Holiday Season 2011 at MHSWH

On Christmas Eve, Volunteer Supervisor Debbie Varner and New Volunteer Dayja Berry got into the holiday spirit by distributing approximately 75 Teddy Bears, Beanie Babies, and other donated stuffed animals to young patients in the Pediatrics Unit, Family Place, NICU, and Emergency Services Department. Earlier in the week, Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus visited children throughout the hospital to spread some holiday cheer and deliver toys. There is nothing quite like the joy of giving to make the holidays feel truly festive! Thank you Houstonians for opening up your hearts and helping to make the Junior Auxiliary’s New Toy Drive an overwhelming success. We are so very grateful!

Many Thanks to Bellaire High School Students Danielle Salazar, Crissy Martinez, Naiyalis Palomo, Trine Cortes, Lucia Rodriguez, Samantha Dragustinovis, and Karen Palma Who Entertained Our Patients, Staff and Visitors on Saturday, December 10th with Christmas Carols!
The Pioneering Work of Memorial Hermann

It all began in 1925, when Hermann Hospital became the first hospital founded in the Texas Medical Center. Since then, Memorial Hermann Healthcare System (MHHS) has been a major facilitator in the nation’s movement towards integrating cutting-edge technology with western medical practices. MHHS was the founder and the first to implement Life Flight, a helicopter ambulance, in the state of Texas. MHHS was the first hospital in Texas to start treating patients with penicillin and the first to perform cardiac catheterization. Furthermore, MHHS introduced the effectiveness of robotics in heart surgery when they became the first in the world to perform reconstructive robotic aortic surgery. The achievements did not end there, as MHHS expanded into the largest non-profit hospital network in the state of Texas by ultimately building 11 hospitals throughout the greater Houston area.

In 1977, MHHS built a hospital that was more accessible to the suburban area, away from the congested medical center. The result was the first suburban hospital in Houston, Memorial Hermann South West (MHSW). MHSW has now taken over as the busiest MHHS hospital, even surpassing Memorial Hermann Texas Medical Center, and is now the second-busiest hospital in Houston, behind only Ben Taub. MHSW performs the most open-heart surgeries in Houston within the Heart and Vascular Institute. MHSW has continued a technologically-minded philosophy, as it was the first hospital in southern Texas to introduce non-invasive, image-guided radiosurgery (Trilogy Tx), an innovative new technological treatment for cancer, brain & spinal cord injuries, and other central nervous system disorders. MHSW was recognized in 2011 as one of the top 5% of the nation’s hospitals when it comes to providing care for critically-ill patients, stroke care, general surgery, gastroenterology services, and maternity care. Also in 2011, four Memorial Hermann campuses - Southwest Hospital, Southeast Hospital, Northwest Hospital, and The Woodlands Hospital - were the only Houston hospitals named on a list of the nation’s 50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals by Thomson Reuters. Great achievements and awards are not just given out, they are earned through the hard work and dedication of all employees, partners, and volunteers of Memorial Hermann Healthcare System.

~ Syed Anjum, MHSWH Junior Board Secretary

Children’s Book Drive

MHSWH’s Junior Auxiliary is Sponsoring a Book Drive

We are gratefully accepting in the Volunteer Office new and gently-used Children’s Books through March. Donated books will be shared with children in the ER and Pediatrics Unit during the month of April and throughout the year.

~ Aala Al Hasan, MHSWH Junior Board Vice President
For many, the start of a new year is an exciting time. It is often a time for reflecting on what was hopefully a fun and productive year, and optimistically making plans for an even better year to come. If volunteering at MHSWH is on your list of resolutions for 2012 (and we hope it is!) please know that you are in good company. MHSWH volunteers make a tremendous contribution to the success of our hospital and our community. Sometimes the smallest things can mean so much to a patient or visitor — from delivering a newspaper, magazine or small bottle of shampoo, to freshening the water in a vase of flowers, or even helping a patient walk around their unit for a bit of exercise.

I am frequently asked by many of our terrific volunteers how they can be even better volunteers. With that thought in mind, here are my top 5 tips for volunteering success:

- Arrive on time and bring a good attitude with you! I strongly believe that 75% of success in life is achieved by just showing up. How else can you be in the right place at the right time?!

- Have a pleasant expression on your face and put a “smile” in your voice.

- Stay calm and professional at all times.

- Be gently persistent with our staff and patients. Don’t be afraid to ask them what more can be done to make their day easier.

- Keep an open mind, a willing spirit, and give it your all — all the time!

Thank you so much Volunteers for everything you have done for Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital not only during 2011, but throughout the past 35 years! During the holiday season and always, being generous with your time is the best gift of all. With your dedication and commitment, I think 2012 will be the **Best of the Best** year yet!

~ Debbie Varner, Volunteer Supervisor

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**A Wise Person Once Said:**

**An Optimist Stays Up Until Midnight On New Year’s Eve To Welcome In The New Year…**

**A Pessimist Stays Up Until Midnight To Make Sure The Old Year Leaves!**
Sleep Disorders

Getting adequate sleep is crucial to how well we function during the day. Just an hour or two less than required can compromise how fast we react and think, as well as how well our immune system fights infections. I’m sure most of you guys and gals in high school ignore these numbers a lot, but y’all need 8-10 hours of sleep for optimum function. Adults 18 and older need around 7-9 hours of sleep, just a bit less, but still just as important. Even I’m guilty of violating this sometimes! However, some of us aren’t getting enough quality sleep - though not on purpose. Here are a few sleep disorders and their descriptions.

The first and probably most common sleep disorder among all of us is simply sleep deprivation - just not getting enough sleep. Initially, symptoms include decreased memory, cognitive ability & reactions, less activity, and a greater likelihood of being involved in a car accident. Long-term sleep deprivation can lead to cardiovascular problems including heart attack, heart failure, hypertension, stroke, and obesity. Psychiatric problems, including major depression, can also result from sleep deprivation. The treatment for sleep deprivation is (you guessed it!) more adequate sleep.

“What if the reason I have sleep deprivation is because I can’t fall asleep?” you may ask. This is often a case of insomnia, a more severe, but not uncommon sleep disorder. Often, insomnia is short lived, such as a temporary reaction to a new sleep setting or stress. Chronic insomnia is much longer and more serious. It can result in hallucinations, muscular fatigue and mental decline. This kind of insomnia tends to be caused by the use of psychoactive drugs, disturbance in circadian rhythm (body clock), psychological disorders such as severe fear, stress, anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and many other factors. Treatment for insomnia may include sedatives and sleeping pills.

Other less common sleep disorders include narcolepsy, which is falling asleep spontaneously during the day, bruxism (grinding the teeth during sleep), night terrors, sleepwalking, nocturia (urinating multiple times during the night), sleep apnea (the temporary cessation of breathing during sleep), and restless leg syndrome (the irresistible urge to move the legs). If you have any of these symptoms frequently, see your doctor. A good night’s sleep on a consistent basis is well worth it!

~ Vinh Ho, MHSWH Jr. Board Social Director

Stress Less, Snore More!

Studies have shown that Americans tend to stress out more than anyone else in other countries. As is commonly known, too much stress can harm a person’s body. We can all benefit from learning how to keep our stress levels to a minimum and really enjoy life. There are many ways to reduce stress levels, such as sleeping more, eating healthy, remembering that not everything in life can be controlled, and exercising. By practicing these tips, your mood will likely improve dramatically. In turn, healthy habits will boost your focus, concentration, and productivity. As an added bonus, they will help you look and feel younger too!

~ Anam Sherali, MHSWH Jr. Board Publicity Liaison
The Wellness Center

If fitness is on your list of resolutions in 2012, the place to be this year is the Wellness Center!

This past December, Houston Baptist University acquired this full-service fitness facility from Memorial Hermann to enhance HBU’s position as a member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). However, you don’t have to be a student at HBU to join the Wellness Center - all are welcome! The Wellness Center offers 10,000 square feet of exercise space, a full-length basketball court, two racquet ball courts, a 1/16 indoor track, and an incredible indoor aquatic center with various recreational and therapeutic pools. The Wellness Center also offers lots of events and classes that include Fitness Boot Camp, Pilates, Zumba and much more. With a variety of premium exercise equipment at your disposal, from simple stationary bikes and treadmills to elliptical machines and concept II rowers, I’m sure that you will find the work out that is just right for you. If you can’t decide, the Wellness Center has a wonderful staff ready and willing to help. So come and enjoy the new year with the Wellness Center. You’ll be glad you did!

~ Paul Dunnand, MHSWH Junior Board Treasurer
Super Food Word Scramble

Research suggests that incorporating more of the following items into a healthy diet will help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol, raise HDL (good) cholesterol, reduce the risk of heart disease, diabetes & cancer, and even boost your mood. See how quickly you can unscramble these SUPER FOODS and add them to your grocery list:

ATLUNSW  OWPETSOETASET
ASNERIDS  ASNEB
PAIHSCN  WKII
PRATGUEIF  LANDMOS
VCAODOSEA  SUERELRBIBE
AENRETGE  ETAOMTSO
GERONSA  AONSML
OLBCRCIO  ETALAMO

Now That's Food For Thought!

What Is Your Resolution for 2012?

“To start working out.” ~ Aala Al Hasan
“To get a job and start saving money for college.” ~ Paul Dunnand
“To get healthier and do better in math.” ~ Annabel Fuller
“To help my friends get better grades.” ~ Vinh Ho
“To not make any resolutions!” ~ Hania Khiljee
“To study hard for my MCAT.” ~ Kristina Leong
“To aim for a 1st place win in Debate.” ~ Ayodh Patel
“To end this school year with great grades.” ~ Justin Shum
“To focus on fitness.” ~ Naitik Singh
“To volunteer more.” ~ Chama Tekrouri
“To eat more vegetables.” ~ Debbie Varner
“To do even better in school this year than last year.” ~ Brian Vispo

Happy New Year!