

Family of Volunteers

FALL 2007

As we go to press with this newsletter, Emerson Hospital is still anticipating a visit from the Joint Commission.

Remember your patient safety goals and always use the two patient identifiers: name and birth date.

Project Score Update

Project SCORE (that's the new Surgical Center, Obstetrics and Radiology Expansion project) is making significant progress. The construction can be viewed from several window locations in the hospital. Volunteers in our Transport Department refer to the large yellow box like structure in the back of the hospital as looking like a large block of Swiss cheese. The PACU volunteers on Wheeler One were very excited to see the first phase of the project completed enabling the opening of the family waiting area and a bright new space for Pre-Surgical Testing. Construction has also started in the Cafeteria, which will undergo a major redesign and expansion thanks to the financial support of our Sodexo food services partnership.

Service Excellence is Working!

From the number of smiling faces everywhere and the great compliments, it appears that the Service Excellence Program has made a big difference at Emerson! The next step in the program will include physician involvement. Phase 2 will also include selecting an "Emerson" name for the Service Excellence program, as well as developing a system to measure how we are doing and acknowledging those who personify service excellence.

Ask yourself this question: "Do I go out of my way to escort patients to their destination?" During the coming months, we will learn more about the value of participating in this Emerson initiative.

From the Director's Desk

By Sharon Knox, Director of Community Services

Summertime, a time to vacation, a time to enjoy the outdoors, and a time to volunteer. This summer, 111 students from 18 nearby towns have graced Emerson's halls to volunteer their services.

Approximately 40 of these students are repeat volunteers from previous years. This popular student volunteer program continues to have a waiting list of students interested in volunteering at Emerson. While everyone is trained to work in Transport, many are assigned to help in other departments, including: Materials Management, the cafeteria, the gift shop, Pediatrics, etc. Student volunteers provide a vital role in filling in while many of our adult volunteers are vacationing.



If you have been away on vacation, you will be surprised at many of the recent hospital changes. Our Greeter and Reception volunteers working at the main entrance are now donning spiffy new navy blue Emerson blazers. Check out that logo – in Emerson green! Emerson's leadership team is standing in to help greet visitors during open periods. If you would enjoy being a greeter volunteer, please let me know.

A very special thank you goes to volunteer Plinny Jewel, longtime Transport volunteer, who recently supported the installation of a restroom near the Transport Department on West Four. Our Transport Team is tremendously thankful for his thoughtfulness and generosity. ☺

We need your help!

By Dottie Bernard, Emerson's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator

Disasters are not just possible – they are inevitable! Bridges collapse, storms hit, dangerous chemicals leak, planes crash – all of these things are concerns for our area. What would happen if a disaster struck here? Are we prepared? At Emerson, we maintain an all-hazards philosophy where we continually plan for all of the "what-ifs" – an internal emergency (e.g. loss of electricity, water, etc.), weather emergency, pandemic influenza or bioterrorism event.

You can help! Join the Emerson Disaster Call Team. Volunteers are invaluable in any disaster scenario. As an Emerson volunteer, you bring important knowledge and expertise – you know the hospital, you are well-trained, and you understand how to respond to people in need. The Disaster Call List is a compilation of local people who are ready to pitch in to help Emerson respond in an emergency. To find out more about the opportunities and rewards of joining the Emerson Disaster Call Team, please complete the form enclosed with this newsletter, and bring it to Community Services. ☺

A Tribute to Rose

By Sharon Knox

In May we lost our beloved Rose Costanzo, volunteer from Maynard, MA. Rose was honored at this year's annual award luncheon for having earned her 13,000 hour award. Rose will always be remembered for her warmth and indomitable spirit, which radiated throughout the Emerson community. In spite of her physical challenges, Rose focused on serving others and on volunteering in Medical Records, Community Services, Public Relations and Development.

"A single rose can be my garden...a single friend, my world." — Leo F. Buscaglia



Our friend, Rose Costanzo.#

Dave Porter, Transport Volunteer

By Elizabeth Berk, Auxilian



Most Saturdays, Dave Porter is busy logging miles as he responds to the many Transport requests throughout the hospital. His welcome smile and quiet manner are both cheery and comforting.

Weekdays in the winter will find Dave shushing down the slopes at Waterville Valley, NH, where he has skied so many years that he now has a free season pass! He's also been seen touring the slopes at Mount Wachusett with his Concord golfing partners. And speaking of golf: Dave can be found on many weekdays at the Concord Country Club where he and his wife Sandy enjoy many hours of scenic exercise.

Somewhere in between these activities, Dave will be in his fully-equipped workshop creating Blue Bird houses which he will install and monitor all over Concord. Making full use of any scrap wood he can find, Dave has made over 50 of these houses. Once installed, he becomes the Superintendent making sure that other birds don't claim squatters' rights and then cleaning out the quarters when the nesters move on.

We're very fortunate that Dave has found a way to include his Emerson volunteering time into his busy "retirement."

Transport Thoughts

By Judy Powers



If you think of Transport as a pyramid with the Transport Staff and Community Services supporting all sides, and, at the heart, as well as the base, the wonderful Transport volunteers!

At certain times, a transporter needs physical strength; at all times, a Transporter needs emotional strength. Each day we see things that hurt, that remind us, that leave us in awe. A vigil in the CCU waiting area reminds us of our own vigils. Chimes heralding the arrival of a new baby remind us of our own children and grandchildren; the courage of a cancer patient takes our breath away.

True, we laugh a lot, we eat a lot, and we work a lot. But it is our spirit that makes us unique. A 95 year-old Transporter who doesn't want to "just sit around"; a Transporter who had hip surgery counting the days until she can come back "and help"; students who volunteer in Transport from the day they turn fourteen until they graduate from high school. And one Tuesday transporter who schedules her vacations so that she doesn't miss her shift! Now that's Transport spirit.

To suggest that a Transporter move to another day invites mayhem! Loyalty reigns supreme!

What I learned from Volunteering



By Zach Weitzner, Acton-Boxborough HS

When I first signed up to volunteer at Emerson, I was told over and over again that the *volunteers* run the hospital! Everyone told me how generous I was to spend my time making a difference. I was skeptical. I could not believe the number of volunteers that work each day, and how volunteers could drastically influence the hospital. Now that I have been spending time at Emerson this summer, I have realized just how much of a difference I make.

Volunteering may seem like a generous way to give time and effort, but it is more than that. I give time and effort, but I also receive the satisfaction of knowing that I make a difference. When a patient thanks me after being discharged or transferred to another part of the hospital, I had the satisfaction of knowing I am making a difference. Even if a patient doesn't say a word, I know that I am helping them. This satisfaction is what makes volunteering feel worthwhile.

Many volunteers at Emerson sign up because it looks good on a college application, because they need something to do with their time, or even because their parents make them. I admit it. I signed up because it would look good on my college application. But my intentions have changed. I now understand that even if I only give eight hours a week, I am making a big contribution to help people. And that is why I'm going to come back next summer, and I'm sure it's why a lot of other volunteers will too.

Volunteering at Emerson



By Leah Stansky, Rivers School, Weston

Volunteering at Emerson Hospital became something I looked forward to every Wednesday and Thursday. In the beginning, I was just volunteering so I would meet my graduation requirements and because my mom told me to. Instead, during my time here I was given a large variety of tasks which have allowed me to make new friends as well as learn new skills which I can use in the future. I have been given an array of jobs from transporting patients and specimens, working at desks, helping out and serving in the cafeteria, photocopying close to forty packets each containing way too much paper, babysitting young patients and even helping an employee organize an office. Scattered in-between, I have met numerous people whom I have fully enjoyed getting to know. These great people are the employees as well as other volunteers, ranging from "first-time" summer volunteers to those with many years of experience. Everyday was a new adventure here at Emerson Hospital and I never knew what to expect. Each task brought a new experience which I will remember forever.

Student Volunteer Spotlight



First year Emerson volunteer and Westford Academy Freshman, **Patrick Richard** was

part of a volunteer group that traveled to Gulfport, Mississippi this summer to work with *Project Hope and Compassion*, an organization that assists victims of Hurricane Katrina. Most of the people don't have the time, energy, skills or knowledge needed to get their houses back in shape on their own, and their finances are limited, especially if they lost their job. That's where the volunteers help, and it is extremely appreciated by the hurricane survivors.

During his week-long volunteering time, Patrick helped by painting, putting up drywall and clearing brush and debris from hurricane victims' homes and yards, and assisting in building new homes.

"I see how much this trip has impacted me and it has shown me how lucky we have it here," said Richard. "Most people don't understand that there's still so much work to be done in the Gulf Coast."

Volunteering, it isn't just about the Fun

By Priya Jani, Acton-Boxborough HS



Volunteering at Emerson Hospital is just as enjoyable as it is rewarding. Because of the positive energy that we are constantly surrounded by, volunteering at this hospital is even more satisfying. The people at this hospital are the reason Emerson Hospital has such a warm, welcoming atmosphere.

The people you meet here are unforgettable. Everyone is always so pleasant and inviting that it is hard not to feel right at home, even on your first day. The hallways are always filled with smiling faces and people eager to help out. The way everyone works together is awe-inspiring. You are never alone when you come to this hospital because there is always someone there to help you. It is so easy to make friends here when the people you work alongside are so hospitable. The friendships we have made here will last long after we leave.

At the end of the day, it isn't just about how much fun you had. One of the most important things is being able to help someone. It doesn't take much to make a contribution, and it can make all the difference to a patient. I'm not saying all of our jobs are easy, but the grateful look we get from patients helps the task feel effortless. That one look of appreciation is what makes it all worth it. The fact that you are able to make such a difference and help others, even with the simplest of actions, is the reason why we continue to volunteer here at Emerson.

Editor's Note

BY LEONARD A. PHILLIPS, VOLUNTEER



There's nothing more concrete than...well, concrete (and steel, etc.), to illustrate how Emerson is growing to meet the healthcare needs of our local towns. The SCORE project update on page one describes how this major construction project is progressing toward the goal line every day. You probably have seen and will continue to see construction and updating of virtually all the Emerson entrances, the cafeteria, and much more. Emerson is evolving before our eyes into a state-of-the-art healthcare resource. All of this development activity gives evidence to the increasing dependence of all of us on Emerson Hospital as a critical community resource for healthcare services. It really makes me proud to be a volunteer!

CONGRATULATIONS



Kevin Whitney, RN, MA, CNAA has been appointed to the position of Vice President of Patient Care Services/Chief Nursing Officer. He reports directly to Christine Schuster and is responsible for the delivery of advanced, quality patient care throughout the Emerson health system.

Joseph S. Piechocki has been appointed Vice President, Clinical and Administrative Services. He reports directly to Christine Schuster. Reporting to Joe are the clinical areas of radiology, laboratory and rehabilitation services, the offsite health centers in Groton, Westford and Sudbury, cardiology/neurology and pulmonary services, and pastoral care. Joe also oversees biomedical engineering, environmental services, nutrition services, engineering and facilities/construction and safety, security and parking.



Volunteer Health Reminder!

It is time for your annual health screening.

If you have not been seen by Employee Health in 2007, please call 978-287-3200 to schedule your health visit ASAP.

ASK THE DOCTOR

Question: My surgeon has suggested that I have hyperbaric oxygen treatment for a wound on my foot that is not healing, what is hyperbaric oxygen?

Answer from the doctor: Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is used in conjunction with a formalized wound treatment plan to treat certain types of wounds. During the hyperbaric treatment, you will lie in a comfortable see through chamber. When in the chamber you will have complete voice contact with the staff, you can watch TV, visit with a friend or family member, or simply relax. While in the chamber you will breathe 100% oxygen, enabling your blood to carry 15 to 20 times the normal amount of oxygen. The high concentration of oxygen enables your body to function more efficiently and assists the healing process of your wound and prevents further types of infection. The treatment takes about two hours and is on a daily basis 5 times per week for several weeks depending on your type of wound.

Answer courtesy of Dr. Stephen Hoenig, Vascular Surgeon and Acting Medical Director at the Center for Wound Care & Hyperbaric Medicine at Emerson Hospital. For more information, please call the Center at 978-287-8550.

Save the Date

Harvest Festival -The Verrill Farm Harvest Festival to Benefit Emerson Pediatric Care will take place on **October 6 from noon to 4:00 p.m.** Proceeds from this festival will benefit coping kits distributed by Emerson Hospital's pediatric intervention team. The kits are colorful bags of toys given to children who enter the hospital through the emergency department or upon admission to the pediatric unit. Verrill Farm is located at 11 Wheeler Road in Concord.

Annual Tree of Lights -The Emerson Hospital Auxiliary will hold its annual Tree of Lights ceremony on **Tuesday, December 4 at 4:30 p.m.** at the Old White House at Emerson Hospital. For information on donating a light on the tree, or to pick up a donation envelope, please come to Community Services.

"Family of Volunteers" is published Spring, Autumn, and Winter by the Community Services Office, Emerson Hospital, Concord, MA. Copyright ©2007.

STAFF

Sharon Knox, Director, Community Services – Publisher
Leonard A. Phillips – Editor and Designer
Virginia Lieblein – Assistant Editor and Designer
Ken Smith – Prepress & Printing

We welcome your comments, ideas and suggestions for stories and coverage in *Family of Volunteers*. Please feel free to contact Community Services at 978-287-3200. The printing of this newsletter is graciously contributed by HP Indigo, Andover, MA, for the volunteers and staff of Emerson Hospital.