



# NEWSLETTER

June 2022

## Culture of hospital, community of volunteers create positive environment

When I looked back at previous editions of the Volunteer Guild newsletter last June's struck a chord with me. This edition last year was all about honouring a beloved volunteer whose impact is immeasurable, Lesley I.

This got me thinking about institutional memory, tradition and the importance of intergenerational relationships. As we slowly begin to build the Volunteer Services programming back up and bring in new volunteers, it is vital we ensure that the legacy of volunteering at Victoria Hospital is handed down.



It is inevitable that things change and that we transition to different ways of doing things. Meeting via technology is a perfect example of this. However, the relationships and integrity of volunteering stay the same. Our "younger volunteers" provide us the confidence and ease that comes with being comfortable with technology. They have been brought up in a diverse world both culturally and socially; they join us with open minds. Our "veteran" volunteers provide us with the much-needed connection to our community through lived history. They instil a sense of loyalty and camaraderie that is vital to a successful volunteer program.

Our goal is to create an environment where many generations form lasting bonds and where they can learn from one another. Another goal is that a new volunteer who is brought into this community will want to return at different stages of their life. I love hearing about the staff who started as a volunteer while in school, returned to the Vic to work and have intentions of volunteering when they retire or better yet, their children are already volunteering here.

This speaks to the culture of this hospital, the community of the volunteers and to the success of this department. Each and every volunteer, regardless of age, leaves a footprint for others to follow. We all contribute in different ways but each is equally important and impactful.

I will leave you with one last thing; yesterday, we found an old map of the hospital before the additions in the front were put on. Does anyone remember the "bubble room"? Or when Oncology was in the basement? Or when Victoria Lifeline had a trailer on the property? Even our building has had many transformations but the core stays the same; we are a small hospital with a big heart rooted in our community.

*Robyn Jones, Volunteer Services Manager*

## New Guild Board poised for success in 2022/23

June is a month of celebration. Among the many celebrations which include the official first day of summer, and Seniors Month, is the installation of our Guild Board for 2022/2023.

It has been a monumental year for our Guild. We rode the mighty waves of the pandemic with great fortitude, camaraderie, and innovation. You, our Guild members remained steadfast in your dedication and support for the Guild and our beloved Victoria Hospital. For all this and more, I extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation.



We welcomed our new Guild Board Members - Brenda Catchpole, Jackie Dutfield, Janet Evans and our student volunteer Rachel Martens. Included in our excellent complement of other Board members, we have Rohan Sethi, Nadine Slight, Zdenka Melnyk, Marilyn Nash, Boni Chowdhury, June Pidlaski, Helga Smyrl, Kay Ames, Roine Thomsen, Barb Langridge, Helen Kirby, Barb Hellofs, Janet Evans, Robyn Jones, and myself (Louise Horst). A forward-thinking and talented team.

It is important to note that we have six former Vic employees (Brenda, Jackie, Janet, Kay, Barb H. and Louise) on our Board and two student volunteers (Rohan and Rachel). To have former Vic employees returning as volunteers and serving as Board members is noteworthy. Student volunteers also serving on the Board is a bonus.

We are working diligently to secure our Guild's future. A working Board is critical to the success of our Guild. A strong foundation is needed to build from, and we are so very grateful for those that helped build this strong footing. This year, many of our long-service Guild Board members moved to the Guild's Advisory Committee - Lorraine Miln, Jo Bembridge, Roine Thomsen, and Kay Ames.

Our Guild family welcomed our staff member - Debbie Hanton as our new Gift Shop Coordinator. Debbie too is a former Vic employee. We are so pleased to have Debbie join us and our Gift Shop is benefitting from Debbie's enthusiasm and creativity. A special thank you to Barb Langridge and Robyn Jones for their valuable support training Debbie in her new position. Our Gift Shop team which also includes Roine Thomsen, Jo Bembridge, Norma Wilson and our many talented Gift Shop volunteers have pulled together resulting in an upward swing in Gift Shop business. Thank you all.

Where do we go from here? Stay tuned. Our Guild Board is preparing for our first ever Strategic Planning session this Fall. The future looks bright for the Volunteer Guild of Victoria Hospital.

Have a safe and spectacular Summer.

*-Louise Horst, Guild President*

Thanks to volunteers' dedication

**Patient Comfort Care program expands and grows to 23,000+ items annually**

Back in 2015, **Lynn Tulleken** approached the ER manager to see if the unit could benefit from the Guild providing packages of basic toiletries – these would be given to patients who unexpectedly needed to spend the night in the hospital.

The concept was received with enthusiasm by the ER and in September of 2015, the Guild Board approved the budget for this program for the first time. Later, packages of colouring sheets and crayons were given out to children in the ER waiting area.

From those beginnings, over the past seven years, Lynn and her partner **Joan Madrigga** have grown the Patient Comfort Care program to the point where more than 23,000 items were provided to patients throughout the hospital in the last fiscal year!



*Toiletry items*

**Program evolved as word spread**

After the success of the comfort care program in the ER, word soon spread to floor managers in other units. Within a short time, Lynn and Joan were providing comfort care and activity items to Units 6, 5 North and South and 4 North and South. The ER unit was discontinued when the area transitioned to Urgent Care, explains Lynn.

“As our hospital underwent a change in programs and we saw a huge increase of Mental Health patients, the need for these comfort care and activity supplies increased dramatically.”



*Painting activity items*

**Demand exploded with COVID**

“When Covid reached our hospital and patients weren’t allowed visitors, the need for these comfort care and activity items increased tenfold,” says Joan. “Every unit wanted supplies.”

Unfortunately, no visitors also meant no volunteers were allowed into the building. “Desperate to keep this essential program operating, Robyn Jones, then Gift Shop Manager, stepped forward,” adds Joan. “We delivered items to the entrance of the hospital and Robyn was able to set up a delivery system to the units. She also created an order sheet which she supplied to each unit with the instructions for each manager to fill out and their items would be delivered weekly. Without Robyn’s dedication, we would not have been able to continue.”

See “Patient Comfort Care program” on page 4

### Kay Ames joins the team

“As the costs for these items escalated we soon realized that we needed some sort of accountability for these requests, e.g. to what units were these requested items going and what units were needing the most supplies,” explains Joan. Kay Ames was brought on board and created a spreadsheet that filled this need. Unable to work within the hospital, she compiled this data from her home computer once Robyn sent her the information.

### Scope, quantities and budgets expand

#	ITEM	UNITS
1	Toothpaste	10
2	Toothbrush	10
3	Hairbrush	5
4	Comb	5
5	Nail Clippers	5
6	Body Wash (individual)	10
7	Men's Deodorant	5
8	Women's Deodorant	5
9	Shaving Cream	5
10	Razors	10
11	Shampoo (individual)	10
12	Conditioner (individual)	10
13	Chapstick	
14	Nail Files	
15	Lotion	10
16	Sunscreen	
17	Feminine Hygiene (tampons)	
18	Body Wash (Large)	
19	Shampoo (Large)	
20	Conditioner (Large)	
21	Dental Floss	10

Toiletry items

As the COVID restrictions were relaxed slightly, Joan and Lynn were allowed to work in the hospital once again, By then, many other units, having witnessed the success of the program, wanted onboard. “With the expansion of Mental Health beds, the hospital is now receiving many homeless people who have no possessions and no supports... we provide discharge packages for them as well if and when they leave the Vic.”

“This drastic increase for supplies in the last couple of years has initiated a change in our budget requests, says Lynn. “In this last fiscal year we provided nearly 23,300 comfort care and activity items.”

#	ITEMS
1	Puzzle Books
2	Books
3	Magazines
4	Colouring Books
5	Sketch Book
6	Pencil Crayons
7	Markers
8	Basic Journals
9	Fancy Journals
10	3D Models
11	Earbuds
12	White Glue
13	Playing Cards
14	Stress Ball
15	Yarn
16	Reading Glasses
17	Wooden Items to Paint
18	Canvas
19	Paint
20	Paintbrushes

Activity items

To keep up with the growing demands of the program, Lynn and Joan each spend 5 1/2 hours each week shopping, sorting and filling orders for the various hospital units. The scope of items provided have expanded over the years to include playing cards, painting supplies, crafts and much more as shown on the order forms above. Even special requests, such as popcorn for movie nights, are accommodated where possible.

What has motivated Joan and Lynn to work on this program for seven years now?

“The feedback and the stories from the hospital staff, recounted by Robyn, are so heartwarming and is motivation enough for our Guild to continue this desperately needed service,” say Lynn and Joan.

Lynn adds, “We want Guild members to appreciate how important fund-raising is and how the money is being put to good use for the benefit of hospital patients.”





These pieces of artwork were created and proudly displayed by Mental Health patients on Unit 6. All supplies were donated by the Guild.

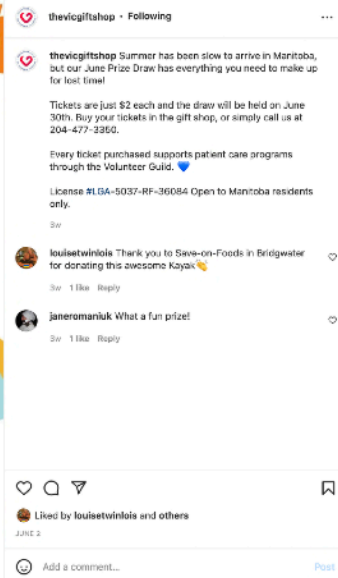
Please see article on pages 3,4.

Be sure to visit the **thevicgiftshop** Instagram page often to keep up with exciting developments like the amazing June Prize Draw

## Summer Fun!



- Kayak - K1 Challenger (Inflatable)
- Napoleon TravelQ Portable Gas Grill
- Bamboo Cutlery & Dishes
- \$25.00 Gift Card to Miller's Meats
- Hoffmann's Fine Foods - Bag of Chicken Fingers
- S'mores Kit with 4 adjustable skewers
- Banana Boat Sun Care Pack
- 6 Steak Knives



### IN MEMORIAM



Charles (Bud) Barbour passed away on May 13, 2022 at the age of 87. Bud was a dedicated Victoria Lifeline volunteer having spent 10 years in this position. The Guild has made a contribution of \$25 to the Mattie Hanna Scholarship Fund in Bud's memory.