

In Brief



DJ Paul Woodard, MD, Hematology-Oncology

Behind the mike

Several times a month calls ring into Memphis radio station WEVL-FM 90 from Shelby County Corrections. They're not calling to request a country song or to ask about a new blues band they heard on air. As it turns out, one of the radio station's telephone numbers is only a digit or two off from that of a local bail bondsman.

But this station, known for its culturally diverse mix of music, gets plenty of callers who revel in the eclectic sounds that play over the airwaves. Several years ago, Paul Woodard, MD, Hematology-Oncology, was one of those callers, phoning not to request a song but to volunteer as a DJ. After a year of filling in as a substitute, Woodard landed his own show.

From 6-8 a.m. every Thursday, Woodard hosts "Thursday Morning Throwdown," featuring Americana, alternative country and singer-songwriters. "My show is for people who like rootsy and organic music, not the polished, commercial stuff," he says.

The busy St. Jude physician says he finds his early-morning side job a way to unwind, relax and explore his creative side. Fairly quiet and shy off the radio, Woodard enjoys the freedom of being a DJ. "I think one of the most rewarding things is when people call or e-mail me to say that they really enjoyed the show or to thank me for introducing them to a new artist or group," he says. "I also learn a lot by doing it; it broadens my horizons, and plus, it's just fun."

WEVL is now streamlined over the Internet so listeners far beyond the Memphis area can tune in.

Woodard—whose wife thinks his "radio voice" is lower than his regular voice—rarely tells people at St. Jude that he is a DJ. "I see patients who relax to music, like me, but I also see those who relax to movies or video games. Everyone has his way," he says. "I did have one patient and her mom who were really into music, but they had very different tastes. The mom would wear her Pink Floyd T-shirt and the daughter would wear her Indie Rock shirt. I found this hilarious. We had a running joke about it."

Shop Hope

Move over Macy's, the St. Jude Gift Shop may reign as Memphis' busiest store. Since the new shop opened a year ago, it has brought in more than \$1 million. That's 117,000 items sold, including 5,500 Liz tote bags, 8,700 "Finding Cures" bracelets and 4,600 St. Jude

medals—tiny talismans of hope. And since the Hope line of products arrived, well, it's been hard to keep the merchandise on the shelves.

"Anything with 'hope' on it sells like crazy," says Janice Ivory, Volunteer Services. "Everybody needs hope, especially at a place like St. Jude. And these items remind us never to give up—that there's always hope and that it can be found at St. Jude."

Built to free the Pavilion for other uses and events, the stand-alone Gift Shop has become a draw not only for patients, families and staff but also for visitors. Even weekends have become busy days at the shop.

"It's a friendly place to shop, and it's easier now, more *shoppable*," says Jerry Groh, manager, Volunteer Services and Gift Shops. "It has also given us the opportunity to test products. If some of our exclusive products sell well, then they go out nationally—on the Web site and in the catalogs."

"The best part of the new shop is having the space to accommodate our customers and knowing that our sales have increased dramatically because of it," says Ivory. "Personally, I love meeting all the people from different walks of life." At any given time, three busloads of people can enter the shop. "They've toured the hospital and seen the amazing work that is being done to help our kids," Ivory says. "I think buying something makes them feel good. They have something tangible to remember the hospital, and they know that their dollar or \$20 helps support St. Jude." ■