Volunteers JeninaMarie Bernardo, Hania Khiljee (Standing) & Marissa Harrison Made the Holiday Season Brighter for Many Patients by Decorating and Delivering Hand-Made Snowman Door Decorations.

Volunteers Victoria Utomi and Jennifer Chopra Did a Terrific Job Decorating the 4th Floor’s

One of Many Hand-Made Teddy Bears Delivered to Young Patients

“Rambo” the Snowman
**Antibiotic Resistance**

When we become sick with cold-like symptoms such as sneezing or runny nose, we often run to our primary care physician (PCP) and expect to receive a prescription for antibiotics. In years past, doctors recognized that when their patients left empty-handed they felt less satisfied. Consequently, this led some physicians to prescribe antibiotics before tests confirmed that they were medically indicated. The unfortunate result was that over time, this approach may have done more harm than good.

The two predominant types of pathogenic agents that can make people sick are bacteria and viruses. Bacteria are biotic organisms that can be both harmful and helpful. Many bacteria work in a mutualistic relationship with humans to benefit both species. On the other hand, some bacteria also have a parasitic relationship causing benefit to the bacteria itself, but harm to its host. Viruses are non-living agents that need a host in order to replicate and cause illness to the host. Antibiotics are very effective against bacteria but not at all effective against viruses. Currently, there is no cure for a viral infection. In most otherwise healthy individuals, a typical virus such as the common cold simply needs to run its course. There is much truth to the adage, “untreated, a cold often improves within 7 days; with intervention, expect to feel better in about a week!”

It usually takes 3-5 days for a blood culture to determine whether an infection was caused by a virus or bacteria. In that time, a physician may have already started their patient on antibiotics. The problem with this approach is that overusing antibiotics when not absolutely necessary can lead to resistant bacteria strains in the body or “super bugs” as they are often called. Thus, when one is exposed to an infectious bacterium in the future, the resistant bacteria can share its resistant DNA with the new bacteria, thus rendering an antibiotic ineffective. Fortunately, physicians of today increasingly recognize this reality and many have adjusted their procedures accordingly. The next time you feel sick, please discuss the risks and benefits of antibiotic treatments with your PCP and never take antibiotics not prescribed specifically for you by your own PCP.

~ Syed Anjum, MHSWH Junior Board Secretary

**Depression in Young Adults**

As reported by the National Institute of Mental Health, 30% of college students have admitted to feeling depression significant enough to interfere with performance of their daily routines. The survey was conducted by the American College Health Association in 2009. Additionally, the website www.psychcentral.com reports that 44% of college students in America have felt symptoms of depression in varying degrees. On an even more alarming note, suicide is the third leading cause of death among those age 15-24, and it is the second leading cause of death in college students age 20-24. Because depression is a major risk factor for suicide, educating students and increasing awareness among young adults is key. Other serious consequences of depression include poor academic performance and turning to self medication and drug abuse.

Feelings of sadness, emptiness, irritability, and/or anxiety can all be symptoms of depression. Lethargy, loss of appetite, and problems with concentration and sleep may also be signs. If such issues persist for more than two weeks, seeking medical help is strongly recommended. Due to individual differences, the underlying causes of depression can be difficult to isolate. However, there is often a trigger. Dealing with the loss of a loved one, feeling alone, financial stress, making a difficult transition, academic woes, or a broken relationship can all be situational factors that may combine with an individual’s biological predisposition to develop depression. If you feel that you may be suffering from depression, seek help and remember that talking to someone can make a big difference. If you suspect that someone you know might be depressed, offer encouragement and a sympathetic ear. Listening to a depressed person can make a difference.

Most colleges provide mental health services and can offer referrals to many available resources. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline’s 24-hour hotline is 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255). More information can also be found online at www.helpguide.org and the National Institute for Mental Health website www.nimh.nih.gov.

~ Rida Khan, MHSWH Junior Board President
Happy New Year, Volunteers! I’m excited to see so many enthusiastic faces around the hospital as we kick off 2013. Our turnout lately has been terrific and I’ve already met quite a few new volunteers this year. Whether you are new or not so new to MHSW Hospital, we welcome you all! I can’t tell you how much Becki, Ruth and I appreciate the positive contributions you all make not only to our hospital, but also to our community. It is no exaggeration to say that the world is a better place because of you.

Recently, I happened to see a toddler near the Information Desk point to several of our red-shirted volunteers and ask his mother, “Who are they?” His mother replied, “They are volunteers and they help people so much. When you’re a big boy, maybe you can be one too.” As the little guy walked out of the hospital holding his mom’s hand and clutching a stuffed pillow pup, he couldn’t take his eyes off our volunteers. Not that I was feeling particularly “Grinch-like” that day, but my heart literally grew three sizes! Our volunteers aren’t just good, they do good. They leave an impression that’s noticed by people of all ages. On behalf of the entire Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital Team, we can’t thank you enough!

One of the best things about volunteering is that you get to know some incredible people. Sadly, we lost two deeply cherished members of the Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital Weekend Volunteer Family during 2012. Many of you will remember the beautiful, elegant volunteer who greeted and helped countless visitors at the Information Desk on Sunday afternoons. Regrettfully, Evelyn Nelson passed away on December 12, 2012. Earlier last year, my dear friend Rex Alford who volunteered with me at the Information Desk on Sunday mornings during much of 2006-2009, passed away on May 5, 2012.

Evelyn and Rex were two of the best. Evelyn was one of the classiest ladies I ever had the pleasure to work with. She always greeted everyone with a smile and she did it with style! We bonded years ago over our love of coffee, all things red, and volunteering. Rex and I joked that we were “the Odd Couple” on Sunday mornings where we swapped stories about our work in the Oil & Gas Industry, our shared love of tennis, and our enjoyment of helping others. Combined, Evelyn and Rex generously donated over 12,000 hours of dedicated volunteer service to MHSW Hospital. Rex was a dynamic MHSWH volunteer for over 15 years and Evelyn was approaching her 30th year of volunteer service with our hospital. Impressive is an understatement when it comes to describing these two. In a “brave new world” of texting over talking and cyberspace over face-to-face, Evelyn and Rex were treasures. I miss visiting with them both. Sundays just aren’t the same...

~ Debbie Varner, Volunteer Supervisor
Recently, weekend volunteers had an opportunity to volunteer outside their usual assigned areas by assisting Memorial Hermann Southwest’s Kathy Buskirk (shown in black below) with her monthly New Sibling Class held at The Family Place on the 5th floor of the hospital. The New Sibling Class is included as part of Memorial Hermann’s women’s services program, and is listed among many pre-natal and family education classes available to expectant parents. The goal of the New Sibling Class is to teach young children (ages three to nine), how to interact safely and care for their newborn sibling.

Upon first entering the classroom, each child is instructed to pick out a life-size baby doll to care for during the class. Volunteers then pair up with the children and assist them with various tasks throughout the class as parents supervise.

The first lesson siblings learn is which toys are safe for their new young sibling to handle. Each child is given a toilet paper roll and must attempt to fit various toys through the roll with the help of a volunteer. The children learn that if a toy can easily slide through the roll, the toy is unsafe and may present a choking hazard if given to their infant sibling. On the other hand, toys that cannot easily fit through the toilet paper roll are generally large enough for the baby to handle safely as long as the toy does not contain small detachable pieces.

In the second lesson of the class, volunteers assist children in learning how to change and discard diapers for their future sibling. Every child is given a disposable diaper, and with the help of the instructor and their volunteer partner, learns the sequence of steps necessary to attach a disposable diaper properly to their baby doll. After a few repeated attempts to enforce the concept, children must then learn to properly dispose of the diaper. They are told to “roll the diaper like a taco” and then discard the used diaper in the trash.

The last lesson of the class instructs children how to properly hold their new siblings. Children must first observe incorrect ways to hold and support an infant and are then taught the correct way to do so. Using the baby doll, young siblings are guided by their volunteer partners as they practice picking up and holding their baby doll using proper techniques. Before the class concludes, participants sit through a short summary video, and are then awarded certificates to prove their new mastery of proper sibling care. At last, volunteers must say farewell to their young partners and class is concluded until the next time.

Available weekend volunteers are strongly encouraged to assist with the New Sibling Class if the chance arises, as it is such a unique opportunity among otherwise routine floor assignments. Help is especially needed during full classes, when many children together can be hard for the instructor to handle alone. If volunteers are interested in spending an hour assisting young children as they attend New Sibling Class, it is definitely an unforgettable opportunity. The parents greatly appreciate the extra time spent helping their child learn about the care of infants and the big siblings themselves have a great time during the class. It’s fun to see their confidence sky rocket!

~ Marissa Harrison, MHSWH Junior Board Treasurer
Caring and Sharing

The Junior Board of Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital Wishes to Thank Everyone who Helped Make Our Holiday New Toy Drive Such a Phenomenal Success! Many Thanks Especially to the Gentlemen of Julius M. Israel B’nai B’rith Lodge for their Enormous Generosity and to the Talented Cheryl McFarlie who Donated the Adorable, Hand-Made Teddy Bears. Kudos to Marissa Harrison for Spear-Heading the Snowman Door Decoration Project! The Holidays for so Many were Brighter Because of You!

Junior Board Officers Aala Al Hasan & Rida Khan Surprise a Young Patient

Let It Snowman!

The Hand-Made Teddy Bear Brigade

Junior Board’s $1.00 Bake Sale Coming Soon

Back by Popular Demand, the Junior Board is Again Sponsoring a Bake Sale to Benefit MHSW Hospital!

ALL ITEMS PRICED AT $1.00

Thursday & Friday, March 14th & 15th
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Medical Plaza 1 Lobby Near Human Resources

We are Gratefully Accepting Portioned and Packaged Baked Goods and Other Donations. Please Speak with Debbie in the Volunteer Office or Rida Khan at rida14@gmail.com for Additional Information.
Healthy and Quick Vegan Pancakes

This is the perfect recipe to get you going in the morning! Enjoy!

Ingredients:
* 1 Cup of Whole Wheat Pancake Mix
* 1 1/3 Cups of Water (You May Need to Add More; Just Add a Little at a Time Until You Have Reached a Good Consistency)
* 5 Tablespoons of Ground Flaxseed
* 4 Tablespoons of Wheat Germ
* 2 Ripe Bananas, Mashed or Pureed

Optional:
Blueberries, Raspberries, Strawberries, Chopped Walnuts, or Pecans

Instructions:
Mix all the ingredients together then spoon onto a hot griddle. Cook until golden brown. Hope you enjoy your quick, healthy and delicious pancakes!

~ Anam Sherali, MHSWH Junior Board Publicity Liaison

Tabata

For those short on time, but still wanting a good cardio workout, a Tabata circuit may be the right choice for you. Faster than a regular hour-long aerobic workout, a Tabata circuit is designed to last for only four minutes. That’s right, just four minutes! How on earth could a four-minute workout be beneficial? Read on.

Designed for Japanese Olympic speed skaters, the Tabata method was developed in the 1970’s and revolves around high-intensity interval training. In other words, this exercise involves short, intense exercise with even shorter breaks in between. Although standard high-intensity interval training programs normally take 10-20 minutes, Tabata was designed to be an even more efficient workout. With Tabata, the athlete performs some cardio activity, whether it be running, burpees, jumping jacks, or anything you want, for 20 seconds. The key is to perform the activity at 100% intensity, as fast and furiously as you can, while safely pushing yourself to your personal limit. After 20 seconds of high-intensity cardio exercise, a 10-second break is given. This process is repeated for a total of 8 times with different exercises, lasting a cumulative total of only 4 minutes. Performing an exercise to one’s maximum capability for 20 seconds may sound easy, but is actually very difficult when properly executed. A Tabata circuit of 8 different exercises with 10-second breaks in between is extremely challenging and not for the faint of heart. Your body will feel the taxing effects immediately!

Studies done by a Japanese research firm showed that Tabata participants exhibited a 170% maximal oxygen uptake, due to the huge demand of oxygen in the exercise. Although it doesn't burn as many calories as a typical aerobic workout such as long-distance running, Tabata is designed to raise both aerobic and anaerobic capacity. Tabata also raises the basal metabolic rate, also known as the resting metabolic rate. Basically, for the next day or so after a Tabata workout, the average person will burn far more calories than they normally would at rest.

If you’re looking for a challenging but time-saving workout, Tabata may be right for you. Tabata circuits can be done at home alone while timing yourself meticulously, or at a local gym with the assistance of a trainer. As always, be sure to consult your Primary Care Physician (PCP) before beginning any new diet or exercise regimen.

~ Vinh Ho, MHSWH Junior Board Social Director