



# VOLUNTEER CONNECTION

Created for the Newport Hospital Volunteers

Winter 2012, Issue 14

## A Patient's Best Friend *by Dennis Bristow*

During World War II, Corporal William Wynne came across a young female Yorkshire Terrier during combat operations against the Japanese on the island of New Guinea. He named the dog Smokey.

Smokey accompanied Wynne on many combat missions, providing comfort and entertainment for troops and even assisted the Signal Corps in running a telegraph cable through an underground pipe. The job was completed in minutes instead of three days of dangerous work. When Wynne was hospitalized his mates brought the dog to the hospital. Her effect on other patients was quickly apparent and the commander of the hospital permitted Smokey to stay with Wynne and visit the entire hospital. That commander was Dr. Charles Mayo of the famed Mayo Clinic. Smokey's work as a therapy dog continued for twelve years, during and after World War II.



Linda Craig-Aguair with pet therapy dog Cassidy!

### “My little dog – a heartbeat at my feet.”

Edith Wharton

The first systematic approach to the use of therapy dogs occurred when Elaine Smith, an American nurse working in London, noticed the effect on patients of a certain chaplain accompanied by his Golden Retriever. In 1976 she started a formal training program for therapy dogs in New York City.

Newport Hospital's therapy dogs do not assist with cable installations but the benefits to patients are numerous and profound. There is a developing body of scientific evidence that therapy pets lower blood pressure. It's easy to observe that they raise spirits and increase the comfort of patients. After interviewing Linda Craig Aguiar, recreation therapist in the Vanderbilt Rehabilitation Department, I learned that the volunteer dogs at our hospital can help convince patients to get over reluctance to begin therapy. She told me that patients begin talking with Cassidy, Linda's volunteer Portuguese Water Dog. This may enhance their ability to communicate with the people who care for and about them. This often begins with petting, and petting a dog is good physical training for the hands and arms. It often starts a patient in stretching and

additional therapies. The dogs sometimes walk with patients who are doing gait training. Patients who miss their own pets left at home can get eye-to-eye with our volunteer canines. The increase in good spirits is particularly noticeable among this group.

Chris Libby of Portsmouth brings Scully, her well-trained Boxer, to the sixth floor on Sundays. Chris says that she notices the increase of smiles among patients at all of her volunteer destinations. Scully and Gus, a Golden Retriever owned and handled by Becky Inman of Portsmouth, were trained at TLC Dog Training in Middletown. TLC is owned and operated by well-known dog trainer Betty Laurin. After being tested at the hospital, the TLC dogs are

*Continued on page five*

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |   |
|---|---|
| A Patient's Best Friend .....               | 1 |
| Focus on BHU Volunteers .....               | 2 |
| Staff Profile – Marc Kalapos .....          | 3 |
| Jim Myers, It's Been a Wildlife Life .....  | 4 |
| Holiday Tea at Canfield House Photos .....  | 4 |
| Volunteer Retreat .....                     | 5 |
| Volunteers Go the Extra Mile .....          | 5 |
| We Value Your Feedback Survey Results ..... | 6 |
| Taking a Plunge on New Year's Day! .....    | 6 |

## Focus on BHU Volunteers

**Sally Lukeris** by Joyce Allphin

Recreational volunteer, Sally Lukeris, comes to the Behavioral Health Unit after a 30-year career in Mental Health Services in the state of Connecticut where she held various managerial and clinical positions with an emphasis on recreation. In addition, Sally was active with the Connecticut Chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, NAMI.

Having grown up in southeastern Massachusetts, she was familiar with this area and settled in Bristol after one of her daughters and her family moved there.

Another daughter lives in Newport and a third in Connecticut. Two Grandsons keep Sally happily busy.

Sally loves her volunteer work and feels she makes a difference to the patients. They express their appreciation to her, and are happy that she is willing to come each week to spend time with them.

Sally recently donated a griddle to the Unit as a tool for leading cooking groups. She and some of the patients made ham and cheese paninis, and it was a big hit. Their attempt at making crepes wasn't a disaster, but they turned out more like pancakes.

In addition to the cooking activities the Nintendo's Wii game is popular with the patients. With it they can simulate dance moves, play tennis and even play a bowling game. Sally is pleased to be able to bring her skills gained in a career in recreational therapy to the Newport Hospital as a volunteer group leader.

**Richard Marz** by Joyce Allphin

Richard Marzialo, professionally known as Richard Marz, brings a unique talent to Newport Hospital's volunteer program. Each week he totes his 1947 Martin 00021, sometimes called the Stradivarius of guitars, to the Behavioral Health Unit at the Hospital. There he entertains patients with his renditions of jazz, blues and country music. Anywhere from six to 15 people may be in attendance at any session.

Richard came to volunteering in the Unit by a circuitous path. Last April after suffering a heart attack he was admitted to Newport Hospital where his life was saved due to the outstanding care he received.



*Sally Luckeris with Christopher Paiva, BHU Director and unit Secretary Bruce Matoes. Sally showing new griddle she donated to the unit for cooking groups.*

He wanted to give back to the hospital and started out distributing newspapers to patient rooms until Lisa Coble, Director of Volunteer Services, learned that Richard had played guitar professionally for 35 years, everywhere from Carnegie Hall to major arenas in every state but Alaska and Hawaii. So in addition to distributing newspapers, he plays his guitar in the Behavioral Health Unit each Tuesday.

Highlights of his career include 8 years in Nashville where he played American country music at the Grand Ole Opry and several years in Austin, which has a tremendous music scene.

Richard returned to Rhode Island to give care to an aging ill mother and while here played in bands in nearby Connecticut until his mother became so ill he decided to give private guitar lessons so that he could stay closer to home.

He continues to study the guitar, especially jazz music and says that his gig in the Behavioral Health Unit, Tuesday afternoons, is as gratifying for him as he hopes it is for the patients.

*Message from BHU Director, Christopher Paiva*  
The Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) at Newport Hospital believes that volunteers truly make a positive impact in the lives of our patients. These volunteers support the hospital's mission of quality, caring and community through the generous gift of their time. Most of the public wouldn't readily volunteer in a psychiatric unit. People suffering from mental illness also struggle with preconceived judgment, misunderstanding, and stigma from others.

## Staff Profile – Marc Kalapos *by Dick Allphin*

As Director of Medical / Surgical Nursing at Newport Hospital, Marc Kalapos oversees all aspects of the second, fourth and fifth floors. As Marc explains, the second floor is the surgical nursing care floor and the fourth and fifth are the medical care floors. The three floors have a total of 75 beds and a staff of about 120.

Marc's goal is to have patients experience the "best possible hospital stay". This is where his volunteers have a very important role. Their patient interaction provides another set of eyes and ears for the regular nursing staff. The volunteers visit each room to see if there is anything they can help with, such as setting up trays, adjusting beds or getting a magazine or a glass of water (if the patient is allowed). They go to each room on the three floors and then return again if there is time. Marc is available to them for any questions they may have. It's a good opportunity for those hospital volunteers who wish to have significant patient interaction. There is also a volunteer that is dedicated to keeping the supply closets stocked.

Currently there are ten volunteers assigned to the medical/surgical units and Marc would love to have more. "I would take as many volunteers as Lisa Coble, Director of Volunteers, can send me."

Marc grew up in the Bronx in New York City, and then moved with his parents to Stratford, Connecticut. After graduation from high school he attended Salve Regina College and obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing there. He worked a short time in a nursing home and then came to Newport Hospital. Marc later obtained a

master's degree in Health Care Administration. Marc has been at Newport Hospital for 15 years. He worked as a CNA in the "float pool" until he got his RN degree and then became a nurse on the Medical / Surgical floors. Next he worked as a nurse in the ER. Marc then became Administrative Coordinator for evening shift. In 2009, he became Director of Surgical Nursing which led to his present position.

Marc, a widower with an eight-year-old son, now lives in Dighton, Massachusetts. He originally lived in Newport with his wife and his son Nicholas who was born at Newport Hospital. The family later moved to Portsmouth and then to Dighton. He and his son get up early in the morning, get ready for school and work and Nicholas gets dropped off at day care for the before-school time. After work, Marc picks Nicholas up at day care where he goes after school. They have supper, do homework and call it a day. What a busy single dad! ■



*Marc Kalapos with unit volunteer Briana Gustaitis*

### Focus on BHU Volunteers *continued*

As a result, patients suffer from exclusion. Not so here on BHU! Our committed volunteers demonstrate passion and share their skills and enthusiasm with patients. We offer guitar music playing and singing, relaxing hand massages, and cooking in the patient kitchen with our panini maker which was purchased by a volunteer. We have a comfort cart that delivers complimentary books, magazines, puzzle books, art supplies and playing cards to the unit.

The dedication of our volunteers stems from their desire to make a difference, meet new people, gain new experiences, and to give back

to society. Volunteerism really is about ordinary people doing extraordinary things. When we give of ourselves, we are contributing and helping others and the community at large.

The unit has a yoga volunteer starting in February and our patients are excited. We are still looking for volunteers in pet therapy and art. ■

**“The Behavioral Health Unit at Newport Hospital believes that volunteers truly make a positive impact in the lives of our patients.”**

## Jim Myers, It's Been A Wildlife Life *by Dennis Bristow*

A large percentage of Newport Hospital volunteers are retired from their professional vocations. We wrote in a recent issue about former hospital employees who have continued their medical careers as hospital volunteers. The rest of the retiree volunteers come from nearly every walk of life. One of the most interesting careers is that of Jim Myers, who worked for the State of Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife. Myers' trained as a wildlife biologist in college and retired about 10 years ago.



*Jim Myers with a new volunteer transport Staxi chair. The chairs were purchased through special purpose fund events!*

Myers does patient transport duty from the hospital front desk each Wednesday. He described the careful procedure for moving discharged patients from hospital departments to vehicles in front of the main door on Powell Avenue for the trip to home or another care facility. Jim has been a surgery and rehabilitation patient at the hospital and that experience strongly motivates him to assist patients in similar circumstances. Director of Volunteer Services Lisa Coble says about him, "Jim has been a very faithful and dedicated volunteer for close to 10 years! His smile and cheerful attitude make Wednesday afternoons at the information desk an upbeat place!"

Myers career is the kind that I dreamed about as a young Boy Scout. As the principal wildlife

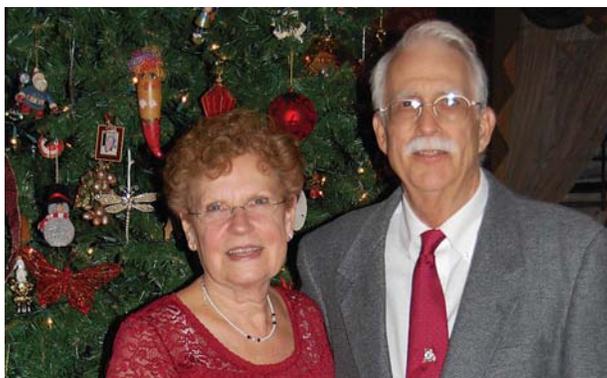
investigator he had responsibility for keeping track of the populations of Rhode Island colonial nesting birds: Ibis, Black-crowned Night Heron and varieties of Egrets in the eastern flyway during the summer season. In the winter season ducks and deer were his responsibility. The Fish and Wildlife Division has the critical job of balancing the needs of wildlife and humans. What's more important than living responsibly in our natural world?

And Jim Myers has stories. I had no idea that a state employee could fly in a de Havilland Beaver from Maine to New Jersey to spot nesting and herding areas, changing range conditions and unacceptable encroachments on the wildlife. The Beaver was fitted as a seaplane and operated by the federal government as a joint operation with state wildlife departments. Before it was replaced with a helicopter, Jim landed at Philadelphia International Airport where there was a man-made body of water in the form of a landing strip for seaplanes. In winter the helicopter would stop for lunch at the parking lot of George's Restaurant in Galilee.

During his time with the Fish and Wildlife Division he published three books on Rhode Island Wildlife: Mourning Doves of Rhode Island, Deer of Rhode Island and Colonial Nesting Birds.

Jim is a native of Wattle, Pennsylvania and graduated from Pennsylvania State University. He lives in Jamestown with his wife Linda Jacobson. When I talked with him I knew that he worked hard and cared for our world, its people and nature. The little beasts can't say "Thank you", but we do. ■

## Holiday Tea at Canfield House



*Barbara and Richard Levesque enjoying the party*



*Clara Nunes, Vincent Roderick, Bert Furtado and Jean Pica at holiday tea!*

## Volunteer Retreat *by Joyce Allphin*

At this year's Newport Hospital's volunteer retreat, everyone went home with a piece of artwork, each as individual as the creator.

As advertised, there was no artistic talent needed – just the desire to create something. With direction from Kyle McDonald, an artist on staff at Hasbro Children's Hospital, everyone was off and running. She provided the materials to facilitate the project – magazines, from which pictures could be torn for decoupage, colorful acrylic paints and paint brushes as well as assorted colorful tiles. The latter would become extra adornment for a mirror with a six-inch wooden surround.

Kyle commented that research has shown that the Healing Arts can help to relieve fear, pain and anxiety in children and adults receiving medical treatment. She adds that by giving patients something to focus on other than illness, the creative process can play an integral part in palliative care.

One volunteer, Carol Formica, e-mailed Lisa Coble, Director of Volunteer Services, saying she loved "the team building experience of sharing

**“Research has shown that the Healing Arts can help to relieve fear, pain and anxiety in children and adults receiving medical treatment.”**

magazines, glue and paint and the encouragement she received from others to have fun.”

Volunteer Jean Wilson thanked Lisa for offering the challenge of creating something new and added a special thank-you for the luncheon of sandwiches, salads, and other goodies.

Volunteers sharing their experiences at the hospital were another segment of the day's program. Carol Formica said "hearing other volunteer experiences made her feel part of a very special team."

Lark d'Helen, Spiritual Care Advisor joined us in the beginning of the Retreat to lead a group introduction and networking session. She encouraged volunteers to visit the 20-seat Serbst Memorial Chapel off the courtyard as a space to have quiet reflection time. Every Wednesday at noon meditation to renew the spirit is led by her or Dr. Scott McDonald. ■

## Volunteers Go the Extra Mile...

Volunteers are frequently asked to take on extra assignments and many do so willingly. They provide office coverage to help departments have a staff meeting, cover planned absences for volunteers and offer support to special events.

The comfort care team provides hand massage and Reiki at the Stress Less Fair, Community Health Fair and Annual Employee Benefits Fair. Volunteers played an important role in supporting the registration desk at the Patient Care Skills Competency Week last November. Thanks to all that go the extra mile.



*Lori Allan, RN with Susan Casey (left) and Nancy Noonan greeting clinical staff as they arrived to complete mandatory competency training.*

**A Patient's Best Friend** *continued from page one*  
certified and assigned to duties by Therapy Dogs Inc., a non-profit agency based in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Becky Inman told me, "The emotion evoked from humans by the dogs is unbelievable!"

I think the future of pet therapy is bright, indeed. Dogs and mankind have been increasing their bond for millenniums and the harmony between

the species clearly enhances the well-being of both. As medical science recognizes this and increases the testing, research and application of pet therapy, we will all benefit. It might not be long before the dogs will forsake their volunteer status and want to be paid! In the meanwhile, Cassidy, Scully and Gus remain happy on the job as loyal and patient volunteers. ■

## We Value Your Feedback Survey Results *by Lisa Coble*

Over 35 volunteers completed the We Value Your Feedback survey. We wanted to solicit your opinions to guide our planning for the upcoming annual volunteer recognition, continuing education offerings and other special events.

From the survey results we discovered that most volunteers would like to be recognized at a luncheon. We are planning a luncheon to celebrate volunteer efforts during National Volunteer Week in April. Nominations for the Shining Star Awards will be collected during the month of March.

There were many suggestions for continuing education programs. Our first offering for 2012 will be a Mandala workshop in late February. What is a Mandala? Come to the workshop to find out, network with other volunteers and experience an activity that you haven't done before! With new experiences we open our minds and broaden our perspective on life. I will be continuing to contact speakers and offer trainings throughout the year.

Thanks to everyone that took time to offer your feedback and congratulations to Patricia Garcia – winner of the movie passes! ■

**Volunteer Services**  
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## Taking a Plunge on New Year's Day!



*Jean Wilson takes a break from Comfort Care volunteering on New Year's day to jump into the ocean at the first beach Polar Bear Plunge. Jean wore her uniform and ID badge into the frigid water because she is a proud volunteer!*

### Save the Date

Wednesday, April 18, 2012

**Volunteer Recognition Luncheon**