

April 3, 2014

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Someone has said, *“The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others.”*

That, in summary, describes perfectly the role and contribution of our 1,273 NCH system-wide volunteers, as we celebrate the 60th year Diamond Anniversary of our downtown volunteers team.

I'd like to use this space to recognize every single volunteer who means so much to us. But I don't have the paper, and you don't have the time. So, instead, I'll cite one NCH volunteer who embodies the good works that all 1,273 volunteers do. He is **Bill Rank**, who has been with NCH 22 years as a familiar and friendly face and one of the first people our visitors see as he safely transports them around the downtown campus in his golf cart. Beyond his transporting duties, Bill has truly made a difference in the lives of others by graciously donating his lifesaving blood and platelets. This month, he donated his 51st gallon of blood products! Wow! Now that's a dedicated and cherished community volunteer. Thank you, Bill.

Next year marks the 25th anniversary of the North Naples Auxiliary, and this past February we celebrated the 30-year anniversary of the construction of the Marco Island Urgent Care Center.

Throughout all our activities and locations, volunteers contribute in so many varied ways. Our White Elephant, for example, reopened in November with the assistance of many volunteers. We have a new look, a new layout, and an additional sale day, making this landmark even more successful. Mrs. **Beatrice Briggs**, first Chair of the NCH Board, and a few other community-minded women sponsored the first “White Elephant” by holding a yard rummage sale. This successful event led to the White Elephant that we know today and this legacy lives on in the person of **Thelma Hodges** who next year will celebrate her 60th year at NCH, as first an RN and later as a volunteer at the White Elephant.

Three Saturdays ago, the NICU Snugglers (volunteers) joined forces with the NICU staff in the first annual reunion with the NICU babies. There were joyful tears by staff, volunteers, and parents as they all reconnected and were amazed by the growth and development of the healthy children who were once so frail. **Carolyn Bellefeuille**, Volunteer Snuggler Chairperson, recalled the moment that a triplet stroller came rolling into the Telford Auditorium carrying all three children that were previous NICU babies; all three were adorned with name tags, sitting up, observant and smiling. And there wasn't a dry eye in the house.

Last August, Director of the Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging & Rehabilitation **Heather Baker** and Director of Volunteers **Amanda Smith** started the Brain Injury Peer Mentor program at the 54-bed Brookdale Center. NCH was the first healthcare system in Florida to form a relationship with the Brain Injury Peer Visitor Association, based in Alpharetta, Georgia. Through this alliance, local brain injury survivors were trained to become volunteer resources to our patients and their families, fostering recovery and serving as role models in connecting with people who have had similar events in their lives. Since the implementation of the program, 111 survivors and 106 caregivers have benefited from our volunteers. Soon, NCH will expand this program to acute care and outpatient rehab areas.

Finally, I regret to report that North Naples Volunteer Operations Manager **Lauren Turner** is relocating to Colorado due to her husband's career opportunity, after six great years helping to enhance the volunteer program through new software, growing our VolunTeen program, and starting new volunteer service areas. Good luck Lauren and thanks. We are so thankful to you and to every one of the 1,273 volunteers who so heroically and graciously represent NCH in our community.

Respectfully,



Allen S. Weiss, M.D., President and CEO

P.S. DO YOU HAVE A COLLEAGUE OR FRIEND WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THESE UPDATES?

Please enter their email address below, and we will add them to our complimentary mailing list. No cost or obligation.

And of course they may unsubscribe at any point they find the content uninteresting. Just enter their email address, and we shall send them a "Welcome" note, indicating you have recommended them to receive the newsletter (again, this is free and without obligation of any sort).

Present Reader's Email Address:

Name:

Please add my colleague or friend to your distribution: His/her name and email address is:
