Volunteering in the Geriatric Day Hospital
A Commitment to Quality of Life

By Joan Willingham

The welcoming smiles and upbeat energy of recreation therapist Mary Anderson, nurse Angela Branscombe and volunteer Heidi Coles were the first things I noticed when I entered the Geriatric Day Hospital. Socializing, I discovered, plays an important role in a client’s recovery and future well-being and volunteers play a large part in the program’s success.

The Day Hospital operates four days a week with morning and afternoon sessions for clients who attend once or twice a week for a period of three-to-five months. Clients, mostly elderly, are recovering from surgery or other injuries but also have concerns such as isolation, poor nutrition or depression and are referred by a physician from Sunnybrook or within the community. Regaining mobility and improving a client’s quality of life are the Geriatric Day Hospital’s main purposes.

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A geriatrician is available for periodic assessments along with a nurse, an occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech pathologist, social worker and two recreational therapists. Each client has an individually designed program and every visit includes a combination of medical therapies, monitoring and recreational and socializing activities.

Greeting clients, hanging up their coats, attaching a name tag and placing their lunch in the fridge, are some of a volunteer’s regular duties in the Day Hospital. After that, each shift can be different and depends on what the recreation therapist has planned and on the individual client’s needs.

On Thursday morning I watched Heidi Coles, a former SVA President, who has been volunteering here for ten years, wash and sterilize plant pots in preparation for some indoor gardening. I also saw two people playing cribbage, another getting his blood pressure checked and a group working with the physiotherapist.

Volunteers set up the lounge for whatever activity has been planned for the day and will escort clients to and from their different therapies such as

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A Message from…

Esther McKinnon
President, Sunnybrook Volunteer Association

It is hard to believe we are already nearing the end of my first term as president. So much has been accomplished and we have so much to look forward to. I am particularly pleased with the highly successful transition we have had in the SVA office with our new Office Administrator, Mille Mandekic, and the progress we have made streamlining our processes, documenting our procedures and enhancing software applications in both the administrative and bookkeeping areas. These developments will be of great benefit to the board and membership at large.

As part of this process we have had a number of meetings with representatives of our key fundraising areas such as Greenthumbs, the Beauty Shop, Fine Arts and the Gift Shop to discuss ways the SVA board and office can best support their successful operations. These meetings provided very helpful insights and resulted in valuable opportunities to simplify procedures and upgrade financial reporting for our fundraising units. Everyone involved in these meetings enjoyed the interaction and agreed we should make these meetings a more regular process.

As we learn more about the various aspects of the SVA, we are documenting the many processes, events and operations that make up the organization and have created a manual so that all activities of the SVA will be outlined with simple step-by-step work plans for every project or process. This will ease transitions and help to ensure continuity as the board and the membership in our key fundraising areas evolve.

We also witnessed a major milestone in January when the Archive Committee presented its final report to the board on the outstanding job they have done to compile, consolidate and document our wonderful history. The committee has worked tirelessly on this project and are highly deserving of our rich thanks. We will now see a transition to a new Archive Committee membership, led by Phyllis Epp, as they move into the ongoing role of maintaining the archives, adding to the collection and supervising the use of archival materials. Our thanks and appreciation go out to Heidi Coles, Linda Diener and Audrey Wilson for the great job they have done on the archives project.

We are now busy planning the important upcoming events that mark the SVA year including the Victorian Afternoon Tea, April 14, the Annual General Meeting, May 26, and the always anticipated Shaw Festival theatre trip June 3. We hope to see you at all of these events. They promise to be a lot of fun!

Esther McKinnon
speech pathology, occupational therapy or for tests within Sunnybrook that may have been scheduled by the Day Hospital.

“Watching clients become more outgoing and start to interact with others” says Heidi, is one of the reasons she enjoys contributing here. Volunteers also bring the clients’ lunches from the fridge, make tea or coffee for them if they wish and sit and chat while they eat. They may be asked to help with a recreation therapy such as music appreciation, jewellery making, painting scarves or mini golf. If asked, a volunteer will help a client with the computer or perhaps with the current affairs program which involves reading the newspaper and facilitating a discussion about a news item.

Volunteers who play the piano may be asked to play and sometimes a volunteer reads a story or a poem.

Gwen Pattison, a gardener who has been volunteering here for 12 years, showed me the outdoor garden that has been created by staff, volunteers and clients. Clients plant seeds and seedlings now, and in the spring will transplant them to the raised beds outside. The flowers, herbs and tomatoes they plant result in a beautiful garden where people can sit and read or eat lunch. Some of the flowers are picked by clients and arranged in vases around the unit and the herbs are made into herb vinegars. In summer, there is a putting green outside, which is very popular, and a BBQ.

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A Message from…

Katherine Alexopoulos
Director, Volunteer Resources

A number of construction projects continue on the Sunnybrook campus. In the Odette Cancer Centre on T1, there is a new Information Desk for the volunteers, increased seating capacity for patients, and the external shell of the Patient Education and Research Learning Centre (PEARL) is complete. Thank you to the volunteers who have helped to ensure quality service during these disruptions.

The Schulich redevelopment is also continuing and a number of patient care units have already been or will be relocating.

The fourth and fifth floors of the M Wing expansion will be completed by the end of June. Over the summer, the space will be prepared for the official relocation of the Women & Babies program this coming September. This includes Labour & Delivery, Maternal and Newborn Care and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. We eagerly anticipate the arrival of this program. As move day draws nearer we will be planning for how volunteers will be able to assist during the move. We will also be organizing events, tours, etc. to orient volunteers to this new program and space. The first event is a Lunch & Learn about the Women & Babies program which will be held on Thurs. April 22 during National Volunteer Week. We hope to see you there.

The relocation of the Women & Babies program will bring with it approximately 500 additional staff, as well as increased volumes of patients and visitors. A new parking garage (PG 3) is being built at the southeast end of our campus in order to accommodate these increases, but despite this, sufficient parking will continue to present a challenge across our campus.

The hospital is in process of rolling out two new initiatives – the first is the RESPECT program, which is about how people work with and treat one another. Next will be a “customer service” program. As volunteers, you already play an integral role in enhancing patient and visitor experiences at Sunnybrook. In alignment with these initiatives, we will be planning sessions for volunteers to further reinforce your key front line roles.

This year, National Volunteer Week runs from April 18-24. Volunteer Resources is planning a number of activities during that week, however, our hope is that you feel “Valued, Involved and Passionate” about the contributions you make to the hospital each and every time you are here. You truly do make a difference in the lives of our patients, residents and families… when it matters most!

The herb vinegars, cookies, wreaths, scarves, note cards, candles, and jewellery made by clients during recreational therapy are sold in the Christmas Bazaar and volunteers play a large part in organizing this event. Money raised is used to buy supplies for the program.

On Wednesday afternoon I watched volunteer Jenny Smith trace a beautiful flower pattern onto silk scarves which clients will later paint. Jenny has contributed here for five years and also volunteers in wheelchairs in the morning. She enjoys the variety of tasks and the feeling of being useful. At the end of the morning or afternoon a volunteer helps clients with their coats and takes them to their transportation home.

Sally LeBlanc, also a former SVA President, has volunteered here for many years, helping in the garden and Martha Cambridge, who recently passed away, is remembered as a long time key member of the Day Hospital volunteer team.

Volunteering in the Geriatric Day Hospital certainly requires flexibility and initiative as well as the attitude of a team player who can take direction. All the volunteers I spoke with enjoyed the positive energy that exudes from the Day Hospital and the variety of the duties. The long tenure of so many of the Day Hospital volunteers suggests they take delight in the many ways their efforts contribute to the success of this wonderful program.

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Greenthumbs Celebrates Its 20th Year!

With the recent renovations to the roof of the original McLean Estates greenhouse, the Greenthumbs organization is all dressed up and ready to celebrate its 20 years of operation in this landmark facility. Greenthumbs has grown from a handful of volunteers selling recovered tulip bulbs from public parks into a major year round growing and marketing operation that today contributes over $20,000 a year to the Volunteer Association’s annual donation to the hospital.

In 1990, the President of the Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre recognized the efforts of a small group of volunteers, who had been collecting and selling donated bulbs, by giving them approval to restore and use the “dilapidated” McLean House greenhouse. Bill Toyne’s adjoining article in this issue describes the original collaboration of sponsors, contractors and volunteers to renovate the greenhouse and save it from demolition, as well as the recent major effort, 20 years later, to restore the roof and anchor the future of this valuable asset. This has truly been a labour of love.

The Greenthumbs organization is always innovating. Every year, the members seem to be able to add a new dimension to their unique form of fundraising and their revenue stream just keeps on growing. Congratulations go out to the Greenthumbs group from everyone associated with the Volunteer Association. Their original Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre sponsors would be tickled pink! Ed.

Sale at Toronto Botanical Garden a Big Success for Greenthumbs

A big bouquet goes to the Greenthumbs volunteers who raised $2,800 at their annual spring sale at the Toronto Botanical Garden on Feb. 20. Bolstered by a CTV publicity visit to the greenhouse prior to the event that was arranged by the botanical garden as part of its Get The Jump On Spring promotion, the Greenthumbs group attracted a large following at the show and sold out as they always do! Well done to everyone involved!

Customer Service and Accessibility Important Areas of Focus for Volunteers

The Government of Ontario has recently made a valuable commitment to all Ontarians and specifically to those with disabilities by introducing the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act in 2005. The first part of this new legislation addressed Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, along with all other public sector organizations in Ontario, was required to introduce and comply with the law by January 2010.

Sunnybrook has had an Accessibility Working Group in place for a number of years with membership from a wide variety of departments and services throughout the hospital. Beth Singleton represents Volunteer Resources on this committee. When the Accessibility for Ontarians Act was introduced, this committee was given responsibility for ensuring all individuals who work or volunteer at Sunnybrook know what they can do to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Volunteers and staff have been given the opportunity to become informed about the new law via seminars at the hospital and/or online learning modules. If you have not already received the booklet Accessibility at Sunnybrook: Serving our Communities’ Needs you can pick up a copy at the Volunteer Resources office — and, if you have not already done so, you should complete the Ontario Hospital Association’s Customer Service Learning Module at http://sunnybrook.discoverycampus.com. To register — enter your name, “volunteer” as your title and “volunteer resources” as your department. When asked for a manager’s email, enter volunteer@sunnybrook.ca. Then proceed to select the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities course — it can be done in about 30 minutes.

By removing barriers and increasing accessibility, everyone benefits, but most importantly people with disabilities are more able to participate in the activities of daily living. In a coming issue of The Sunnybrook Volunteer we will be publishing additional information on the customer service oriented programs Sunnybrook is introducing so that volunteers can keep up to date on these important initiatives. Please be sure you are current on these matters. As a volunteer, you represent the hospital’s front line of customer service and these programs will be helpful to you in fulfilling that role. Ed.

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By Bill Toyne

Last August, the Greenthumbs greenhouse was a hive of activity as volunteers, working with Sunnybrook Maintenance, scraped and sanded the cypress wood framing that forms the glass roof over this historic building. The greenhouse was originally constructed in the 1930s and for the past few years there had been concerns about the safety of the 70-year-old roof. When the time came for a new safer roof, the combined efforts of the Greenthumbs volunteers and a number of generous donors got the job done.

An expert in greenhouse construction, Alex Turkewitsch, volunteered his time and know-how to come up with the design. Frank Jonkman, of JGS Ltd., the firm that supplied and installed the new glass, donated $3,000 towards the total cost of $5,500 to replace the roof with tempered glass. Additional donations from Shell Oil and Petro-Canada of $500 each were obtained under their employee and retiree volunteer sponsorship programs. It was a perfect combination of volunteer effort and corporate support!

The whole project was actually reminiscent of the origins of the greenhouse in 1990 when the recently retired husbands of two Sunnybrook volunteers undertook the restoration of what was then a long abandoned structure. With financial help from their former employers and elbow grease from a growing band of volunteers, the greenhouse was restored. Donations of used spring bulbs from the City Parks Department carefully tended over the winter brought the first sales to Greenthumbs.

Today, Sunnybrook volunteers rise at 4 a.m. to shop at the Ontario Food Terminal for material for their sales, and in 2009 Greenthumbs raised over $20,000 for the Volunteer Association. These projects have been great examples of what volunteer activity and corporate donations can do to make Sunnybrook a better place.

Volunteers and contractors donating their time have completed restoration of the roof of the historic McLean Estates greenhouse in time to celebrate its 20th year. Photo courtesy of the SVA.

Corporate Donations Help Volunteers Restore Their Greenhouse
The Canadian Cancer Society and Sunnybrook
A Partnership That Makes a Difference

By Kathy Kwan

The Canadian Cancer Society has been a partner of the Odette Cancer Centre (formerly Toronto Sunnybrook Regional Cancer Centre) for many years. Prior to the integration of the cancer centre with Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in 2004, the Canadian Cancer Society fully supported and managed the Volunteer Program at OCC. The current partnership was formed when Cancer Care Ontario relinquished responsibility for regional cancer centres to host hospitals; this is when the OCC volunteer program was integrated with the hospital’s program.

The hospital and the Society entered into a Memorandum of Understanding, which allowed the Society to continue providing support to the centre in various ways.

The Society funds various programs, free of charge to the patients. Some of these programs include the refreshment carts (coffee, tea and cookies) within the cancer centre and comprehensive and credible information on cancer, risk reduction and treatment, through our brochures that are available throughout the centre as well as on our website – www.cancer.ca.

Patients and families can also access credible information through our Cancer Information Service. For those that are having difficulty getting to and from the hospital for treatment, the Society provides a Volunteer Driver Program – available to give people rides to and from cancer related appointments.

We can also help to access funding, such as the Northern Health Travel Grant, as well as assistance for families that are transporting their child to pediatric oncology appointments. The Society also offers Peer Support, for those interested in speaking to someone who has had a similar experience. To find out more about any of these services, please call 1-888-939-3333.

Within OCC, the Society provides funding for a staff member, the Volunteer Resources Coordinator, to be onsite at the centre to supervise the Volunteer Program and also assist patients by helping them to access various programs, both within OCC and in the community. The Society also operates a wig and hat boutique to assist those who are losing their hair, due to cancer treatments. Patients are able to come and get a wig and/or hat free of charge. In addition to wigs, we have cotton turbans and knitted wool hats available. All our products are donated to the program and are washed and styled prior to being made available to the public.

The existing partnership continues to be beneficial to both the hospital and the Society, but most importantly provides much needed resources and support to the patients and families of the hospital. Together we hope to make their journey that little bit easier. This ultimately is the goal of both Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and the Canadian Cancer Society.

Kathy Kwan is the Canadian Cancer Society’s partnership representative to the Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre where she acts as Volunteer Resources Coordinator for the Odette Cancer Centre. She can be reached at 416-480-6003 or kathy.kwan@sunnybrook.ca.

Newsletter Committee

John Lang, Editor; Esther McKinnon, ex-officio; Joan Willingham, Stacey McIndless and Bill Toyne members
Design & Copy Editing: Lorraine Hunter
Printing: Sunnybrook Print Shop

The Newsletter Committee welcomes input from members interested in joining Board Committees, helping out at SVA events, researching and/or writing articles for the newsletter, or taking photographs. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact us at: svaunder@university.ca or 426-480-4132

ISSN 1918-7637 The Sunnybrook Volunteer
Mark Your Calendar!

**Green Thumbs Plant Sales**
Thurs. April 1, Easter Baskets Every Wed. in T, K & E Wings and Craft Area until May 12
After that, weekdays 9 a.m.–1 p.m. in the Greenhouse

**Book Sales**
8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. in D1
Thurs. March 25, Tues. April 13, Fri. May 21, Fri. June 18

**SVA “Victorian Afternoon Tea”**
Wed. April 14, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Room EG18a, McLaughlin Auditorium

**Shaw Festival Trip**
Thurs. June 3 to see *The Ideal Husband* by Oscar Wilde

**Annual General Meeting**
Wed. May 26

**National Volunteer Week**
April 18–24

**Lunch and Learn – Women & Babies Program**
Thurs. April 22, 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m.
Room EG18a McLaughlin Auditorium

**Healthcare Career Fair**
Thurs. May 20, 3:30–6:30 p.m. Open to students in the community.

**CrCu/CVICU Volunteer Meetings**
Tues. April 6, 6–8 p.m., Rm M1006
Wed. April 7, 10 a.m.–12 noon, Rm M1006

**Emergency Department Volunteer Meetings**
Tues. April 27, 6–8 p.m., Rm E115
Thurs. April 29, 2–4 p.m., Rm E115

**M1 Wheelchair Escort Volunteer Meetings:**
Mon. May 17, 2–4 p.m., Rm EG21
Wed. May 19, 9–11 a.m., Rm EG21

**M-Wing Greeters Volunteer Meeting:**
Mon. May 31, 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m., Rm C103

**Women & Babies Program**
Sept. 7–12 relocation of program from Women’s College to Sunnybrook.
Sun. Sept. 12, patients/babies to be moved to Sunnybrook.

Notes & Reminders

- Don’t forget; if you have not already done so, to sign up for the Victorian Afternoon Tea on April 14 in the McLaughlin Auditorium from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Get out your finest spring hat and your favourite tea cup. The tulips are just about to burst through the snow!

- Notices are just going up for the annual Shaw Festival Theatre Trip on June 3 as well. The excursion group will enjoy lunch at the Prince of Wales Hotel, a bit of serious shopping, and a matinee performance of Oscar Wilde’s *An Ideal Husband*. Don’t miss it!

- Please make a note that the Annual General Meeting of the Sunnybrook Volunteer Association is being scheduled for Wed., May 26. Be sure to be there to review the Association’s progress, enjoy dinner with friends and to elect your 2010/11 board of directors.

- Please note the Volunteer Association has changed its email address – you can now contact the SVA office at sva@sunnybrook.ca.

- A reminder also that, if you have not yet given your email address to the SVA office, you should do so right away so you can receive the quarterly newsletter and other volunteer communications in a timely manner.
Welcome New Volunteers!

Hospital Services
Anne Chisolm
Bob Gorman
Candida Telles
Gunther Clesle
Hovig Kerkezian
Pawel Pietkiewicz
Rachel Lim
Robert MacDonald
Shakila Parveen
Sophie Hamouth
Tania Johannsen
Valerie Strba
Vibert Lampkin

Support & Fundraising Services
Angela Rickett
Carole Barry
Georgette Davidow
Kamyar Pournazari

Veterans Centre
Anna Morellato
Biyang Qian
Christine Sri Skandharajah
David Jackson
Geoffrey Lovegrove
Marnie Walker
Pat Folliot
Pinkie Mentore
Robert Crookston
Rosemary Simpson
Ursula Lente

Odette Cancer Centre
Ekaterina Potapova
Frances Arzem
Hodan Hassan
Karim Louie

Holland Centre
Remy Baterina

In Memoriam
Our thoughts go out to friends and family
Martha Cambridge - January, 2010

Nominations Requested
Kay MacLellan Volunteer Award

The Recognition and Awards Committee is seeking nominations for the 2010 Kay MacLellan Volunteer Award. This award is given by her son, Bruce MacLellan, and his wife, Karen, in memory of Kay.

A nominee should be an active volunteer who meets the following criteria developed by Kay’s son to reflect characteristics of his mother:

- Supportive of fellow volunteers and the Association
- Interested in the well-being of patients, staff and the Sunnybrook community
- Brings a positive attitude to life and work
- Committed to the volunteer role
- Always acts as a team player
- Displays modesty in accepting and carrying out tasks

Think about all the volunteers you know, either through your work or through shared experiences, who might be eligible for this award. Complete the following form and submit it by April 10, 2010 to:

Esther McKinnon
Chair, Recognition & Awards Committee
Room E-116

KAY MACLELLAN VOLUNTEER AWARD NOMINATION

Nominee’s Name:
Area of Service:
Examples to support the above criteria:

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Martha Cambridge - January, 2010