



Spotlight: Parents mentoring parents at St. Jude

BY BRITTANY COCHRAN, parent mentor coordinator, and HAYDEN SCHILL, parent mentor volunteer

"Every day I am thankful for her kindness, laughter, insider info, cheers for every little milestone, and simply knowing that she is in this with me and for me," said Connie Cruthirds, a St. Jude parent who enrolled in the PAIR Mentor Program. PAIR stands for Parents Assisting, Inspiring and Reassuring. This acronym highlights the program's mission to provide supportive mentors for new families walking through the doors of St. Jude for the first time.

PAIR mentors are St. Jude parents who provide encouragement and insight into navigating the treatment journey, home life and struggles for families with newly diagnosed patients. Because of their own past experiences at St. Jude, they can make a unique connection with new families who are trying to get used to a new way of life in the hospital.

In addition, parent mentors are able to provide perspective on life after treatment and encourage parents to look to the future with hope. Connie described her experience with her mentor, "My parent mentor understands firsthand the many emotions and daily

continued on page 4

Photo top: Current St. Jude parent Connie Cruthirds (L) with her parent mentor Jeannie Rogers



The Kay Kafe Companion volunteer placement just passed its two-year anniversary in January and the Ready Runner placement is two years old in March. Above, Volunteer Services Director Kathryn Berry Carter (R) is shown with Raven Valentine who volunteers two shifts each Wednesday—one as a Ready Runner and one as a Kay Kafe Companion. Below: Also shown with Kathryn is Archie Reece a Ready Runner who volunteers every Wednesday afternoon.

Bring on the smiles

BY KATHRYN BERRY CARTER
Volunteer Services director

"Today, give a stranger one of your smiles. It might be the only sunshine he sees all day."

H. Jackson Brown Jr.

I've said it before, and it's still true, your smiles and enthusiasm are infectious, and we love hearing your stories and the numerous ways you impact our families. The good your smiles bring across this institution is immeasurable and appreciated.

In November we celebrated Volunteer Management Week. Employees visiting our booth outside the Kay Kafe could answer Jeopardy questions to test their knowledge of our

continued on page 2



Bring on the smiles

continued from page 1

profession, the competencies required in our daily work and our volunteer program. Participants could also guess how much candy was in the jar, which represented how many days the beverage cart circulated last year (328). Volunteer coordinators attended a special luncheon hosted by Directors of Volunteers in Agencies (DOVIA), a city-wide volunteer management association. According to Tricia Spence, “It was a great way to celebrate what I do as a volunteer manager.”

Fall activities among the clubs kept members super busy. The Ladies of St. Jude donated an awe inspiring \$417,794 at their meaningful holiday luncheon, and the St. Jude Auxiliary recently donated \$68,000 toward the purchase of patient care items. The St. Jude Women’s Club also donated \$7,395, and their elves put a cheerful spin on the holidays through the elf event and hospital decorations. All the sponsored activities are priceless, and we are always grateful for our club members and their contributions of time and talents.

Night and weekend volunteers were the spotlight of an appreciation event in their honor, hosted at El Toro Loco Restaurant. It was such fun to see volunteers in a casual setting, having fun and networking with each other.

Thanks to Shannon Pintane and

Thank you tour guides

A luncheon was held for all the volunteer tour guides in November. Those attending included: (From L to R) Jo Epstein, Lenny Kircher, Lydia Gibson, Carol Griffin, Ken Phillips, Mary Driscoll, ALSAC Event Marketing Department Manager Laura Carpenter, Volunteer and Special Events Coordinator Tricia Spence and Bryan Brashear. Tour guides have the important role of introducing visitors to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

Caroline Mitchell, who interned for us from August to December 2014. They both worked incredibly hard, and their contributions will live on for many years to come. Emily Graham will assume the role of student programs intern this semester. She attends Texas A&M University, College Station, pursuing her bachelor’s degree in community health. Jennifer Joyce will assist with shift programs and implementing our spring recognition event. She is pursuing her master’s degree in public administration from Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers. We also welcome Peterson Wellford who is a senior at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, pursuing his bachelor’s degree in communications, public relations and journalism. Our interns bring a tremendous amount of enthusiasm, talent and fresh perspective, and we are a stronger volunteer program because of their involvement.

Mark your calendar for Monday, May 18, 11:30 a.m.–2 p.m. at the Holiday Inn University of Memphis for our annual St. Jude Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. This event location received high marks in 2014 for delicious food and a convenient location. Let’s make year two just as fun and exciting.

Happy spring everyone! May you smile continuously, bringing sunshine and flowers to those around you.



Thinking of you...

Get well wishes go out to volunteer Doris Burton who had surgery in February, Lydia Gibson’s husband who had surgery in January and Brenda Luster Miller’s husband who had open-heart surgery in November.

We send condolences to these volunteers who recently had deaths in their families: Betty Anderson (daughter in law) and Susan Bransford (father in law).

Sympathy is extended to the family and friends of longtime St. Jude volunteer Cuple Bright who died in February. She will be greatly missed.

Festive evening fiesta celebrates night and weekend volunteers

In November, about 45 people attended a fabulous fiesta—the annual Night and Weekend Volunteer Appreciation Event—at El Toro Loco restaurant in Midtown. Each year Volunteer Services hosts this festive evening event to recognize weekly shift volunteers who serve in the adult volunteer program in the hospital. This includes Helping Hands, Eucharistic Lay Ministers and Beverage Cart volunteers.

Volunteer and special events coordinator Tricia Spence says, “This is an opportunity for these dedicated volunteers to relax and connect with fellow St. Jude volunteers and the Volunteer Services staff, because many do not see other volunteers or staff during their weekly shifts.”

The Volunteer Services staff and the entire hospital is thankful for the many hours these volunteers give to St. Jude patient families.



(From L to R) Child Life volunteer Jane Wells, Helping Hands volunteer Megan Spangler and Helping Hands volunteer Valerie Cox enjoy some talk time at the Night and Weekend Volunteer Appreciation Event at El Toro Loco in November.



Helping Hands volunteer Charlotte Anderson and her daughter sign in at the Night and Weekend Volunteer Appreciation Event.



At left, Beverage Cart volunteer Camden Hastings (L) and a friend arrive at the volunteer appreciation event.



At right, Helping Hands volunteer Pam Wingfield and her husband have fun at the volunteer appreciation event.



PAIR Mentor volunteer Jeannie Rogers (R) talks with Connie Cruthirds, the mom of a current St. Jude patient.

Spotlight: Parents mentoring parents at St. Jude

continued from page 1

challenges of where I am today in this journey. At the same time, she is holding a candle of faith and support and adding her light to the pathway toward cure. When she says, 'I know' she really does."

This mentor program began as an idea inspired by St. Jude parents. In 2011, the program started out with three mentors in two clinics. Parent Mentor Coordinator Brittany Cochran was hired in 2014 to drive the program and help it grow into a resource that provides a greater reach for the St. Jude psychosocial team.

Today the PAIR Mentor Program consists of 19 parent mentors who have collectively mentored more than 100 families in four clinics. In 2014 alone, mentors turned in 655 encounter forms, which documented their referrals to resources, such as Social Work, Child Life and the medical team. They spent time sharing their stories, validating parents' perspectives and offering suggestions when appropriate.

The PAIR Mentor program has become an exceptional example of the effort that the St. Jude community will invest to ensure that its patients and

their families are well-supported.

When mentors are asked why they have chosen to come back to St. Jude a second time, they often say that encouraging another family through this difficult time in their life is a wonderful way to give back to St. Jude. As parent mentor Jeannie Rogers said, "Walking 'the journey' again with other parents is such a wonderful way to give back to St. Jude. I hope that I can help prepare moms like Connie for what is down the road for them and also make it a

bit easier."

"The ability to look into a parent's eyes and say 'I understand' and know that they see the sincerity in my eyes that I truly do get it, makes everything we went through worth it," Jeannie says. "I wish the PAIR Mentor Program had been in existence when my daughter was a patient."

PAIR Mentor volunteer Merri Hackett (R) shares her experience with Chantana Hoskins, the mom of a current St. Jude patient.



New name for St. Jude short-term housing facility

On February 6, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital hosted more than 400 Delta Delta Delta (Tri Delta) women from across the country for a leadership weekend and formal dedication of the newly renovated St. Jude Tri Delta Place. This short-term housing facility for St. Jude patient families was recently named for Tri Delta after the fraternity pledged to raise \$60 million in the next 10 years to combat childhood cancer and other deadly diseases. This gift is the largest single commitment made by a St. Jude partner.

Fraternity members from across the country gathered in Memphis to get a sneak peak of St. Jude Tri Delta Place's

dramatic interior renovation. A modern, open-concept lobby redesign has just been completed, and renovations of all guest rooms will be underway soon.

If you are interested in learning

about volunteer opportunities at Tri Delta Place, call or email Amanda Wheeler, special events and volunteer coordinator, at amanda.wheeler@stjude.org or 901-595-8241.



St. Jude Tri Delta Place housing facility for patient families

Tri Delta Place rolls out new amenities cart

Tri Delta Place recently began a new volunteer shift aimed at delivering amenities by cart to patient families in the evenings. With funding from the St. Jude Auxiliary, Amanda Wheeler, special events and volunteer coordinator, and Brooke Marmaro (intern 2014), took the idea of an amenities cart with a fun, playful theme and ran with it.

The cart was designed with a riverboat theme. The boat was then brought to life and custom built by Richard Bourland and painted by local artist Lea Holland of Pomegranate Studios.

The "St. Jude Queen" floats down the hallways of Tri Delta Place on Monday evenings, captained by college student volunteers. The boat is a family-friendly vessel delivering hot beverages, toiletries (such as lip balm, hand sanitizer and nail polish), crafts, games, and more in its 29 drawers.

The goal of this volunteer shift is to brighten the evenings of those staying at Tri Delta Place and provide items to families that they might not have brought from home. Amanda said, "The boat currently makes rounds on all floors every Monday, but we hope to expand these services in the future."



Student volunteers hand out items from the new St. Jude Queen Amenities Cart to a patient family member on one of the Tri Delta Place guestroom floors. These college students include: (from L to R) Tiffany Legarda, Matthew Canavo, Juliana Ratton and Emma Jackson.

Welcome New Volunteers!

To see a list of volunteers who have joined the team between October 31, 2014, through February 6, 2015, visit www.stjude.org/hospitalvolunteers. Click on "Volunteer Recognition" then choose "Welcome New Volunteers." Join us in welcoming these new volunteers to the St. Jude team.

St. Jude Women’s Club

BY ALLISON COOK AND KELLY CAUDLE,
public relations co-chairs

The St. Jude Women’s Club hosted the annual Danny Thomas Birthday and Founder’s Day Celebration January 6 in front of the Kay Kafe. This year would have been the 103rd birthday of St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital founder Danny Thomas. To commemorate this special day, St. Jude Women’s Club members served delicious slices of cake to employees, patients and patient family members. Along with the sweet treats, attendees also enjoyed episodes of “Here Comes Daddy” that played throughout the event on a television setup near the tables. The event was such a success that Club members easily cut their way through eight full sheet cakes.

Everyone indulged in the celebration, while mixing and mingling outside the Kay Kafe. Even St. Jude CEO James Downing, MD, stopped by to celebrate this great occasion. Downing even helped hand

out cake! The event was the perfect start to a new year and a fun excuse for birthday cake and camaraderie.



Women’s Club Founder’s Day Event: (From L to R) Event co-chair Rebecca Ruff, event co-chair Kelly Caudle, St. Jude CEO James Downing, MD, Miriam Dillard-Stroud and Annalisa Owsley.

St. Jude Auxiliary

BY MEG LEWIS, member

The St. Jude Auxiliary concluded 2014 on a great note. The annual holiday bazaar, our largest fundraising event, was held in early December, and it was a big success. We’d like to thank all those who gave so much of their time – from many months of pricing out all the items to working during the event. We could not have done it without your help. We are also appreciative of our bazaar chair Jenny Bledsoe and her leadership. Her passion and enthusiasm for St. Jude are inspiring.

A big thank you also goes out to all those who shopped during the bazaar. Because of your support, we had a total profit of more than \$38,000! This is fantastic considering the unexpected date change that made the bazaar a two-day event, instead of the originally planned three-day sale. All of the profits from the bazaar allow us to fulfill our mission of supporting and giving back to St. Jude this year.

We are excited as we settle into 2015. We recently

held our first quarterly meeting of the year, where we went through funding requests from various departments. The members approved \$67,796.48 in funding to help the staff serve the amazing St. Jude patient families. This is a win-win situation for all involved, and it is an honor to assist the hospital in this way.

We always welcome and encourage volunteers who share in our mission of supporting hospital programs to become members of the St. Jude Auxiliary. If you are interested in joining this great group, please contact the Volunteer Services office.

Our quarterly meetings are open to all, and the next one is planned for Tuesday, April 14. Be sure to check out the Volunteer Services Weekly Alert e-newsletter for details about the time and location as the date gets closer, as well as for other exciting Auxiliary news.

On behalf of all Auxiliary members, I look forward to seeing you in action around the halls of St. Jude.

The Ladies of St. Jude

BY SARAH D. PRATT, member

Fall and winter provided many activities for the Ladies of St. Jude. In November, members helped with the *St. Jude Give Thanks. Walk.* at Carriage Crossing, sponsoring the “Kid Zone.” Tracy Christoffersen reports that the walk raised more than \$300,000 for St. Jude, and it attracted more than 1,900 walkers.

Next came the St. Jude Marathon in early December. Lydia Gibson reports that the Ladies assisted in the “Heroes Section” as greeters, as well as in the “Heroes Cheer Item” booth.

Meanwhile, Suzanne Hieserman led art sessions at the hospital for the patients, decorating and stitching Christmas stockings.

The club’s Christmas luncheon at Chickasaw Country Club was fantastic. Not only did members and guests enjoy delightful fare and an ornament exchange, but they were also treated to an enlightening talk by Sanford Mann, administrative director of St. Jude Anesthesiology.

Included in the luncheon was the annual check presentation to the hospital, representing the dollar amount that club members helped raise during the year. For 2014, the total was \$417,794.

Monthly meetings have included guest speakers from the hospital. In November, the program included Tanya

Gruber, MD, PhD, of the Genome Project; in December Sanford Mann; and in January Miguella Caniza, MD, of the St. Jude International Outreach Program. Thanks to these speakers, the Ladies are more knowledgeable about the work going on at St. Jude.

Three new members have joined the Ladies of St. Jude: Mary Beth Uselton, Kathy Vaughan and Susan Youngblood. Welcome Ladies!



Ladies of St. Jude member Suzanne Hieserman admires a patient’s art work at the Teen Art Party sponsored by the club in December.



Thanking volunteer supervisors

Tricia Spence (L), volunteer and special events coordinator, and Rafonda Burks (R), ICU nurse manager, share their thoughts at the Volunteer Supervisor Reception held in December. The event was sponsored by Volunteer Services to thank those St. Jude staff members who manage volunteers. Guests were offered refreshments, a take-a-way goodie bag and a chance to write feedback about how to improve supervisor training. Beginning this year, Volunteer Services will offer updated training sessions for staff who supervise volunteers. Attendees will receive one-hour leadership competency credit from St. Jude.

Service-in-action gallery



St. Jude Auxiliary member Lisa Houston (L) helps customers at the annual Auxiliary Holiday Bazaar in December. See article on page 6 for details about the event.



In an effort to teach staff and families what it means to be a volunteer manager, Brin Schaechtel (L) and Tricia Spence (C) of Volunteer Services celebrate Volunteer Manager's Week in November by asking Kay Kafe lunch goers to play Volunteer Management Jeopardy. Here they ask a question of Kay Kafe Companion Greer Simonton.



Child Life volunteer Joe Mertz plays Legos with a patient. He is both a volunteer and an employee in Structural Biology.



Ladies of St. Jude member Jaymie Salley helps a patient decorate a cookie during a Valentine's Day event.



St. Jude Women's Club member Christina Guttke reads "The Elf on the Shelf" to patient families during the annual Elf Event.



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