



## Spotlight: Guest Services

BY BRITTANY SMITH,  
Volunteer Services intern

Many new patient families arriving at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital are scared, worried and anxious. They hope for a pleasant, comfortable environment. That hope becomes reality when they are greeted with the friendly smiles and kind words of guest services representatives Leah Brooks and Penny Tramontozzi.

Part of the Volunteer Services team, Leah and Penny are responsible for much more than sitting behind information desks. Together they provide the ultimate frontline care, helping patients and parents feel welcomed into a new family—the St. Jude family—which will walk with them through their treatment journey.

Let's take a walk in the shoes of Leah and Penny and experience a day in the life of a guest services representative.

Every morning, Leah walks into the Patient Care Center lobby and immediately begins to acknowledge every patient family with a warm "good morning." Meanwhile, down the hall in the Chili's Care Center, Penny is sharing a smile and her upbeat attitude with

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**Bringing comfort:** (photo at top) Bob Stewart volunteers regularly as a Eucharistic Lay Minister at St. Jude.



Volunteer Services Director Kathryn Berry Carter dropped in to say hello to three Child Life volunteers, and they put her to work sanitizing children's books on the Hematology/Oncology Inpatient Unit. Shown here are (from L to R): Jasmin "Jazzy" Miller, Kathryn, Heather Simons and Georgia Gilbertson.

## Change, hope and progress

BY KATHRYN BERRY CARTER,  
Volunteer Services Director

*"Action and reaction, ebb and flow, trial and error, change – this is the rhythm of living. Out of our over-confidence, fear; out of our fear, clearer vision, fresh hope. And out of hope, progress." Bruce Barton*

One thing I've learned that remains constant at St. Jude is change. I'm sure you'd agree that change is common in all facets of our lives. How we embrace and adapt to change can lead us to progress at work and at home.

Volunteer Services has been honored and pleased to be involved in the design and creation, as well as daily implementation of the volunteer program at the Memphis Grizzlies House since it opened in 2004. Randa Spears has dedicated much of her time, energy and passion to ensuring that this program is successful. Under her leadership, in the last three years alone, we've hosted nearly 500 dinners and activities and served more than 35,500 patients and family "guests." We're pleased that the program has grown and that administration supports the need for more staff resources. We welcome Amanda Wheeler as the new

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## Service rewarded

Volunteer Services Director Kathryn Berry Carter congratulates her staff on their service milestones for St. Jude: Randa Spears, 10 years; Penny Tramontozzi, 5 years and Tricia Spence, 5 years.

## Change, hope and progress

special events and volunteer coordinator and look forward to having Randa's full focus on volunteer student programming. (See article, page 6.)

Through recommendations and feedback from parents on the institution's Family Advisory Council, a new volunteer position is in pilot mode. The Kay Kafe Companion volunteer will help families navigate the cafeteria, take meal trays, find open tables, retrieve condiments, and in general play the role of host. If you've ever been in the cafeteria during the lunch rush, then you've noticed the need for this type of position. Parents struggle to balance their trays, push wheelchairs and strollers or pull wagons. We need volunteers to join in this new adventure, if this sounds interesting to you, please email [tricia.spence@stjude.org](mailto:tricia.spence@stjude.org).

Fall activities always keep club members super busy. The Ladies of St. Jude donated an unprecedented

\$435,031 at their annual holiday luncheon, and the St. Jude Auxiliary recently donated \$62,855 toward the purchase of many patient care items. The Women's Club elves put a cheerful spin on the holidays through their elf event and hospital decorations. All the club-sponsored activities are priceless, and we are always grateful for our club members and their contributions.

Our evening and weekend volunteers were honored at an appreciation event held at the Cordova Bowling Center. It was such fun to see volunteers in a casual setting, having fun and networking with each other.

Thanks to Briana Keyes, our fall intern, for leaving such a great legacy. She did a tremendous job interacting with our students and will be missed greatly. We welcome back Brittany Smith for another semester, as well as Erica Luciano. Erica is a senior at Illinois State University pursuing her Bachelor of Science degree

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## Thinking of you...

Congratulations to Simone Meeks on the birth of her new baby girl.

Get well wishes go out to Ditas Sargent.

We extend condolences to these volunteers who recently had deaths in their families: Gina Myers (father), Kim Louis (mother), Wendy Avery (brother) and Memina Franklin (husband).

Doggy Daze canine volunteer Sandy died in January. Her handler Betsy Robinson has been bringing Sandy to St. Jude for the past year to visit with patients and siblings. Our sympathy is extended to Betsy on the death of her friend and volunteer partner.

in family and consumer sciences. Our interns bring such a tremendous amount of enthusiasm, talent and fresh perspective. We are a stronger volunteer program because of their involvement.

Mark your calendar for Thursday, May 2, 11:30 a.m.–2 p.m., in the Danny Thomas/ALSAC Pavilion for our annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. The Pavilion has been newly renovated, and we are pleased to share it with you for this incredibly meaningful event.

Happy spring everyone! May you all gain hope and thereby progress by adapting to change.

## Spotlight: A Day in the Life of Guest Services

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the small community of children and families in her lobby. Every day Leah and Penny are focused on meeting the needs of patients, visitors, staff members, and the public.

"The relationships I've made over the years are very special to me, and it's what makes my job exciting," said Leah, who has worked at St. Jude for eight years and volunteered for about six months before that. "I love the day-to-day interaction with St. Jude volunteers, employees and staff from ALSAC."

Leah helps the volunteer tour guides and supplies them with a daily list of visitors. "Tour guides have a strong impact on our guests. One couple who toured gave a donation of \$50,000," she said. At other times during the day, Leah assists families with directions, provides contact information for social workers and chaplains, gives out transportation schedules, takes messages and much more.

Meanwhile, Penny is constantly communicating with ALSAC regional offices passing along donor information from the public. She is also a hospital representative for ALSAC, taking part in many speaking engagements throughout the year.

"Penny's passion for the mission gives



Guest Services representative Leah Brooks helps a patient and her mom in the Patient Care Center Lobby.

her the gift to inspire donors by sharing St. Jude stories," said Kathryn Berry Carter, director of Volunteer Services. Penny has been employed at St. Jude for five years, but she was also a volunteer for eight years.

In November, Penny spoke at the unveiling of the Patient Care Plaza Presented by ESA (Epsilon Sigma Alpha International, a prominent service organization). "It gives me the opportunity to put a face to what our generous supporters do for our patients," Penny shared.

Aside from making referrals to ALSAC,

Penny gets visits from patients, families and visitors asking for directions and housing information, and picking up deliveries.

The guest services "dynamic duo" strives to make each encounter with children special. Our patients and families look forward to the Volunteer Services Monday Movie and Craft event hosted weekly by Leah and Penny.

"I have a teen who will visit my desk and beat box music for me," smiled Leah. Patients and siblings are also invited by Penny to come aboard the Hope Boat in the Chili's Care Center lobby and pick out a coloring book.

Every day spent as a guest services representative is new and exciting for both women. They listen to parents when they need to talk and celebrate with them when their children's scans are clear, but most importantly, they provide nurturing care and support for everyone who walks through the doors at St. Jude.

Guest Services representative Penny Tramontozzi gives directions to a patient and her mom in the Chili's Care Center lobby.



## Welcome New Volunteers!

To see a list of volunteers who have joined the team between November 3, 2012, and January 29, 2013, visit [www.stjude.org/hospitalvolunteer](http://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.





At left, Helping Hands volunteers Jack Ingram, Karen McNeil and Caleb Everson are ready to bowl at the Evening and Weekend Volunteer Appreciation event.

Below, Memphis Grizzlies House volunteers Jessica Ward and Rich Van Meter, and Helping Hands volunteer Lindsey Rothenbach get ready to bowl.



## Evening and weekend volunteers bowled the night away to celebrate all that they do for St. Jude

BY TRICIA SPENCE,  
Volunteer Services coordinator

As a way to say thank you for all they do, Volunteer Services hosted a get-together for evening and weekend volunteers and their guests in November at Cordova Bowling Center.

The gathering began in a private party room that held the group of about 25 comfortably. Music from the juke box and location set the mood for talking and mingling as everyone dined on pizza, cookies and cupcakes.

Helping Hands volunteer Jack Ingram said, “I enjoyed the camaraderie with everyone, many of whom I’ve never had the opportunity to meet in person.”



After everyone ate and got to know each other, Volunteer Services staff thanked the volunteers for their continuing service and dedication. Four volunteers received an “Above and Beyond” certificate, a special recognition award for their outstanding service:

- Randa Rosenblum, Helping Hands volunteer and mentor
- Shankar Sadasivan, Beverage Cart volunteer and trainer
- Joan Williams, Helping Hands and Volunteer Services volunteer
- Kim Louis, Beverage Cart and Tour Guide volunteer and regular blood and platelet donor

After dinner, it was time to bowl! Friendly competition ensued as teams

Helping Hands volunteer and mentor Randa Rosenblum poses with Volunteer Services administrative specialist Brin Schaechtel during the Evening and Weekend Volunteer Appreciation Event.

formed, and experienced and novice bowlers alike did their best to knock down pins.

“I loved being with my fellow night and weekend volunteers. It was so much fun to get to know each other and to put a face with a name,” Rosenblum said. “We all share the wonderful experience of being St. Jude volunteers so it was nice to share some time outside the hospital. Even, if I can’t bowl!”

When the evening ended, each volunteer received a take-home bag with a certificate of appreciation and a token of thanks for their volunteer spirit.

“Most of these individuals have full-time jobs, but they freely give their time after work and on weekends to fill many volunteer roles around the St. Jude campus,” said Volunteer Services Director Kathryn Berry Carter. “We are inspired by their dedication to the St. Jude mission.”

## St. Jude *Auxiliary*

BY PATTY STEPHENS, member

Welcome, 2013! A common superstitious belief is that the number 13 is unlucky. The first St. Jude Auxiliary meeting of the New Year was indeed unlucky. Scheduled for January 15, it was cancelled due to icy conditions.

A sunny forecast quickly appeared when the Auxiliary committed \$62,855 to fulfill requests throughout St. Jude. These requests ranged from \$35 for Social Work to \$9,998 for Respiratory Therapy. The diverse list includes medical equipment and supplies for Volunteer Services, Child Life, Clinical Nutrition and International Outreach to name a few. The Auxiliary Executive Committee approved 26 requests on behalf of all members, since the January 15 meeting was cancelled.

Filling these requests is made possible by funds raised at Masquerade Jewelry sales and the annual Auxiliary Bazaar. Under the direction of Jenny Bledsoe, who has chaired the event since the mid-80s, the 2012 bazaar raised more than \$42,200. This event required months of preparation; weekly pricing sessions began in May. In mid-summer, members began meeting twice a week to organize items sent from Donor Services. Through the bazaar, members take goods donated to St. Jude that are not needed and turn them into funds that benefit St. Jude patients.

Our next quarterly meeting is April 9. Be watching the *Weekly Alert Newsletter* from Volunteer Services

for updates. The first of two Masquerade Jewelry Sales will begin at 9 p.m. Tuesday, May 14, and run around the clock until 3 p.m. Friday, May 17. If 2012 is any indicator, pricing for the 2013 Auxiliary Bazaar will begin shortly thereafter.

Increasing membership is a major goal for the Auxiliary. It takes many dedicated hands and hearts to grant all the requests the Auxiliary did for 2013. To learn more about joining the St. Jude Auxiliary, please call Volunteer Services at 901-595-3327. We invite all volunteers to join us as we continue to provide support and service to the children, families and entire St. Jude community.



St. Jude Auxiliary members Fannie Brown and Pat Canale volunteer at the annual Auxiliary Bazaar in December.

## Helping Hands volunteer has “up-for-anything” attitude

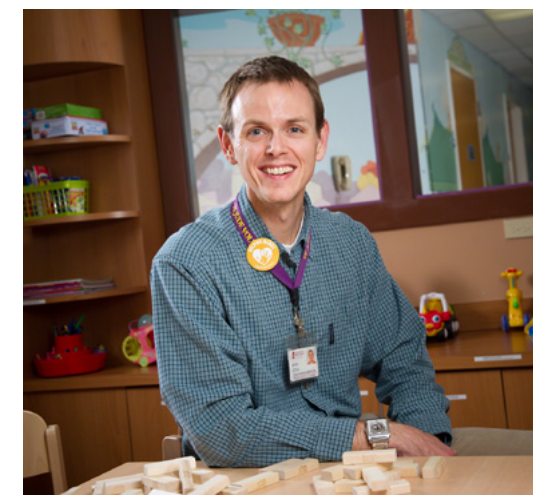
“I absolutely love coming to St. Jude every week because of the spirit and positive attitudes that permeate every inch of the hospital,” said David Tuttle, the longest serving Helping Hands volunteer at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital. “I feel good that, even in simple activities such as playing Candy Land, I am making a difference by contributing to the happiness of the patients and their families.”

David has volunteered at St. Jude for seven years. He is so dedicated to the

cause that you might even see him sporting bunny ears and a white cotton-tail around Easter. What David enjoys most about volunteering is the interaction with the young patients who just want to play and forget, even for a moment, that they are in a hospital. With his “up-for-anything” attitude, David finds no problem entertaining not only the patients, but also siblings and parents.

Beyond donating his time to the hospital, David has been a St. Jude Hero since 2005, fundraising for the hospital

by running the St. Jude Memphis Marathon and half marathon.



David Tuttle



## St. Jude Women's Club

BY ALLISON COOK, publicity chair

In January, the St. Jude Women's Club celebrated the birthday of Danny Thomas, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital's founder. He would have been 101 years old, and like any good birthday party, there was cake! Women's Club members served cake to staff, patients and their families outside the Kay Kafe. The Kay Kafe staff made a delicious cake, honoring Thomas' special day. This has become a tradition for the Women's Club, and one that is always appreciated by the hospital and ALSAC staff, as well as patients and guests. The club members were quick with a smile and enjoyed adding cheer to everyone's day. Visitors to the cake table also enjoyed videos of *Make Room for Daddy*, Thomas' long-running television series. It was a wonderful birthday celebration.

The Women's Club's Elf Event is highly anticipated each year. Who can resist having their picture taken with Santa's elves? This year was no exception, and the event drew quite a crowd of patients and their families. Children enjoyed several craft stations to get them in the holiday spirit. They decorated holiday cookies with icing and candy, and many had their faces painted to show off their

favorite animals, colors and characters. Club members also offered holiday-themed crafts with loads of stickers, and everyone enjoyed the holiday music. Last, but not least, children could get their photos taken with Santa's elves in his regal chair. There was truly something for everyone, and the Women's Club members had just as much fun as the kids.



Women's Club member Lindsay Cummins serves cake at the birthday party for St. Jude founder Danny Thomas.

## New volunteer coordinators chosen for Grizzlies House and Target House

Two former Volunteer Services interns have secured permanent positions within the St. Jude family.

Megan Jones is now the special events and volunteer coordinator for Target House. She replaces Sarah Wilson, who took a position with ALSAC. Megan was a Volunteer Services intern from January to May 2012. She holds a bachelor's degree in Journalism and Mass Communications from the University of Oklahoma in Norman.



Megan Jones

Amanda Wheeler has taken on the new position of special events and volunteer coordinator for the Memphis Grizzlies House. She will report directly to Grizzlies House Manager Cayce Starr. Amanda was a Volunteer Services intern from May to August 2011. She has a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Missouri in Columbia.

Volunteer Services Coordinator Randa Spears has been organizing volunteer programs for the Memphis Grizzlies House since it opened in 2004. Now, she will be able to devote her time to managing Volunteer Services student programs (college, volunteers and Pediatric Oncology Education student involvement) as well as various projects that engage volunteers in special events, such as the Day of Remembrance.



Amanda Wheeler

Megan and Amanda will still be working closely with the Volunteer Services team to ensure that volunteers have consistent services, practices and policies system-wide.

"We will be using one central process to bring in new volunteers including the same application, the same website links and one orientation for all volunteers," said Volunteer Services Director Kathryn Berry Carter.

## The Ladies of St. Jude

BY SARAH D. PRATT, member



Ladies of St. Jude members volunteered at the fourth annual *St. Jude Give thanks. Walk.™* in November in Collierville. Shown here are: Virginia Daniel, Sarah Wright (of ALSAC Southern Region), Betty Christy and Suzanne Hieserman.

and grand opening weekend will be May 4 and 5. Give-away day this year will be June 23. Again, the Ladies will serve as hosts for open houses and will handle recording tickets under the supervision of Chair Betty Christy.

On a sad note, we report the death of a Ladies of St. Jude charter member, Lila Gould. Much sympathy and love go to her family.

November was a busy month for the Ladies of St. Jude. The November 13 hospital tour allowed members to see new equipment that the club has paid for. On November 17, members helped run registration for the *Give thanks. Walk.™* at the Avenue at Carriage Crossing in Collierville, which raised more than \$141,000. The Ladies were back again November 29 and 30 to help with the St. Jude Marathon at the Cook Convention Center headquarters. Mixed in were a few sessions in the LSJ workroom to fold T-shirts for St. Jude radiothons.

In December, the Ladies enjoyed their annual Christmas luncheon, this year at Chickasaw Country Club. Amid the beautifully decorated surroundings, members shared a lovely luncheon and enjoyed mingling with their guests: Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services Pam Dotson and Volunteer Services Director Kathryn Berry Carter, ALSAC staff members Sarah Wright and Kristen Getman, LSJ art program teacher Amy Hutcheson, and St. Jude patient Helen Tully and her mother, Andrea. During the luncheon, the Ladies made their annual check presentation to the hospital. This year, the Ladies of St. Jude donated \$435,031.

With very little time to spare, the Ladies have turned their thoughts to the 2013 Dream Home. Chair Aggie Wagner reports that tickets will go on sale March 6,



This Frequencer Acoustic Airway Clearance Device is one of the equipment items paid for by Ladies of St. Jude donations. Cardiopulmonary Director Jim Cresswell (front, left) said, "This is a huge addition to our arsenal to help St. Jude kids." This device, which cost \$16,494, was just one of the many items on the November LSJ tour. Members on the tour include: (front, R) Michelle Crump, (behind from L to R) Rene Leach, Glenda Fox, Lydia Gibson, Paula Phipps, Candy Johnson, Deborah Follis, Debbie Gage and Patty Williams.



## Service-in-action gallery



St. Jude School Program volunteer Sylvia Whitworth helps tutor a patient. Sylvia volunteers at St. Jude three hours each week.



Auxiliary Bazaar Chair Jenny Bledsoe shows off some of the toys that were for sale at the annual event in December. Learn more about the Bazaar on page 5.



St. Jude Women's Club member and "elf" Shelly Orwick talks to a patient during the club's annual Photos with the Elves event in December.



Clerical volunteer Justine Jezisek in Patient Services helps a patient's mother with snack bag tickets. Justine volunteers in Patient Services every Tuesday morning.



Volunteer Information Publication  
262 Danny Thomas Place  
Memphis, TN 38105-3678  
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Editing and Production by Volunteer Services. Photos and printing by Biomedical Communications.  
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