Volunteer Services Director Kathryn Berry Carter (center) bids farewell to two of our talented interns, Laura Bosi and Megan Jones.

50 golden years: Volunteers past and present

BY KATHRYN BERRY CARTER, Volunteer Services director

St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital is celebrating 50 years of saving children’s lives through research and treatment. At the recent volunteer appreciation luncheon, we celebrated our volunteers for their rich history and for playing such a significant role in the past and present. As volunteers, you’ve helped make St. Jude one of the world’s premier pediatric research facilities, and you’ve done it one smile, one hug, and one listening ear at a time.

In 2011, 188 volunteers generously contributed more than 50 hours of service, with Betty Christy achieving the most at 657 hours. Twenty-eight volunteers reached milestone anniversaries, and we were honored to celebrate Marjorie Webster for 40 years of service! Two volunteers, Carla Johnston and Jane Koelz, were inducted into Lifetime Membership status. We announced the winners of the Sheryl K. Nienhuis Award (article at right) and the Supervisory Excellence Award (page 6). The inaugural Family-Centered Care Award went to Justin Baker, MD, for his support of the Family Advisory Council. We also recognized Regions Bank for five years of committed service to the Memphis Grizzlies House. Finally, we celebrated volunteer Katherine Golightly for winning the Youth Volunteer of the Year Award at the Volunteer Mid-South Spirit of Giving Awards Luncheon in April.

The common theme behind our recognition event was the celebration of each second,
50 golden years continued from page 1

minute and hour that every volunteer gives to St. Jude. No matter the contribution, you all make a huge difference. Read more about the awards program on page 5.

I am again running the St. Jude Memphis-to-Peria Run July 19–21. I would like to express my deep appreciation to all those who have supported me. This relay-style race was a humbling and rewarding experience for me last year. It was also a physical challenge, but one I welcome in recognition of the brave and courageous fight our patients and families go through daily. I ran to run for you—our St. Jude hospital volunteers. I’ll be thinking of your tremendous heart and passion for St. Jude with each step along the way. I must raise $3,000 for St. Jude before the run begins, and I have a long way to go! If you haven’t had a chance to contribute and you would like to, please visit this site: www.stjude.org/donate?utm_source=MemphisToPeria

The St. Jude Auxiliary hosted a successful Masquerade Jewelry Sale in May, clearing $9,932. The club will review proposals from hospital departments on ways they can spend their profits to tangibly benefit St. Jude patients and families. Summer is just around the corner, and with it, we welcome a flurry of activity. Our Volunteers arrive in June, and college-aged volunteers from the Pediatric Oncology Education program are also joining us. The Women’s Club Golf-A-Round will be held in tandem with the FedEx St. Jude Classic. The Ladies of St. Jude will soon help give away the next Dream Home and will begin preparing for the St. Jude Marathon.

We must applaud our outstanding interns—Laura Bosi and Megan Jones. They have each made their mark within our department and in our hearts. We’ll miss each of them tremendously, and we sincerely appreciate all they’ve done to add value to our services and quality to our programs. We welcome two new interns—Genevie Aaker and Kylie McCarthy. From more than 130 applicants, they were chosen for their extensive and relevant experience. Genevie is pursuing her master’s degree in Public Administration from the University of Memphis. Kylie is pursuing her master’s degree in Health Services Administration at the University of South Dakota. Kylie will be working with our Volunteers and POE students, and Genevie will be working with our shift programs such as Helping Hands, volunteer spotlights, retention projects, and our annual report. Each of you brings a special touch to St. Jude and to all those with whom you interact. We appreciate you beyond what words can express. Perhaps William Shakespeare summarizes the sentiment best, “I can no other answer make, but thanks and thanks.”

Welcome New Volunteers!

To see a list of volunteers who have joined the team between January 25 and May 1, 2012, 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.

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St. Jude hosts DOVIA conference

Last fall, St. Jude Volunteer Services hosted the 5th Annual Manager’s Toolbox Conference for the Memphis chapter of DOVIA (Directors of Volunteer Agencies). DOVIA is a professional organization offering networking and learning opportunities for nonprofit professionals who manage volunteers. St. Jude Volunteer Coordinator Tricia Spence is the current president of Memphis DOVIA and St. Jude Volunteer Services Director Kathryn Berry Carter is a former president of this group. Several attendees at the DOVIA conference are (from R to L) Tricia and DOVIA membership chair Cheri Hopper, who works with the Salvation Army Kroc Center.

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St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital

Volunteer Kathleen “Kat” Golightly was recently chosen Youth Volunteer of the Year, a regional award presented by Volunteer Mid-South at their annual Spirit of Giving Awards Banquet. As part of the award, Kat received a beautiful engraved platter and a $250 educational savings bond. She also received a check for $250 for St. Jude, which she presented to the Volunteer Services staff at the St. Jude Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon.

Kat has been a St. Jude volunteer for two years. For the past two summers, she has participated in the St. Jude Volunteen program, always seeking out the most difficult patients and finding ways to connect with them.

Although St. Jude has limited ways for teens to volunteer, Kat was determined to serve and to create opportunities beyond her service as a volunteen. She founded an organization at her school called “Team up for St. Jude” to raise awareness and money for the hospital. With her infectious enthusiasm, she inspired almost 100 people to get involved. She also brought groups from her school to provide activities for the hospital and the Memphis Grizzlies House.

At this year’s Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon in April, the staff celebrated the 50th anniversary of St. Jude by honoring volunteers “Past and Present.” In 2011, more than 1,030 hospital volunteers gave 37,094 hours of service to St. Jude. That is equivalent to the annual work hours of almost 18 full-time employees.

The staff of St. Jude is extremely grateful for your service. At this year’s annual luncheon, Volunteer Services celebrated both service milestones and service hours.

St. Jude officials attending this year’s luncheon thanked our wonderful volunteers in person. The officials included St. Jude Clinical Director Joseph Laver, MD, Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services Pam Dotson, RN, and ALSAC Chief Operating Officer Dave McKee.

On this page and the next, you will see some of the honored volunteers who attended the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. To see a list of all St. Jude volunteers who gave more than 50 hours in 2011, visit www.stjude.org/hospitalvolunteers. In the menu at the left, click on “Volunteer Recognition” and then choose “Award Events.”

Volunteers Past and Present honored at volunteer appreciation luncheon

Volunteer Coordinator Randa Spears (third from R) and Memphis Grizzlies House Manager Cayce Starr (second from R) thank representatives of the Wilson Hotel Management Group for their commitment to serving patient families. They are (from L to R) Brittney Cline, Brad Cline, Teresa Cline and Sarah Cooley.

Volunteer Coordinator Tricia Spance (R) thanks Helping Hands volunteers (from L) Vilma Carnahan, Gayatri Mamidanna and Mari Authement for their hours of service in 2011.

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Amy Scott named volunteer supervisor of the year

Kirsti Thomas. The judges for this year’s award included staff members Mark Brown and Justin Gardner, volunteers Lisa Houston and Jan Lindsey and last year’s winner Mary Schuchaskie.

The winner of the 2012 Volunteer Supervisory Excellence Award is child life specialist Amy Scott. Amy supervises eight volunteers along with her many other duties.

“Amy, in her soft, kind way, is solid in her job,” says volunteer and nominator Susan Lugar. “She relates well with the children, parents and me. I just love her and always look forward to seeing her.”

Volunteer Ben Levie says: “Amy communicates well and is always accessible. I am especially motivated by Amy’s open-mindedness to do different types of activities for the patients.”

Patty Stephens is another volunteer who nominated Amy. Patty writes, “Amy is always very encouraging and patient with me.” Patty likes to do arts and crafts with the children, and sometimes it can get a little messy. “For me that is part of the fun, and Amy never discourages that.”

Ben says, “Amy certainly embodies the values of St. Jude since she is totally dedicated to enriching the lives of patients and families.” Patty agrees, “Amy does a superb job, and I feel she is very deserving of this award.”

The Ladies of St. Jude

At this time of year, the Ladies of St. Jude (LSJ) workroom transforms into the ticket office for the St. Jude Dream Home. Betty Christy chairs this ticket operation. Along with handling tickets, the LSJ members host weekend open houses at the home during May and June. Chair of these open houses, Aggie Wagner, reports that her committee took part in a “Sneak Peek” party at the house May 3 and sold 93 tickets. Members will keep the house open every day during the week leading up to the give-away date, June 24.

Back at the office, the club has taken on the task of folding and sorting T-shirts for St. Jude Radiothon.

The monthly LSJ Art Program has been bustling with activity. For Valentine’s Day, six LSJ members assembled 100 bakery boxes and filled each one with two heart-shaped cookies, plus containers of candy, sprinkles, and icing. The next day, 80 children gathered at the ABC wall to decorate their cookies. Each child wore a chef’s hat, with a large red heart on the front. There were lots of smiles and sugary fingers. The remaining boxes were taken to impatient kids on the second floor. Everyone had a good time, including 15 LSJ members who came to help.

April’s art theme was umbrellas. Fifty children had fun decorating white umbrellas with fabric markers. These talented youngsters drew rainbows, butterflies, bees, and sports logos, among other things.

With such a successful art program, it comes as no surprise that Art Project Chair Suzanne Hieserman was awarded the Sheryl K. Nienhuis Memorial Volunteer Service Award at the annual volunteer luncheon. Suzanne puts great effort into making each art event memorable for patients and siblings.

It is also not a surprise that Marjorie Webster was recognized at the same luncheon for her 40 years of dedicated volunteer service. Marjorie is a hard worker, who can always be counted on. Congratulations to you both!

St. Jude Women’s Club

The St. Jude Women’s Club held its annual book sale in February. Members, led by chair Stacey Zambetti and co-chair Roletta Ammons, manned tables as book-seekers combed the wares. This year’s sale raised $4,919, which will be used to purchase much-needed items that are requested by various departments and clinics throughout the hospital.

Club members have also been working on the annual Golf-A-Round event, which was held June 5, and preparing for the club’s 40th anniversary celebration in October.

New Women’s Club officers were elected at the May meeting. They are: Laurie Webby, president; Christy Mallikin, vice president; Roletta Ammons, secretary; Claire Watts, treasurer; Shelley Orwick, membership chair; Stacey Zambetti and Roletta Ammons, book sale co-chairs; Lindsay Cummins and Jamie Young, elf event co-chairs; Shannon Thomas-Lohman and Roletta Ammons, Christmas decorating co-chairs; Ashley Interiano and Miriam Dillard Stroud, social coordinator co-chairs; Mary Jo Belak, secret gift exchange chair; Mary Jo Belak and Lindsay Cummins, Danny Thomas birthday co-chairs; Terri Davis, scrapbook chair; and Allison Cook, public relations and website chair.

The St. Jude Women’s Club always welcomes new members. If you are interested in joining, contact Shelley Orwick, membership chair, at shelley.orwick@stjude.org or 901-595-4759.

St. Jude Auxiliary

Past and present—what a blessing to know that St. Jude has been taking care of children for 50 years. We were honored with a big treat in April when our volunteer luncheon was held at the Memphis Marriott Downtown. The food was delicious, the fellowship was awesome, and it was great to see so many volunteers in one place.

The St. Jude Auxiliary held a spring Masquerade Jewelry Sale in May and raised $9,932. As always, everything we raise goes back into the hospital to benefit St. Jude patients.

The Auxiliary elected new officers at our May meeting. They are: Pat Pennington, president; Tony Svarczkopf, vice president; Patty Stephens, secretary; Don Griffith, treasurer; Jenny Bledsoe, Auxiliary Bazaar chair; and Patty Stephens and Doris Burton, newsletter co-chairs. We want to thank Patty Stephens for a job well done, as our immediate past president.

We need to start thinking about our Bazaar because December will be here before you know it. We will need donations and plenty of help preparing and pricing items and running the event. If you would like to help or would like more information about becoming an Auxiliary member, please call the Volunteer Services office at 901-595-3327.

Hope is so powerful. With hope, one can think, one can walk, one can dream. If you have hope you have everything.
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Service-in-action gallery

Tony Svarczkopf (aka The Easter Bunny) and other St. Jude Auxiliary members get ready to hand out Easter goodies. They are: (from L to R) Keela Dodd, Maureen Kennedy, Jacqueline Savoy and Vilma Carnahan.

Jenny Reddick volunteers at the St. Jude Women’s Club Annual Book Sale in February.

Volunteer Chris Clark plays a game with a patient and sibling. Chris is a Helping Hands volunteer who provides respite care for patient families on Tuesday mornings.

LSJ member Ann Bagley helps a child during the Valentine’s Day Art Project sponsored by the Ladies of St. Jude.

St. Jude Auxiliary member Nikki Yadav volunteers at the club’s Masquerade Jewelry Sale in May.