



Spotlight: Nienhuis Winners

Choosing one winner of the annual Sheryl K. Nienhuis Memorial Volunteer Service Award is always difficult. The nominees are often some of the best and most dedicated volunteers at St. Jude. This year, the judges had such a hard time choosing that they decided to name two winners.

This award, created in 2002, honors St. Jude volunteers who exemplify the qualities that the late Sheryl Nienhuis brought to her volunteering. She never considered any job too unimportant for her to do. She gave from the heart, lifting countless patients and families and motivating those around her to dig a little deeper and give a bit more of themselves.

Nominees for the annual award have made volunteering at St. Jude a priority and each has demonstrated a strong commitment to the St. Jude mission. The ten nominees for 2013 were Betty Christy, Georgia Gilbertson, Cathy Glavas, Maureen Kennedy, Gale Mueller, Randa Rosenblum, Heidi Stokke, David Tuttle, Laurie Webby and Sherry Wilt.

This year's judges were Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer Pam Dotson, last year's Nienhuis Award winner Suzanne

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Photo top: Georgia Gilbertson and Betty Christy have won the highest honor given by Volunteer Services.



Volunteer Services Director Kathryn Berry Carter and Ladies of St. Jude President Candy Johnson (center) thank and congratulate Mary Kay Kuhns (right) for giving 40 years of volunteer service to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Mary Kay was honored at the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon in May.

Volunteers: The Essential Piece

BY KATHRYN BERRY CARTER,
Volunteer Services Director

At the recent volunteer appreciation luncheon, May 2, I was so moved by the closing speech given by Pam Dotson, chief nursing officer and senior vice president of Patient Care Services. She made a compelling case for why volunteers are truly the "Essential Piece" at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. In case you missed it, with Pam's permission, I'm sharing a small excerpt of what she said.

"So let's talk about the theme, 'The Essential Piece' for just a moment. I don't know about you, but I love puzzles, especially one of those 1,000-piece jigsaw puzzles of a beautiful nature scene. All of the individual pieces are unique, and when they are all put together, you reveal the big picture. Working one of those takes patience and determination to carefully put every individual piece in place. Truthfully, I find these puzzles addictive. I will think I am just going to put in one or two pieces and find myself an hour later still sitting there working away on it. And when you finally complete it, you feel so satisfied seeing it all come together.

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“I just used four words that I think of when it comes to working a puzzle: patience, determination, addictive and satisfying. Those words can also describe your work as a volunteer: You demonstrate great **patience** as you go about your assignments working to carefully do what is asked of you. You are **determined** to give it your very best, no matter the task. I find that as an institution we are quite **addicted** to you in the best way possible. We need you; we depend on you; and our day is so much brighter when you are around. And hopefully, you find your work as a volunteer to be a **satisfying** experience, because we are completely satisfied with what you do, how you do it and the way in which you do it. In other words, I believe volunteers are essential!”

There were more than 190 volunteers who generously contributed more than 50 hours each in 2012, with Don Griffith achieving the most at 591 hours. Thirty-one volunteers reached milestone anniversaries, and we were so honored to celebrate Jenny Bledsoe for 30 years and Mary Kay Kuhns for 40 years of service. Three volunteers—Cuple Bright, Don Griffith and Cynthia Connelly—were inducted into Lifetime Membership status. We also announced the winners of the Sheryl K. Nienhuis award (see article front page) and the Supervisory Excellence Award (see page 6). The Family-Centered Care Partner in Excellence Award went to Penny Tramontozzi.

The common theme behind our recognition event was the celebration of

each second, minute and hour that every volunteer gives to St. Jude. No matter the contribution, you all make a huge difference. (Learn more about the awards program on page 4.)

The St. Jude Auxiliary hosted a successful Masquerade jewelry sale in May (see article page 7). The club will be entertaining proposals from internal 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 golf tournament. The Ladies of St. Jude will help give away the next Dream Home and will begin preparing for the St. Jude Memphis Marathon Weekend.

We must applaud our outstanding interns—Brittany Smith and Erica Luciano. They have each made their mark within our department and in our hearts. We’ll miss Brittany tremendously, and we sincerely appreciate all she has done to add value to our services and quality to our programs. We are pleased to announce that Erica will stay through the summer to help implement Volunteer and student programming.

We welcome two new interns—Leslie Wells and Ellie Koehly. Of more than 150 applicants, they were chosen for

Thinking of you...

Get well wishes go out to Beth Gray (car accident), Barbara Pavlat (broken hip) and Doris Burton (surgery).

We send condolences to these volunteers and staff who recently had deaths in their families: Mary Driscoll (father), Patty Stephens (nephew), Maria Chandler (father-in-law), Kathryn Berry Carter (grandmother) and Pam Dotson (husband).

their extensive and relevant experience. Leslie is pursuing her master’s degree in mass communications with emphasis in public relations from Louisiana State University. Ellie is pursuing her master’s degree in business administration with an emphasis in non-profit administration at the University of Missouri, Columbia. Leslie will be working with our shift programs such as the Helping Hands program, volunteer spotlights, retention projects, our annual report and so much more. Ellie will be working closely with Target House and Memphis Grizzlies House volunteer coordinators to host numerous patient events and more.

Each volunteer brings a special touch to St. Jude and to all those with whom you interact. We appreciate you beyond what words can express. Thanks for being an important piece in our puzzle. We appreciate your patience, determination and addiction to service, and we hope that your time here is always satisfying.

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Hieserman, Director of Employment Relations and Training and Development Robin McCord, and, representing the Nienhuis family, ALSAC Senior Regional Event Specialist Kevin Nienhuis. They concentrated on the activities each volunteer performed, the commitment the volunteer exhibited, the impact that the volunteer’s service made and the nominee’s spirit of volunteerism.

For 2013, this prestigious award was presented to Betty Christy and Georgia Gilbertson.

Betty Christy

Betty has been volunteering at St. Jude since 2001, and during that time she has generously served more than 7,000 hours. She is a weekly volunteer in the St. Jude Gift Shop and an active member of the Ladies of St. Jude. In that organization, Betty has served as club president, chair of the holiday card project and current chair of the St. Jude Dream Home ticket sales. She has led and participated in numerous other club activities and fundraisers including the St. Jude Give thanks. Walk., the St. Jude Memphis Marathon, Country Cares for St. Jude Kids® radiothons, the monthly patient art projects and many more.

Nominator and volunteer Paula Phipps wrote, “Betty’s service and hours speak



Betty Christy helps place products during her weekly volunteer shift in the St. Jude Gift Shop. She is also an extraordinarily active member of the Ladies of St. Jude.

for themselves. Since I have had the privilege of knowing her, she has been ‘all in’ for St. Jude. Please accept my nomination for a lady who has meant the world to me.”

Paula is also the grandmother of a former St. Jude patient. She said, “I know that in my darkest days as a St. Jude grandmother, Betty encouraged me, and our family knew we had an advocate.”

Georgia Gilbertson

Georgia has been volunteering at St. Jude since December 2006, and she regularly serves two shifts a week as a Child Life volunteer on the Solid Tumor Inpatient Unit and on the south side of the Ambulatory Care Unit. She gave more

than 275 hours last year.

One nominator, Child Life specialist Ashley Wedderburn, wrote, “Georgia is by far the most kind and genuine person that I have ever met. Parents tell me all the time that they appreciate her warm nature and have enjoyed getting to know her. Georgia is not afraid to get messy in the playroom and is always willing to come up with creative art and craft ideas for the patients and their siblings.”

Another nominator, Child Life specialist Katherine Bailey, wrote, “No matter whether only one kid or 10 kids are participating in her activity, Georgia is able to make each child feel special throughout her time. She seeks out children playing on the computers to encourage them to play and do art, proactively engaging children at each visit.

“Georgia has been such an asset to my area that I have begun to use her as a role model for new volunteers, having them shadow her for a shift before they begin volunteering. I appreciate Georgia’s enthusiasm, excitement and dedication to the children of St. Jude and thank her for bringing a spirit of joy to each volunteer shift.”

Volunteer Georgia Gilbertson helps a patient’s sister during one of her two weekly Child Life shifts.



Welcome New Volunteers!

To see a list of volunteers who have joined the team between January 30 and May 7, 2013, visit www.stjude.org/hospitalvolunteer. Click on “Volunteer Recognition” then choose “Welcome New Volunteers.” Join us in welcoming these new volunteers to the St. Jude team.



Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services Pam Dotson congratulates and thanks Don Griffith for having the highest number of volunteer hours in 2012: 591 hours.



Fun and fellowship at the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

Volunteers Cathy Glavas, Maureen Kennedy and B.J. Bendixson

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon honored 2012 accomplishments

This year's Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon in May honored each volunteer as "The Essential Piece" of the St. Jude puzzle. Every second, minute and hour that volunteers give to the hospital matters greatly to the staff and the patient families we serve. In 2012, 949 hospital volunteers gave 40,852 hours of service to St. Jude. That is equivalent to the annual work hours of almost 20 full-time employees.

St. Jude and ALSAC officials who thanked our wonderful volunteers in person included: St. Jude Director and Chief Executive Officer Dr. William E. Evans, ALSAC Chief Executive Officer Rick

Shadyac, Clinical Director and Executive Vice President Larry Kun, MD, Chief



Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services Pam Dotson and ALSAC Senior Regional Special Event Specialist Kevin Nienhuis.

At this year's luncheon, Volunteer Services celebrated both service milestones and service hours. On this page and the next, you will see some of the honored volunteers who attended the event. To see a list of all St. Jude volunteers who gave more than 50 hours in 2012, visit www.stjude.org/hospital-volunteers. In the menu at the left, click on "Volunteer Recognition" and then choose "Award Events."



Volunteers Ken Phillips and John Dorian



Volunteer Services Director Kathryn Berry Carter thanks Jenny Bledsoe for her 30 years of dedicated volunteer service.

At left: Cuple Bright, Don Griffith, and Cynthia Connelly (not pictured) were named to Lifetime Membership status at the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon.

At right: Family Advisory Council Parent Chair Audrey Davis (L) congratulates Penny Tramontozzi on being chosen the Family-Centered Care Partner in Excellence for 2013.



Knitting and crocheting program volunteers (from L to R) Joanne Olson, Maggie Devault, Donna Kendrick, Gail Ray, Eloise Warfel and Carol Kennedy.



Ashley Wedderburn uses medical play dolls to teach a patient about a procedure.

Many St. Jude employees take on the added responsibility of training and supervising volunteers. To recognize great volunteer supervisors, Volunteer Services created the annual Volunteer Supervisory Excel-

Volunteer Supervisor of the Year Award

lence Award. Being nominated for this award is a great honor because only volunteers can submit nominations.

This year's nominees were: Jessica Boles, Kathryn Cantrell, Ashley Carr, Marc Friedman, Jessica Goddard, Amy Kennedy, Lynda Laird, Brent Powell, Jennifer Smith and Ashley Wedderburn.

The judges for the award included staff members Tracy Long, Valerie Crabtree, Amanda Taylor and Allison Keasler, and volunteers Mike Bowlan and Regina Simmons.

The winner of the 2013 Volunteer Supervisory Excellence Award is Child Life specialist Ashley Wedderburn.

Ashley supervises 10 volunteers along with her many other duties.

"Ashley is a joy to work for!" said volunteer Stephanie Dodson. "She is an outstanding supervisor and I'm sure an asset to St. Jude."

Volunteer Sarah Levins shares the same feelings about Ashley, "She is very kind, encouraging and hardworking. She spends each day making sure that every child has what he needs to succeed for the day, be happy and have peace of mind."

"Ashley never hesitates to jump in and help when giving a job. By the end of my shift, she usually stops by to tell me 'good job' and to say thanks. I am inspired by Ashley. She loves the kids and cares deeply for the children, her job and her volunteers."

St. Jude Women's Club

BY ALLISON COOK, publicity chair

The St. Jude Women's Club organized another successful book sale this year in the Danny Thomas Research Center Atrium. Each year the club sorts, compiles and categorizes hundreds of books that are donated from ALSAC and St. Jude staff, as well as from outside sources. The number of books donated increases each year, as does the number of volunteers and shoppers. The outside community benefits from this sale as well, because leftover books are donated to Friends of the Library.

As with each fundraiser, the Women's Club makes sure proceeds go directly to the hospital's patients in some way. In recent years, the money from the book sale has purchased a book cart and a supply of books for volunteers to distribute, furniture and supplies for a breastfeeding room, 12 personal electric breast pumps for nursing moms, baby bassinets and an Accuvein viewing system to help with IV insertion and to more easily locate veins.

The book sale has also purchased DVDs for the patients and a Movie Mate ceiling projector to entertain children during MRIs. With ever increasing and changing needs of the hospital and its patients, the Women's Club understands the true value and dependability this book sale brings to the hospital.

February's sale raised \$4,600, and later this year, Women's Club members will decide how those funds will be used. This was Stacey Zambetti's ninth year as event chair. "We are so fortunate that the book sale grows every year," she said. "We were especially thankful to have a lab space donated to us where we sorted all the books before the sale. It's a lot of work, but the funds we are able to raise for the children make it all worth it."



St. Jude Women's Club member Christy Mullikin sorts books at the club's annual book sale.

The Ladies of St. Jude

BY SARAH D. PRATT, member

The season has arrived for another fabulous St. Jude Dream Home in the Memphis area. The house, valued at \$475,000, is located in Fayette County, in Aston Park, Hickory Withe community.

Again under the guidance of Chair Aggie Wagner, the Ladies of St. Jude are hosting open houses. They greet visitors at the door, sell tickets and conduct tours of the house. The house and 20 impressive prizes will be given away at the TV event June 23.

For a third year, the Ladies are processing Dream Home tickets in their workroom on the St. Jude campus under the leadership of Chair Betty Christy.

The club's art project continues to draw enthusiasm from patients and siblings. Chair Suzanne Hieserman organized a great "April Showers" day, when participants decorated white umbrellas with fabric markers. In May, the kids made paintings for Mother's Day gifts.

Another ongoing Ladies of St. Jude project involves folding and packaging T-shirts for Country Cares radio-

thons, under the direction of Debby Gage.

Two of our members received high honors at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon—Mary Kay Kuhns, for 40 years of service, and Betty Christy, for giving more than 500 hours in 2012 and being named the Nienhuis Award winner. We are proud of them.



Ladies of St. Jude Vice President Patty Williams helps a child paint an umbrella during the April art event.

St. Jude Auxiliary

BY DORIS BURTON, member

We were treated to an awesome volunteer banquet in May. Auxiliary member Jenny Bledsoe was recognized for 30 years of volunteer service. And one of our sweet members, Cuple Bright, was inducted into Lifetime Volunteer membership status. Our St. Jude Auxiliary members gave more than 5,000 hours of service last year and donated \$42,500 for various departments to receive much needed equipment and supplies.

The Auxiliary is hosting two jewelry sales this year. The most recent one in May raised \$11,086. The next one is planned for October. We will soon begin pricing and sorting for the Annual Auxiliary Bazaar, and we always need help. If you are interested, please call Volunteer Services at 901-595-3327.

Just remember we are the Danny Thomas army as we volunteer and carry on his legacy. All a volunteer

asks for in return for service is a smile and hug! Thank you for your service to St. Jude.



Auxiliary members host a dinner at the Memphis Grizzlies House. They are: (from L to R) Helen Harbor, Lisa Houston, Cathy Swain, Julia Eanes, Pat Pennington, Norma Lea, Joy Taylor and Vilma Carnahan.

Service-in-action gallery



Helping Hands volunteer Pam Wingfield has fun with a young patient.



St. Jude Women's Club member Cristina Guibao (R) volunteers at the club's annual book sale in February. See page 6.



Robert "Bob" Radel volunteers in the Linda R. Hajar Family Resource Center.



Helping Hands volunteer David "Paw" Fisher plays dinosaurs with a patient.



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901-595-3327

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