

Meet the Eclipse Baby



While millions of Americans and thousands of people from Schuylkill County were trying to catch a glimpse of Monday's solar eclipse, Brittany Konas of Ashland was focused on delivering her first baby at The Birthplace at LVH–Schuylkill E. Norwegian Street.

Baby Taittum Kowker came into the world at 2:38 p.m., just moments before the peak of the rare eclipse. The “eclipse baby” weighed in at 7 pounds, 5 ounces and measured 21.5 inches in length.

“I was so excited to have him, to see him, to hold him,” says Konas, who added that even the rarity of a solar eclipse paled in comparison to the birth of her first child. “It (the eclipse) didn't really matter, but I know people were into it.”

Monday started as any other day for Konas. She awoke earlier than usual around 5 a.m. with some unfamiliar pains. Josh Kowker, Konas' fiancé and the baby's father also of Ashland, says, “I asked her if she thought the baby was coming and she said no. So I dropped her off at her mom's so I could run some errands.”

Throughout the morning, Konas' labor pains continued and intensified. Her mother decided to bring her to the hospital shortly after noon. She called Kowker and suggested he meet them at the hospital.



“Brittany did a fantastic job,” says her Labor and Delivery Nurse Carol Beckett, RN. “She was pretty far along when she arrived.” By about 1:30 p.m. she was already pushing. Father and grandmother were in the delivery room. “As Taittum's arrival came closer, we laughed about him arriving at the peak of the eclipse,” Beckett says.

Mom, Dad and baby Taittum were presented with a gift basket on behalf of the hospital to help commemorate their special day.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Hip Replacement Surgery – Anterior Hip

Free Community Lecture
Wednesday, Sept. 17, 6 p.m.
LVHN Rehab Center–Schuylkill
300 Schuylkill Medical Plaza, Pottsville

I Pink I Can Event

Cardiac, breast and gynecologic health
Monday, Oct. 2, 5 p.m.
LVH–Schuylkill E. Norwegian Street,
Wall Auditorium

LVH–Schuylkill Auxiliary Art for a Cause

Featuring the artwork of Abdul Wahhab, MD
Benefits breast cancer awareness and support
Wednesday, Oct. 18
The Lodge at Sharp Mountain

Car Seat Safety Check

Medical Office Building
Schuylkill Medical Plaza
Saturday, Oct. 21, 9 a.m.–noon



Colleagues Peek at the Eclipse

Monday at 2:20 p.m., a few LVH–Schuylkill colleagues came from their offices and work areas to catch a glimpse of the solar eclipse. For Maintenance Mechanic Dan Bredbenner Jr., it was the first eclipse he remembers seeing.

Bredbenner secured official eclipse glasses more than three weeks ago for his wife, daughter and himself. When he saw a few colleagues gathering near the maintenance building, he took his glasses, his personal welding mask and another from the maintenance shop for colleagues who wanted to take a peek.

“It was really quite interesting,” Bredbenner says. “It seemed like the whole thing was over in a few minutes. And although it didn’t seem like night, it didn’t feel like daytime either.” He estimates that Schuylkill County’s eclipse was about 72 percent.

In another area of LVH–Schuylkill E. Norwegian Street, a few colleagues gathered near the main entrance to look skyward. “I was very excited to join other colleagues outside because I had never seen an eclipse before,” says Administrative Secretary Eleanor Kotch. “It was amazing. There’s no comparison when you see it in person versus seeing it online or on TV.”

“People were sharing their glasses with anyone who wanted to take a look,” says Administrative Secretary Kay Anne Barber. “It was great to experience such an uncommon event.”

The next solar eclipse will occur in 2024 and take a different path, with Schuylkill County closer to the path of totality.

Handwashing is Cool

Do kids enjoy washing their hands? They do when members of our pediatrics team demonstrate the do’s and don’ts of proper hand hygiene. Just ask students from the Pine Grove Area Elementary School. For the third consecutive year, pediatric team members attended the district’s Meet the Teacher Night program.

It’s all about education through fun. “The kids enjoy it and the parents like it too,” says Nicole Drum, RN. “They seem to find it fascinating.” Colleagues place a solution on participants’ hands that can be detected only under black light. After some education on the proper technique to wash hands – such as intertwining fingers and hands, and washing all areas while singing “Happy Birthday” twice – staff members then shine the black light on participants’ hands to show how successful the handwashing was.

“We see students from previous years who wash their hands very well, so they’re learning,” says Michelle Crochunis, LPN. “The kids like to bring their parents to see how they do. So then we have kids teaching parents.” One little girl came back just to wash her hands a second time after going around to the other displays.

LVH–Schuylkill joined with 11 other community, civic and service organizations to share information and education during the event.



Michelle Crochunis, LPN, teaches third-grader Kylie Hatter the proper way to wash her hands.

Center Signs

New signs are in place at LVHN Rehabilitation Center–Schuylkill at 300 Medical Plaza. Signage on the building’s corner replaces temporary signage, while the main entrance has a new look.



New Goals for Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18)

Each fiscal year LVHN sets goals

to help us focus on things we must do to further our mission. Departments align their goals with health network goals and track their progress on their visibility wall. Here are details about our new goals, which are again based on the Triple Aim.

BETTER HEALTH

► **Low mortality.** We've done great work to decrease our mortality index (ratio of actual deaths to expected deaths in our hospitals). We're now among the nation's best hospitals. This year, we'll work to maintain our success.

► **Decrease catheter associated urinary tract infections.** To achieve this goal, which is a focus of many hospitals nationwide, physician and nursing colleagues are collaborating regularly to discuss the care of patients with urinary catheters.

► **Improve diabetes control.** In the outpatient setting, we'll focus our efforts on the ideal management and care for patients with diabetes, creating a model for how teams of colleagues will approach ambulatory care pathways moving forward.

► **Improve breast cancer screening.** Although many patients are screened, we still have opportunity for improvement. This goal aligns departments across LVHN and heightens our focus on enhancing patient convenience and access to screening.

BETTER CARE

► **Provide an exceptional inpatient experience.** We'll continue to drive improvements in HCAHPS scores.

► **Enhance appointment scheduling.** Access Center representatives in the Lehigh Valley are asking callers who want to schedule an appointment if they would answer two questions.



We'll use this graph to track our progress throughout FY18.

Using data from this baseline survey, the Access Center will work on enhancing the appointment scheduling experience through the end of FY18.

- **Implement scheduling phone system and decrease abandon rate.** This goal is applicable to LVH–Hazleton and LVH–Schuylkill, where we'll work to quickly answer Call Center phone calls.
- **Provide an exceptional outpatient experience.** We'll continue to drive improvements in Press Ganey scores.
- **Standardize care, improve efficiency and improve outcomes.** We'll build on the work we've done with common procedures such as joint replacements, low-risk pregnancy delivery and others, and develop new pathways in other care areas.

BETTER COST

- **Optimize cost per patient encounter.** Our target goal is to keep costs 0.2 percent below the budgeted amount.

Mission Fulfillment

LVH–Schuylkill President Bill Reppy recently received this letter from a patient.

Dr. Mr. Reppy,

I take this opportunity to thank the nursing staff at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Schuylkill E. Norwegian Street. After my mother's June 20 surgery, she stayed overnight for observation.

The nursing staff and aides that covered both the evening and day were outstanding. They were kind, caring and attentive. I hope you take the time to acknowledge these ladies who well represent the hospital and their profession.

I especially thank Carolyn who was there from at least 4 p.m. to after 11 p.m. She not only made sure my mom was well cared for, but was also very kind to me.

Unfortunately, I have had much experience in the past three years with hospitals, and this was by far the best experience for my family.

WELCOME NEW COLLEAGUES

Brittany Brittenburg	Sarah Mansell
Kyla Brobst	Autumn Maroldt
Anita Carver	Amanda Riegel
Paul Delpais	Samantha Stahr
Jessica Grube	Amy Witman
Kellie Linkchorst	