Preslee Lynn dress<mark>es u</mark>p like <mark>a b</mark>utterfly at our baby photo shoot at Willow Fork Country Club

> Written by Sunshine Farris Photography by Suzi Issa

# Babies Babies Everywhere!

They're Cute, They're Cuddly and They Seem to be Everywhere in Katy. Are we in the Midst of a Baby Boom?

Have you looked around Katy lately? Adorable babies seem to be popping up everywhere. According to local hospital officials, Katy's baby population is undeniably on the rise. "In 2006 we delivered 1,569 babies," says Diana Schauer-Tran, Senior Marketing Representative for the Western Region at Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital. "A year later in 2007 there were a total of 2401 babies delivered. For the past four months we have averaged 230 births monthly. This means we are estimating a total of 2760 births at the end of 2008."

The baby trend is not only in Katy; Houston's baby population is also climbing. Jennifer Hart, a representative of Memorial Hermann Children's Hospital says, "We have seen a 47% increase in deliveries at Children's Memorial Hermann from 2002 to 2007. There were 4,671 deliveries in 2007, and the hospital is projected to have more than 5,000 in 2008."



Case, 3 months, was born at CHRISTUS St. Catherine Hospital



#### Birthing Suites Extraordinaire

Here's some great news for all expecting Katy moms. Local hospitals roll out the red carpet to make the preparation for and delivery of your baby a very special occasion. "It's all about the consumer," says Diane Shauer-Tran at Memorial Hermann Katy Hospital. "We want you to have the best experience as a customer. You should see the rooms here -- they are beautiful. We also offer room service and aromatherapy options."

"My birthing suite was like a hotel room," says new mom Bonnie Cerny, who delivered a baby boy at CHRISTUS St. Catherine last fall. "Each room has a nice big window, a private bathroom as well as a sofa and a recliner. Cerny says the supplies needed for labor, delivery and recovery were contained in a supply closet right in her room so everything was close at hand. But more than a nice room, Cerny says the CHRISTUS staff made sure she had a positive birth experience. "The staff was incredible. My labor and delivery nurse Melanie Hanson made it the best experience of my life. We left feeling like we had a new friend."

## Baby Programs Galore

Christa Clifton, Marketing/Public Relations Manager for CHRISTUS St. Catherine Hospital says they also offer many programs for new parents and families, "We have childbirth classes,



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sibling classes, open house tours for parents-to-be, and Lamaze classes. We celebrate the new births with handcrafted momentos from our staff as a token of this special occasion." All local hospitals offer incredible classes to help prep parents and siblings for the arrival of the new baby. They are also very sensitive to the needs and desires of the delivering mother. Policies on Labor Room capacity are generally alike for most hospitals. A couple of family members are allowed in the rooms and no children are allowed in the rooms unless they are a sibling and are accompanied by an adult.

### A Baby Changes Everything

Katy mom Harmony Patterson has four children ranging from four months to eight years of age. Patterson says she cherishes the times right after each baby is born. "I adore the first few weeks after a new baby is born. You can spend endless hours staring into their precious new faces and getting to know them." And she feels strongly that nothing in the world can compare to having a new baby in the house. "I love my babies; I love their gummy little smiles; I love how incredibly soft their skin is and how their little bodies are so out of proportion. I am a baby lover in case you can't tell."





In addition to all the joy that comes with a baby so comes the chaos. Those little tikes can turn new parent's life upside down and inside out. Parents, of course, will admit they really don't mind the chaos – and that it's all worth it. "No matter how drastic your life may change or how much you sacrifice for them, you love them because they are Heaven sent and they are part of you," explains Sandralee Porter, mother of two and grandmother of three. "Knowing they're yours, you appreciate them," agrees local mom Danielle Croteau.



#### Babyhood Passes Quickly

In a span of a year one helpless infant will rollover, crawl, stand, walk, and talk all on its own. "I was telling my dad, that it was just yesterday Nathan (6 months old) was a sweet quiet infant, and now six months later he's this crawling ankle biter," jokes Stephanie Judson, mom of two.

Kim Levandowski, Katy mom of three says, "They change over night. Even though Callie (16 months old) is my third, I'm still surprised at how fast it happens. She actually grew over the weekend." These moms agree that every milestone is so incredible. "Each new stage is so exciting and so wonderful, but with each new stage the old one is lost," exclaims Harmony Patterson. Any parent will tell you to seize each moment because they change everyday. So, don't forget to hug them and love them even when you're worn out. But most emphatically treasure today because it will soon be tomorrow. **KM** 

SUNSHINE FARRIS is a freelance writer for Katy Magazine. She lives in Katy with her husband and three young children.

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