

# VOLUNTEER *Life*

Keeping Southlake's volunteers informed

WINTER 2010

## Celebrating Volunteers' Dedication to Shockingly Excellent Service

*Patient satisfaction and volunteer commitment – a perfect match!*

**M**y mother underwent hip surgery at Southlake in May of this year. Since then, she has visited the hospital on numerous occasions for post-surgical follow-up assessments and, most recently, for physiotherapy in your Rehab area.

On all occasions, I have accompanied my mother to provide her with assistance and to stay in touch with her progress. At all visits, we have entered Southlake through the east entrance and have encountered your Volunteers as soon as we entered the hospital. I just wanted to tell you what a pleasure it is to be greeted by your Volunteers.

They are friendly, knowledgeable and extremely helpful. They are proactive and are always on the move looking for people that they can help. They really make a great first impression and we all know how important that is.

My compliments to Southlake and, especially, to all the wonderful Volunteers. I am sure that you are proud of them all, and so you should be.

*Sincerely,*

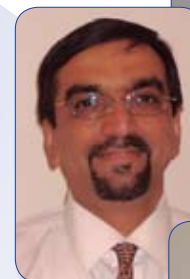
V. Paul Gordon, *B.Sc., M.Sc., C.Chem.*



**A**s President and CEO of Southlake Regional Health Centre, it is an honour and a privilege to receive letters such as this one in recognition of the role and impact of our volunteers as we continually strive to *Put Patients First*. Congratulations!

I would also like to add a very special thank-you to all of our volunteers as part of the Southlake Family. During the H1N1 crisis in October/November, we received strong support from the volunteer team who continued to provide *shockingly excellent service* during a very challenging period.

— Daniel P. Carriere, *CEO Southlake Regional Health Centre*



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*“Go the extra mile. It’s never crowded.” — Author unknown*

# Some of our Volunteers...


## Edna Willis — ‘One Special Lady!’



Edna Willis

Every Thursday, Edna Willis arrives in the hospital’s Human Resources Department to help members of the HR team. And she quietly gets to work on whatever task needs to be done where another pair of hands is required. Very much a member of the team, Edna instinctively knows what is a priority, and is a stickler when it comes to attention to detail. She provides much-needed support to the department, preparing benefit packages and retirement kits, assisting with mailings and a variety of other tasks. Willingly offering help wherever needed, she can be counted upon to be there and to do her work well.

Edna has a great sense of humour, thoroughly enjoying — and participating in — the friendly banter in the department. The staff enjoy her company and look forward to Thursdays when she comes in to help. In the photograph, Edna is about to cut into a birthday cake, baked for her by one of the staff.

As a volunteer, Edna’s contribution to the work of Human Resources exemplifies *shockingly excellent service* in every way. She gets rave reviews from her co-workers, who are amazed how much she gets done for the department. A co-worker sees her as “a volunteer who is very dedicated, committed and loyal to our team ... we can depend on her to see a job to its completion.” Brenda Noble, Benefits and Pensions Specialist, says “We all appreciate the time and commitment that Edna provides on a weekly basis ... She is our HR gem—and one special lady!” 


## A Winning Smile and a Positive Attitude

If you visit the Mammography Department on Tuesday afternoons, Carol Bowers is the friendly face you will see. She greets patients as they arrive, ensures they are properly prepared for their test and helps them through the process.

Many women are nervous about having a mammogram, and this is where Carol steps in. She chats with them to take their minds off their anxiety. To Carol, one of the most important things she can do is to make patients comfortable. And, if someone is waiting longer than normal, she asks the technologist for an update, doing her best to obtain answers to questions patients may have.

Diagnosed with breast cancer in August 2000, Carol and her husband Doug, (who also has had cancer) have faced their challenges with a positive attitude. Along with other breast cancer survivors, Carol is an enthusiastic member of a dragon boat racing team in Toronto, where she trains and competes in races throughout the summer period. She also competes with a national team, and has a handful of medals to prove it. Carol intends to paddle until she is 75! Now in her fourth year volunteering in Mammography,

Carol hasn’t let breast cancer stop her from enjoying life and helping others.

Carol is regarded as a very dedicated and reliable volunteer in the Mammography department. Hélène Compeau, senior technologist for Mammography and Bone Density, says, “When Carol is in, I know that I do not have to worry about the patients in the waiting room, as they will all be very well cared for. We love her!” 



Carol Bowers

## Volunteers Tend the Gardens at Southlake



*Dorothy Schmauder*

Although Winter is fast approaching and gardens filled with riotous colour will not be seen again until Spring, let us take a moment to recognize and appreciate the work of some very special volunteers who tend to three beautiful garden areas that help lift the spirits of everyone who takes a little time to enjoy them. Dorothy Schmauder, Mary Slingerland and many other enthusiastic volunteers help make these gardens grow.

The garden on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor patio grows well, thanks to the green fingers and tender loving care of Dorothy Schmauder. She tends the garden every Tuesday in the Spring, Summer and Fall. Dorothy purchases plants, delivers them to the hospital, plants them and carefully weeds and tends to them. Watering of the garden is done by Complex Medical Rehab volunteers and students. The garden is a cooperative effort among all the volunteers, with advice from patients who have enjoyed gardens of their own. Some of the plants are donated by volunteers from their own gardens.

Patients and their visitors spend many hours on the patio when the weather permits. Some patients eat their lunch out there, and staff and volunteers escort patients to the patio so they can enjoy the flowers and the fresh air.

The 6<sup>th</sup> floor patio garden is under the tender loving care of Mary Slingerland. Mary is a master gardener and a member of the Lake Simcoe South Master Gardeners. She has been tending this garden since it opened four years ago. Although Mary retired as a volunteer in palliative care, she still comes in once a week to look after the garden and has help in tending this garden from other palliative care volunteers on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor.



*Mary Slingerland*

The patio has seen many events since it opened, including weddings and memorial services. It provides a quiet place where patients can go and meet with their families, sit and admire the plants or, look off into the distance and see the hills and trees surrounding Newmarket. In the Fall these trees provide a glorious show of autumn colour.

And there is a garden at Southlake Village. This large open garden is a quiet enclosure where Village residents can spend time on their own or with their families. There is lots of room for wheelchairs to be moved around.


Flowers are planted every Spring over several weeks by Valerie Liney and Jennifer Walton, members of the Lake Simcoe South Master Gardeners, who volunteer their special skills. The Village does not yet have volunteers who can help with caring for this garden, but the Community Resources Department is hoping to build on the relationship with the Lake Simcoe South Master Gardeners and attract more volunteers to donate their time and skills in this way. The grass and plants currently are cared for by Village maintenance staff.



*The garden at Southlake Village.*

Those residents who also like gardening and are able to help, tend the garden and there are specially designed raised planter beds, designed and built by volunteer Bill Chadwick, so residents in wheelchairs also can assist. Herbs and tomatoes are also grown in these beds, and are used in the Village kitchen in the preparation of meals. This Summer the garden was home to a barbecue for the residents, and a music programme is also held there. The garden is decorated with plants and themes to follow the different seasons.

A big thank-you to all the wonderful volunteers who donate their time and skills to create beautiful places for all of us to enjoy!

– Janet Rentsch, *Volunteer, Complex Medical Rehab* 

# 2009 Volunteer Award of

**A**t Southlake we invest a great deal of time, resources and energy recruiting and retaining the right people to work, practice and volunteer in our organization. We value people who are committed to delivering *shockingly excellent service* and living our Values of *put patients first, give a damn, honour your commitments and push the envelope*.


Each year, we take the opportunity to recognize these people with the Awards of Excellence event hosted by Dan Carriere, CEO. We are proud of each of the nominees and the winner of this year's Volunteer Award of Excellence. These people are usually nominated by the people in the department where they work or volunteer, and their application undergoes a rigorous process through a Selection Committee made up of staff, physicians and volunteers to identify the winners. It is truly an honour to be nominated for one of these prestigious awards, so we would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge all of our nominees and the winner.

## Margaret Taylor



Margaret has volunteered at Southlake for the past nine years in the Cancer Program. Her reliability


and positive attitude are much appreciated by the staff, volunteers, patients and their families.

Margaret demonstrates leadership and goes "above and beyond" in many ways. In the past, she has worked with Food Services and Infection Control to ensure snacks for our immune-compromised patients are appropriate. She has also worked closely with Doane House Hospice volunteer program to provide support programs that benefit our patients and their families. Last but not least, she is a volunteer trainer who uses her skills and experience to help new volunteers feel more comfortable in their roles. 



## Lynn Bird


Lynn has been a volunteer in Corporate Communications for four years, following a long career as the Manager of the Laboratory at Southlake. Her vision of "establishing a gallery-worthy art collection for the hospital", coupled with her skills and expertise in the art world, have benefitted Southlake in many ways. Lynn's contributions to the hospital include the development of a database

that catalogues the hospital's art collection; re-opening the Art Gallery (in the cafeteria in which the hospital's portion of sales stands at approximately \$5,000); acquiring a donation of approximately 40 pieces of photographic art work (valued at \$20,000) and the securing of a multi-year loan of 16 pieces of art work by renowned Ojibwa artist Norman Knott – to name but a few! Lynn is also helping to position Southlake as a good corporate citizen by supporting local artists in York Region and Simcoe County by displaying their work in our cafeteria area. 



## Marjorie Brewster

Marjorie has been a volunteer at Southlake for the past twenty-two years, all of that time devoted to the Paediatric Department. The staff see Marjorie as someone who loves children and whose mission in life is to "bring smiles to replace tears." She provides a warm, loving voice to calm fears, reads stories and gains the trust of both children and parents. Marjorie often receives beautiful

cards of thanks and pictures from the children once they have been discharged, and is proud and honoured to have made a difference in their lives and that of their parents and family members. 

*"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time;*

# Excellence at Southlake

## Denny Le Masurier Winner of the 2009 Volunteer Excellence Award




*Denny with Dan Carriere, President and CEO of Southlake Regional Health Centre.*

In a highly emotional ceremony held on May 28<sup>th</sup> this year, Denny Le Masurier was presented with the highest award that Southlake confers once a year to the volunteer who embodies the spirit of the entire volunteer group.

Denny has dedicated her volunteer experience to visiting the hospital every week for the past seven years with her therapy dogs, King and Jewel. These dogs undergo rigorous testing through the St. John Therapy Dog Program, and great care is taken in the selection and training of these dogs prior to their visiting the hospital. Denny truly understands the role that animals play in participating in the healing environment – not only of the body, but the mind and spirit as well. The therapy dogs reach out with their paws to help lift spirits, and decrease problems and stresses, and no other communication is needed in that moment.

Her outstanding relationship with her dogs is easy for all to see, with no ambition other than to simply be of service. Sadly, King was killed in an accident but, even through her shock and pain, Denny used this time to create a positive experience. Fundraisers, silent auctions and donations in memory of King were given to the Southlake Regional Health Centre Foundation to ensure that King may be gone but not forgotten.

The contribution Denny makes in her work with therapy dogs truly makes a difference in the lives of patients and their families. 

*they just have the heart.” — Elizabeth Andrew*

## A Special Volunteer at Southlake Village




Elsa Schwill

Southlake Village has a total of 117 volunteers. Of these volunteers there are many who go above and beyond the call of their volunteer role, but there is one volunteer that Southlake Village would like to recognize for her *shockingly excellent service*. Her name is Elsa Schwill.

She began volunteering at the Village in May 2007 and has come in nearly every day since, putting in an amazing 869.25 hours! She volunteers on the second floor, where she visits the residents, assisting them with anything they might need. This can mean anything from sitting quietly with a resident, to holding someone's hand, or brightening a resident's day with a little humour — as well as helping the Life Enrichment staff on all the floors with special events programs.

She comes to the Village with a smile on her face and love in her heart. Elsa gives so much of her time and energy, yet she expects nothing in return. Elsa delivers *shockingly excellent service* every day she volunteers! You can tell this by the gentle approach she uses with residents, her ability to adapt to any situation, and the caring and compassion she shows to residents, families and staff. Some of the words used to describe Elsa are 'amazing', 'lifesaver', 'caring', 'kind,' friendly' and 'compassionate'.

Elsa has had a great impact on everyone at Southlake Village because of the dedication that she shows in her volunteer role. These are special qualities that all our volunteers have, but Elsa has found a special place in the hearts of the residents, their families and staff. 

— Michelle Naray  
Volunteer Coordinator Southlake Residential Care Village.

## Volunteer Leaders' Council (Year 7)

Term: September 2009 to June 2010



Photo courtesy of Dorothy Hare, Admin. Asst.,  
Community Resources Dept. Sept. 2009

The Volunteer Leaders' Council meets monthly and provides guidance, advice, support and recommendations to the Community Resources Department related to volunteer involvement. It is made up of Community Resources Department staff, Hospital, Foundation and Southlake Residential Care Village staff and volunteers. If you are interested in participating on the Council, please contact Mary Ryan, Manager, Community Resources at 905-895-4521 ext 2198 or [mryan@southlakeregional.org](mailto:mryan@southlakeregional.org).

**Back row:** Judy Whittaker; Darlene Albers; Janet Rentsch; Kathy Bitove; Michelle Naray (Staff); Danielle Koren  
**Third row:** Anne Boden (Staff); Cynthia Gordon (Staff); Rachel Agnoluzzi (Staff); Ruth Morton (Staff); Ranji Singh  
**Second row:** Mary Ryan (Staff); Julio C. Santos; Fred Quinn; Anne Pryde  
**Front row:** Winnie Robinson; Rick Hannivan

# Spiritual Care – A New Beginning



Vicki Cousins

As the new coordinator of Spiritual Care, Vicki Cousins knows the value of the forty special people who volunteer in the department and is proud of their contribution to patients, their families and staff.


Spiritual Care volunteers provide spiritual, emotional, religious and practical support to all faiths – 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Some volunteers are ordained, some have theological training and are assigned to specific units at Southlake, and some are trained lay spiritual care visitors. All are dedicated individuals, available to help where and when needed.

Being a member of the Spiritual Care team means being with patients and their families in any situation, sometimes in a crisis. This may involve simply sitting with a patient — listening, perhaps offering reassurance — helping that person find his or her way. Some of the issues patients struggle with are spiritual at the core: the feeling of losing one’s identity or independence, experiencing grief or loss, or the fear of the unknown. For a patient, it can mean having someone to talk to or to pray with. It can mean hope. And, for their families, it can mean support when facing difficult decisions.

To Vicki, Spiritual Care is an integral part of the Circle of Care. To her and to the volunteers, it is a privilege and an honour to listen to someone’s story and to be there with them, offering whatever help can be given.

In her position, Vicki spends time with patients, families and staff. She supports the Spiritual Care volunteers, and is currently reviewing programs, setting priorities and goals, and developing plans and creating possibilities for the future.

One of the goals for the Spiritual Care Department is to offer a ‘labyrinth’ at Southlake. A labyrinth is a “path of prayer for all people,” also called a walking meditation. It is also Vicki’s objective to begin a meditation/reflection group, meeting once a week for forty-five minutes and to have a Remembrance Day service at Southlake next November.

Providing Spiritual Care support to patients and their families — as well as to hospital staff and to the volunteers themselves — is something Vicki is passionate about and she is excited about the opportunity to continue to build on the legacy of our former chaplain, Margaret Gordon. 




Linda Tanaka

## Fashion Affair for Art

*Fashion Affair for Art* took place on November 4th, 2009 in the Medical Arts Building at Southlake Lecture Hall. This unique fundraising initiative raised over \$5,200 to provide artwork for the new Stronach Regional Cancer Centre.

It all started when I decided there was a need for art in the new Cancer Centre. I went to Tammy LaRue, Manager of Corporate Communications, who leads the Volunteer Art Program at Southlake, and presented a plan for a fashion show. Tammy was very enthusiastic and supportive.

After many hours of planning, phone calls and several meetings, things started to take shape. It was a huge challenge but a very rewarding volunteer role. The net proceeds will be used to purchase artwork from York Region artists – a win-win situation!

We hope this will be the first of many Fashion Shows at Southlake and look forward to continuing volunteer leadership and involvement. Special thanks to volunteers Lynn Bird, Raine Davis and Josee Savaria for their support in making this event so successful. 

— Linda Tanaka, Volunteer, Corporate Communications

2009 Southlake Gala raises almost \$850,000 net

*Hollywood style*



**A**lmost \$850,000 net was raised at the 2009 Southlake Gala – On the Red Carpet in October to help build the Regional Cancer Program, desperately needed by the more than one million people living in York Region and South Simcoe County. Another \$150,000 was donated to Southlake via the Gala to bring comprehensive cancer care to our region.

“While some may be surprised that a hospital in Newmarket raises more money in one evening than almost any other hospital beyond Toronto, it’s not a real surprise to us,” says Neila Poscente, president and CEO of Southlake’s Foundation. “Our community is deeply committed to Southlake and wants to help the hospital to become everything our community needs and deserves.”

Southlake’s Gala, which attracted almost 1,200 guests, is unique in yet another way: It is largely volunteer-driven and has a large group of influential and dedicated volunteers who invested over a year of efforts to make the 2009 Gala such a success. Our

sincere thanks to co-chairs Teresa van Schaik and Kim Kay and the 2009 Gala committee for their hard work in creating a wonderful experience for our guests as well their dedicated efforts in raising the funds needed to complete the Regional Cancer Program.

The word about Southlake is getting out and prominent Canadian individuals and organizations generously showed their support, despite a difficult economy. In addition to major sponsors York Region Media Group and State Farm Insurance, other partners such as Rogers and the Beswick Group returned once again to support Southlake. This year’s event was hosted by Q107 Morning Show hosts John Derringer and Maureen Holloway.

With an ambitious \$60 million goal, the Southlake... *count on me* campaign will conclude with the opening of the Stronach Regional Cancer Centre in March 2010.



**Submissions to Volunteer Life**

We are always looking for story ideas. The next issue of *Volunteer Life* will be distributed the Spring of 2010. The deadline for submissions is noon on March 1, 2010. Please forward your submissions (Microsoft Word format) or story ideas to Community Resources in the Central Mailroom or via email to Mary Ryan at [mryan@southlakeregional.org](mailto:mryan@southlakeregional.org)



The Southlake Regional Health Centre Southlake Village *Volunteer Life* is published for our Volunteers by the Community Resources Department. Submissions, including letters to the editor, are welcome. The volunteer editor reserves the right to edit all materials submitted. Opinions expressed in *Volunteer Life* are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Hospital or its administration. Contents of *Volunteer Life* may not be reproduced without written consent of the Community Resources Department.

596 Davis Drive, Newmarket L3Y 2P9 905-895-4521