

Vol. 22, No. 2/ Spring 2026



# Heart to Heart

A publication of St. Tammany Health System

## All heart

The Cardiology Center at St. Tammany Health System opens, transforming heart care on the Northshore, p. 8

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WORLD-CLASS CARDIO CARE. CLOSE TO HOME.



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# Gratefully Yours

## A new beginning – and a renewed commitment to patient-centered care



Joan Coffman, STHS President and CEO

At St. Tammany Health System, our commitment to patient-centered care is not simply a goal. It is a promise we renew every day, a fitting reflection as spring brings its own sense of renewal and new beginnings.

That promise is on full display in our newly introduced Cardiology Center at St. Tammany Health System, the focus of this issue of Heart to Heart. Designed with our patients at the forefront, this leading-edge facility brings a wide range

of outpatient heart services together under one roof,

making care more convenient, more coordinated

and more compassionate.

It reflects our ongoing investment in innovation and quality, while also keeping the experience of every patient and family at the center of all we do.

You will see that same commitment reflected throughout this issue in different, but equally meaningful, ways.

- You will meet Ruth Klein, a Mandeville grandmother whose handmade creations have brought comfort and joy to countless pediatric patients.
- You will learn about the Parenting Center's new Koop Drive home and what it means for growing families across our region.
- We share updates on expanded services at Money Hill, helping us extend care closer to home for those in the Bush-Sun area.
- And we spotlight Patrick Mauti, the newest member of the St. Tammany Health Foundation Board of Trustees, whose heart for service continues a remarkable family legacy.

Each of these stories reflects the people, partnerships and purpose that define St. Tammany Health System as well as the community we are honored to serve.

As we move together through this season, I wish you and your loved ones continued health and well-being. Thank you, as ever, for trusting St. Tammany Health System with your family's healthcare.

Gratefully,



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

# STAT!

Quick hits from the STHS newsroom

## By STHS Communication Department

In January, the Adult Critical Care Unit at St. Tammany Health System's flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital was recognized with a gold-level Beacon Award for Excellence from **the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses** for 2025. ... Also in January, STHS's Home Health team received Home Health Heart Failure certification from the **American Heart Association** in recognition of its alignment with AHA's rigorous, science-based standards for heart failure patients. ... In February, the STHS Parenting Center was recognized as a **Gold Level Safe Sitter Provider** after teaching more than 125 students in a single year across its Safe Sitter programming. ... In March, **Newsweek** named St. Tammany Parish Hospital one of the best hospitals in America and the fifth-best hospital in the state of Louisiana as part of the publication's 2026 World's Best Hospitals rankings. ... Also in March, STHS's Home Health Department was recognized by **U.S. News & World Report** as one of the nation's Best Home Health agencies for 2026, earning a "High Performing" rating, the highest possible designation. ... Congratulations to longtime STHS colleagues **Freda Darby** (46 years at the health system), **Royce Keaton** (36 years), **Michelle Chaix** (32 years) and **Eric Brewster** (29 years), all of whom retired from STHS in the first quarter of 2026. ■



Members of St. Tammany Health System's Critical Care team gather for a photo during a celebration of their recent Beacon Award recognition. (STHS photo)

## Beacon of excellence

### Adult Critical Care Unit earns gold-level recognition

#### By STHS Communication Department

**T**he Adult Critical Care Unit at St. Tammany Health System's flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital has been recognized with a gold-level Beacon Award for Excellence from the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses for 2025, a recognition of its demonstrated dedication to delivery of high-quality critical care.

St. Tammany is one of only three Louisiana institutions to receive the recognition and the only one on the Northshore.

The Beacon Award recognizes hospital units that demonstrate sustained, high-level performance across key measures, including patient outcomes, nursing practice, quality improvement and workplace culture. Units earning a gold designation

must show a consistent commitment to evidence-based care, patient safety, interdisciplinary collaboration and staff engagement. The award also underscores the importance of environments that support professional growth, teamwork and retention — all essential to delivering high-quality critical care.

"The Beacon Award is a highly respected recognition, and earning it speaks to the exceptional commitment of the nurses and care teams in our Adult Critical Care Unit," STHS Assistant Vice President — Critical Care Teresa Krutzfeldt said. "This honor reflects the compassion, clinical excellence and teamwork our colleagues bring to patients and families every day. I am incredibly proud of the dedication and professionalism that made this achievement possible." ■

# And the winners are...

*Celebrating excellence in the St. Tammany Health System family*



1) In January, St. Tammany Health System celebrated colleagues marking five years of service with a luncheon ceremony during which each received a commemorative pin. 2) Patient Access Specialist Monica Payan and her fan club celebrate her receiving of a Sunflower Award for her support of the nursing mission at STHS. 3) Daisy Award-winning STHS nurse Laine Orser, left, receives an embrace from patient Kelli Ann Boatright, who nominated her for the award for the fourth quarter of 2025. 4) Recipients of the spring 2026 STHS Board of Commissioners' Nursing and Allied Health Scholarships gather for a group photo after a ceremony on Jan. 13 at St. Tammany Health System's flagship St. Tammany Parish Hospital. Together, the scholarships awarded this cycle total \$131,750. 5) STHS nurse Mary Moore, center, takes a congratulatory photo with, from left, President and CEO Joan Coffman, AVP-Nursing Kathy Felps, Director of Adult Health Bryan Farrar and Chief Nursing Officer Kerry Milton after Mary was presented with a Daisy Award for the fourth quarter of 2025. 6) Maintenance Mechanic Jim Gille poses for a photo after learning he won a Sunflower Award for his support of the nursing mission for the fourth quarter of 2025. 7) STHS Chief Nursing Officer Kerry Milton, left, surprises Critical Care nurse Afton Layrison with a fourth-quarter 2025 Daisy Award.



# Hooked on compassion

Meet the Mandeville grandmother whose crocheting skills have brightened the day for 2,500 pediatric patients at St. Tammany Parish Hospital

*Story by Mike Scott | Photos by Tory Mansfield*

**R**uth Klein's story is very much the heartwarming yarn, and every stitch of it happens to be true.

It is the type of story best told backward, so we will start at the end. That would be at the pediatrics unit of St. Tammany Parish Hospital — and, more recently, the year-old St. Tammany Health System Surgery Center — where more than 2,500 children in total have had their hospital stay brightened by one

of Ruth's colorful crocheted and knitted creations over the past 10 years or so.

Here, there be dragons. There be



Mandeville resident Ruth Klein shares a laugh from beneath an armload of her colorful crocheted and knitted creations, which she has been making and donating to St. Tammany Health System to be gifted to pediatric patients for the past decade.

kittens. There are also racoons and tigers and foxes, alongside all manner of fantastical creatures that defy taxonomic classification. Each is

stitched by hand, one loop at a time.

"Everybody loves the octopus because they can run their fingers through it, so it's good for the little ones," Ruth said recently from the sofa of her Mandeville home, where she was putting the finishing touches on a particularly huggable penguin.

Crafting runs deep in her family. "I actually started knitting when I was 5," she said, adding that she remembers helping her mother make socks. Later, her own daughters would take up crafting as well, one beginning at age 3. A granddaughter, now a volleyball player at Oberlin-Henry College, knits sweaters for family members.

Ruth's plush-making journey began in earnest about 10 years ago at the request of Lizzy, another of her four grandchildren.

"She was making a





**"I'm really a very content person. But I see that there's all kinds of hardships all around, and so I just like to help out where I can." - Ruth Klein, Mandeville**

project for earning a silver star for Girl Scouts, and the project they were doing was making animals for the surgery center at St. Tammany," Ruth said. "They were also asking if they couldn't interest someone else to do it, and of course she hit me up because I'm the one who taught her. I said, 'Sure!'"

That "sure" turned into a calling. Depending on the pattern and materials, a single animal can take her anywhere from a few hours to a full week to complete. "The time depends on what size hook or needle I use," she said.

Yarn thickness plays a role, too. Her most recent delivery included a batch of ogres that came out unusually large thanks to especially chunky yarn.

The yarn often comes from the community itself. Nurses and others who hear about her work keep an eye out when cleaning out attics or craft closets.

"When they come across yarn, they send it my way," she said.

When hitting her stride, she can crank out a plush a day, crafted while she's watching TV or just enjoying some quiet time. When she's done, her finished creation earns a place of honor — albeit a temporary one — in her kitchenette, so her family can admire her handiwork before it heads off to do its spirits-lifting duty.

Every couple of months, she lets the Surgery Center folks know she's got a new batch to share with their patients.

Because of patient privacy laws, she has never personally witnessed a child receiving one of her

creations. Still, she keeps a letter from a young boy who once wrote to thank her for the

fox she made him. The note is a reminder that even unseen kindness

has impact.

As it turns out, service has long been woven into Ruth's

life. Born in Switzerland, she came to the United States with her family in 1955. She raised four children, then returned to school in her late 20s to become a biology and math teacher. Later, she served as principal of an alternative high school in New York.

"I really treasured working with those boys and girls," she said, adding that they can excel just like anyone else, "with a little understanding."

Ruth eventually made her way to St. Tammany Parish after one of her daughters decided to move south.

"She wanted to go where it was warm; it was just too cold," she said.

Wanting to be close to her grandchildren, Ruth followed. Then came Lizzy's request and, from there, the animals kept coming.

The staff at the Surgery Center describe her as "an angel." Ruth shrugs off that sort of talk.

"I'm really a very content person," she said. "But I see that there's all kinds of hardships all around, and so I just like to help out where I can." ■

*Visit [StTammany.health/Volunteer](https://www.sttammanyhealth.org/Volunteer) to learn how you can become a St. Tammany Health System volunteer.*





# All Heart

State-of-the-art outpatient facility unites heart care services under one roof

**By STHS Communication Department**

In a transformational moment for heart care on the Northshore, the new Cardiology Center at St. Tammany Health System was officially dedicated March 25 during a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by health system leadership, members of the medical community and local public officials.

The 22,000-square-foot facility, located across South Tyler Street from St. Tammany Parish Hospital, represents a strategic step forward in how outpatient cardio care is delivered on the Northshore, aligning services, technology and clinical expertise in a purpose-built environment designed for maximum efficiency and minimal patient anxiety.

This centralization of cardiology procedures and diagnostics under one roof streamlines the patient journey from diagnosis through recovery, according to St. Tammany Health System President and CEO Joan Coffman.

“Why is that so important?” Coffman said. “Because it means easier access, less stress and a more personal experience from the moment a patient arrives – and if you know us at St. Tammany Health System, you know the patient experience is a key driver of our approach to delivering world-class care close to home for our Northshore neighbors.”

Incorporating input from the care providers who will work there, every detail of the center was designed with the patient in mind, with a specific goal of providing a more accessible, less fragmented care journey. Health system leaders said the move reflects a nationwide trend toward outpatient cardiovascular care and aims to increase capacity to meet the needs of the growing Northshore community while also improving convenience and reducing stress for patients.

Among other things, the center includes:

- Two fully equipped cardiac catheterization labs, with

St. Tammany Health System President and CEO Joan Coffman welcomes guests to the ribbon-cutting ceremony for The Cardiology Center at St. Tammany Health System.

the ability to expand to add a third should patient volumes require it.

- Four echocardiography and vascular ultrasound rooms.
- Two noninvasive cardiology procedure rooms for stress testing, transesophageal echocardiograms and cardioversion.
- Fifteen pre- and post-procedure rooms.

The facility opened with 17 full-time employees and is expected to grow to 35 staff members when fully operational.

The inpatient cardiovascular program at St. Tammany Parish Hospital, including its four catheterization labs, remains unchanged and separate from the new outpatient Cardiology Center.

As with the health system's dozens of other facilities in the community, The Cardiology Center at St. Tammany Health System features original works of local artists — including Peggy Hesse, Mary Helen Seago and Rachelle Woodard — provided through the nonprofit St. Tammany Health Foundation's award-winning Healing Arts Initiative.

Taken together, the center represents a meaningful step forward in meeting the region's growing demand for cardiovascular care, delivering advanced treatment in a setting designed not only for clinical excellence, but for the comfort and confidence of every patient who walks through its doors. ■

*The Cardiology Center at St. Tammany Health System is on the third floor of the Charles A. Frederick Medical Office Complex at 1203 S. Tyler St., which is connected to St. Tammany Parish Hospital by a pedestrian skybridge spanning Tyler Street.*



1) St. Tammany Health System leaders and local stakeholders gather on March 25, 2026, to cut the ribbon on The Cardiology Center at St. Tammany Health System, located across the pedestrian Skybridge from St. Tammany Parish Hospital in Covington. 2) A peek inside one of the 15 pre- and post-procedure rooms at the new Cardiology Center. 3) STHS Chief Operating Officer Jack Khashou delivers remarks ahead of the ribbon cutting. 4) St. Tammany Parish Councilman Larry Rolling and STHS President and CEO Joan Coffman. 5) Guests eager to get a first peek at The Cardiology Center at St. Tammany Health System gather in a hallway outside the new center ahead of its ribbon-cutting on Wednesday, March 25. The center occupies the entire third floor of the Charles A. Frederick Medical Office Complex at 1203 S. Tyler St., which is connected to St. Tammany Parish Hospital by a pedestrian skybridge spanning Tyler Street.

# Tiny Topics | Teaching children to play nice and share

*Tiny Topics is an occasional series from the St. Tammany Health System Parenting Center covering issues affecting today's families. Today's focus: Sharing and sibling fighting.*

**By Kayli Coleman MA,  
STHS Parenting Center**

In our last Tiny Topics column, we discussed the many benefits of apologizing and using manners, and different ways adults can support children in learning these skills. Today, we will explore a similar topic many parents and adults find frustrating and prevalent: sibling arguing and resistance to sharing.

Outside of maintaining parents' sanity, teaching children how to share and manage conflicts comes with several positive outcomes. Research has shown that children who are taught sharing skills tend to be more generous, are happier, understand fairness and are more likely to engage in helping behaviors.

Children with conflict resolution skills typically also have developed problem-solving skills, critical thinking, compromise and alternative perspectives, among many more abilities.

Like teaching children how to apologize or use manners, forced sharing is also ineffective. Children learn through play, using time to explore their environments and experience trial and error. This helps to develop focus, increase concentration, and foster curiosity and reasoning skills. When children are engaged with an object or activity and are interrupted by an adult or another child, this learning process is disrupted

and can leave the child feeling frustrated and less than cooperative.

Regardless of the length of time a child has been engaged with the toy or task, halting their play to force them to share can reduce their internal motivation to learn. They might also develop a negative association with



collaborating with others. Obviously, there are times when play must stop for bedtime, meals or other obligations, but this type of transition is different.

Instead of forced sharing, adults can increase sharing by giving children the language they need to communicate that they are not done playing and need more time. Adults can model boundaries by teaching children to say, "I am not done yet. You can have a turn when I am finished."

Additionally, children can learn how to ask to play with something they are interested in by saying, "Can I play with that when you are done?" When children can communicate their needs and feel as though they have been heard and respected, they are more likely to share the toys when they are done, and the other child is more likely to wait patiently.

The process of learning how to share also means that adults should not allow children to guard or gatekeep toys. When children put them down or walk away from toys,

parents can help them understand that they have given up that toy to allow other friends to play with it and now they will need to wait until that child is finished with their turn.

There are often instances when multiple children begin to fight over the same toy or activity. Instead of stepping in and resolving the conflict, adults can act as a guide for children to learn conflict resolution themselves. This can be done when parents act as a narrator as opposed to a referee, stating, "I see

two children who are both excited to play with the same toy. It can be really frustrating when another friend wants the toy you would like to play with. I wonder what we can do so that everyone can take a turn."

From there, adults can help children navigate problem solving.

Over time, and with patient and supportive adults, children will begin to identify problems on their own and empathically solve those conflicts with their peers. This often results in less tension and stress for parents, too. ■



*Kayli Coleman MA is an educator with the St. Tammany Health System Parenting Center, which since 1987 has worked to promote confidence and competence in parents, encourage optimal development for their children, and enhance the well-being of local families as a whole. Learn more about the Parenting Center's programs at [StTammany.health/ParentingCenter](https://StTammany.health/ParentingCenter).*

# HOME SWEET HOME

STHS Parenting Center finds its forever home on Koop Drive

By *STHS Communication Department*

**W**ith blue skies overhead and a playground buzzing nearby, St. Tammany

Health System leaders and local dignitaries gathered April 7 to cut the ribbon on the STHS Parenting Center's new forever home on Koop Drive.

The 3,000-square-foot facility — the fourth home for the Parenting Center since its 1987 founding — sits adjacent to both the Kids Konnection playground and the Tammany Trace recreation trail, offering a central, convenient hub for families across St. Tammany Parish.

"The new space is open, welcoming and designed with families in mind, making it easier than ever to learn and grow together," St. Tammany Health System President and CEO Joan Coffman said. "This is a welcoming facility that will last for generations."

She added: "This space offers opportunities for play, exploration and learning in a healthy environment."



St. Tammany Health System Parenting Center Manager Lori Cage, center — surrounded by colleagues and local dignitaries — cuts the ribbon on the new Parenting Center facility on Koop Drive on April 7, 2026. (Photo by Tory Mansfield/STHS)



Intern Savannah Keller waits her turn as Parenting Center Educator Kayli Coleman adds her signature to a mat that will frame out a ribbon-cutting photo in commemoration of the opening of the Parenting Center's new location. (Photo by Mike Scott/STHS)

We look forward to many years in this space and many years of collaboration with our community partners — St. Tammany Parish Government and the Tammany Trace Foundation — as we work together to bring our services to our youngest citizens and connect our families."

The new Parenting Center, which



Since its inception in 1987 by a group of local mothers, the St. Tammany Health System Parenting Center has moved four times. Parenting Center Manager Lori Cage, center, has been there for all four. (Photo by Tory Mansfield/STHS)

occupies the parish's former Kids Town building, features dedicated classroom space, a separate crafting area, indoor play areas and a fenced outdoor play yard with an array of toys and equipment.

It is open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. weekdays. Learn more at [StTammany.health/ParentingCenter](https://StTammany.health/ParentingCenter). ■

## Money Hill clinic offers cardiology, pulmonary care

By *STHS Communication Department*

Earlier this year, St. Tammany Health System announced an expansion cardiology and pulmonology services to the St. Tammany Physician's Network primary care clinic at Money Hill.

As of February, Dr. Bekir Melek offers cardiology services at the clinic on a biweekly basis. Pulmonary services are

also offered on a biweekly schedule, provided by Dr. Clifford Coile.

Since opening in spring 2025, the St. Tammany Physician's Network clinic at Money Hill has served as an access point for locals in need of preventive care, chronic disease management, lab work, radiology services and more, often with same-day appointments.

The St. Tammany Physician's Network Clinic at Money Hill is located at 79630 Louisiana 21 in Bush. It operates Mondays through Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Visit [StTammany.health/STPNmoneyhill](https://StTammany.health/STPNmoneyhill) to learn more or call (985) 878-4001 to schedule an appointment. ■



St. Tammany Health System colleagues are joined by representatives from the state-level and national-level Bridge program on a tour of the St. Tammany Parish Hospital Emergency Department on Tuesday, March 31, 2025. (Photo by Mike Scott/STHS)

# Meeting the moment

## Front-line approach to addiction care takes shape in the ED

By STHS Communication Department

**A**t St. Tammany Health System, a new approach to addiction care is meeting patients where they are — in the emergency room — and offering treatment when it can matter most: in the moment they are ready to accept help.

That philosophy underpins the Bridge program, an evidence-based model designed to turn brief emergency visits into pathways for long-term recovery. On March 31, representatives from the state and national Bridge organizations met with a team from the health system to share best practices and identify opportunities to build on the program's early rollout.

The visit began with a breakfast session for the hospital's multidisciplinary Bridge implementation committee, led by Bridge representatives

and focused on strengthening the health system's approach to substance-use intervention.

The session focused on the Bridge model, which identifies patients with substance-use disorders — particularly in emergency settings — and connects them with immediate treatment and long-term support. The training brought together representatives from emergency services, pharmacy, care navigation, social work and other departments, all of whom serve on the health system's internal Bridge committee.

Under the Bridge model, ED clinicians are trained to recognize signs of substance-use disorder and, when appropriate, begin medication-assisted treatment during the patient's visit. That initial

step is paired with coordinated follow-up care after discharge, supported by hospital pharmacists, navigators and social workers.

Following the Tuesday-morning session, local and national Bridge representatives toured St. Tammany Parish Hospital's Emergency Department and Obstetric Emergency Department, reviewing workflows and offering feedback on opportunities for continued improvement.

While the work involves multiple departments and processes, the goal is straightforward, according to STHS Director of Emergency Services Bradley Leonhard.

"It's really about our community, caring for our community," he said.

*Visit [BridgeToTreatment.org/About](https://www.BridgeToTreatment.org/About) to learn more about the Bridge program. ■*

# Patrick Mauti joins the STH Foundation team

Mandeville High graduate eager to give back to the community in which he was raised

By STHS Communication Department

Patrick Mauti knows a thing or two about legacy.

Around here, the Mauti name carries weight — from his father, New Orleans Saints legend Rich Mauti, to his kid brother, former Saints linebacker Michael Mauti. But Patrick wears it with an easy, unassuming air.

Raised on the Northshore, the affable Mandeville High graduate is quick with a laugh and quicker to shrug off praise. His path has taken him from Penn State Nittany Lions football, where he walked on under the legendary Joe Paterno, to a career in health insurance, where he works across individual, group and Medicare plans.

Off the clock, he keeps his competitive edge alive the way a Mauti would: on the golf course, on the tennis court, anywhere there is a score to keep.

That competitive drive is matched by a deep sense of purpose. The Mauti family's work through the Mauti Cancer Fund — born from the loss of Patrick's



Patrick Mauti

grandfather to lung cancer — has made a lasting impact locally, most recently helping bring St. Tammany Health System's Breathe Well ConneCTion mobile lung screening unit to life.

Now, back home after 15 years in South Florida, Patrick is adding a new chapter as a member of the St. Tammany Health Foundation Board of Trustees.

Two meetings in, he is taking it all in stride — listening, learning, getting the lay of the land. It is a natural posture for someone who believes growth comes from a little discomfort. "If you're comfortable, you're not learning," he says.

There is a rhythm to it now — work, taking his two young sons to their next team practice, a quick match on the tennis court when he can squeeze it in. In between, he shows up where he is needed, whether that is through the Mauti Cancer Fund or around the foundation boardroom table.

Asked if he had a particular goal he wanted to accomplish with the foundation, he said it's too early for such things. Instead, what he brings to the table is a love for the community — and a willingness to raise his hand, lean in and figure out where he can help. ■



Volunteers with Ruby's Kids, a longtime friend of the cancer center, pause for a team photo with the Easter Bunny.



Participants enjoy a little facetime with the Easter Bunny.

## In bloom

Springtime brought a welcome moment of joy to the Cancer Center, as patients, families and colleagues came together with the nonprofit Ruby's Kids to celebrate Easter. From festive decorations to shared smiles, the gathering offered a lighthearted pause and a reminder of the strength and community that define the journey of care. ■



The top-finishing team from St. Tammany Health System – coming in second overall, behind only the Five Star Breaktime Solutions team – consisted of, from left, Cath Lab Supervisor Sandy Morgan, Endoscopy nurse Kent Amacker, Equipment Processing Tech Simo Martinez and Physical Therapist Randy Martinez. Rounding out the field was the team from RLDatix, which came in third.



▲ St. Tammany Health Foundation Executive Director Nicole Suhre presents an award of appreciation to Greg Lucia, Sr. Regional Vice President, of Five Star Breaktime Solutions, the tournament's title sponsor since its inception 15 years ago.



▲ Once again, Banner Ford sponsored the Hole-In-One competition, with a new ride in the offing for the first player to score an ace.

# The giving game

Sunshine, cool breezes and a shared sense of purpose set the scene March 12 as St. Tammany Health Foundation hosted its 15th annual Get Lucky! Golf Tournament at Beau Chene Country Club in Mandeville. Presented for the 15th year by Five Star Breaktime Solutions, the popular fundraiser drew 32 teams to the course and raised more than \$55,000 in support of programs and services across St. Tammany Health System. From long drives to friendly competition, the day offered no shortage of highlights – all in service of advancing care close to home on the Northshore.



A thirsty foursome pauses for a little 'hydration' at an Abita Brewing table.



With a scenic South Louisiana vista providing a postcard-ready backdrop, Rachel Mauti takes her shot.



Lining it up ...



... maaaaybe ...



... Nooooooooooooo!!!!!!

# Spring into new ways to give

Tax advantages can make charitable donations a win-win



Nicole Suhre, STHF executive director



The St. Tammany Health Foundation team, from left, Emily Revere, Melanie Rudolph, Nicole Suhre, Kathleen Thomas and Doug Walker, photographed at the foundation's 15th annual Get Lucky! Golf Tournament on March 12.

Happy spring!

I love this time of year. Our board and our team have spent time planning for the year ahead and are well into implementing those strategies to support the work of St. Tammany Health System. We are actively meeting with donors, hosting purpose-driven events, writing grants and bringing opportunities for improving community health to local business partners.

It's easy when actively fundraising to sometimes forget about all the different ways there are to give. I like to use this time every year to share some non-cash ways to make an impact on healthcare innovation on the Northshore.

If you're 70½ or older, there's a simple way to support St. Tammany Health Foundation that may also offer meaningful tax advantages. By making a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) of up to \$111,000 directly from your IRA, you can give in a tax-efficient way and, if you're 73 or older, even satisfy part or all your Required Minimum Distribution. Many donors appreciate that a QCD can reduce taxable income while making a difference to a nonprofit organization that is important to them.

Many donors find this to be one of the most satisfying and tax-savvy ways to give. If you'd like to explore whether it fits your financial plans, I'd be happy to talk through the basics, or you can connect with your financial adviser for personalized guidance. You can also visit [STHfoundation.planmygift.org](http://STHfoundation.planmygift.org) to learn about all the ways to make legacy gifts.

St. Tammany Health Foundation believes in Connecting People to Purpose. No matter the gift or the season, we deeply appreciate all you do to support our mission.

Warmly,

Nicole Suhre, CFRE  
St. Tammany Health Foundation executive director

## Foundation calendar Save the dates!



ST. TAMMANY HEALTH  
FOUNDATION

### Healing Arts exhibition

May 18-Aug. 17 | First floor,  
St. Tammany Parish Hospital

The foundation's Healing Arts Initiative is proud to host the next show in its Rotating Gallery Series. This thirteen-week exhibition will feature original works of art from local artists.

Details: [STHfoundation.org/HealingArts](http://STHfoundation.org/HealingArts) | (985) 898-4110 or [erevere@stph.org](mailto:erevere@stph.org)

### Falaya Float

June 6, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. | Covington

The annual Falaya Float Poker Run charity event, hosted by Courtney and Josh Graham, will once more benefit St. Tammany Health Foundation, in addition to giving participants a chance to win prizes as they paddle down the scenic Bogue Falaya River. Cost is \$50; canoe and kayak rentals available at additional cost.

Details: [FalayaFloat.com](http://FalayaFloat.com) | (985) 502-5667

### Celebrating You

June 17 | St. Tammany Cancer Center – A  
Campus of Ochsner Medical Center

The cancer center hosts diagnosed cancer patients, survivors and their caregivers for its bi-yearly celebration, including a day of community, fellowship, education, health screenings and activities, including a look at the center's classes and other enrichment activities.

Details: [kgthomas@stph.org](mailto:kgthomas@stph.org) | (985) 338-5328



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