first people to sign a pink St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office cruiser. The vehicle, which costs \$5 to sign, will crisscross the parish throughout October as a fundraiser for United in Pink, St. Tammany Hospital Foundation's monthlong breast cancer awareness campaign. Read more about it on page 13. (Photo by Mike Scott / STHS)

STAT!

Quick hits from the STHS newsroom

STHS President and CEO **Joan M. Coffman, FACHE**, has been appointed to serve as chair of the Board of Directors of Vizient Southern States, an alliance of not-for-profit healthcare providers ... In July, St. Tammany Health System's flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital was named to **Newsweek's inaugural listing** of America's Best Cancer Hospitals. It is the highest-ranking Louisiana hospital on the list. ... Also in July, the hospital received the maximum five stars from the federal **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services**, which updated its Overall Hospital Quality Star Ratings for 2023. ... In August, St. Tammany Parish Hospital was named to **U.S. News & World Report's** 2023-2024 Best Hospitals ranking, as a high-performing hospital in treatment of heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia and stroke. ... Also in August, **Fitch Ratings** affirmed the "AA-" long-term rating on the series 2018A and 21018B bonds issued by St. Tammany Health System. In addition, it affirmed the health system's "AA-" Issuer Default Rating, declaring the rating outlook to be stable. ... The health system earned the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's **Energy Star certification** for superior energy performance. ... St. Tammany Parish Hospital was named one of the region's best acute-care hospitals in **New Orleans CityBusiness' seventh annual Reader Rankings**. Additionally, the health system's **Paul D. Cordes Outpatient Pavilion** was named one of the best diagnostic imaging centers in the greater New Orleans metro area. ... Sixteen-year STHS veteran **Terri Johnston**, a registered nurse currently serving as director of the health system's Education Department, has been named one of the Great 100 Nurses of Louisiana for 2023. ... In August, STHS Financial Analyst **Patti Falgout** retired after 23 years with the organization. ■



A group of St. Tammany Health System's 2022 DAISY-winning nurses gather for a photo beneath the newly installed Daisy Award honoree wall on the main campus of the health system's flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital. (Photo by Jan Budenz / STHS)

In the name of nursing

Daisy Award honoree wall unveiled at Covington hospital

By STHS Communication Department

There's a fresh and flowery sight to see at St. Tammany Health System's flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital.

Health system colleagues gathered recently for the dedication of a DAISY Award honoree wall featuring the names of each of STHS's 2022 Daisy recipients. New recipients will be added periodically to the display, installed in the hospital's first-floor Conference Center Hallway.

Chief Nursing Officer Kerry Milton read an excerpt from Ashley Rivere's nomination — one of the first Daisy winners at St. Tammany Health System — and spoke to how the award reflects the health system's dedication to excellence, compassion and teamwork.

From the nomination: "She worked tirelessly to help me and encourage me in my journey to recovery. Ashley stayed late and came to work on one of her well-deserved days off to care for me. When she was not on duty she called to check on me. Ashley genuinely cares about her patients and others. In her practice of nursing, Ashley Rivere embodies professionalism, compassion, energy and skill."

In reflecting on those words, Milton added: "Patients are always at the

center of what we do, and this award reflects this philosophy. Nurses are humble people who join this profession because of their love of caring for people. I am glad we have this recognition, because they would never ask for it themselves."

Spearheaded locally by Rebecca Wood, a nurse and clinical educator in STHS's Education Department, the Daisy Award for Extraordinary Nurses is an international recognition program that was brought to St. Tammany Health System last year.

The award program was founded in 1999 by the family of Patrick J. Barnes to honor his memory and to give patients a way to express their gratitude for nurses. It is a way to honor and celebrate the skillful, compassionate care our nurses provide every day.

Among other things, all recipients receive a one-of-a-kind stone sculpture crafted in Zimbabwe called the Healer's Touch Sculpture.

Funding for the Daisy Award honoree wall was provided by generous donors to St. Tammany Hospital Foundation. ■

"I am glad we have this recognition (for nurses), because they would never ask for it themselves."

— STHS Chief Nursing Officer Kerry Milton

STQN at 10: A decade of caring for the community

By Mike Scott, mscott@stph.org

It's an age-old question, one with which countless people have wrestled over the years: When looking for a new doctor, how can you be assured you're getting a quality one?

Ten years ago this past summer, a group of community physicians teamed up with St. Tammany Health System to help local residents come up with an answer.

Their solution: the formation of St. Tammany Quality Network, a clinically integrated, physician-led network of Northshore doctors who are united — as the name suggests — by a shared desire to deliver reliable, quality care to local patients.

Now, as it celebrates its 10th year, STQN has grown to include more than 300 member physicians across all specialties but separate and distinct from the medical staff at the health system's flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital.

In the decade since its founding, the STQN label has become synonymous with quality care. But what does that mean, exactly?

"While we're blessed on the Northshore to have a wealth of quality physicians and an amazing medical community, St. Tammany Quality Network strives to ensure that all its member physicians maintain a standard of excellence," said Dr. L. Phillips Jenkins, a local gastroenterologist and the current chairman of STQN's seven-member Board of Managers.

"Our mission is to provide a network of doctors that can collaborate around excellent patient care to provide the most up-to-date, efficient and timely healthcare for our community."

Those quality standards, which are updated continuously to remain in step with the newest innovations, are at the core of STQN's mission.



St. Tammany Quality Network's Dr. Mike Hill presents the group's third-quarter 2023 Medical Director's Award to Dr. Farah Ali, surrounded by her colleagues in St. Tammany's Palliative Medicine Department. (Photo by Tim San Fillippo / STHS)



Dr. Mike K. Hill, left, medical director of St. Tammany Quality Network, presents Dr. Russell Reed of St. Tammany Health System's Cardiovascular Clinic with the STQN Medical Director's Award for the second quarter of 2023. (Photo by Tim San Fillippo / STHS)

To help patients identify STQN members — and to celebrate its first decade — a 10th anniversary STQN seal will soon be sent to member physicians for display at their clinics, signaling that they adhere to those established quality guidelines.

Just as central to the network's mission, though, is its work to facilitate communication between member physicians. That includes regular newsletters to members, it includes shared medical records and, sometimes, it includes good old-fashioned telephone calls between

physicians as they coordinate care for a patient.

The end result is increased efficiency and shared expertise, which combine to provide better care and, thus, better outcomes for patients.

STQN is, in short, its own community — a medical community —

that promotes camaraderie and collegiality between physicians who share the ultimate goal of making the Northshore community healthier, Dr. Jenkins said.

That's a big deal for patients. As Dr. Jenkins tells it, it's just as big deal to STQN doctors.

"The biggest medical advantage is you know you're taking great care of patients," Dr. Jenkins said. "You have a built-in community of trusted physicians you know you can tap into to attain the best results for your patients." ■

Scan the code to learn more about St. Tammany Quality Network.



STHS adds Ion robotic system to its surgical arsenal

Leading-edge device 'a game-changer' for lung biopsies

By Mike Scott, miscott@stph.org

St. Tammany Health System's robotic surgical fleet just got a noteworthy new addition.

STHS leadership recently purchased and put into service an Ion bronchoscopy system, a minimally invasive robotic-assisted platform designed to aid pulmonologists during lung biopsies.

According to Dr. Ricardo Blanco, a pulmonologist with STHS's Northlake Pulmonary Associates who has been using the Ion system since May, it is unique in the way it marries computer-generated virtual bronchoscopy imagery — acquired through a pre-procedure CT of the chest — with live bronchoscopy. Those two images are then integrated in a split screen that helps physicians navigate to any site in the lung.

The end result is a smooth and accurate procedure Dr. Blanco characterized as "a game-changer."

"It gives us the potential to make earlier diagnoses of suspicious



St. Tammany Health System is one of only four Louisiana care providers using the Ion system and one of only two using it in tandem with cone beam CT. (Image courtesy Intuitive)

lesions that, if confirmed as cancer, can lead to a better prognosis and potentially prolong survival," he said.

That's particularly true when the Ion is used in concert with a radiological tool called cone beam computed tomography. The cone beam technology produces three-dimensional imagery that helps a surgeon make ultrafine adjustments while zeroing in on even the smallest lesions.

St. Tammany Health System is one of only four Louisiana care providers using the Ion system and one of only two using it in tandem with cone beam CT.

"It's an amazing improvement in technology," Dr. Blanco said. "This is the state of the art in terms of diagnostic bronchoscopy, and with the

availability of cone beam CT during the procedure, puts our institution at the leading edge when it comes to pulmonary diagnostic tools."

In its first five months, the procedure has been used in about 30 cases at St. Tammany. By all accounts, it has performed beautifully.

"There's no doubt that this is absolutely the way to go from now on," said Dr. Blanco, who credited the health system's entire lung cancer team for the device's early successes at STHS. "There's no doubt from me or anyone in our practice. We have no reservations." ■

Lung screenings save lives. Learn more about this easy, quick and painless process, including how you can get one, at StTammany.health/lung.

MEET THE FLEET: A closer look at STHS's robotic surgical assistants

A Stryker Mako system, which aids orthopedic surgeons in total knee and hip replacements.



Three DaVinci robotic systems, used to assist in pelvic, thoracic and general surgery.

A Modus V robotic microscope with BrightMatter technology, to assist neurosurgeons in brain and spine surgeries.



A Velys system, also used in knee replacements.



A Globus Excelsius GPS unit, also designed to assist neurosurgeons in spine surgeries.



Packing a punch

Salmon bowl recipe a nutritional powerhouse



Chef Alex Moss and Chef Osman Rodas of Pardo's Restaurant in Mandeville manned the kitchen for Healthier Northshore's latest cooking demonstration. (Photo by Tory Mansfield / STHS)

By Mike Scott, miscott@stph.org

The ingredients list for Chef Osman Rodas' Salmon Power Bowl recipe looks ordinary enough: garlic, olive oil, ginger, spinach, things like that. If there is a surprise to be found, it is probably the blueberries.

But the real rock star is one most people probably aren't quite as familiar with, as he told the two dozen or so people in attendance at Healthier Northshore's quarterly Eat Well, Live Well cooking demonstration on Sept. 25 at St. Tammany Cancer Center – A Campus of Ochsner Medical Center.

"The menu today is based on polyphenols," he said. "I wanted this dish to be polyphenol-rich."

As he went on to explain, polyphenols are micronutrients that occur naturally in certain plants, including all those foods listed above. Packed with antioxidants, they have been shown to offer protection against development of certain cancers, as well as benefiting people suffering from any of a variety of chronic conditions, including diabetes, high blood pressure and others.

To Chef Osman, owner of Pardo's Restaurant in Mandeville, that's important both for his cancer center

audience but also for himself.

"I recently turned 53, and I noticed my body started changing," he said. "Everything about me started changing, physically."

Specifically, dishes that his body used to tolerate well when he was a younger man simply didn't make him feel right anymore.

"I was like, all right, I've obviously got to start paying attention to what I put in my body," he said.

That meant reconsidering his ingredients list to include foods that pack a nutritional punch, like his Salmon Power Bowl recipe, which is served with a side of pecan quinoa and topped with a blueberry ginger sauce.

In addition to getting a sample of it as part of September's cooking demo, all audience members also received a box of fresh ingredients — as they do at all Eat Well, Live Well demos — so they could re-create the dish at home, courtesy of Rick and Tina Flick of Banner Ford.

And while it might sound fancy, it's a breeze to whip up.

"This is a very simple dish," Chef Osman said. "It should take you no more than 20 minutes." ■



Salmon Power Bowl with Blueberry Ginger Sauce

Yield: 3 servings
Time: Approximately 35 minutes

Ingredients:

6 oz. salmon	1 tablespoon plus one
1 pinch salt	teaspoon ginger, finely
1 pinch black pepper	minced
2 tablespoons extra	1 cup uncooked quinoa
virgin olive oil	2 cups chicken stock
1 cup blueberries	1 oz. chopped pecans
1/8 white onion, chopped	2 cups spinach
2 teaspoons garlic, finely	Additional salt and
minced	pepper to taste

Preheat your favorite skillet on medium. As it comes to temp, separately season both sides of salmon with a pinch each of salt and pepper.

Add ½ tablespoon of olive oil to heated skillet. After a minute or two, add salmon and sear for 3 to 4 minutes on each side. Remove from pan and set aside.

Clean your skillet, heat it over medium heat again then add 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Once oil is hot, add blueberries, onion, 1 teaspoon garlic, and 1 tablespoon ginger. Cook, stirring, until blueberries burst and you can mash all ingredients together. Remove mixture from skillet and set aside.

Prepare quinoa by bringing 1½ cups of chicken stock to a boil in a pot. Add quinoa. Lower heat and allow to simmer for 15 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand for five minutes, then gently mix in chopped pecans.

Clean your skillet once more and heat it on medium-high heat. Once it comes to temperature, add ½ tablespoon olive oil. Sauté 1 teaspoon of garlic in heated oil for 1 minute. Add remaining ginger, along with spinach, ¼ cup chicken stock, and salt and pepper to taste. Reduce until 80% of liquid is evaporated.

To serve, scoop a cup of cooked quinoa onto center of a plate, then place a serving of sauteed spinach mixture over center of quinoa. Add salmon on top of spinach, topped by 1/3 of the blueberry ginger sauce.

Look! Cut me out! I'm a bookmark for your favorite cookbook!

‘They’re not just surviving. They’re thriving’

Cancer Center celebrates life, love at Survivors Day picnic

By Mike Scott, mscott@stph.org

Amedee Frederick knows all about having the blues. They don’t call the Abita Springs musician “The Creole-Cajun Bluesman” for nothing.

But on Sept. 22, Mr. Frederick was all smiles as he took the stage with his son’s band, the Pontchartrain Shakers, to celebrate Survivors Day at St. Tammany Cancer Center – A Campus of Ochsner Medical Center.

That’s because, like so many others in attendance, he is himself a cancer survivor, having lived for more than four years with pancreatic cancer.

“If it wasn’t for the doctors and nurses here,” he said from a stage set up in the cancer center parking lot, “I guess I wouldn’t be here. So, I’m so happy to be here playing for you today.”

He had just finished playing a cover of the Doobie Brothers’ “Long Train Runnin’,” with its chorus of “Without love/Where would you be now?” – which was perfectly appropriate given the love on display at the midday event.

There were hugs, there was dancing, there were fresh-off-the-grill burgers and dogs, and there was an assortment of other goodies to be had from the dozen or so participating sponsors.

The central focus, though, was on the assembled survivors and their families, who got a chance to reunite with the care providers who stood beside them – and, in some cases, are still standing beside them – through their treatment.

That included Lacombe-area siblings Janice Harris, celebrating one and a half years of remission after being diagnosed with three separate cancers, and Karen Harris Barnes, in remission for five years.

“The people in this building, they are terrific – A-number-one. I would recommend them to anyone,” big brother Donald Harris said, flanked by his sisters. “... They treat you like you’re family.”

That is no mistake, according to Cancer Center Administrator Jack Khashou.

“The best thing about Survivor’s Day is we’re doing a better and better job every day, so we have more and more survivors – and they’re not just surviving. They’re thriving,” Khashou said.

He added: “Survivorship starts the day you are diagnosed, and it goes on forever. So we are here to celebrate every day you are a survivor.”

St. Tammany Health System launched its cancer program in 1998 and, along with longtime partner Ochsner, operated for years across the street from its flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital.

Two years ago, in an effort to consolidate local cancer care under one roof, the cancer center was relocated to the three-story, purpose-built facility at Interstate 12 and Louisiana 21. With an emphasis on integrative oncology, its array of care providers focus on treating the whole patient – mind, body and spirit – rather than just the tumor.

Through a separate partnership announced in June between Ochsner and MD Anderson Cancer Center, St. Tammany Cancer Center – A Campus of Ochsner Medical Center is now an approved location under this partnership. Cancer patients in the region now have access to cancer treatments that are among the most advanced in the nation.

For the Harris family, it has been a godsend.

Asked what prompted them to turn out for Survivor’s Day, Donald Harris made it clear it wasn’t just about the food and fun. It was also about the care providers who showed them so much compassion – and an opportunity for the Harris family to pay it forward.

“(We’re here) so we may be an inspiration for another survivor or somebody that’s going through cancer,” he said. “They figure there’s no hope. There is hope.” ■



Amedee Frederick wasn’t just the entertainment for Survivors Day at St. Tammany Cancer Center – A Campus of Ochsner Medical Center. He’s also a patient at the Covington facility. (Photo by Tim San Fillippo / STHS)



STHS Nurse Practitioner Kathy Ann Howard doesn’t just work at St. Tammany Cancer Center – A Campus of Ochsner Medical Center. Last year, she also became a patient. Above, she celebrates her survivorship with members of her care team at the cancer center’s 2023 Survivors Day celebration. (Photo by Mike Scott / STHS)

‘What we have here is so special’ Nurse gets new perspective as a patient

By Mike Scott, mscott@stph.org

Unlike most people, Kathy Ann Howard knew well what palliative medicine was. At least, she thought she did.

As a nurse practitioner with St. Tammany Health System’s Palliative Medicine Department, she was familiar with the unique blend of compassion and expertise required of palliative medicine providers. She also knew from experience just how important and uplifting such care is to patients.

Turns out, she knew only half of it.

In January 2022, after her regular mammogram, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Over the months that followed, Howard – who indeed knew the care provider’s perspective – would undergo an unplanned but invaluable crash course in palliative medicine from the patient’s viewpoint at St. Tammany Cancer Center – A Campus of Ochsner Medical Center.

Howard’s cancer is in remission now, and she is back at work. Coincidentally, she works with patients at the same cancer center at which she was treated. The experience has not only made her a better care provider, she said, but it has also reinforced her belief in the beauty of palliative medicine as a whole.

“It was a scary experience, but it was an awesome experience at the same time,” Howard said. “The support and care I received was just wonderful. But also, stepping out of the provider role and being in that patient role and understanding how scary it is when somebody’s giving you bad news – that made me even better at my job.”

In a nutshell, palliative medicine sees trained healthcare professionals work with patients to manage severe chronic conditions with an eye toward maximizing their quality of life.

Such patients run the gamut from a condition standpoint. Sometimes, they’re dealing with terminal diagnoses. But palliative

(Continued on next page)



STHS President and CEO Joan Coffman visits with care providers, patients and their families at Survivors Day 2023. (Photo by Tory Mansfield / STHS)



In addition to providing the food for Survivors Day, a team from Winn-Dixie manned the grill. (Photo by Tory Mansfield / STHS)



STHS Chief Information Officer Craig Doyle, left, Vice President of Quality and Utilization Management Dr. Mike Hill and Chief Operating Officer Sharon Toups help dish out nutrition at the cancer center's Survivors Day picnic. (Photo by Tory Mansfield / STHS)



In addition to food and entertainment, Survivors Day at St. Tammany Cancer Center - A Campus of Ochsner Medical Center also featured booths hosted by a variety of community groups and businesses. (Photo by Tory Mansfield / STHS)

(Continued from previous page)

medicine also helps patients with such life-limiting conditions as lupus, multiple sclerosis, heart failure or COPD lead fuller lives.

Howard uses terms such as “comfort care” and “supportive care” in describing what she sees as a way to return a bit of dignity to patients.

“What we do is help patients get to their goals,” she said. “When we sit down and see patients for the first time, whether it’s for a new diagnosis or an old diagnosis with advancing symptoms, we ask the patients, ‘What are your goals? What do you want to do that your disease is preventing you from doing?’

“Sometimes, they say, ‘I want to sit on the porch with my grandkids,’ or, ‘I want to go fishing.’ And we help them with that.”

For some patients, that might mean additional medications. For others, it might mean fewer. Often, it means something else entirely. It all depends on what the patient wants.

“What we’re doing here is not curative, but we’re helping them to meet their goals in their life, and that improves their quality of life.”

And that’s not just anybody talking. It’s someone whose journey has brought them a firsthand view of both sides of the palliative medicine equation – and who is grateful for it. “It’s really special now taking care of cancer patients, because it feels like this is my way of giving back for all the people who took care of me,” Howard said.

“What we have here is so special,” she continued, talking about St. Tammany Health System’s Palliative Medicine program. “I really feel fortunate to be a part of what we’re doing here with palliative medicine, especially what we’re doing with the cancer center. I want patients to know that we really want to help them to have the best quality of life. We have a great team here and we’re doing really, really good work.” ■

Prescription for growth

STHS acquires Braswell’s pharmacy in Covington

By STHS Communication Department

In a move that unites two Northshore healthcare institutions, St. Tammany Health System acquired the iconic Braswell’s community pharmacy in Covington on Sept. 15, health system leadership announced.

The purchase ensures that Braswell’s, which has served Northshore residents since 1981, remains locally owned and operated.

STHS has successfully operated an employee pharmacy for years. The purchase of Braswell’s pharmacy and boutique across South Tyler Street from its flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital expands the health system’s retail pharmacy services and is consistent with its mission to serve the health needs of our community, close to home.

“We are proud to maintain this trusted community pharmacy as just that: a trusted community pharmacy,” said Joan Coffman, president and CEO of St. Tammany Health System. “As the leading provider of healthcare in our community, we look forward to providing another avenue of healthcare services to our friends and neighbors as we continue to deliver on our promise of providing world-class healthcare



Braswell’s pharmacy, which has been serving Northshore patrons since 1981, became a member of the St. Tammany Health System family on Sept. 15, 2023. (Photo by Mike Scott / STHS)

close to home for local families.”

The proximity of Braswell’s to St. Tammany Parish Hospital, coupled with local support for Braswell’s, made the purchase a natural fit for STHS, Coffman said.

“Adding this longstanding, respected community pharmacy will allow STHS to reach and serve more members of our community,” said Sharon Toups, senior vice president and chief operating officer of St. Tammany Health System. “We are eager to welcome and work with our newest colleagues as we fold their retail pharmacy operations into our health system structure.”

Patrons of Braswell’s can rest assured that the familiar faces of the employees they know and love will still be hands-on in the St. Tammany Health System

Pharmacy at Braswell’s and that prescriptions will be filled as usual.

St. Tammany Health System will continue to operate its employee and inpatient pharmacy within St. Tammany Parish Hospital.

The purchase of Braswell’s is one of several expansion projects taking place as St. Tammany Health System grows to meet the needs of the Northshore community.

Notably, that includes construction of a \$75 million Ambulatory Surgery Center currently underway on Bootlegger Road, adjacent to the Paul D. Cordes Outpatient Pavilion; establishment of an academic center for nursing students on Louisiana 21; and an 18,000-square-foot family medicine clinic north of Covington, near the intersection of U.S. 190 and Louisiana 25. ■



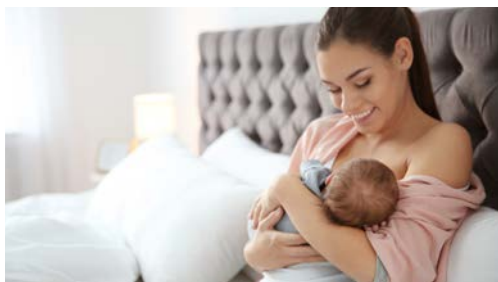
When complete, STHS’s 126,000-square-foot Ambulatory Surgery Center will boast 12 surgical suites and array of support services. Ground was broken in November 2023, and completion is set for summer 2024. (Photo by Mike Scott / STHS)



Construction continues apace on a new, 18,000-square-foot family medicine clinic north of Covington. It is expected to be complete in January. (Photo by Tim San Fillippo / STHS)

Scan the code to learn more about St. Tammany Health System’s Palliative Medicine program.





Breastfeeding moms have a new friend at STHS

By STHS Communication Department

St. Tammany Health System, already recognized as a Baby-Friendly institution by the World Health Organization and UNICEF's Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, just got baby-friendlier.

As part of its community outreach efforts, the health system has introduced an outpatient lactation consult program, designed for new moms in need of assistance or advice as they begin their breast-feeding journey with their new baby.

The announcement coincided with the recognition of August as Breastfeeding Awareness Month.

The new service, conducted by a lactation consultant certified by the globally recognized International Board of Lactation Examiners, is offered at the health system's Paul D. Cordes Outpatient Pavilion (16300 Bootlegger Road, Covington).

Appointments can be made by calling (985) 898-4446. A mother need not have had her baby at St. Tammany Health System to use this new community service.

Studies show that breastmilk provides immune protection and benefits newborns as long as they continue to breastfeed. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the World Health Organization recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of a baby's life when possible.

In addition to its outpatient lactation consulting program, St. Tammany Health System supports nursing mothers with a 24-hour, non-emergency breastfeeding help line (985-898-4446). Additionally, its Neonatal Intensive Care Unit hosts a breast milk donor depot for approved donors of the Mother's Milk Bank of Louisiana.

Since opening in 1954 as St. Tammany Parish Hospital, St. Tammany Health System has become the premiere birthing destination on the Northshore, with more than 60,000 babies born there. ■



Dr. Adela Narcisse, center, is surrounded by St. Tammany Health System colleagues as she 'cuts the cord' on the health system's newly opened Obstetric Emergency Department on Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023. (Photo by Mike Scott/STHS)

A labor of love

STHS christens new Obstetric Emergency Department

By STHS Communication Department

Ask any parent: Not all emergencies are created equal.

That's exactly why St. Tammany Health System's flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital on Sept. 12 christened its new Obstetric Emergency Department, a purpose-built space designed specifically for expectant mothers experiencing the unexpected in their pregnancy journey.

"We are so excited as we 'cut the cord,' if you will, on this new, custom-built space, which will help us continue to deliver exceptional care for our community's moms-to-be in a much bigger space than previously," said Joan Coffman, the health system's president and CEO.

Located in the Labor and Delivery unit of the hospital's New Family Health Center, the new OBED features six fully private triage rooms, where trained maternal experts can examine patients and determine the next step in their care.

All of the rooms are built with new moms' serenity and safety in mind, and all are outfitted with advanced fetal monitoring equipment. Additionally, the new OBED, which replaces a smaller, semi-private triage space inside the

hospital, is staffed around the clock by a team of highly trained obstetric hospitalists and maternity nurses.

According to STHS Chief Medical Officer Dr. Patrick Torcson, having a dedicated OBED is a continuation of an ongoing effort to provide high-quality, specialized care to all Northshore residents.

"At St. Tammany, we've delivered over 60,000 babies in the 70 years the hospital has been in existence, and I don't think we've ever been better equipped than we are now in terms of the quality, safety and overall experience we can provide to women," Dr. Torcson said.

The new OBED space is just one part of St. Tammany Health System's comprehensive Emergency Services Department, which also includes its hospital Emergency Department, a standalone Emergency Department in Mandeville, and a Pediatric Emergency Department, all open 24/7.

Although its christening was Tuesday, the new OBED space had a soft opening a week earlier, fittingly just two days after Labor Day. ■

Visit StTammany.health/OBED to learn more about the new St. Tammany Health System OBED.

United in Pink – and Pearl

Annual breast cancer campaign broadens its reach

By STHS Communication Department

For the third consecutive year, St. Tammany Hospital Foundation's United in Pink campaign is hitting the streets to raise awareness of the importance of breast screenings and to raise money for Northshore cancer care – but with a notable addition this year.

The campaign, part of the larger yearlong series of St. Tammany United observations, will still see the Be Well Bus crisscrossing the parish and offering mammograms at dozens of community events.

It will also still feature a pink-wrapped St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office cruiser that people can sign for a \$5 donation.

And there will still be a raft of local "Pink Partners" hosting give-back events through October, including Timeless Touch Medical Aesthetics, Sunshine Coffee, the Southern Hotel, Chick-fil-A and others.

But unlike previous years, the 2023 campaign will include a focus on the importance of lung cancer screenings, which are quick, painless and – just like mammograms – can make a major difference by catching tumors early.

"Technically, November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month, and we'll be observing it as always with our newly branded St. Tammany United in Pearl campaign," STHS Lung Screening Coordinator Megan Broussard said. "But a lot of people don't realize that lung cancer is quickly becoming a women's disease, so we decided to double down on our efforts by offering lung cancer assessments and education as part of our United in Pink efforts, too."

According to the American Lung Association, lung cancer diagnoses have risen 84% among women



St. Tammany Hospital Foundation's United in Pink campaign launched on Sept. 22 this year to coincide with Survivors Day at St. Tammany Cancer Center – A Campus of Ochsner Medical Center. (Photo by Tory Mansfield / STHS)

Save the dates!

A sampling of upcoming screening events featuring mammography on the Be Well Bus. Find a full, updated list at StTammanyUnited.org.

Oct. 18: STPN Madisonville clinic, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Oct. 23: Franco's Athletic Club, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Oct. 26: Stone Creek Club and Spa, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Oct. 30: St. Tammany Justice Center, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Nov. 4: Fontainebleau State Park, 9 to 11:00 a.m.

Nov. 8: STPN Folsom clinic, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

over the past 42 years while dropping 36% among men.

"Honestly, this was already shaping up to be our biggest and best United in Pink campaign yet," the foundation's Kathleen Thomas said. "The addition of lung cancer awareness efforts just makes it that much more so."

Other United in Pink events include a Ladies Night health screening event sponsored by McDaniel Dermatology on Oct. 6 at the Covington Beer

Garden, screening stops at local St. Tammany Physicians Network clinics, and participation in the annual Bras for a Cause fundraiser on Oct. 19.

United in Pearl will follow that up with a 1-mile community walk at Fontainebleau State Park on Nov. 4.

"Screenings save lives, simple as that," Thomas said. "And through both United in Pink and United in Pearl, we are determined to make a difference." ■

Scan the code to learn more about United in Pink, including how you can become a Pink Partner.





Becky Carson-Parks, a St. Tammany Hospital Foundation board member and chair of its Healing Arts Committee, introduces the latest exhibition in its rotating gallery series on Sept. 26. One of the artworks, a whimsical alligator-inspired 'Reefie' created by Covington artist Robert Post, can be seen on the table behind her. (Photos by Chuck Billiot for St. Tammany Hospital Foundation)

The art of the heal

Healing Arts exhibition returns bigger than ever

By *STHS Communication Department*

It was a big night for the Northshore art community, and in more ways than one.

On Sept. 26, St. Tammany Hospital Foundation's Healing Arts Initiative hosted its latest gallery series, the first since being forced into COVID hibernation three years ago.

If that news wasn't big enough, the exhibit is also the initiative's largest yet, showcasing more local artists and more artworks than ever before.

"The exhibit we celebrate tonight is entitled SEASons of Grace and heART," said Becky Carson-Parks, a foundation board member and chair of its Healing Arts Committee. "The pieces you are about to see cover a wide range of styles and mediums, all selected through a truly rewarding, but at times difficult, jury process."

That theme, she said, not only described the artwork on display but it also aligns neatly with the health system's mission.

"Of all the ideas that we put out there, two concepts kept coming back: grace and heart," she said. "Grace is a catalyst for greater good, whether it's at home, at work, out in our community or here at St. Tammany Health System. Heart is the central or most vital part of something. It is compassion and the seat of life and strength. We hope these images will inspire a call for good within all of us."

In all, the exhibit — dedicated in honor of immediate past Healing Arts Chairwoman Mary Lee — features 117 pieces from 27 local artists, all on public display through Dec. 8 on the first floor of St. Tammany Health System's flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital. ■

St. Tammany Hospital Foundation's award-winning Healing Arts Initiative was started in 2004 to promote art as a core component of healthcare and the healing process. Learn more, including how you can contribute to that mission, at STHFoundation.org/HealingArts.



Bogalusa artist Cordero Mark, second from left, and his family.



Artist and Covington City Councilman Joey Roberts and his graphite portrait of Mother Teresa.



Artist Colette Martin poses for a photo alongside one of her works, titled 'The Elephant in the Room.'



Healing Arts Committee member Jean-Marie Desrosiers, right, with local family medicine practitioner Dr. Arlette Delcham.

Color and Lights

From a SEASON of celebration to a time of remembrance.



STHF Executive Director Nicole Suhre at the 2022 Angels of Light ceremony. (STHF photo)

"Beginning in November, we invite all members of the community to purchase Tribute Angels in the name of their loved ones to adorn the Hospice Tree for Life, which will remain on display throughout the holiday season."

As you read earlier in this issue, St. Tammany Hospital Foundation's Healing Arts Initiative recently installed its first exhibition of healing art in nearly three years. What a joy it has been to see new original works of art in the halls of our flagship hospital again.

The exhibit's opening reception was a celebration of the 27 talented partner artists featured in the exhibition and a celebration of community. Art creates community. Art heals. The Healing Arts Initiative has changed the landscape of St. Tammany Health System's facilities forever, and has brought together artists, donors, volunteers, colleagues, patients and visitors who are passionate about making the inclusion of arts in healthcare the standard at our health system.

From the bottom of my heart, I sincerely thank each and every person who has been part of our healing arts journey since its inception. You have made a difference.

Our art exhibits bring color and light to our facility, but light also arrives to St. Tammany each holiday season with one of our most touching traditions: Angels of Light. This annual tree-lighting ceremony held to honor or memorialize friends, neighbors and members of the community, will take place Dec. 7 in the lobby of our hospital.

Beginning in November, we invite all members of the community to purchase Tribute Angels in the name of their loved ones to adorn the Hospice Tree for Life, which will remain on display throughout the holiday season. Proceeds from this beloved event support the meaningful work of St. Tammany Health System Hospice.

The season of celebration and gratitude are certainly upon us. I am grateful for our generous community and wish you all a happy fall!

Sincerely,

Nicole Suhre, CFRE
STHF executive director

Foundation calendar Save the dates!



Monster Mash

Oct. 21 | Bogue Falaya Park

St. Tammany gets in touch with its spooky side with the 35th edition of its not-so-scary Halloween celebration, presented by Metairie Bank Northshore and featuring family-friendly games, costumes, trick-or-treating and more. Proceeds benefit the STHS Parenting Center.

Details: (985) 898-4435 | DoTheMash.org

#GivingTuesday

Nov. 28 | 24 hours of giving

Give back to the community by showing your support for St. Tammany Hospital Foundation on #GivingTuesday, an international day of paying it forward. Visit www.sthfoundation.org/GivingTuesday or call (985) 898-4174 to make a donation on Nov. 28.

Details: STHfoundation.org/GivingTuesday

Angels of Light


Dec. 7 | St. Tammany Parish Hospital lobby

The foundation ushers in the holiday season with the lighting of its Hospice Tree for Life, which is decorated every year with tribute angels purchased by community members to honor or memorialize a loved one. Proceeds benefit St. Tammany Hospice.

Details: (985) 898-4141 | STHfoundation.org/Angels



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Search STHS job openings and apply today.

StTammany.health/Recruitment