



Vol. 18, No. 4 / Fall 2022

# Heart to Heart

A publication of St. Tammany Health System



## MAKING A SPLASH

Whimsical art installation  
goes swimmingly at  
St. Tammany Health System, p. 8

'Tis the season to get vaxxed, p. 4  
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Shrimp Ratatouille recipe helps you make the most of your garden, p. 13

**NATIONALLY ACCREDITED CHEST PAIN CENTER**

The cardiology team at St. Tammany Health System stays in rhythm with the community we love so much. Here on our high-tech campus, many talented specialists and subspecialists devote themselves to providing the latest advancements in cardiac disease prevention and minimally invasive cardiac surgery. Together with our partner Ochsner Health, we're making St. Tammany hearts beat stronger.

**WINNING  
ST. TAMMANY  
MANY HEARTS**



**St. Tammany**<sup>SM</sup>  
HEALTH SYSTEM

WORLD-CLASS HEALTHCARE CLOSE TO HOME



**MISSION**

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

**VISION**

We will strengthen the health of our community with compassion, innovation and partnership.

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# Gratefully Yours

At St. Tammany Health System, it's a family thing



Joan Coffman, FACHE

**“It’s an exciting time for our pediatrics family. That’s good news for families across the Northshore and for our own St. Tammany Health System family.”**

You needn’t be a mathematician to know 60,000 is a big number. In miles, it’s more than twice the distance around the Earth. In feet, it’s roughly the height of 2,181 Monkey Hills.

And at St. Tammany Health System, it’s the number of babies born here since we first opened our doors on Dec. 1, 1954.

That’s both heartwarming and gratifying. After all, we at STHS talk about being the heartbeat of our community, and on the Northshore there really is nothing more important than family.

That’s why I’m so excited to see all the wonderful news generated recently by our pediatric service lines.

The most conspicuous are the wonderfully whimsical new additions to our foundation’s Healing Arts collection that grace the cover of this month’s issue of Heart to Heart. But that’s just the start.

After reading the stories in this issue, you’ll likely agree: It’s an exciting time for our pediatrics family.

That’s good news for families across the Northshore and for our own St. Tammany Health System family.

Thank you for being a part of it, thank you for reading – and here’s to another 60,000 bundles of joy!

Gratefully,



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



### Putting families first

From left, St. Tammany Parenting Center Executive Director Lori Cage, St. Tammany Hospital Foundation Specialist Melanie Rudolph, St. Tammany Health System President and CEO Joan Coffman, Metairie Bank Northshore President Paul A. Myers, Metairie Bank President Michael Gennaro and Metairie Bank CEO John LeBlanc attend a ceremony dedicating the exam room in the inpatient pediatric unit of St. Tammany Parish Hospital to the children and families of the Northshore. *Read the full story on page 12.*

## MONKEYPOX, AT A GLANCE

A look at monkeypox data, as of Oct. 6, 2022.

**26,311**

Confirmed U.S. monkeypox cases



Confirmed U.S. monkeypox deaths



Confirmed Louisiana monkeypox cases

### Louisiana monkeypox cases by region:

Southeast	183
Capital region	24
South Central	17
<b>Northshore</b>	<b>13</b>
Acadiana	9
Northwest	9
Northeast	6
Central	1
Southwest	1

## COVID, AT A GLANCE

A look at COVID-19 data, as of Oct. 6, 2022.



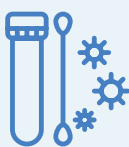
Current COVID hospitalizations statewide



Current COVID hospitalizations at STHS

**77.37%**

Percent of unvaccinated COVID patients at STHS since July 2021



**7.8%**

Current COVID positive test rate in St. Tammany Parish

**18,097**

Number of COVID deaths in Louisiana since start of the pandemic

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Louisiana Department of Health

# Flu and RSV and monkeypox (Oh, my!)

By Mike Scott, [mscott@stph.org](mailto:mscott@stph.org)

First it was COVID-19. Then came monkeypox. Now flu season is upon us, to say nothing of the RSV virus affecting so many kids.

Even if you manage to avoid the viruses swirling throughout our community, the nonstop worry they generate is enough to make a person sick. But just how concerned should we be about each of these current health threats?

To wrap our heads around it all, we visited recently with St. Tammany Health System infectious disease expert Dr. Mike Hill. Here's what he had to tell us:

### So where are we with these four viruses?

In a nutshell, it looks like monkeypox is on the decline. COVID has been declining but there's always a chance for a resurgence in coming months. Then there's RSV, which is on the rise now that kids are back in school, and influenza, which is the one that, at the moment, could cause the most problems.

### Why is that?

Well, it's flu season, which is always a concern. For the past two years, when everyone was isolating during the COVID pandemic, we've seen light flu seasons. But early indicators suggest this year could be more serious.

Most concerning is that flu has already returned with a vengeance in the Southern Hemisphere, where flu season arrives a few months earlier than here. The concern is that if it follows the same pattern for us, the "twindemic" of flu and COVID could strain the nation's hospitals.

### So what can I do to protect myself?

Get your flu shot. That's especially true for those at high risk, which includes young children, older adults, pregnant women and people with chronic medical conditions. But, really, everyone is at risk for

flu, and this year's updated flu vaccine is your best protection.

That being said, the same precautions we've been hammering since the start of the COVID outbreak holds true here: Wash your hands, cover your coughs and sneezes, stay at home if you're feeling sick. It would also be smart to mask in public, particularly if attending crowded indoor gatherings.

### Speaking of COVID, where are we with that?

The big headline here is the new bivalent booster, which just came out in late August and has been designed specifically to fight off the highly infectious omicron strain of COVID and its subvariants. The CDC is recommending all fully vaccinated people 12 and up get the new booster, and particularly those who are 50 and older.

### How about RSV? That's mostly affecting children, right?

Well, older adults are susceptible, too, and now that kids are back in school, it's spreading quickly. It's a seasonal virus, and we're definitely seeing an uptick in our community. Again, the best defense is good hand hygiene, covering your sneezes – you know the drill.

### What about monkeypox?

As I mentioned, this one, which was declared a U.S. public health emergency in August, looks like it's fading. That being said, Southeast Louisiana is the state's hotspot, so if you're in a high-risk group, you should remain vigilant. Right now, this is primarily a male disease that is highest among men who have sex with men, but, just like with HIV, which started in the gay population, it can cross over into the heterosexual population.

The same advice concerning COVID and flu is the same for monkeypox: Get vaccinated, especially if you think you might be at risk. ■

# Welcome to the family

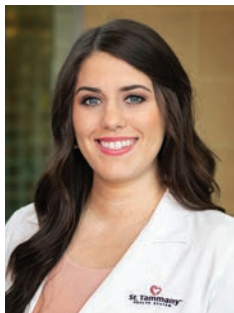
St. Tammany Health System adds two new pediatricians and a family medicine practitioner to help keep Northshore families healthy, happy

By Mike Scott, [mscott@stph.org](mailto:mscott@stph.org)

## Dr. Victoria Blossman

Dr. Victoria Blossman, a primary care physician specializing in family medicine, has joined the medical staff at the St. Tammany Physicians Network clinic in Folsom.

A Mandeville native, Dr. Blossman



Dr. Victoria Blossman

earned her undergraduate degree at LSU and her medical degree at William Carey College of Osteopathic Medicine in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

She joins the STPN-Folsom

team following a residency with LSU School of Medicine's Rural Family Medicine Program in Bogalusa.

"I'm passionate about the rural community, and I've grown to love it even more as I've worked in Bogalusa," she said. "When I went out to visit the clinic, I knew Folsom was where I needed to be."

Although she'll practice general medicine, Dr. Blossman has a particular interest in preventative medicine and management of chronic conditions, such as obesity, diabetes and hypertension.

Those interests were bolstered by the connections she's formed with her patients during her Family Medicine residency.

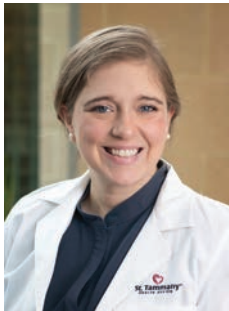
"In Bogalusa, there are limited resources, and because of that I've developed a real relationship with my patients," she said. "Those personal relationships are what's kept me going."

*Dr. Victoria Blossman is based out of our STPN-Folsom clinic. She is now accepting new patients. Call (985) 898-4001 to make an appointment. ■*

## Dr. Margaret Leefe

Dr. Margaret Leefe knew.

She knew before she became the latest pediatrician to join St. Tammany Pediatrics, St. Tammany Health System's growing primary care practice for children. She knew even before



Dr. Margaret Leefe

she enrolled in medical school.

One way or the other, she knew her professional life would revolve around children.

"I have always loved kids," Dr. Leefe said. "I'm one of four children myself,

and I'm one of the older kids. Since I was little I talked about having my own kids. I took care of my siblings, I was a summer camp counselor and all that. I was also a nanny for a while."

By the time she decided to study medicine, she knew that if she was to specialize in a discipline other than pediatrics, it would really have to impress her. But Dr. Leefe is a sucker for the little ones. And so pediatrics it was.

After graduating from LSU School of Medicine, she served a residency at Children's Hospital in New Orleans. After that, the decision to make St. Tammany Health System her professional home was easy for the mother of two daughters.

"It's the only interview I went on where, when I came home, my family said, 'Oh, you were just beaming,'" she said. "I love the people here. Everybody seemed happy to be at work.

"I also loved how patient-centered St. Tammany is," she added. "I loved that their priority is caring for these kids."

*Dr. Margaret Leefe is based out of St. Tammany Pediatrics' Madisonville office. She is now accepting new patients. Call (985) 773-1600 to make an appointment. ■*

## Dr. Seth McVea

There are certain truths we hold to be self-evident, and this is surely one: Dr. Seth McVea loves his job.

The newest member of St. Tammany Pediatrics, the full-service pediatrics practice of St. Tammany Health System,



Dr. Seth McVea

he makes that abundantly clear the way he lights up when asked about his new professional home.

And the way he smiles when talking about it. And embraces costume-wearing like

the South Louisiana native he is. (He has a hot dog costume. He has a cowboy costume. He has a pumpkin costume. He has a lot of costumes.)

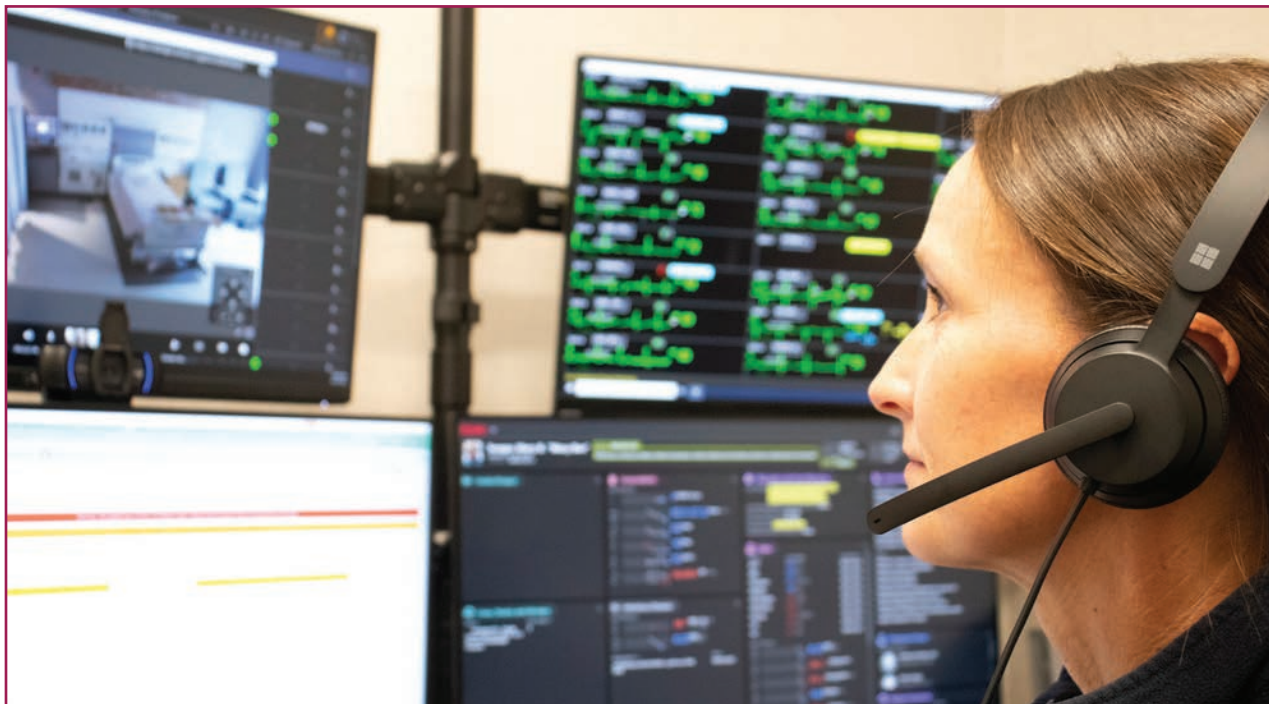
"I just love pediatrics, and I love it more the more I do it," Dr. McVea said.

Following graduation from LSU Medical School and a pediatric residency at Children's Hospital New Orleans — which, in a collision of medicine and romance, is where his wife, Dr. Mary-Elizabeth Lago, also served her pediatric residency — he realized St. Tammany was the perfect fit for him.

Largely that was due to the sense of community and the family focus on which the health system was founded in 1954 — and which it still prides itself on today.

"As a pediatrician and a doctor, I want to be seen as a part of these peoples' lives. I love the bonds I get to have with my patients and their families."

*Dr. Seth McVea is based out of St. Tammany Pediatrics' Mandeville office. He is now accepting new patients. Call (985) 773-1600 to make an appointment. ■*



St. Tammany Health System nurse Michelle Richard speaks with a patient at St. Tammany Parish Hospital from a central location in the hospital. Richard is among the health system's first 'virtual nurses,' part of a pilot program to leverage in-room technology to enhance patient care. (Photo by Tim San Filippo / STHS)

## Latest STHS nursing innovation gives patients a 'guardian angel'

By Mike Scott, [mscott@stph.org](mailto:mscott@stph.org)

Some people call it a "virtual nurse." Others might describe it as a "remote nurse."

St. Tammany Health System Director of Telemetry Medicine Mathilde Lyon has a different way of seeing the newest nursing position at the health system's flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital.

"It's like having a guardian angel," Lyon said recently. "That's the best way to look at it. It's like having an extra set of eyes watching over you, caring for you, while you're in the hospital."

Whatever you call it, the latest healthcare innovation at St. Tammany grew out of the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, as hospitals around the world tried to figure out new ways to conduct routine caregiving tasks — monitoring vital signs, answering patient questions, conducting pain assessments, discussing medications and the like — without needlessly exposing nursing staff to the virus.

As luck would have it, while the pandemic was still going full tilt, STHS construction teams were putting the finishing touches on a leading-edge new patient tower on the health system's main Covington campus. Among other pieces of technology, all of the patient rooms in the new tower came equipped with electronic message

boards outfitted with cameras and microphones.

That gave the nursing team an idea: What if they assigned an experienced, veteran nurse to staff an on-site computer station that would allow her to drop in virtually on patients — almost like a Zoom call — and conduct those routine tasks?

"The idea isn't to replace caregivers at the bedside," Lyon said. "It's to enhance that care, helping with work

that needs to be done to free up caregivers to focus on providing the type of quality bedside care St. Tammany is known for. These nurses will be able to keep our patients safer. It's a second check."

The idea quickly gained steam, and a pilot program was launched in early September on the hospital's 33-bed Telemetry Medicine unit. Plans are in the works to scale it up and expand it to the Adult ICU in coming months.

So far, the virtual nursing program has

been receiving rave reviews from patients and nurses alike.

"It's going to benefit not only the patient," STHS Chief Nursing Officer Kerry Milton said, "but also our team."

Mariah Wallace, the health system's director of Critical Care, agreed, saying, "This is a great representation of the future of nursing." ■

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**It's like having an extra set of eyes watching over you, caring for you, while you're in the hospital."**

*- Mathilde Lyon, director of Telemetry Medicine*

## Coming up Daisies

Four more St. Tammany Health System nurses were honored this summer by the international Daisy Award program for their compassion, commitment and expertise. We thought you'd like to meet them.



That's not just any tutu-wearing nurse. That's St. Tammany Health System's own Brenda Demuth, a nurse in the Surgery Medicine unit at our flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital. Brenda received two Daisy nominations, one from a grateful patient and the other from co-worker and fellow nurse Ashley Rivere, who says Brenda "puts her entire heart and soul in every patient she cares for. ... She brings out the best nurse in me."



STHS nurse Winnie Hernandez works in the hospital's New Family Center, where she elicits smiles daily — including from Baby Colin, pictured, whom she helped deliver. 'I had been planning for an unmedicated birth and asked to have an All Star nurse who could help me reach my goal. Winnie was just that: an All Star,' wrote Colin's mom, Maite Adams, who nominated Winnie for her Daisy. 'She was unbelievably supportive, and I felt very safe under her care.'



Jason Hollingsworth is a nurse in our standalone Mandeville Emergency Department — and an absolute wizard when it comes to drawing blood. That drew the attention of patient Paul Maddox, who was impressed by Jason's bedside manner, his compassion and his pain-free needlework. 'Never had such a fantastic ER experience. He's a keeper,' Mr. Maddox wrote in nominating Jason for the award. Ever committed to his patients, Jason accepted his award politely, plunked it down on his desk and got right back to work.



Pamela Beth 'PB' Pilet, center, wasn't nominated just once for a Daisy, or even twice. She was nominated by three people, including Shirley Blount Bailey, pictured with PB at the top of this page. Bailey, the mother of the patient wrote: 'After witnessing her kindness, consideration and nursing skills, I realized how much a patient's waiting family needs and greatly benefits from the care and presence of the nurse who cares for their loved one in a hospital bed. Our admiration, thankfulness and love for nurse Pamela Beth Pilet will always be.'

# STAT!

Quick hits from the STHS newsroom

On June 26, **U.S. News & World Report** released its regional rankings, which named St. Tammany Health System's flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital as the No. 2 hospital in the New Orleans metro area and the fourth-best in the state. The magazine also recognized the health system for excellence in a **record seven treatment areas**: COPD, heart attack, heart failure, hip fracture, kidney failure, pneumonia and stroke. ... STHS has been named to New Orleans CityBusiness' 2022 list of **Best Places to Work in New Orleans**. ... In July, **STHS President and CEO Joan Coffman** was appointed to a two-year term representing the Louisiana Hospital Association's Northshore District on its Board of Trustees. ... **Fitch Ratings** in August affirmed the health systems "AA" credit rating. ... In September, STHS Trauma Services Manager **Bethany Monistere** was named one of the Great 100 Nurses in Louisiana by the Great 100 Nurses Foundation. ... STHS has been recognized by the American Heart Association with a 2022 **Get With the Guidelines – Stroke Gold Plus achievement award**. The health system was also placed on AHA's **Target: Stroke Honor Roll**. ... The Anticoagulation Forum has once more named the health system an **"Anticoagulation Center of Excellence."** ... In September, the St. Tammany Parenting Center was named a **Certified Autism Center** from the IBCCES, making it the fifth STHS department to earn the designation. ... Congratulations and thanks go to several longtime STHS colleagues who retired recently, including Cafeteria Supervisor **Annie Moses** (22 years of service) and Patient Access Specialist **Cary Visser** (21 years). ■

Is there a St. Tammany Health System nurse you'd like to nominate for a Daisy?  
Find out how at [StTammany.health/ThankYou](https://StTammany.health/ThankYou).



# Making a splash

'Reefie' sculptures add touch of undersea whimsy to hospital campus

By Mike Scott, [msscott@stph.org](mailto:msscott@stph.org)

It started with a fish.

More accurately, it started with two little girls – the rosy-cheeked daughters of Covington artist Robert Post – and his desire to make them smile.

And so, after years of specializing in hyper-realistic wildlife artwork, he decided to swim in a different direction and sketch out a whimsical and colorful cartoon fish. And then another.

And another and another and another.

Flash-forward a couple of decades,

give or take, and nine original undersea sculptures by Post – now employed by a certain animation house in Orlando, Florida (yes, that one) – have found a home at St. Tammany Health System's Covington hospital, where since late August they've been greeting visitors and warming hearts.

"I can't put into words how thankful I am that something that would have for the next 15 or 20 years be laying on the pages of a sketchbook ... can be shared with a lot of people now," Post said recently, standing amid the vibrantly colored, ceiling-mounted aquatic menagerie.

"How do you thank somebody for

something like that?" he continued. "You can't. It's impossible. All I can hope for is it brings some smiles to some faces."

They're already doing that. No sooner were the sculptures installed in late August than they began drawing "oohs" and "aahs" from pint-size visitors to the hospital, according to Nicole Suhre of St. Tammany Hospital Foundation, the charitable organization that commissioned the sculptures as part of its Healing Arts Initiative.

"We've incorporated a lot of different kinds of art into the hospital over the years, from our first piece – a player





piano for our lobby – to paintings and drawings and sculptures of all descriptions,” Suhre said. “Robert’s incredible, vibrant pieces really add something special. The whole goal of the Healing Arts Initiative is to harness the power of art and give people a respite from real-world issues, even if for a moment. Robert’s sculptures certainly do that, and I have a feeling they’re going to make a splash with our patients.”

Eventually, Suhre said, the plan is to have the fish migrate down Highway 21 to a permanent home in a new facility currently being designed for St. Tammany Pediatrics, the health system’s primary care kid clinic that was displaced by 2021’s Hurricane Ida.

That was the original vision of the project when it was first spawned nearly two years ago when, while dining at a local restaurant, Healing Arts Committee member Norma Richard spotted one of Post’s pieces hanging on the wall. It gave her an idea.

With a little shoe-leather detective work, she discovered who the artist was, tracked him down and pitched him on her big idea: to create a school of various undersea creatures – an octopus, a seahorse, a baby shark (doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo) and others – and invite hospital donors to sponsor them.

He was more than willing to take part. So were donors. What started as a group of seven creatures quickly turned to nine – and more may be in the offing.

“I’ve made hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of them. I can’t even count how many sketchbooks we have of drawings,” Post said of his fantastical finned designs, many of which have been turned into small painting kits marketed for children under the brand name “Reefies.”

“A lot of the sculptures we have here on display never existed before except

as drawings,” he said. “This is their first time coming to life as three-dimensional sculptures. That’s exciting to me.”

The process to create each of Post’s creatures is a laborious one, starting with a chicken-wire armature that is then covered with paper, then lots of tape, which is then sanded down to get just the right shape.

“Everything I sculpt, I try to have a lots of soft edges,” he said. “Nothing sharp. Even with the shark, I tried not to put sharp teeth in him. Everything’s soft and happy.”

If those “happy” critters make patients similarly happy, well, then, Post figures he’s done his job.

“There’s enough negative in the world,” Post said. “Hopefully, if we can bring some positive and bring some smiles to some folks – that’s what this is all about. It really is.” ■

“See those side fins on the seahorse? Real seahorses don’t have those,” Post said, explaining that his creatures are intended to be fantastical versions of real animals, not scientifically accurate.



# Art school

A closer look artist Robert Post’s creative process for the school of undersea critters he created for St. Tammany Hospital Foundation’s Healing Arts Initiative.



1 Each sculpture starts as a sketch in one of the many notebooks that Post has filled with creature concepts. Post’s happy fish “was just a little, bitty drawing. I totally forgot I even made the little drawing.”



2 After the foundation selected the sketches of the creatures it wanted, Post started by converting them into “maquettes,” or scale models. Using those as guides, he then scaled each up to full-size.



3 Post’s full-size sculptures are made of chicken wire, covered with layer upon layer of tape, then topped with a layer of fiberglass, which creates a hard shell. “It takes a lot of sanding,” Post said, “but eventually you get to where you have a piece that’s ready to accept the paint.”



4 When they’re ready to paint, the real work begins. Although it takes the most time of all the steps in the process, Post says “it’s my favorite part, because that’s what brings these characters to life.”



5 Post didn’t name the creatures he created for St. Tammany. That honor will belong to the donors who sponsored each sculpture, St. Tammany Hospital Foundation Executive Director Nicole Suhre said.

# Tales from the NICU

Grateful moms help STHS celebrate its snuggliest patients

By Mike Scott, [miscott@stph.org](mailto:miscott@stph.org)

September was Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Awareness Month, and, since St. Tammany Health System's New Family Center has long been the Northshore's premiere maternity unit – with 60,000 babies born since 1954, and counting – we thought we'd ask the parents of some of our snuggliest patients to share their experiences.

Here are their stories.

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*Kathryn Esposito's son was delivered early, at 36 weeks, and had difficulty oxygenating and clearing fluid from his lungs. That led to a four-day stay in St. Tammany Health System's NICU.*

“(What I remember most about my stay in the NICU is) the love and compassion of the nurses that cared for my son. They were understanding and went above and beyond to help not only my son but my husband and me through a very unknown and scary time. (Nurse) Alyssa Callais spent extra time with us, helping me to breastfeed for the first time and answer all of our questions throughout his NICU stay. She was a bright light during his stay in the NICU!”

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*Due to medical complications, Kayla Sanders went into labor at 23 weeks. The staff did what they could to stop the labor, but an emergency C-section was required to save the life of both her and her son, Judah, who stayed in the St. Tammany Health System NICU for 16 weeks.*

“The staff took excellent care of Judah, both as professionals and people who cared about him and his family. Every milestone reached was celebrated, and every time we had



Recent 'graduates' of the St. Tammany Health System Neonatal Intensive Care Unit include, from left, Peter Shepherd, Ethan King Boston and Judah Sanders. (Submitted photos)

a setback, they were there to answer all our questions, hold our hands and encourage us. They always had a plan to go forward. As a mother, leaving your very fragile child is an emotion only mothers can relate to. I visited during the day, in the middle of the night and I never met a nurse that I didn't feel was giving Judah the utmost care and compassion. I could leave knowing he was in good hands.”

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*E'Laine Robinson has had all of her children at St. Tammany Health System. However, her youngest, Ethan King Boston, was born at 25 weeks, necessitating a 112-day stay in the St. Tammany NICU due to premature lung development.*

“The main memories I have from his stay in the NICU is feeling hopeless and helpless and how the staff made sure I was in the loop with everything pertaining to my baby. ... (I'm) grateful to have had such caring and understanding staff to take care of my baby.”

.....

*Kalicca Pistorius is a stay-at-home-mom who is a former nurse at*

*St. Tammany Health System, so she knew that “St. Tammany is the best ‘baby-making’ hospital around.” After working a shift one day, her blood pressure rose to dangerous levels, so she returned to the hospital and was admitted. Two days later, her son was born at 32 weeks and 5 days. He would stay in the NICU for 33 days.*

“The nurses were AMAZING! My son was under bili lights for the first few days, and I would come and they would let me hold him and love on him. They were very informative every step of the way! ... It was a good experience for what it was. No one wants to leave their baby at the hospital and go home. There were lots of tears, lots of stress, but we were blessed! We had a great hospital family taking care of the baby.”

.....

The St. Tammany Health System NICU is a 14-bed Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit operating as part of the health system's celebrated New Family Center. ■

*Learn more about the New Family Center, and take a video tour, at [StTammany.health/NewFamily](http://StTammany.health/NewFamily).*

Read these grateful mothers' full stories, and learn more about St. Tammany Health System's New Family Center, at [StTammany.health/NewFamily](http://StTammany.health/NewFamily).

# St. Tammany Parenting Center Toy Guide 2022

Christmas is coming, which means it's time to start looking for the perfect presents to bring joy to the faces of the all little ones in your life. As you make your list (and check it twice!), the elves at the St. Tammany Parenting Center have come up with a list of their own to help you find safe and age-appropriate gifts for all the kids on your list. Find a sampling of it here, and find the full guide at [StTammany.health/News/ToyGuide2022](https://StTammany.health/News/ToyGuide2022). Here's wishing you a joyous holiday season, from our St. Tammany Health System family to yours!

## For Children 0 – 3



iPlay, iLearn Bouncy Pals Cow



Silicone Rainbow Stacker Puzzle, 10-Piece Rainbow Stacking Toy



RenFox Musical Mats Keyboard Piano Play Mat



Springflower Wooden Toddler Jigsaw

## For Children 3 – 5



Do A Dot Art! Brilliant Colors Six-Pack Washable Paint Dot Markers



Magnetic Blocks Magnet Toys for Toddlers



Play-Doh Ice Cream Truck Playset



Klipkonn Construction Toys with Play Mat

## For Children 5 – 8



EzyRoller Classic Ride On - Lime Green



Lulu Jr. IlluStory Book Making Kit, Multicolor



The Big Book of Silly Jokes for Kids



New Stomp Rocket Dueling Stomp Racers

## For Children 8 – 12



The Lego Ideas Book: Unlock Your Imagination Hardcover



Play22 Kids Adjustable Basketball Hoop Height 5 - 7 Feet



Aikmi Walkie Talkies for Kids 22-Channel Two-Way Radio



Art 101 Doodle and Color 142-Piece Art Set in Wood Carrying Case

## Donor spotlight: Community comes first at Metairie Bank

By Mike Scott, [mscott@stph.org](mailto:mscott@stph.org)

The quarters were decidedly cramped in early September when Metairie Bank's Michael Gennaro, Paul A. Myers and John LeBlanc crammed shoulder to shoulder in the pediatric inpatient exam room at St. Tammany Health System's Covington hospital.

The space originally had been designed for children, but to all those watching, it felt like a perfect fit anyway.

Five years earlier, Metairie Bank's then-President and CEO Ron Samford Jr., along with the bank's Northshore Market President Paul Myers, visited the health system's flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital to present a gift to the St. Tammany Hospital Foundation in support of the STHS Parenting Center. This gift, a multi-year sponsorship of the annual Monster Mash fundraiser, would be the first of what has been numerous donations made by the bank in support of the health system's mission and families on the Northshore.

In September, the health system and the foundation returned the



Why is this group smiling? In September, they – Metairie Bank's Michael Gennaro, Paul A. Myers and John LeBlanc – joined St. Tammany Health System and St. Tammany Hospital Foundation leadership for the dedication of the exam room in the health system's inpatient pediatrics unit. (Photo by Mike Scott / STHS)

favor during a ceremony in which the pediatric exam room was dedicated in honor of the community-minded financial institution's generosity.

"Not only have they donated more than \$115,000 to support the great work that the Parenting Center does for the families in our community, but they have donated the ultimate gift of their time in support of our mission," the foundation's Melanie Rudolph said.

She continued: "We could not ask for better partners, better friends and ... we are proud to permanently have their name etched on the walls of our hospital in support of the children and families in our community who need us most."

Moments later, Myers was invited to unveil the plaque outside the exam room. Inside, a second plaque was installed to honor the memory of Samford, who died in January but whose generosity lives on through the bank's support of the health system.

"Since 2017, we have enjoyed working with countless Parenting Center, hospital and foundation staff to present Monster Mash," Myers said. "And today, we could not be more excited about this opportunity to further our partnership. With all the technological advancements in both healthcare and banking, everything still comes down to people, trust and relationships." ■

## Beloved tradition returns to benefit Hospice of St. Tammany



By Mike Scott, [mscott@stph.org](mailto:mscott@stph.org)

For many, the year-end holidays are all about tradition, and one of the Northshore's most touching traditions continues Dec. 8 with St. Tammany Hospital Foundation's 2022 Angels of Light ceremony, an annual tree-lighting ceremony held to honor or memorialize friends, neighbors and members of the community.

Between now and the big day, members of the community are invited to purchase "tribute angels" in the name of their loved ones to adorn the Tree for Life, which will stand in the

lobby of the health system's Covington hospital throughout the holiday season.

Proceeds from the event will support Hospice of St. Tammany.

"It really is a beautiful event on multiple levels," St. Tammany Hospital Foundation's Melanie Rudolph said. "On one hand, the trees themselves are simply gorgeous, but the love on display is even more so. This event is the highlight of the holidays for many local residents, and the foundation is proud to be a part of what has truly become a special tradition." ■



St. Tammany Hospital Foundation Executive Director Nicole Suhre addresses those gathered at the 2021 Angels of Light tree-lighting ceremony. (STHS photo)

For more information on Angels of Light, including how you can purchase a tribute angel, visit [www.STHfoundation.org/Angels](http://www.STHfoundation.org/Angels) or contact Rudolph at (985) 898-4141 or [mrudolph@stph.org](mailto:mrudolph@stph.org).

# Taste the 'rainbow'

New cooking demo series celebrates local veggies



While some home cooks might be intimidated by ratatouille, Chef Dave Solazzo of Del Porto Ristorante in Covington says his fuss-free version is simple. "Anyone with a stovetop, an oven and basic skills should be able to make it," he said. (Photo by Tory Mansfield / STHS)

By Mike Scott, [mscott@stph.org](mailto:mscott@stph.org)

For Chef David Solazzo of Del Porto Ristorante in Covington, the calculus is simple: fresh equals flavor.

For the folks at Healthier Northshore, fresh also equals healthy.

So it was only natural for Solazzo to serve as the guest chef Sept. 19 for the inaugural installment of Healthier Northshore's quarterly Eat Well, Live Well cooking demonstration series, designed to promote healthier food choices by incorporating fresh vegetables from local gardens.

"Nutrition and access to healthy food choices are the hallmarks of Healthier Northshore," said Anne Pablovich of St. Tammany Health System, one of numerous local organizations united under the Healthier Northshore banner. "At the same time, Chef Dave is known for his use of fresh, local vegetables. So, this cooking demo is really a match made in culinary heaven."

Working in the newly completed classroom kitchen at the Samaritan Center in Mandeville, Solazzo whipped up his Gulf Shrimp with Ratatouille.

"At this time of year, the markets are full of eggplants, zucchini,

tomatoes, summer squash," Solazzo said. "All of those ingredients are included in ratatouille."

While he acknowledged that some home cooks might be intimidated by ratatouille, Solazzo's fuss-free version has the benefits of being easy to make while also maximizing the flavors of all those fresh veggies.

"One of the things health professionals tell us is to 'eat a rainbow.' As you can see, this is pretty close to being a rainbow," he said.

Through the generosity of the American Heart Association and its Go Red for Women sponsor Amy Brumfield, all attendees at the event were given a box containing the fresh ingredients necessary to re-create Solazzo's recipe.

"And that's really the point," Pablovich said. "The goal is to provide people with the tools they need to re-create dishes like this all on their own. Judging by the smiles on the faces I'm seeing, I think we've done that." ■

*Find a schedule of upcoming events hosted by Healthier Northshore at [HealthierNorthshore.health](http://HealthierNorthshore.health).*



## Chef Dave's Shrimp Ratatouille

Yield: 6-8 servings

### Ingredients:

1 pound Gulf shrimp	2 bunches fresh basil (or 1½ tablespoon dried)
1 large eggplant	1 bunch fresh oregano
2 zucchini	(or 1½ tablespoon dried)
2 summer squash	1 bunch flat-leaf parsley
2 vine-ripe tomatoes	(or 1½ tablespoon dried)
1 red bell pepper	salt to taste
1 yellow bell pepper	pepper to taste
½ cup peeled garlic cloves	olive oil

### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
- While oven is heating up, coarsely chop garlic and set aside. Cut zucchini, squash, bell peppers and eggplant into random, roughly bite-sized pieces. Separately, dice tomatoes.
- Drizzle two 9x11-inch baking dishes with 1-2 tablespoons each of olive oil. Divide diced tomatoes between both dishes, season lightly with some of the salt, pepper and herbs, then put dishes in preheated oven.
- On stovetop, add 1 to 2 tablespoons of olive oil to skillet on high heat. Just when olive oil begins to smoke, add just enough zucchini, squash, bell pepper and eggplant to cover the bottom of the pan, and sauté until vegetables begin to brown.
- Add about a tablespoon of garlic and a sprinkling of basil, oregano and parsley. Continue sautéing briefly, about 30 seconds, until garlic releases its aroma. (Be careful not to burn garlic.)
- Add sautéed vegetables to baking dishes with tomatoes, and continue baking in oven.
- Sauté remaining vegetables in batches as described above, dividing each batch between baking dishes when done.
- Once all vegetables have been added to baking dishes, continue baking in oven for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, sauté the shrimp in a skillet, seasoning to taste.
- Remove baking dishes from oven and gently mix tomatoes and vegetables, adding seasoning to desired taste.
- Serve with a portion of shrimp on top.



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

## TICKET TO RIDE

A partial list of upcoming events at which St. Tammany Health System's Be Well Bus or the Sheriff's Office pink-wrapped Chevy Tahoe will be in attendance. Additionally, watch for giveback events at local "Pink Partner" businesses that have signed up to host fundraisers to benefit Northshore breast cancer treatment.

**Pelican Athletic Club, Mandeville**  
Oct. 18 | 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**St. Tammany Physicians Network – Madisonville**  
Oct. 19 | 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Franco's Athletic Club, Madisonville**  
Oct. 20 | 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**34th annual Monster Mash, Bogue Falaya Park**  
Oct. 22 | 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Acquistapace United in Pink Event**  
Oct. 25 | 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Franco's Athletic Club, Mandeville**  
Oct. 27 | 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**St. Tammany Parish Justice Center in Covington**  
Oct. 28 | 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Mandeville Trailhead, 675 Lafitte St.**  
Oct. 29 | 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Trunk or Treat, Magnolia Park**  
Oct. 29 | 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

**St. Tammany Physicians Network – Folsom**  
Nov. 2 | 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**St. Tammany Physicians Network – Folsom**  
Nov. 9 | 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**St. Tammany Physicians Network – Madisonville**  
Nov. 16 | 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Bush Community Center, 81605 Highway 41**  
Nov. 23 | 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

See a calendar of Pink Partner events at [STHfoundation.org/PinkEvents](http://STHfoundation.org/PinkEvents).



# (Re)united in Pink

STHS rallies community for breast cancer month

By Mike Scott, [mccott@stph.org](mailto:mccott@stph.org)

It was November 2021, and Jack Khashou – wearing a tie with pink accents – stood before a room of local community and healthcare stakeholders gathered to celebrate the success of St. Tammany Health System and St. Tammany Hospital Foundation's inaugural United in Pink breast cancer awareness campaign.

Moments earlier, it had been announced the campaign had raised more than \$35,000 for Northshore cancer care in just one month's time. It was then and there that Khashou, the administrator of St. Tammany Cancer Center, a campus of Ochsner Medical Center, promised that the monthlong event would be back in October 2022.

"We can't stop now," Khashou said. "... If you catch (cancer) early, you change the outcome. It saves lives. It really does. There's no other way to say it."

Delivering on that promise, the foundation – in partnership with St. Tammany Health System, the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office, local businesses and others – is gearing up for the return of United in Pink.

Call it Re-United in Pink.

Once again, the campaign will run all October long. Once again, it will operate with the primary

goal of providing easy, convenient mammograms to as many local women as possible and educating the community on how to support breast cancer care on the Northshore. And, also once again, the health system's Be Well Bus – a 40-foot mobile health unit equipped with leading-edge mammography equipment – will lead the charge.

It all started Sept. 30, with a special appearance of the bus and a pink-wrapped Sheriff's Office vehicle – which people will be able to sign in exchange for a nominal donation to local cancer care – in the St. Tammany Parish Fair Parade.

From there, the Be Well Bus embarked on a monthlong tour of the parish, visiting health clinics, festivals and other community events to offer convenient mammograms to local residents.

"Breast cancer awareness is a big deal, and so we figured we'd go big with United in Pink," St. Tammany Hospital Foundation Executive Director Nicole Suhre said. "Last year, the community responded with resounding support, and we can't wait to build on it this year and continue our mission of delivering world-class healthcare close to home – including potentially life-saving mammograms – for everyone on the Northshore." ■

# Home, sweet home

There's a reason the Northshore is a great place to live: you



STHF Executive Director Nicole Suhre

**“Our health system has been providing world-class healthcare to this community since 1954 and will continue to do so for generations to come.”**

They say changing the world starts at home. I quite love this sentiment. You see, St. Tammany Health System is all about “home.” Our health system has been providing world-class healthcare to this community since 1954 and will continue to do so for generations to come.

They are the second-largest employer in St. Tammany Parish, fueling the economy of the Northshore and providing jobs to the residents who live here so they can work near home.

From birthing the new babies who will call St. Tammany and its surrounding parishes home, to the compassionate care provided to the patients who come through its emergency departments, hospital rooms, surgical suites or physicians offices, our health system is deeply committed to the health and well-being of its patients, its colleagues, its visitors and its community partnerships.

At St. Tammany Hospital Foundation, we work every day with our generous donors to change the world – or at least our little corner of it – through the support provided to our mission. Our foundation board is committed to raising funds to help STHS advance its healing work, improve access to quality healthcare and expand specialty care. We can't do this without you.

We invite you to bring your energy, passion and resources to our foundation. Together, we can change our world – our home – by improving the well-being and quality of life for the family, friends and neighbors who share it with us. Visit our website at [sthfoundation.org](http://sthfoundation.org) to learn more about the mission of St. Tammany Hospital Foundation and how your donation can truly make a difference.

Thank you for all you do to make our home a better place!

Sincerely,

Nicole Suhre, CFRE  
STHF executive director

## Foundation calendar Save the dates!



### MONSTER MASH

Oct. 22, 2022 | Bogue Falaya Park

St. Tammany gets in touch with its spooky side with the 34th edition of its not-so-scary Halloween celebration, presented by Metairie Bank Northshore and featuring family-friendly games, costumes, silent auction, trick-or-treating and more. Proceeds benefit the STHS Parenting Center.

Details: [DoTheMash.org](http://DoTheMash.org) | (985) 898-4435

### GIVING TUESDAY

Nov. 29, 2022 | 24 hours of giving

Giving Tuesday is an international day of giving. Give back to the community by showing your support to St. Tammany Hospital Foundation. Visit [www.sthfoundation.org/GivingTuesday](http://www.sthfoundation.org/GivingTuesday) or call (985) 898-4174 to make a donation on Nov. 29.

Details: [STHfoundation.org/GivingTuesday](http://STHfoundation.org/GivingTuesday)

### ANGELS OF LIGHT

Dec. 8, 2022 | 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: [STHfoundation.org/Angels](http://STHfoundation.org/Angels) | (985) 898-4141



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*World-Class Healthcare. Close to Home.*



## Ready to reach new heights?

At St. Tammany Health System, we work hard to provide nothing less than world-class healthcare close to home for our neighbors on the Northshore of Lake Pontchartrain. To deliver it, we are committed to attracting and retaining the very best professionals for every position in our health system.

Search STHS job openings and apply today.

[StTammany.health/Recruitment](https://StTammany.health/Recruitment)